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## **Sensing interrail mobility**

*Towards multimodal methodologies*

Jensen, Martin Trandberg

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# **SENSING INTERRAIL MOBILITY**

TOWARDS MULTIMODAL METHODOLOGIES

BY  
**MARTIN TRANDBERG JENSEN**

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2015



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK



**Sensing interrail mobility:  
Towards multimodal methodologies**

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**Submitted to Aalborg University**

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**Martin Trandberg Jensen**

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PhD supervisor: Associate Professor Szilvia Gyimóthy  
Aalborg University

PhD committee: Associate Professor Carina Bregnholm Ren  
Aalborg Universitet, Denmark

Professor Philip Vannini  
Royal Roads University, Canada

Associate Professor Britta Timm Knudsen  
Aarhus University, Denmark

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13 August 2015, Copenhagen

Martin Trandberg Jensen

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## Resume

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På de følgende sider diskuterer jeg de teoretiske og metodiske inspirationskilder bag projektet, og klargør for relationerne imellem de seks publikationer der er indleveret som dele af denne artikel-baserede Ph.d.

Afhandlingen tager udgangspunkt i det Europæiske togrejse fænomen, interrail. Tidligere interrail studier er baserede på motivationsteorier (Schönhammer, 1993), tilfredshedsundersøgelser (Fernandes, Sarmiento, & Matias, 2013) eller strukturel antropologi (Hartmann, 1995; Klingbeil, 1994) hvorigennem fænomenet er blevet reduceret til et udtryk for bagvedliggende sociale eller kulturelle strukturer (Franklin, 2004). I disse studier repræsenteres interrailere som forholdsvist 'livløse' aktører der minder om den generiske passager i transport studier (Cresswell, 2006). Jeg ønsker at bryde op med denne distancerede forståelse af interrail(ere), og trækker derfor på tre relevante teorifelter: performative turisme studier (Ateljevic, Pritchard & Morgan, 2007; Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010); 'ikke-repræsentationelle teorier' [Non-representational theories] (Anderson & Harrison, 2012; Dewsbury, 2010; Thrift, 2008), og endeligt den sociologiske drejning mod mobiliteter (Edensor, 2007b; Hannam, Butler, & Paris, 2014; Urry, 2000). Herigennem belyser afhandlingen interrail som en *konstrueret, situeret og sanselig rejseoplevelse* der gøres via materielle hverdagspraksisser. Dette forlænger den knap så eksotiske formodning at turisme oplevelsen ikke kan frakobles hverdagens 'trummerum' (Larsen, 2008). Denne optik kræver dog nye hensynsfulde begreber og sensitive metoder til at beskrive og forstå de ikke iøjnefaldende dimensioner af den mobile

turistoplevelse. Derfor er denne Ph.d. et bidrag til den fortløbende udvikling af refleksive og kritiske turisme studier igennem adaptationen og udviklingen af multimodale metoder.

Afhandlingen åbnes med en refleksiv optakt der beskriver projektets historie, de praktiske årsager til specifikke valg der blev taget undervejs, og ikke mindst de tilfældigheder der delvis formede afhandlingen. Her minder jeg læseren om at selvom Ph.d. afhandlinger traditionelt går direkte til studiets kerne, ligger der utallige effektfulde relationer, frustrationer, afsporede ideer, formalier og hverdagspraktiske 'baggrunde' bag tilblivelsen af Ph.d. afhandlinger. Disse detaljer er langt fra uskyldige, men derimod centrale i konstruktionen af akademisk arbejde. Jeg håber at læseren får en klarere forståelse for hvorledes dette projekt blev til ved at læse denne indledning.

Afhandlingens kapitel 2 beskriver de metoder der har informeret projektet, og reflekterer i den forbindelse over hvilke metodebidrag der vokser ud af projektet. På den baggrund udvikler jeg begrebet "Forvrænget repræsentation" [Distorted Representation] som en refleksiv ramme til at forstå indflydelsen af *sanselighed*, *performativitet* og *materialitet* under visuel feltarbejde (Publikation 4). Derudover foreslår jeg et udkast til en audio-orienteret turismeforskningsstrøm (Publikation 5) baseret på benyttelsen af nye teknologiske værktøjer til at optage, distribuere og analysere lydens rolle i turistoplevelsen.

Afhandlingens kapitel 3 præsenterer kort turismeforskningen i relation til det sanselige. Jeg positionerer mig her især i forhold til turisme *mobilitet*, og diskuterer hvorledes mobilitet er blevet repræsenteret ud fra vidt forskellige ontologiske udgangspunkter. Mit mål med denne

gennemgang er at belyse hvorledes turisme mobilitet ikke har én universel betydning, men gives mening ud fra den måde det konceptuelt og metodisk repræsenteres på (Publikation 1). Herfra argumenteres det at mobilitetens *sanselighed* til stadighed er underbelyst, og at især de metoder med hvilke man har forsøgt, oftest har været tekstbaserede og fokuserede på det symbolske og iøjnefaldende. Jeg søger at nuancere denne tendens ved at introducere 'ikke-repræsentationelle teorier' [Non-representational theories] (Thrift, 2008) som en nutidig forståelsesramme hvorigennem betydningen af det sanselige og det affektive på kreativ og multimodal vis kan beskrives og studeres.

I afhandlingens kapitel 4 diskuterer jeg perspektiverne, og ikke mindst udfordringerne, i at arbejde med multimodale metoder og ikke-repræsentationelle teorier i turismeforskningen. Ud af denne diskussion trækker jeg tre lovende fremtidige forskningsretninger baseret på henholdsvis: *multimodale metoder*, en *livlig relationel materialisme* [vibrant relationel materialism] og *mobilitets design*. Afhandlingen afrundes med at sammenfatte hvilke fremtidige bidrag ikke-repræsentationelle teorier kan tilføje turismeforskningen. Konklusionen opridser derefter kort afhandlingens primære bidrag.

## Abstract

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On the following pages, I discuss the theoretical and methodological underpinnings behind this doctoral work, and clarify the relations

between the six publications submitted as parts of this PhD-by-publication.

This dissertation focuses on the European train travel phenomenon, interrail. Previous interrail studies have been based on motivational theories (Schönhammer, 1993), satisfaction studies (Fernandes, Sarmiento & Matias, 2013) or structural anthropology (Hartmann, 1995; Klingbeil, 1994) through which the phenomenon has been reduced to an expression of underlying social or cultural structures (Franklin, 2004). In these studies, interrailers are represented as relatively 'lifeless' actors resembling the generic passenger in transport studies (Cresswell, 2006). I want to break from this distanced understanding of interrail(ers), and subsequently draw on three relevant research fields: performative tourism studies (Ateljevic, Pritchard & Morgan 2007; Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010); non-representational theories (Anderson & Harrison, 2012; Dewsbury, 2010; Thrift, 2008), and finally, the sociological 'turn' towards mobilities (Edensor, 2007b; Hannam, Butler & Paris, 2014; Urry, 2000). Through this departure point, I animate interrail as a *constructed, situated* and *sensuous* travel experience emerging through everyday material and affective practices. This extends the de-exotic presumption that tourism experiences should not be disconnected from the plodding of everyday life (Larsen, 2008). However, this optic requires new thoughtful concepts and sensitive methods to describe and understand the inconspicuous dimensions of mobile tourist experiences. This PhD contributes to ongoing reflexive and critical tourism studies through the development of multimodal methods.

This dissertation opens with a reflective prelude that describes the project's history, the practical reasons for specific choices and, not least, the coincidences that shaped this work. Here I remind the reader that although PhD theses often go directly to the aim of the research design, there are countless influential relations, frustrations, derailed ideas, formalities, everyday and highly practical 'backgrounds' behind the writing of PhD theses. These details, far from innocent, are central to the construction of academic work. By reading this introduction I hope the reader will have a clearer understanding of the relations that shaped this project.

Chapter 2 describes the methods behind this doctoral work, and in so doing reflects upon the methodological contributions that grow out of the project. I develop the concept of 'distorted representation' as a reflexive framework around which to understand the influence of sensuousness, performativity and materiality in visual fieldwork (Publication 4). In addition, I propose a manifesto for a novel audio-based tourism research agendum (Publication 5) based on the application of new technologies to capture, distribute, and analyse the role of sounds in tourism experiences.

Chapter 3 presents tourism research in relation to the sensuous. More specifically, I position this review in relation to tourism mobility, and discuss how mobility has been represented from different ontological viewpoints. My goal with this presentation is to illustrate how tourism mobility does not have a singular, stable essence, but is given meaning by the way it is conceptually and methodologically engaged with (Publication 1). In this chapter I argue that the sensuousness of mobility

is under-researched, and more often than not, highly text-based and focused on the symbolic and conspicuous elements of tourist experiences. In trying to nuance this tendency, I suggest that non-representational theories (Thrift, 2008) work as a contemporary framework through which the sensuous, the affective, the multimodal and the embodied everyday can be creatively reanimated and studied anew (Publication 3 and 6).

Chapter 4 discusses the challenges and prospects in working with multimodal methodologies and non-representational theories in tourism research. Out of this discussion I draw three promising future research directions based on respectively: *multimodal methodologies*; *vibrant relational materialism* and *mobility design*. The project concludes by summarising how tourism can be studied anew and what novel knowledge forms and values can be generated by applying non-representational theories in tourism research. The conclusion shortly outlines the primary contributions of this doctoral work.

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# Overture

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## The hinterland of the project

My work consists of two parts: the one presented here, plus all that I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one.

- Wittgenstein in Binkley, 1973, p. 136

This extract is from an open letter by Ludwig Wittgenstein to a prospective publisher of the *Tractatus*, Ludwig Ficker. Today, the tension between the sayable and unsayable is just as relevant as then, and the following reflexive tale is my attempt to write meaningfully about ‘this second part’ of PhD theses, which, while highly central to their outcomes, are often readily disregarded in favour of slightly more potent opening arguments on the relevance, usefulness and original contributions of doctoral work.

I want to use the following few paragraphs to describe the origin of this PhD. This is not meant to be a lengthy, navel-gazing chronicle, but a transparent and factual account of the origins of this project. I do so for two reasons. First, since every PhD project has a history, I want to acknowledge how this work was shaped over time and through various networks. This illustrates the relational and even coincidental origins of this doctoral thesis. Second, through this description I illuminate some of the reasons, premises and events that informed this piece of work.

This will help position the arguments raised and facilitate understanding of the contributions made by my work.

Holding a BA and MSc in tourism (both University of Southern Denmark), I come from the multidisciplinary field of tourism studies. This background has provided me with a glimpse into the diversity of the sciences of tourism. Yet, it is through this doctoral work that I have found an academic ‘position’, a particular voice and an intellectual sense of belonging. Of course, such stance should not be seen as static, but dynamically stretching towards new empirical fields, (post)disciplines and methodological territories. Through this work I have grown to identify myself as a *tourism researcher who enjoys hanging around with cultural geographers and mobilities researchers*. But how did this all come about? And how did the decision to study interrail emerge? The following seeks to address these questions by drawing attention to a few specific events that influenced the trajectory of this PhD.

\*\*\*

This PhD-by-publication is based on an internally funded three-year PhD research project entitled ‘Transnational mobilities and experiencescape design’. The research project is embedded in SPIRIT, the doctoral school within the Department of Culture and Global Studies at Aalborg University. My daily work has been situated under the Tourism Research Unit (TRU) at Aalborg University’s campus in Copenhagen. The PhD enrolment period began in September 2012 and will run to September 2015. However, the rather unforeseen starting

point of this project stretches back to my employment as a research assistant at AAU, more precisely around May 2011.

I had been working as a research assistant for a year when a journalist from a national newspaper contacted me. As part of the upcoming 40th anniversary of interrail in 2012, he had tried to find reasons for its increasing popularity in Europe. Regretfully, I had to inform him that little research had been published on this topic. He went on to publish a cursory news article on the basis of our short conversation, which is still available online (Politiken, 2012) and makes an interesting example of how the earliest ideas behind PhD projects may be rather unexpectedly conceived. Importantly, his request planted the seeds for a growing academic concern with interrail as a topical travel phenomenon through which to discuss both the non-representational and multisensory experience of rail travel and the politics of European rail mobilities. At the time, both topics linked nicely to intensifying intellectual interests as I was under the influence of emerging work in cultural geography, sensuous ethnography and mobilities-oriented sociology.

Having clarified the origin of the idea behind this project, the following briefly addresses the main events that informed the publications submitted as part of this PhD.

\*\*\*

At the beginning of this PhD, I participated in a doctoral course, on the basis of which I wrote a book chapter on mobile methods and the production of 'the mobile' (Publication 1). This chapter is written on the

basis of an initial literature review and includes empirical insights from a two-day pilot test in May 2012, during which I travelled from Copenhagen to Hamburg and back. This early work triggered my interest in mobile methods and alternative ways of representing and understanding mobilities (an interest that lingers on!). As an additional outcome from this PhD course, I met professor Ole B. Jensen (Centre for Mobilities and Urban Studies, Aalborg University), who eventually became my secondary supervisor. This stands as another unintended, yet central, relational effect that in turn intensified the mobilities perspective of this doctoral work and allowed me to occasionally mingle with designers, architects and urban planners, constantly inspired by their spatial imagination and representational creativity.

From November 2013 to June 2014, I was enrolled as an exchange student at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Surrey University, England. This writing ‘retreat’ revolved around condensing the rich data from the main fieldwork, between June and August 2013, and writing some of it up. This would later become a paper on multisensory phenomenology in tourism mobilities research (Publication 3) which I see as the magnum opus of this PhD as it encapsulates my inspiration gained from reading Nigel Thrift’s seminal work, *Non-representational theories: Space, Politics, Affect* (2008) and Phillip Vannini’s multi-sited ethnography, *Ferry Tales: Mobility, Place, and Time on Canada’s West Coast* (2012). With this contribution, I am particularly satisfied with bringing mundane materialities, subtle affective atmospheres and multisensory strategies of representation into a tourism research environment that too often, I find, can be crudely characterised by

wanting to reduce everything to the cognitive, the symbolic and the textual.

During this university exchange, I also vividly recall having a solo-authored paper rejected and handling the intellectual insecurities that followed. In retrospect, however, this whole process led to a much improved revised paper (Publication 4) and academic as well. This reflexive paper is informed by non-representational theories and develops a reflexive approach to visual tourism research based upon the notion of distorted representation. This notion refers to the critical understanding of photographic practices that lead to often neglected, opaque and aesthetically displeasing photos (Publication 4). This approach offers a novel way to approach the non-representational in practice. The development of this paper was strongly linked to Publication 1, inspired by my growing interest in the influences, implications and even atypical values of mishaps, disruptions and entanglements in tourism.

It was also during my stay at Surrey University that a sudden exchange of emails led to a short co-authored encyclopaedia entry on 'Rail Tourism' (Publication 2). While this is not the central paper of this PhD, I am pleased with revising the previous transport- and planning oriented 'Rail Tourism' definition (Ozment, 2003) in order to better encapsulate the multidisciplinary approaches that characterise contemporary studies on rail tourism. Subsequently, this revised encyclopaedia entry pays tribute to the emerging and diverse insights from tourism mobilities studies. Indeed, 'rail tourism' means much more

than functional mobility between points A and B, which I hope this PhD will work to exemplify.

Following the university exchange, I returned to Aalborg University in Copenhagen, and during the summer months of 2014 I completed a research note on tourism research and audio methods (Publication 5). This note materialised as I discovered that during teaching and conference events, audiences were surprisingly captivated by ordinary audio recordings from various trainscapes around Europe. This triggered in me an interest in how to represent research differently through multimodal modes of expression, and audio methodologies became central in this attempt to challenge the visual hegemony and textual output of much tourism research.

The final manuscript included in the series of articles is a co-authored research paper on the staging of interrail mobilities (Publication 6). In this paper, mobilities design, tourism research and non-representational theories are interlinked to provide a novel account of the material cultures and discursive staging of interrail mobility. I believe this final publication effectively illustrates the prospects of non-representational analyses in tourism mobilities research.

So where do these reflections take us? What is the value of informing you, the reader, on this web of influential events? The answer is exceptionally ordinary, and therefore easily overlooked.

\*\*\*

First, had it not been for various coincidences and influential networks the outcome of this PhD would likely have been quite different. This is a reminder of the powers of organic relations in the generation and completion of doctoral work. It is also a reminder that PhDs have histories, bumps along the way, derailed ideas and sudden incidents that shape their form. This complexity suggests a range of critical questions: How did the networks through which I was enrolled affect the type and focus of my PhD? What kinds of knowledge are accommodated through the increasingly popular PhD-by-publication format? Even more importantly, which ones are silenced? How has the knowledge generated by this PhD-by-publication been shaped by the surrounding academic structures (such as the increasing relevance of external funding bodies, as well as the national bibliometric research incentive scheme and institutional requirements)? How are *these pages* and *these very words* shaped by institutional structures and conventions that determine the extent to which non-representational strategies of representation can be fully embraced? All are central questions to be reflected upon in relation to any PhD project. While the reply to each question is beyond the scope of this dissertation, most importantly, they remained latent questions that I reflected upon as this PhD unfolded.

Second, with this highly entangled creation of doctoral work, I have opted for a particular strategy for writing up the following pages. Beyond the empirical, conceptual and methodological descriptions, I would also like to point to the great work laid on developing a personal and reflexive writing style. These pages are but the earliest steps in this continuing ambition, but I hope that this doctoral work has managed to

enliven the complex and processual construction of research through an open-ended, impressionistic, situated and multimodal ‘rhetoric’. This confessional writing style carries such central importance to the character of this PhD that I hope the reader recognises this lexical footwork as well.

This dissertation is my attempt to write a reflexive meta-narrative’ that integrates extracts from the six papers as short ‘interludes’. These interludes consist of reflections on, and snippets from, the submitted papers. Hopefully, this untraditional thesis format merges the papers and dissertation in a way that more naturally encapsulates their intricate relations.

Before turning to the formal introduction of the dissertation, the next section briefly provides a reading guide and an overview of the papers submitted as part of this PhD.

### **A reader’s guide to the dissertation**

Since this dissertation is based upon six publications (three journal papers, one book chapter, one research note and one encyclopaedia entry), some direction is needed to enhance the reading experience. For readers with only the physical copy of this dissertation, each paper is included separately in the appendices (in its published, accepted or in-review format) and on the USB stick. I strongly recommend reading this dissertation and the submitted papers in the digital version as specific empirical examples are only accessible with an internet connection. Throughout the entire dissertation, the six publications are referred to as [Publication 1, 2, 3 etc.] and relate to the following papers:



- Publication 1: Jensen, M. T. (2014). Engaging with mobile methods. *Tourism research and the production of the mobile*. In: J. W. Megeed, B. S. Blichfeldt, L. A. Hansen, K. A. Hvass (eds.) *Tourism Methodologies – New Perspectives, Practices and Procedures* (pp. 77–96). Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Publication 2: Jensen, M. T. and Bird, G. (In press). Rail tourism. In J. Jafari and H. Xiao (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Tourism* (pp. TBA). Springer. 2016.
- Publication 3: Jensen, M. T., Scarles, C. and Cohen, S. (2015). [A multisensory phenomenology of interrail mobilities](#). *Annals of Tourism Research*, 53, 61–76.
- Publication 4: Jensen, M. T. (2015). [Distorted representation in visual tourism research](#). *Current Issues in Tourism Research*. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2015.1023268
- Publication 5: Jensen, M. T. (In second-round review). Tourism Research and Audio Methods. *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- Publication 6: Jensen, M. T., Gyimóthy, S. and Jensen, O. B. (2015). [Staging interrail mobilities](#). *Tourist Studies*. DOI: 10.1177/1468797615594740

Listing these publications numerically reminds me that it seems more appropriate to think of each of them as emerging organically, criss-crossing the boundaries of their intentions (e.g. ‘methodological’ or ‘theoretical’). As one paper would be in review, rejected or accepted, new ideas would materialise and subsequently, novel papers drafted. So I prefer to see this progression of work as an interlinked ‘melting pot’ hardly reducible to an incremental line of publications.

Beyond the data used for these papers, a considerable amount of material was gathered but is yet to be published. This data can be found on the submitted USB stick and includes field notes, videos, audio recordings, photos, survey responses and links. The reader is urged to go through some of this (albeit parts of it are only available in Danish) to gain a nuanced overview of the material.

The thesis has seven parts. Chapter One sets the aims of the dissertation and briefly describes the interrail travel phenomenon and positions it in relation to the subfield of rail tourism studies. Chapter Two discusses methodological aspects relevant to this doctoral work. Chapter Three reviews tourism mobilities research in relation to the sensuous and elaborates on the prospects of non-representational theories in tourism research. Building from this, Chapter Four draws out the main findings and speculates on three future research trajectories that emerge from this work. Chapter Five briefly recaps the contributions. The dissertation ends with the reference list and the appendices section.

# Chapter One

---

## Introduction

Thessaloniki train station, Greece, is a small train station, with few daily departures. Forced to wait for four hours due to the lack of trains heading southwards, I walk to the main hall to relax and observe mundane station life. Heat-struck, and slightly irritated by the extended immobilisation, I decide to rest on a bench in the open foyer of the main hall. Looking downwards I see a characteristic plastic floor carved in parallel lines. Sitting there, I notice how numerous ‘corridors’ have been formed by the dusty footprints left from various travelers-on-foot, providing a dirty, yet rich material animation of mobility. I smile, pondering at how the circulation of dirt in the everyday provides intuitive and subtle routes and navigation points for movement, when I suddenly hear a passer-by pulling her suitcase, which [leaves an audio trace](https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/thessaloniki-st) [https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/thessaloniki-st] as the wheels under the suitcase traverse the distinctive textures of the floor. Inscribed in this soundscape are also the echoes of people talking, resonating in the high-ceilinged main hall providing dimensions, animations and specificities to this situated experience. I reflect on the paradoxical nature of being temporarily immobilised yet surrounded by various resonances and material ‘halos’ of movement and bustling life.



**Figure 1:** Main hall of Thessaloniki train station. Author's photo, July 2013. Notes:  
This audio-visual impressionistic tale has not been published previously.

Opening a dissertation based on three years of work with this odd recollection might surprise some readers. However, it encapsulates the two central contributions made by this doctoral work. First, this dissertation seeks to evoke the *non-representational* (Thrift, 2008) in interrail experiences. This contributes to the lingering neglect of the multisensory in tourism research and the reliance on text to represent the richness, complexities and sensuousness of tourism. Consequently, this dissertation asks how tourism researchers may better animate the non-representational and multisensory places of tourism. This doctoral work is thus first and foremost an attempt to *adapt and develop innovative and multimodal methods capable of empirically translating the non-representational*. To reach this aim, a number of methodological innovations develop from this PhD, and five of the six submitted publications engage with

reflexivity and multimodality. These insights extend and contribute to innovative methodological initiatives in tourism (Feighery, 2003; Scarles, 2010; Tribe, 2008). With these aspirations in mind, what actually makes up the non-representational in tourism, and why go about studying ‘it’ in the first place?

The opening tale describes a remarkably mundane experience from my interrail fieldwork. Perhaps remarkably insignificant for some, the example neither represents a symbolic reading of interrail mobility nor does it (seek to) explain the travel phenomenon through abstract, behaviourist, psychological or sociological framings. Rather, working non-representationally, this impressionistic experience illustrates the ordinary and multisensory ‘hum’ of the everyday, which, while providing little in essentialist terms, makes up relatively large and visceral parts of lived experience. These sorts of mundane and easily neglected events are the ones that this dissertation concentrates on. I use them to describe how interrail is intertwined in ordinary and everyday situations, banal objects, subtle atmospheres and circulating affects. But why is this so important? My primary reply is to allow room for a modest and situated – rather than explanatory, predictive and causal – depiction of interrail travel. Let me explain my argument.

Going back to the opening recollection, one might imagine this, or other similar, ordinary experiences, being overlooked or disregarded by the intellectualised researcher gaze (Crang, 1997). The majority of researchers, I assume, would favour slightly more eventful experiences that underline befitting theoretical discourses related to power relations, projections of identities, socio-cultural structures or imaginaries in order

to decipher interrail meanings. Previous research, for example, aligns interrail with the backpacker ethos as a semi-nomadic, adventurous and character-building travel phenomenon. Contributions include explanatory studies that emphasise motivational factors for interrail travel (Schönhammer, 1993); others link the interrail phenomenon to effects of social classes and the modernist leisure society through structural anthropological framings (Dahl, 1999; Hartmann, 1995; Klingbeil, 1994), whereas others reduce it to a matter of behaviouristic travel incentives (Fernandes, Sarmiento & Matias, 2013). Common to these studies is that they render interrailers inert – very similar to the notion of the ‘generic passenger’ in the minds of planners and transport modellers (Cresswell, 2006). I find such representations of interrail to be either overtly structural-scientific or distant abstractions that view interrail as ‘merely the welling up of a deep-rooted structural element of the human condition’ (Franklin, 2004, pp. 278-279). Subsequently, the majority of interrail studies have neglected the significance of the everyday practices of interrail mobility; they have omitted insights into the experience and implications of the embodied interrailer and they have overlooked the subtle, yet influential, role of materialities (including thingy ‘stuff’ but also atmospheres and affects).

To contribute to these omissions, the opening tale describes how interrail unfolds through the situated coming together of infrastructures, everyday atmospheres, social encounters mediated by a whole host of materials (such as trolleys, dirty footprints, high-ceilinged foyers, echoes, etc.). By acknowledging this complex composition of interrail experiences, my approach seeks to differentiate itself from scientific and

symbolic studies, as well as the general tendency to reduce mobility to a mere transport function across Euclidean space. In my optic, interrail mobility is experienced through complex ecologies based upon materially distributed and embodied practices, interactions, affective atmospheres and sensuous dispositions. These non-representational and multimodal details of tourist mobility are still relatively scarce in tourism research and deserve attention for their ability to enrich abstract and explanatory tourism discourse.

The second contribution of my dissertation suggests that *mobilities design* (Jensen, 2014; Larsen, 2015; Veijola & Falin, 2014) affords, shapes and prevents tourism mobility. This builds on the wave of material semiotics that has recently informed tourism research (Haldrup & Larsen, 2006; Van der Duim, Ren & Jóhannesson, 2012). By interlinking mobilities design with non-representational theories, I illustrate how non-representational strategies of representation can be set around a multiscalar analytical framework focusing on design effects. From this reading, the opening tale is also a manifestation of the non-representational implications of material designs (the particular floor design, the architectural acoustics of the main hall, the plastic wheels of an ordinary suitcase, the bench layout etc.). Consequently, working non-representationally is not necessarily a purely phenomenological project, but it can be used across a variety of research aims and through diverse methods, for example, to explore the implications of mobilities designs and the staging of interrail mobility. Thus, the two-fold aim of this study can be condensed by these research descriptors:

### **How can non-representational theories inform the development of multimodal methodologies in tourism research?**

This thesis does not offer one flamboyant theory that explains everything or a concluding conceptual revelation that orders interrail into neat cultural codes, class structures, psychological models or consumer categories. Rather, my doctoral work experiments with untraditional methods and mixes a range of traditionally discrete methods in new ways. The empirical accounts in the papers are woven together by impressionistic field notes, audio-visual recordings, netnographic snippets, survey responses and a few interviews. This pragmatic method ‘mingling’ underlines that this is first and foremost an exploratory dissertation. To outsiders, the openness and sense of wonder that drives my empirical work might appear to lack rigor. Yet, as the anthropologist Tim Ingold has argued (2006, p. 18), *astonishment* has been banished from the protocols of conceptually driven, rational inquiry, it is inimical to science. Driven by a sense of continuous wonder, my work is an attempt to reconnect knowing with being, epistemology with ontology, by not placing myself ‘above’ or ‘beyond’ the world I claim to describe. As Nigel Thrift (1999, pp. 296-297) argues ‘non-representational theory arises from the simple (one might say almost commonplace) observation that we cannot extract a representation of the world from the world because we are *slap bang in the middle of it*, co-constructing it with numerous human and non-human others’ [emphasis added].

### **How can mobilities design and non-representational theories be interlinked to inform the analysis of tourism mobilities?**

This means drawing upon concepts emerging from the mobilities design subfield in order to explore how tourism mobility is afforded, shaped and prevented by design decisions and material interventions. This part



of the dissertation suggests that mobilities design and non-representational theories work well together to provide innovative and multiscalar understandings of tourism mobilities set around the situated implications of mobilities designs.

With the aims of this doctoral work clarified, the following section briefly summarises the Interrail (or for non-Europeans, Eurail) phenomenon, and positions it in relation to the subfield of rail tourism.

### **Background and context**

In 1972, the interrail travel concept was formed as part of the 50th anniversary of the International Union of Railways (UIC). Its mission was ‘to promote rail transport at world level and meet the challenges of mobility and sustainable transport’ while ‘promot[ing] interoperability, creat[ing] new world standards for railways (including common standards with other transport modes)’ (UIC mission, 2015). Originally set in pro-European political landscapes, ingrained with visions of free movement and the narrowing of national jurisdictions, the interrail travel concept was born to support intercultural exchange. The key aim was ‘developing innovative new passes’ (Eurail Group, n.d.). Thus, the interrail concept emerged as an ambitious ideological European mobility project to harmonise rail transport through the introduction of one unified pass. Today, 30 European countries are members of the Eurail Group (see Figure 2), making interrail one of the largest cross-national rail mobility concepts in the world.



**Figure 2:** Map of the 30 interrail countries.

In 2012, the interrail concept celebrated its 40th anniversary, marking the surprising endurance of a travel concept through periods of increasing European automobility and, not least, low-cost aeromobility. Following a decrease in the numbers of pass-holders throughout the 1980s, the interrail scheme has regained popularity (Eurail Press, 2014). Despite its enduring popularity and its historical significance as a central train travel practice in Europe imprinted in the minds of three generations of travellers, interrail remains a surprisingly untouched topic in tourism and mobilities research (Johnson, 2010).

In relation to tourism research, interrail can be associated with the research subfield of ‘rail tourism’ studies. Publication 2 refines the previous definition of ‘rail tourism’, which was highly associated with transport economics and planning, to include the phenomenology, socio-material and cultural studies of train travel:

Rail tourism describes the fusion between traveling to a destination by rail and train *as* the destination (Dickenson and Lumsdon 2010). The

concept encapsulates the experience, and/or symbolic consumption, related to traveling by train (including the experience of railway architecture such as stations, tunnels, and viaducts) and visiting railway museums... In addition, rail tourism has been explored through recent mobility research, including cultural studies, investigating how rail travel is relationally experienced through materiality, the senses and practices (Roy and Hannam 2013), contributing with insights into the phenomenology of train travel. (Publication 2, p. 1).

With this minor, yet important, alteration, the range of tourism and mobilities research emerging throughout the last decade has been acknowledged and included in the encyclopaedic description of rail tourism. Although Publication 2 is arguably a footnote to this doctoral work, it provides an equally important contribution by recognising the diversity of rail tourism studies in the public lexicon of tourism research.

The following pages describe how I engaged with a range of traditional as well as under-utilised methods in the course of my doctoral work, to allow for an empirical exposition of interrail that renders a sense of place, and a poetics of movement, in a way that words alone would fail.



## Chapter Two

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### An interrail ethnography

When there has been much discussion about the significance of the body, how do we write meaningfully about those everyday embodied experiences of touching and feeling, conjunctions of sensation and emotion that cannot arise without the physicality of the body?

- M. Paterson, 2009, p. 1

You must learn to heed your senses. Humans use but a tiny percentage of theirs. They barely look, they rarely listen, they never smell...But they talk, oh, do they talk.

- M. Scott, 2007, p. 149

At the beginning of this project, I remember interviewing three Danish interrailers in depth. While doing these interviews, and re-listening to them, I quickly learned that the conversational framing, nearly always cognitive in origin and effect, often reduced interrail to symbolic projections and essentialist imaginaries associated with freedom, drifter romanticism and transformative travel. Standing alone, the interview seemed insufficient to fully embrace and animate the rich sensuousness of interrail. Thus, in line with the opening quotes, the role of the interview gradually decreased in favour of alternative and multimodal methodologies. The following briefly recaps the three main

sources that inspired my methodological ambitions, before describing how each method played out in practice throughout the project.

Firstly, since the turn of the millennium tourism research has seen a promising wave of performative and reflexive working methods (Ateljevic, Pritchard & Morgan, 2007; Ren, Pritchard & Morgan, 2010). Through this stream of work, attention is placed on the constructedness of knowledge. Growing from this argument, recent tourism research has shifted the focus of attention from the ‘representational’ to the performative, in other words redirecting ‘...attention from the posited meaning towards the material compositions and conduct of representations’ (Dewsbury, Harrison, Rose & Wylie, 2002, p. 438). This development has contributed by challenging the reliance on traditional methods – most predominantly the interview, the questionnaire and participant observation – by ‘pushing’ or merging methods in novel ways (Latham, 2003; Scarles, 2010; Tribe, 2008) to develop richer ways to represent the affective, the emotional and the embodied in tourist experiences.

Scarles (2010) develops the notion of ‘visual (auto)ethnography’ by traversing reflexivity and embodiment in visual research. Through her analytical account she demonstrates how the image, occasionally conceived of by scientific realists as objective truths (Pink, 2007), embodies complex experiences that allow the interviewer and interviewee to share mutual experiences through the sensuousness of the visual. Inspired by De Botton (2008) and Lippard (1999), Tribe (2008) proposes the idea of ‘virtual curating’ as an original artwork-based strategy of representation that explores various prominent themes in

tourism. This is done to flavour the incapacity of language to represent the richness of the world. Tribe (2008, p. 941) provides a reading of tourism ‘that goes beyond the restrictions of text which include conventional structures, the linearity of sentences and paragraphs and the limited explanatory power of words’. He exemplifies how tourism representations can be reanimated through the evocative impressions raised by artworks in order to enrich the understanding of the powers, beauties, affects and virtues of tourism.

Secondly, parallel to the recent methodological contributions in tourism research, ethnography and human geography have seen a blossoming interest in the implications of the sensory, the affective and the kinesthetic. I am particularly influenced by the style of sensuous scholarship emerging from empirical authors such as Sarah Pink (2007, 2009; Pink & Mackley, 2013), Phillip Vannini (Vannini, 2012; Vannini & Taggart, 2015) and Tim Edensor (Cook & Edensor, 2014; Edensor, 2007a; Edensor & Holloway, 2008) who work around (a more or less lively) relational materialism, embodied performances and non-representational theories in their understanding of tourism, mobility and beyond. Listing these authors calls me to include, all too briefly, the significant work of anthropologist Tim Ingold (2007a, 2011, 2012) and his unrelenting attempts to invigorate the social sciences by challenging what he terms the ‘logic of inversion’, that is, the modernistic (and largely Western intellectualist) way of thinking that uncritically presumes that human involvements, dispositions and practices ‘behave according to the directions of cultural models or cognitive schemata installed inside [human] heads’ (Ingold, 2011, p. 68).

Finally, the more recent mobilities literature should not be neglected. This dissertation grows out of an interest in mobilities and the reevaluation of mobile methodologies. I am influenced by authors such as Ole B. Jensen (2013, 2014), David Bissell (2010a, 2010b) and Tim Cresswell (2006) for their engagement with mobility as much more than functional movement. Their studies inject life and socio-material and embodied significance into ordinary transport contexts, and thus remain fundamental resources for the aims of this dissertation.

This triptych of schools is a highly condensed description of the kind of research that I feel intellectual belongingness to, and which more than other types of work, have been continuous sources of theoretical and empirical delight. In the following, I suggest that sensuous tourism scholarship can adapt and develop innovative methods by drawing upon insights from these streams.

In this project I do this by drawing on multi-sited ethnography particularly framed around the non-representational, embodied photographing, audio recording, impressionistic writing styles, netnography, a survey and interviews. For overview purposes, the scope and type of empirical knowledge on which this doctoral work is based are:

Field notes:	50-page travel diary in Danish from the main fieldwork (June–August 2013)
Visual Ethnography:	Submitted on USB stick, the reader will find the uncategorised photos from the main fieldwork and all uncategorised photos from the pilot tests, as well as some video recordings.



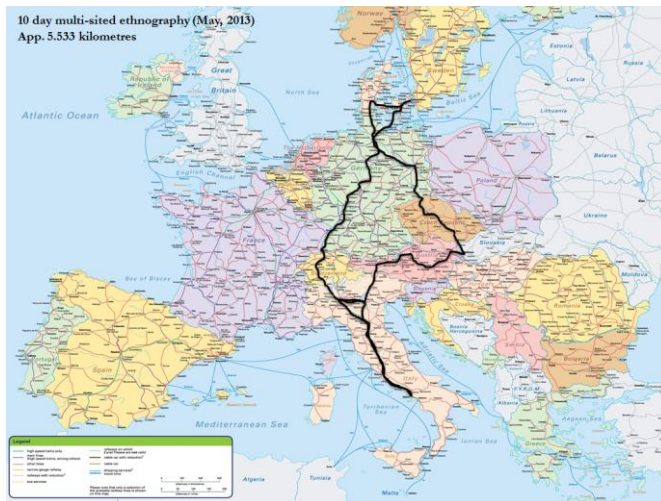
- Audio Ethnography: Uploaded and partly available via this link: <https://soundcloud.com/interrailing>, the reader will find 89 soundscape recordings (some included in the submitted papers, others not utilised and currently not publicly available).
- Netnography: 31 pages of Facebook entries from the interrail group (spanning the period 2008–2014) are attached on the USB stick.
- Survey: Submitted on USB stick, the reader will find the responses from the survey launched in cooperation with the Eurail marketing department (August 15 - October 15, 2014). Data includes all uncategorised survey responses (644 respondents).
- Interviews: Also, on the USB stick are two audio recordings of in-depth interviews with Danish interrailers. Upon request, the in-depth interviews with leading Eurail representatives have not been included.
- Others: Besides the aforementioned primary data, the dissertation has been informed by a wide range of Eurail marketing information and user-generated content (maps, travel guides, websites, statistics, promotional videos, YouTube videos, campaigns and so forth), which, while not analysed as primary data, have indirectly informed the analysis. Most of this material is not included on the USB stick.

I will spend the remainder of this chapter discussing the reasons behind the deployment of each method as well as the inconveniencies that emerged as each method was ‘played out’. Along with these thoughts I integrate extracts from the submitted papers and include a number of

unpublished examples to substantiate the arguments and exemplify the far from fully utilised reach and intensity of the empirical knowledge. Let me start by addressing the beginning of this doctoral work, the pilot tests.

## Pilot tests

Prior to the commencement of this PhD, I had interrailed in Slovenia, Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Germany and Denmark in 2007. Besides this private experience, I completed an exploratory two-day pilot test in May 2012 between Copenhagen and Hamburg, and a more extensive two-week pilot test in May 2013 in Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Slovakia (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Pilot test travel route, May 2013.

Both pilot test routes were chosen for pragmatic reasons (time constraints, budget and train availability) and allowed me to get a glimpse

into the cross-national coordination of interrail mobility. These early travel experiences provided important practical knowledge on how to actually *do* interrail (fill in the pass, update travel reports, cope with the RailPlanner application, etc.), and not least how to approach and mingle with other interrailers and train travellers onboard trains, which was complicated due to the limited physical space and embodied privatespheres on trains. In this process, I found that ordinary objects, for instance *beer cans*, *books* and *railway maps* were particularly effective mediators for social interaction. The practical knowledge gained during these pilot tests helped me prepare myself practically and materially prior to the main fieldwork (in fact even a *ukulele* was purchased on the basis of these experiences, and it proved to be a highly effective intervention for social mingling).

Furthermore, numerous photos were taken of physical train designs (windows, signs, compartments, doors, seats, etc.). Although this visual work on semiotics and materialism across national borders and mobility infrastructures makes for particularly interesting analyses on mobilities design, it has been beyond the time and scope of this PhD to fully explore it. That said, however, the unused photos of various train designs from time to time seeped into my analytical thoughts, reminding me of the embodied implications of mobilities design. The textures, fabrics and affordances of train seats (see Figure 4) are ordinary examples that stress how we should not reduce train travel to functional transport on generic trains, but must understand and invigorate how the diverse materialities of trains shape particular travel practices, experiences, affects and atmospheres. The implications of designed

trainscapes are hinted at in several of the publications submitted as part of this PhD (Publication, 3, 4, 6), but generally, I still find that design and architecture deserve further attention in tourism research inspired by non-representational theories.



**Figure 4:** Photo montage of European train seats. Author's photos, July 2013. Notes:  
These photos have not been published previously.

Finally, the pilot tests allowed me to record, upload and re-listen to various train soundscapes by using the *SoundCloud* application. Subsequently, the pilot tests were used to develop and refine the form and style of the audio-visual impressionistic accounts that would later be used as subjective interpretations of affective interrail experiences. In this process, my early interest in sensuous scholarship (Pink, 2009; Rodaway, 2002; Vannini, Waskul & Gottschalk, 2011) led to the authoring of a book chapter on mobile methods and the production of 'the mobile' (Publication 1). At the time of writing I was particularly captivated by how to animate train travel through its sensuous tension between mobility and immobility (Adey, 2006; Hannam, Sheller & Urry, 2006).

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

Given this background, Publication 1 exemplifies the embodied entanglements, movements and immobilisations that characterise multi-sited ethnography from the perspective of an overwhelmed PhD fellow:

An hour or so later we enter the arriving bus. The train passengers are now spread across three different busses, no longer divided by seat numbers. The conductor switches to a reconfigured bus guide as he walks through the bus asking if people have any questions. The surreal experience peaks as he via the bus speakers announce that *'Now, crossing the bridge, on your left hand side you can see our stranded train'*. We – the self-entitled train riders – are reconfigured, and as a critical ethnographer I am negotiating with myself whether or not this makes up *my intended aim of studying train travel* – my research field has transcended its prejudiced *locality* (Cresswell, 2004) and, more concerning, my comfortably framed pilot test in between the train walls! Yet, here we sit, as strangers on board a German bus – we are hybrids, mentally configured train riders (so our tickets tell us), nonetheless orchestrated to enjoy the 'scenic views' of Autobahn S1 from a bus window? Serious methodological headaches arrived at this point; *'well, I have data enough to substantiate my points back home'*, I think to myself, glazing out the bus window with the face of a disappointed researcher on the move (Publication 1, pp. 89-91)

The example reveals the unintended embodied experiences of fieldwork. It offers an illustrative account of how a simple train trip (and a pilot test) can be intertwined in everydayness and extraordinariness, not to mention mobility and immobility, as such extending the idea of de-exoticizing tourist travel and sociology on the move (Larsen, 2001). Growing from these empirical explorations, the paper suggests that critical mobilities research:

[be] sensitive to the overwhelming and less directed experiencing of mobility and sensory ethnography. Maybe in the extension of such final arguments, the whispers of performativity made by Shusterman (1997, p. 129), might point towards the disciplinary bridge-building needed in order to develop such new engagements with, and representations of, tourism mobilities: “To understand the body as the ‘nondiscursive other’, we have to stop pushing words and start moving limbs [sic]: stop talking and start dancing. Perhaps I should say no more”. (Publication 1, p. 93)

The paper concludes by asking: What are mobile methods? Ultimately then, it proves more valuable to restate the question, asking instead: How do we engage with methods, and how does this entanglement partake in the production of the realities that we study? Pursuing this latter question, the chapter illustrates the different ways through which mobility is given a more or less stable essence. It is argued that (mobile) methods are already performative, interwoven and shaped by research ideologies, conventions and practices that influence the representation of that which is deemed ‘mobile’. Importantly, none of these different approaches to the mobile ‘subject’ is less important or better than others, but maybe some are more utilised, routinised, distributed (and accepted?) in tourism research than others. And this is the primary contribution and question raised by the chapter: What mobile realities do we wish to make more real? Because interfere, we will, one way or another (Law & Urry, 2004). By showcasing the ambiguity and diverse animations of mobilities, the main point was to describe how research is multiple, constructed and therefore never innocent. Reflecting on how such ‘truths’ are performed, and shaped through ontological politics (Mol, 1999), remained a central aspect of the remaining doctoral work, and unknowingly at that time, provided the start for a later method-oriented paper, Publication 4.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

Exemplified by this short interlude, the pilot tests provided contexts through which I deployed and experimented with a range of methods, but most importantly, in retrospect, it awakened in me a continuous academic reflexivity. Thus, the pilot tests functioned as much more than the ‘calibration’ of particular methods; they laid the reflexive ground that became a persistent, if not primary, dimension of the papers submitted as part of this dissertation.

### **The multi-sited ethnography**

The primary fieldwork behind this dissertation is based on ‘multi-sited ethnography’ (Marcus, 1995) that acknowledges interrail as dynamic and diversely produced across contexts and through heterogeneous practices. This means that the overall framing of this empirical work is inspired by contributions emerging from the ‘crisis of representation’ in anthropology (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1973) focusing on the inadequacy of the social sciences to represent the complexity of lived experiences.

The main fieldwork behind this dissertation unfolded between June and August 2013, in which period I interrailed approximately 28,000 kilometres, spanning 23 European countries (see Figure 5)



**Figure 5:** The original fieldwork travel map. Author's photo, August 2013. Notes: This photo has not been published previously.

The insights from this work partly materialised through observation. The concept of 'participant observation' is used to encapsulate '...a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture' (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010, p. 1). Indeed, participant observation has often been accepted as *the* method for cultural anthropology and ethnography (Spradley, 1980).

Aligned to the non-representational aspirations of this dissertation, however, I found it more appropriate to rearrange 'participant observation' to 'observant participation' (Dewsbury, 2010; Thrift, 2000b) to more thoughtfully emphasise the radical immersion involved in non-representational theories' approach to ethnographic research. This is very different from the passive 'consuming gaze' often associated with the



specific word ‘observation’ (which derives from the Latin word *observatio*, meaning ‘watching’, underlining visual attention). In contrast, emphasising observant *participation* implies a much more interactive, embedded and multisensory perceptive ‘vision’ committed to a process of mutual exchange (Büscher, 2006; Dewsbury, 2010). This particular approach relates to the notion of ‘short-term ethnography’ (Pink & Mackley, 2013) arguing that thorough ethnographic research does not necessitate an extensive calendar year of fieldwork. Rather, short-term ethnographies can be compensated for by the qualitative depth and data intensities brought forth at the analytical stage of ethnography (ibid.). This approach revolves around a close focus on the details of everyday practices and the turn towards the non-representational (the unspoken, unsaid, not seen, but sensory, tacit elements of everyday life).

During the fieldwork, observant participation materialised in two ways. First, as I interrailed I met up with, conversed and shared experiences with other interrailers. Often these encounters would be transient (either limited to the travel time on-board trains, or to the small talk unfolding in the time it would take to consume a soft drink or alcoholic beverage, and during layovers or delays where striking up a conversation would work as an effective ‘time-killing’ practice). Occasionally, get-togethers would stretch over several days and travel routes as I would repeatedly meet interrailers traveling along the same routes as me (see Figure 6) – most often on popular interrail ‘corridors’ connecting capital cities. Many of these experiences would be written down in further detail in the travelogue, whereas others were never

‘documented’ in any rigorous sense, but likely seeped into and informed the creative thought processes behind this project.



**Figure 6:** Author (front right) with Bobbi and Timmo, two Dutch interrailers. Author’s photo, July 2013. Notes: This photo has not been published previously.

My observations concentrated on the travel experience of interrail pass-holders. In this regard, spotting interrailers was based on detecting particular travel practices and materials (interailers are required to fill in their interrail passes prior to or upon departure; many wear official interrail armbands or study/draw their travel routes on interrail maps). On other occasions, I would meet interrailers by overhearing conversations or taking part in convivial socialisation. Indeed, this approach was based on convenience and context. Second, observant participation emerged through my own role as an interrailer. In both instances, ‘observing’ revolved around reflexively interpreting and

drawing on my own physical impressions, affective, material and performative involvements in interrail mobility (see Figure 7).



**Figure 7:** Filling in the interrail pass during travel and using the RailPlanner application for travel planning. Author's photos, July 2013. Notes: These photos have not been published previously.

Travel included early morning, mid-day as well as night routes, couchettes and sleepers, high-speed connections and regional trains, private as well as public railway operators, covering 23 of the 30 Eurail Group participating member states. (Traveling in every participating member state would have been preferable, but budget and time constraints made this impossible.) The geographical coverage can be described as ‘continental Europe’ (see Figure 5). Through these train travel experiences my aim was to get a nuanced perspective on the cross-national technologies, heterogeneous practices, embodied impressions, and not least, infrastructural frictions in the practical coordination of interrail mobility across diverse member states.

Despite demographic information not being central to the non-representational framing of the research, the vast majority of pass-holders were young (late teens/twenties) Western Europeans. The gender balance was fairly equal. Similar demographic tendencies are seen in the public statistics (Eurail Statistics, 2011) and in the demographic insights generated by the survey for this doctoral work (which is likely skewed towards younger segments as it only took interrailers enrolled in the Facebook community into consideration). While comments from families, children, those retired, or people from non-affluent and developing countries could arguably have nuanced the findings, the project did not examine these perspectives explicitly.

### **From field notes to impressionistic tales**

Documenting my observations, conversations and embodied experiences was done through the writing of *field notes*. These were used to document, in a condensed fashion, my experiences of particular atmospheres on trains, specific designs of trains, descriptions of how it felt to travel the routes and how physical impressions such as fatigue, exhaustion, exhilaration and irritation influenced my mood and sense of place. The field notes were originally written in Danish as I found this to be the most appropriate and verisimilitudinous way to articulate my impressions of different unfolding interrail moments (see Figure 8). Each entry was defined by the particular travel route and train information (e.g. ‘Torino-Fossano, #10155, dep. 10:25 – arr. 11:11’) and often included a telling title, such as ‘Being kicked off the train in Brasov!’, ‘Delayed night-train and the encounter with the German Camino wanderer’. Rather than

trying to make ordinary travel seem more eventful, this provided me with tags to swiftly find and recall the fieldwork experiences.


29-06-2013: Berlin-Prag (TOG EC 175, afgang: 10:46-14:47) – 'World-Musikanten og Hash-klumpen'

I flexrummet af toget møder jeg 3 Tyske World Music musikere på vej til Dresden til en Art Punk Festival. Jeg fortæller dem lidt om min interrail rejse, hvilket får den ene musikanter til at fortælle om hans oplevelser med interrail som 17-årig. Han fortæller om hvordan han ikke havde købt vand til en 10 timers togrejse igennem Italien, i en bagende hede, og hvordan han tydelig husker **tørsten, trætheden og svedigheden** der fulgte ham på rejsen. Han taler også grinende om hvordan han sammen med sine venner havde købt hash i Amsterdam, for derigennem at rejse igennem Europa med en klump hash i bagklommen. Imens vi taler sidder guitaristen ved vores side, og spiller nogle få rytmiske anslag på guitaren, nogle piger kigger opmærksomt tilbage fra siddepladserne foran i vognen, og de smiler. Guitaristen og undertegnede tager en snak, imens de 2 andre musikanter har modtaget en SMS fra den kvindelige saxofonist i bandet, - hun gør dem opmærksom på at der er veltilberedte ungarske specialiteter i spisevognen. Inden de forlader os, når den ene at sige: "Ja, det er endnu en positiv ting ved EC-toget imod Budapest, - de plejer at have hjemmelavede Ungarske pandekager i spisevognen... Dem må du prøve inden du står af!". Toget rummer også potentielle gastronomiske oplevelser.

**Figure 8:** Extract from field notes, June 2013. Notes: This field note has not been published previously.

Occasionally, however, this simple act of writing field notes posed challenges. Trains can be stuffed with passengers and the rather limited space in most trains mean that more or less subtle physical acts such as *jostling*, *shoving* and *squeezing* between co-passengers are tacit practices that characterise much ordinary rail travel. I would learn that these sorts of physical trainscapes complicate the fixed practice of *writing* field notes (with either pen-and-paper or on a laptop). Next to this, specific worn routes and aged trains produce rhythmical disjunctions, kinesthetically experienced travel undulations that hardly allow for accurate computer typing or writing. Or try to imagine how delays force you to stressfully navigate train stations to find departure platforms on time, or imagine how extensive train travel can be so physically and mentally overwhelming and fatiguing that the act of writing sensibly and in detail is confronted. Although these examples might be mere insignificancies

of mundane fieldwork for some, I argue that they bring attention to the non-representational minutiae of the studied, and by doing so, animate both the sensible and intelligible of the researched (Hannam, Butler & Paris, 2014):

Picture yourself having fought your way to the top bunk-bed on a night trip from Belgrade to Skopje. Imagine that you are forced to keep the window open all night to allow for cooler air to stream inside, and doing so, also allowing for the [sounds of the old train](https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/nightrain335)  [https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/nightrain335] wagon bumping its way across the sturdy rail-lines; the signal horns sounding for each railway crossing passed (which are all too frequent on such regional train routes). Imagine how the otherwise dark compartment is embraced by the snoring, light coughing and snuffling of travelers you hardly know in the bunk beds underneath you, reminding you that you are not alone, and more importantly, that no one is tinkering with your luggage. Now imagine lying in that hard bunk bed with your warm laptop uncomfortably placed across your thighs, imagine the bumpy interferences from the train's movements, and envision trying to write down the impressions from your fieldwork in a sensible manner.



**Figure 9:** Photo from sleeping couchette, Belgrade-Skopje, Author's photo, August 2013. Notes: This audio-visual impressionistic tale has not been published previously.

During experiences such as the one animated by this audio-visual impressionistic tale, field notes were not written, rather they were worked over and written out more fully when I had substantial breaks (most often in cafes and hostels). This was always done as soon as possible after completing a travel route. Importantly, this difficulty in 'practicing ethnography' (at least the writing part of it!) is a rich reflexive example of some of the specific socio-material, affective and embodied particularities that characterise nocturnal interrail travel. This example delineates attempts to divide the researcher/researched through disembodied approaches by acknowledging the *constructed* nature of research (Ateljevic, Harris, Wilson & Leo Collins, 2005; Ren et al., 2010) and relaxes the rigid conceptual dichotomy between the 'extraordinary' and the 'everyday' in tourism (Larsen, 2008).

The evocative tone of the recalled field notes is inspired by the belief that cultural researchers are first and foremost storytellers, who neither can nor should attempt to separate themselves from the researched (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1973; Vannini, 2012). I am consciously present in the pages of this PhD (and the submitted papers), and my words are written to be thoughtful, impressionistic and unapologetically shaped by my dispositions, objectives and embodied experience. This is a writing style that grows out of the turn towards reflexive and embodied ethnographies in anthropology and sociology and the critique of overtly realist frameworks (Denzin, 2003). Consequently:


Rather than display interview excerpts in the manner of traditional qualitative research, I have opted for a situated, embodied, reflexive, dialogic, and performative strategy of representation. This strategy of representation is motivated by the will to “mak[e] the world come alive” and to give it back its sensuous performative, the very performative that much too often traditional research sucks away. (Vannini, 2012, pp. 27-28)

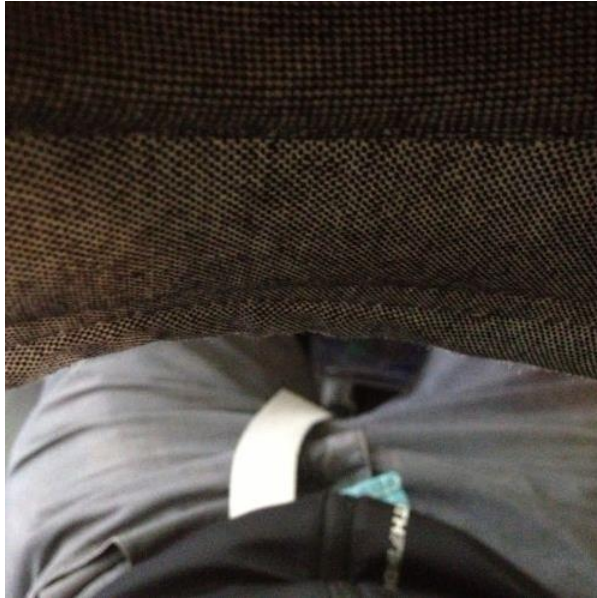
In this process, the traditional textual and verbatim, transcribed first-person recollections are reanimated by drawing on the multimodal and imaginary potential associated with confessional and impressionistic writing styles (Van Maanen, 1988; Publications 3 & 4). This means writing *dialogically* in order to ‘evoke and create in our audience sensations that evoke research settings, people, and the phenomena that interest us’ (Vannini et al., 2011, p. 74).

To understand and judge the quality of these tales it is important to acknowledge the underrated criteria of *trustworthiness*, *apparency* and *verisimilitude* (Decrop, 2004; Van Maanen, 1988). These notions evaluate the extent to which a (non-)representational tale is capable of engaging the reader in the active reconstruction of the tale. Allowing my travel experiences to be animated through the second-person – ‘you’ – seeks to induce in the reader a suspended reading that stimulates memories from the past, introducing the multiplicities of personal origins to the tales told. Inspired by the reflexive turn in the ethnographic tradition (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1973), the aim of impressionistic tales is to draw the audience into an (un)familiar story and allow the reader, as far as possible, to *see*, *hear* and *feel* what the fieldworker saw, heard and felt in



order to generate embodied interpretations. This teases out the multisensory nature of vision as readers enter the impressionistic tales, not only through intellectual reasoning, but through embodied practice. Consequently, readers become ‘imaginative voyagers’ (Scarles, 2009, p. 472) enlivening representations and partaking in making representations ‘more-than’ mimetic and descriptive ‘preserves’ of an experienced event, but evocative, expressive and open-ended:

Nothing happens during this early train departure from Zilina at 5:05 am heading towards Bratislava. You want to write that something happens. But nothing happens. Fatigued you try to catch some sleep by tilting your head downwards, hiding behind the shade of your cap, which protects you from the strong lights from the rising summer sun, and makes up a material shelter from social life. You vaguely open your eyes and notice your legs resting assured on the opposite seat. “Nothing...really...happens!” you again think to yourself embraced only by the [subtle sounds](https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/zilina-soundscape-hatte)  [https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/zilina-soundscape-hatte] of a nearby family conversing, soda cans being opened and the continuous rumbling of the train.



**Figure 10:** Photo from open wagon, Zilina-Bratislava, Author's photo, July 2013.

Notes: This audio-visual impressionistic tale has not been published previously.

This audio-visual impressionistic tale stresses how ethnographies unfold through the plodding of (annoyingly) unremarkable series of events, and suggests that tourism research be enlivened by imagining and narrating various omitted places and practices of tourism (i.e. through opaque visual points of view). Rather than reducing this particular event to an insignificant detail of fieldwork, it illustrates the ordinary and visceral experience of interrail mobility. This nuances explanatory interrail studies (Hartmann, 1995; Klingbeil, 1994; Schönhammer, 1993) by illustrating how the monotonies of mundane rail travel are indispensable dimensions to the sensation of interrail mobility.

Importantly, this strategy of representation should be judged by its ability to animate ethnography differently in line with parallel approaches

such as ethnodrama, performance ethnography, art, lyrical inquiry, sound studies, poetry and narrative inquiry (Denzin, 2003; Maréchal & Linstead, 2010; Tribe, 2008; Vannini, 2012). I neither intend nor claim that the travel impressions in this dissertation are ‘representative’ (in the scientific and positivistic sense of the term) of the diverse experiences of other interrailers, but rather modest impressions, trustworthy and imaginable accounts of localised experiences, atmospheres and partial descriptions of *my* interrail travels. As much as these impressions are my own, they are used to spark in the reader an embodied imagination of some of the places and moods that interrail mobility embraces. I find such a representational style has the quality of transparently positioning the embodied researcher within the context of study rather than presumptuously claiming to be an objective theorist. To enrich these impressions, numerous photos were used and the following chapter addresses the role of the visual fieldwork.

### **From photography to the practices of photographing**

The visual ethnography behind this dissertation materialised as attempts to visually document train travelscapes (compartments, waiting hallways, platforms, etc.). A digital camera - sony cyber-shot dsc w85 - as well as the integrated camera in an iPhone 4S were used in this process. This work generated numerous photos of everything from train seats, toilets, scenic landscapes, posters and signs to the documentation of rail practices such as physically negotiating proper sleeping positions, and mundane acts of gazing. Parallel to this, reflexivity informed my engagement with visual fieldwork, which informed a visual tourism

research environment relatively slow at adopting innovative visual methodologies (Publication 4).

Feighery (2003) argues that there is a considerable challenge in developing an appreciation of image-based research in tourism studies due to the textual confinements of academic papers or books and due to the general lack of academic training in acknowledging and understanding visual creations. He suggests that the development of a pictorial turn demands that academic institutions, conference organisers, journals and publishers facilitate the space for visual tourism research. In a similar vein, Rakic and Chambers (2012) note that while visual research techniques are legitimate in social sciences more broadly, they are scarcely employed in tourism academia, and even fewer researchers work with the actual crafting of innovative visual methodologies. Despite the multisensory nature of tourism experiences, alternative means of data display and research reporting are virtually absent (Feighery, 2003). Linking the general lack of innovative visual methodologies with the emergence of performative and reflexive approaches to photographing (Cragg, 1997; Haldrup & Larsen, 2003; Rakic, 2010; Scarles, 2010) led me to explore specifically neglected photographic practices.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

With this background, Publication 4 develops a non-representational framework to understand photographic practices. More precisely, it demonstrates how obscure photos can be used to retrace neglected frantic or overwhelming photographic events. By proposing the notion of ‘distorted representation’, I argue that analyses can be enriched by reflexively taking into

account how particular situated materialities, performativities and sensations influence photographic practice. An empirical extract from the paper states (Publication 4, p. 9-10):

Imagine yourself on a night train between Budapest and Brasov, Rumania. Imagine waking up as the sun beams cuts through the large compartment windows, disrupting your persistent, but wasted, attempts to catch some sleep during the nightly travel. It's around 5 am in the morning.

Drowsy and still half-way asleep, you decide to go through the train to observe the multiplicity of embodied performances relating to the often unsuccessful attempts to catch some sleep on night trains. Admittedly, you feel slightly apathetic at this point, fighting with an extreme fatigue of several days of little rest, which has developed into an annoying back pain that you 'carry with you' as a serious physical effect of determined fieldwork. Relentlessly, you walk through the train compartments, your senses increasingly compromised by an all-encompassing tiredness.

The compartments are indulged in early morning silence as most people are still asleep; a few others, eagerly fighting to stay awake, monotonously tilt their heads...down-and-up...down-and-up as the rhythmical continuity of the train softly rocks them to sleep. Dragging yourself through the train you take a wave of perfunctory and uncommitted images with your mobile camera, only to later notice the blurred aesthetics of many of these photos.



**Figure 11:** Photo from open wagon. Author's photo, July 3 2013.

Notes: This visual impressionistic tale was originally published in Publication 4, pp. 9-10.

By traversing non-representational theories, embodiment and reflexivity, the paper turns to seeing/photographing as an embodied, material practice, and thus one that can never be entirely innocent. Subsequently, 'distorted representation' is an attempt to formalise a reflexive approach to visual research that acknowledges and works to exemplify this constructed nature of photographing. Furthermore, the paper calls attention to the publishers of visual economy of tourism research by using opaque and 'ugly' photos to challenge the visual requirements of images laid down by publishers, journals, conferences and university departments.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

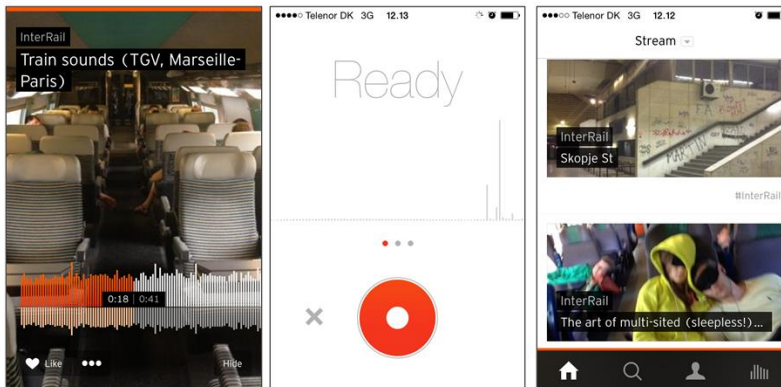
Structural scientific approaches work to standardise visual methodologies around a realist framework (Collier & Collier, 1967; Prosser, 1998). My engagement with visual ethnography has differed greatly from realist approaches by reflexively illustrating *how* representations are animated through the ‘sticky landscape of practical encounters’ (Dewsbury et al., 2002; Thrift, 1996; Tsing, 2005, p. 1), thus conveying vision as a highly material ‘practice’ and not a passive ‘reception’ (Büscher, 2006). From this perspective, the act of photography is entangled in the sensations, materialities and performances of situated events. As such, my work with visual methods is both an attempt to visually document unfolding events through the lens of the camera and reflections on photographic practice as a highly embodied act (Rakic, 2010).

### **Animating research through sounds**

Lately sensory research has been popularised as a critical approach to challenge the disembodied intellect of tourism theories (Andrews, 2005; Crouch & Desforges, 2003; Edensor & Falconer, 2012; Pritchard, Morgan & Ateljevic, 2011). Some have studied the embodied act of listening within tourism contexts (Duffy, Waitt, Gorman-Murray, & Gibson, 2011; Feintuch, 2004; Schofield, 2009; Waitt & Duffy, 2010) while others have challenged the visual hegemony of tourism research by pointing out the central role of the ‘tourist ear’ (Gibson & Connell, 2007, p. 160). Reduced to the discursive, however, these studies often reduce the auditory to the structures of language, discourse and symbolic meaning (Blackman & Venn, 2010). Consequently, the material relations

and non-representational dimensions of sound are not fully attended to (Kanngieser, 2012; Simpson, 2009). For instance, ‘environmental sounds’ (van Hoven, 2011) have been largely ignored as they make up the non-representational, unnoticed and unspecific auditory ambiances, backgrounds or ‘latent worlds’ (Thrift, 2008, p. 19) of tourist experiences.

To explore these sounds, I used a Dictaphone – a Zoom H2 recorder - and an iPhone audio recording application, SoundCloud, to record various soundscapes during the fieldwork. I did this in the belief that audio recordings let people, materials and places speak with their situated environmental ‘voices’ and allows for rich explorations of the affective implications of everyday sounds.



**Figure 12:** The SoundCloud interface. Author’s screenshots. Notes: These photos have not been published previously.

These recordings represents a range of sounds pertaining to rail travel, such as the sounds of particular trains and routes and of specific stations, waiting rooms, departure platforms and underground walkways. They



were thematised online by telling titles of the route travelled, location or type of event (see Figure 12). Due to the exploratory approach of my sounds studies, the analytical value of these audio recordings was far from being settled, but as time passed and the impressions from the fieldwork condensed, I began to see how sounds could enrich the impressionistic tales.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

The numerous sound recordings from the fieldwork led to the authoring of Publication 5. This research note calls attention to the broad neglect of audio methods in tourism research. In this note, the audio recording application, SoundCloud, was used as an example of several online platforms that enable its users to record, distribute and comment on audio files. Furthermore, the application easily structures recording, makes it publicly/private accessible with the click of a button, and allows the linked integration of descriptions and photos for each recording. To my knowledge, the application of SoundCloud had not been applied in tourism research prior to this dissertation. In Publication 3, SoundCloud recordings are used to enrich the impressionistic tales and to convey the agency of everyday sounds. An empirical example from this paper:

Envision yourself on a night train, more specifically the IR383, leaving Bucharest, Romania, every day close to midnight, commencing its 10-hour journey towards the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia. Imagine having waited for hours at the station, and now increasingly tired you find yourself craving to catch some sleep. As the train cuts through the darkness of the countryside, you take off your shoes; perhaps you use your jacket as a blanket; perhaps you jam some shirts together to form a

temporary pillow, and with an exhausted, slightly despairing sigh, you make a wriggle, and find yourself positioned for an ephemeral rest. The compartment is indulged in silence, and the only auditory evidences of movement are the [sounds of the train moving through the night](https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/bucharest-sofia-ir-383)<sup>d</sup> [https://soundcloud.com/interrailing/bucharest-sofia-ir-383]. Sleeping only vaguely, the repetitive sound reminds you that you are indeed on the way – moving - which, after all, makes up a redeeming thought. At 2am the train is suddenly put to a halt. The deadening of sounds leaves a strangely noiseless and uncertain atmosphere in the wagon. You notice your fellow travellers move their heads, groggily glancing with half-open, dreary eyes, as if to reorient themselves on the sudden immobilisation. As the train departs, the compartment once again submerges into silence, complemented by the heavy breathing of travellers and the opening and closing of the automatic sliding doors (Publication 3, p. 69).

Through this example, the paper calls attention to the non-discursive, embodied and poetic dimension of non-representational sounds otherwise largely neglected in tourism research. Through this ‘reading’, less concern is given to what meaning can be deciphered through sound; instead, value is given to the very timbre and acoustics of sound and how this resonates in us, providing us with spatial dimensions, experiential aspirations and imaginations. Subsequently, sounds should be admired for providing richness, details and virtues to representation. Furthermore, it enables multiple interpretations, and in doing so, makes representation less a process of preservation and more of creation, enlivening rather than deadening the represented.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

McCartney (2002, p. 1) argues, ‘...[these unspecific sounds] are so much with us and surrounding us that it takes a special effort to bring

them into the foreground, and pay attention to them'. In this way, non-representational sounds (such as the echoes of peoples' voices and pulled-along trolleys in hallways or trains moving monotonously through the night) make up relatively prominent audio 'backgrounds' that embrace the plodding of the everyday, but still remain surprisingly disregarded in sensory tourism research although they remain central sensescapes that both shape and affect tourist experiences, as the empirical examples of my doctoral work has shown.

Arguably, sounds – as with all other modalities – are registered differently, provoking different reactions, sensations and affects and triggering different outcomes and imaginaries. Importantly, the ambition of this PhD is not to claim that particular essential sounds define the interrail experience. Rather, my work seeks to illustrate how the auditory is embodied heterogeneously. The subjective experience of sounds cannot be recuperated objectively, but can be reached for through metaphors, vivid empirical animations, multimodal and impressionistic representations and by trying to conjure what it might be like for others to interrail. This task will always fail, given that imagining what it might feel like for others to interrail is arguably not the same thing as interrailing yourself. My attempt is therefore not to suggest a static auditory geography of interrail, but to acknowledge, through partial and situated examples, how sounds have experiential, social, practical and affective implications for interrail travel. This approach illustrates the under-researched effects of sounds in tourism, and through this argument, I suggest a framework around which future sound studies can emerge (Publication 5). This contribution speculates on ways that

auditory tourism research may engage with non-representational sounds, and breaks ground for further multimodal analyses in tourism research and beyond.

### **Interviews**

Formal interviews make up a relatively minor part of the data collection. One interview with two recent interrailers and another with one interrailer were made prior to the main fieldwork. Next to this, three interviews were held with leading Eurail representatives (all anonymised on their behalf). A telephone conversation was conducted with an interrail product manager on 26 November 2012; Skype conversations were conducted with an interrail social marketing manager on 22 July 2014, and with an interrail sales and marketing manager on 30 October 2014.

Insights from the conversations with interrail managers led to an understanding of the complex organisational structure of the Eurail Group, and with this, an understanding of the discursive processes that stage (and occasionally hinder) interrail mobility (Publication 6). These conversations unfolded as semi-structured interviews based around three themes: (1) the Eurail Group (organisational structure, negotiation of strategies and aims, opportunities and obstacles for providing innovative new passes); (2) the railway carriers and EU transport politics (how market changes, regulations and political interventions shape, afford and prevent interrail mobility); and (3) product design focus (reasons for the size and fabric of the pass, implications of the travel report as a source for revenue distribution, RailPlanner application). The conversations

were vitalised by sharing insights from the survey and the fieldwork, so the interview materialised as a mutual exchange of knowledge which benefitted both interviewee and interviewer, and in so doing, generated a co-produced and supportive conversational atmosphere.

## Netnography

This doctoral work also draws on netnography, which remains an under-utilised method in tourism research (Mkono & Markwell, 2014). I draw on ‘archival netnographic data’ (Kozinets, 2010, p. 104) of the Interrail Facebook Group, spanning 2008-2014. I did not actively participate in the forum, but studied and collected updates relating to the role of the senses during interrail travel:

[Christopher Eweran](#) Worst: Nightrain Venice - Vienna. 2 parents 2 kids next to us (at the window) flipping down the seats and going to bed (after cleaning their feet close to our faces) , blocking the way to the door. Locked in for 11 hours, no space to stretch your legs, no toilet, no sleep. arriving in vienna and wandering around like zombies.

[15. september 2011 kl. 12:59 · Synes godt om · 1](#)

[Kate Creachen](#) Venice to Budapest. And not for a good reason! We decided to go cheap and not book a bed, just a seat. The seats did not go back, the air con did not go off, the lights stayed on all night and even if you managed, through some divine miracle, to fall asleep for a minute or two, either the border police or train guys woke you up to look at your passport/ticket. This happened ELEVEN times throughout the night!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[15. september 2011 kl. 12:59 · Synes godt om](#)

**Figure 13:** Extracts from the interrail Facebook community (pseudonyms used). Notes:

These extracts have not been published previously.

Examples such as those presented in Figure 13 were then categorised and analysed on the basis of recurrent themes (Beaven & Laws, 2007; Mkono, 2011), such as auditory or olfactory impressions. My main intention in integrating audio recordings, impressionistic tales and netnographic insights is not solely to substantiate the empirical claims,

but also ‘to experiment with established, indeed quite traditional, methods to create innovative, insightful methodological hybrids’ (Latham, 2003, p. 1993). This work is intended to pave the route for further methodological experimentation in tourism research.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

Publication 3 exemplifies how multisensory phenomenology can materialise through non-representational aspirations and the merging of novel methods. In particular, netnographic snippets were used to nuance the impressionistic tales and substantiate the analytical claims through multiple sources of empirical insights. Following is an extract from publication 3:

A wide range of materialities thus moderate the experience of temperatures during interrail. These include for instance access to/and type of windows available, the amount of luggage dragged along and compartment thermostats (surprisingly few seem to work when needed!). In relation to this, Manuel exclaimed: “This compartment...where I slept last summer, between Nice and Paris. It had 7 passengers for 6 beds! And a dog! To end in beauty [*sic*], in the middle of the night, the air conditioning broke down” (Facebook, 31-05-12). Next to this, Mary-Ann (Facebook, 21-08-09) recalls a vivid event: “You’ve had a 3am start...you’ve had a dodgy McDonalds the night before and been sick. You still feel nauseous at 8am when you are getting your first train at 6 that day to get from Nice to Barcelona. All the compartments are full besides one in which resides one woman who has the strongest stench of garlic, literally radiating from! During the journey, just to add a little salt to the wound, she gets up to not only shut the compartment door, but turn the air con off!!”

Enrolled into a range of sensations, these remarks all touch upon the centrality of thermascapes, more specifically how air-conditioning

systems and thermostats are material infrastructures through which temperatures can be negotiated or forced upon passengers. Hence, when air-conditioning systems breakdown, or when temperature is automatically imposed upon people, it reminds that space is transduced through electronic networks, design codes, hardware and operational management systems (Adey, 2006), which order and reorder the sensory contexts of rail travelers, interrailers included. (Publication 3, p. 18)

In the experimental spirit of recent non-representational theorists (Vannini, 2015), netnographic extracts were used to nuance the impressionistic tales, and to provide an emerging example of how novel co-integration of methods can contribute to insights on the sensuous relating to tourism mobilities and beyond. Weaving together netnographic insights with the impressionistic tales of the lead author enriched our analysis and worked to guide, nuance and substantiate the analysis.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

## Survey

An international survey was launched in cooperation with the Eurail marketing department in the summer of 2014. The survey had two focus areas: first, to gain insights into the *travel experience* (best/worst moments, preferred travel routes, motivations for travel) and second, to collect comments on the design, usability and general perception of *specific interrail affordances* (such as the interrail pass, the travel guide and the RailPlanner application).

The tone and form of the questions were formed on the basis of back-and-forth conversations with the head of the social marketing

department at Eurail Group. This process arguably led to a more market-oriented survey (e.g. including a range of demographic categories and marketing-specific questions), but the Eurail representatives remained openly supportive of my attempt to collect *open-ended replies* recalling lived interrail experiences. The incentive to entice people to respond was the chance to win two interrail passes in a random drawing.

The survey was launched as a publicly available Google survey link from August 15 to October 15, 2014. The link was shared via the Facebook interrail group and the social marketing department's Twitter account. During this period, a total of 644 respondents completed the survey. Related to the PhD timeline, this rather late launch meant that the findings were used solely to substantiate the analysis in the final paper (Publication 6). Indeed, these findings are far from fully explored and will make for interesting analysis at a later stage.

Latham (2003) and Carolan (2008) both suggest that the employment of traditional research methods can be pushed in the appropriate direction to give a richer taste of lived experiences. Mixing survey, netnography and audio-visual methods around a multi-sited ethnography opens the way for novel research inspired by non-representational theories. Through my work I have come to believe that methodological *pragmatism* offers rich opportunities to break down the methodical timidity in tourism research, by putting an emphasis on choosing tools that best produce desired outcomes and compelling and convincing analyses. Through the proliferation of methodological and theoretical eclecticism, new insights and ways of undertaking research emerge. Importantly, there are no 'better' methods for encapsulating the non-



representational; rather, as I prefer to see it, there are specific orientations towards the practicing of methods (such as embodiment, reflexivity, creativity and a continuous sense of wonder) and these orientations are central to non-representational styles of research. As I have argued elsewhere (Publications 1 and 4), I want to embrace the entangled and open-ended creation of knowledge, partly by understanding the non-discursive and not-quite-graspable atmospheres and latent backgrounds of everyday life (Lorimer, 2005).

With these details now described, the following clarifies the theoretical hinterland and sources of inspiration for the project. I then move on to the contributions emerging from the papers submitted as part of this doctoral work.



## Chapter Three

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### Tourism mobility and the sensuous

A qualified beginning to sensuous concerns in tourism research dates back to 1994 when two Finnish researchers published a reflexive paper titled ‘The Body in Tourism’ (Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). Notably ahead of its time, the paper critiqued the so-called scientific objectivity in tourism research by calling attention to the absence of the body in tourism. Not the ‘body’ as an abstract or discursive subject or ‘text’, but the fleshy and sensuous body. Indeed, in their view, tourism research lacked a ‘body’ ‘...because the analyses had tended to concentrate on the gaze and/or structures of waged labour societies’ (Veijola & Jokinen, 1994, p. 149). Today, 20 years later, this is still a remarkably topical and under-researched field that I explore in relation to contemporary tourism mobilities research (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Hannam et al., 2014) and non-representational theories (Obrador Pons, 2003; Xiao, Jafari, Cloke & Tribe, 2013).

First, however, I want to briefly address the main historical traces relevant for the popularisation of sensuous tourism research. Despite sensuous scholarship still being relatively new in tourism research, its modern influence can be traced through two primary fields of thought. First, *existential phenomenology*, spearheaded by authors such as Martin Heidegger (1953) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) worked to sensitise the practical, sensing and engaged *body* in the understanding of human

life. Thus, delineating the Cartesian divide between mind and body, this new school of thought argued for the intimate connection between mind and body, underlining the role of sensory *practice* in constituting human life. Second, and partially as a result of these philosophical currents, *sensuous scholarship* started to inform a range of traditional disciplines, including anthropology (Classen, 1997; Geertz, 1973; Stoller, 1997), sociology (MacNaghten & Urry, 2001; Shilling, 1997; Vannini et al., 2011) and human geography (Jackson, 1957; Paterson, 2009; Porteous, 1985; Rodaway, 2002). Through these studies, the sensuous (auditory, tactile, olfactory, kinaesthetic, etc.) were revalued as overlooked human modalities. In this sense, the popularisation of sensuous tourism research is heavily indebted to parallel streams in the social sciences. However, acknowledging this prominent role of the body throughout the last half-century of phenomenological philosophy, human geography and anthropology only reminds me how little sensuous scholarship has informed tourism research.

In the context of this doctoral work, the following paragraphs relate the sensing body to aspects of *mobility*. I address how tourist mobility has been studied historically in tourism research, and argue that non-representational dimensions of mobility (such as subtle atmospheres, the ordinary everyday and the affective) have been largely neglected. Indeed, tourism mobilities research has contributed with insights into sensory and everyday dimensions of mobile experiences (Bissell, 2010a; Larsen, 2001; Edensor & Holloway, 2008), yet there still remain vast opportunities in developing *multimodal methodologies* capable of sensitising

and enlivening the sensuous in ways hardly possible with interviews, focus groups and observations alone.

The following briefly summarises how three tourism research streams have engaged with the study of tourism mobility (Publication 1). I then suggest that non-representational theories be used to inform future tourism research.

### **Tourism and mobility: Retracing the sensuous**

The first tourism research stream that deals (somewhat distantly) with tourism mobility is based on the numerous tourism ethnographies from the 1970s and 1980s. In 1976, Dean MacCannell reflected upon the methodological underpinnings of his now-classic book, *The Tourist*, stating: ‘So I undertook to follow the tourists, sometimes joining their groups, sometimes watching them from afar’ (MacCannell, 1976, p. 4), insinuating the mobile ethnography behind his work. However, rather than analytically dwelling on these movements, patterns, routes and traces of tourists, MacCannell drew out a number of discrete *touristic* (to borrow MacCannell’s term) concepts inspired by the dualism of structural anthropology (Levi-Strauss, 1974) prevalent at the time. Similar traits run through the range of parallel publications inspired by assumptions of tourism as an extraordinary ‘event’ polarised to ‘the home’. Many such studies appear to follow a mantra of a tourist as a ‘...temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change (Smith, 1989, p. 2). Another example extending such dualism is Cohen’s phenomenology of tourist experiences (1979), which defines five tourist modes ranked on a

spectrum, from tourists who travel in pursuit of mere pleasure at one end of the spectrum, to those who travel for meaning formation at the other end.

Although these renderings have merit in their spell-binding illustrative powers and generalisability, they 'read' tourism mobility through rigid frameworks that see tourism as the emblem of modernity or the manifestation of societal leisure classes. Consequently, these dualistic predispositions reduce tourists to passive archetypes or meta-sociological models (MacCannell, 1976) needing explanation. The 'mobile' in these ethnographies is a functional necessity; yet as a practical, situated and visceral experience, mobility is analytically disregarded.

The second stream of research grows out of an increasingly technology-inspired generation of researchers, and relates to what can be seen as *tourism mobility across Euclidean space*. Shoval and Isaacson (2007) track the spatial and temporal behaviour of tourists by using three case studies (Heidelberg, Jerusalem and Nazareth) to investigate the capabilities of three tracking devices: cellular triangulation tracking, GPS tracking and TDOA (land-based tracking devices). Importantly, they also promote a number of previously published tourism papers using tracking methods that are not necessarily technologically fuelled (as the ones above), but were carried out with a similar goal in mind: mapping and categorising tourist behaviour in relation to a geographically defined area. These writings include Keul and Kühberger (1997) who track Salzburg tourists based upon non-participatory observations, counting motion and stationary data and relating this to socio-demographics derived from later interviews. Hartmann (1988) combines *interviews, observation studies*

and *aerial photos* to examine the dynamics of recreational travel of American and Canadian tourists moving in the city of Munich. Finally, there is the wide array of researchers using systematic time–space approaches (such as time–space diaries and recall interviews/questionnaires) to map the behavioural characteristics of tourists across a demarcated setting (Cooper, 1981; Debbage, 1991; Fennell, 1996; Thornton, Williams & Shaw, 1997).

Armed with a vocabulary, including words such as tracking, routes, distance, coordinates and time–space patterns, the examples above see mobile ‘realities’ as something that can be mapped in Euclidian space. Above all, the methodological strength of these projects is their capacity to track movements across fixed time and space. Here, actors are faceless and generic entities with an ontological essence of directed and functional movement. They *are* movements and are occasionally reduced to either lines or dots in a given space. This risks treating tourists as aggregate and collective behaviours, enumerating tourists as ‘Turistas vulgaris’, only found in herds, droves, swarms and flocks (Löfgren, 1999, p. 264; Franklin & Crang, 2001).

These tracking methods thus operate as a ‘technology of power’ (Harley, 1988) that tames the tourist to the synchrony of cartographic structures, enacting yet another meaning of the mobile subject. Thus, while this stream of research mobilises tourists (as in acknowledging that tourists do in fact move across space and this is analytically significant), few remarks are made as to how tourists *embody* and *sense* their mobile experiences, how they *feel*, *perform* and *negotiate* them. Informing this

particular understanding of mobility, the final trajectory relates to the mobilities paradigm in tourism research.

Since the turn of the millennium, a growing number of tourism scholars have been inspired by the mobilities paradigm (Urry, 2000). Although the paradigmatic claim of a ‘mobilities turn’ (Hannam et al., 2006) is potent, Cresswell & Merriman (2004, p. 4) rightly argue that mobilities research is more a matter of ‘revisiting an old friend’ in the intersection between spatial sciences and transport geography. The mobilities ‘turn’, as I prefer to see it, is an orientation towards the empirical that draws on both Lefebvre’s spatial account of the production of space (1991) and the flat ontologies subscribed to by actor–network theorists (Latour, 2005; Law, 1992) and post-structuralist geographers (Doel, 2010; Massey, 2005; Murdoch, 2006). Through this popularised lens, a ‘new’ understanding of tourism has been drawn out, one which focuses ‘...upon movement, mobility and contingent ordering, rather than upon stasis, structure and social order’ by examining ‘...the extent, range and diverse effects of the corporeal, imagined and virtual mobilities of peoples, for work, for pleasure...’ (Urry, 2000, p. 18).

Tourism mobilities contributions include insights into the embodied performances of photographing (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003; Larsen, 2005) and of tourist places in general (Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen and Urry, 2004); it includes attempts to move ‘beyond’ the sedentary thinking occasionally associated with backpacking conceptualisations (Jayne, Gibson, Waitt & Valentine, 2012; Johnson, 2010); it includes comments on tourism and global insecurities (Bianchi, 2006), and tourism and



climate change (Gössling, Scott, Hall, Ceron & Dubois, 2012). So it is important to recognise that the application of mobilities theories is diverse and multidisciplinary. Common to these studies is, however, an attempt to look anew at tourism through the relational, complex-theory-inspired and multiscalar lens of the mobilities paradigm.

The introduction of the mobilities paradigm in tourism research has contributed in at least two ways. First, a strand of tourism research has reiterated the concern that mobility is more than mere linear transport from A to B; it is itself a socio-material practice (Fullagar, Markwell & Wilson, 2012; Larsen, 2001). These contributions have broken down the traditional research view of tourists as ‘economically-modeled passengers who are rational actors in a calculative transport system’ (Watts and Lyons, 2011, p. 104) by studying them as embodied ‘wayfarers’. Such studies recognise that travel is not reducible to functional movement, but is also a process of *embodying and making* travel space–time. This is an important contribution that revalues the social, cultural and sensuous significance of mobility in tourism. Second, the mobilities lens has weakened the rigid conceptual ties that recursively (mis)informed tourism research for decades, most predominantly through dichotomist distinctions between ‘home’ and ‘away’, ‘hosts’ and ‘guests’ and the ‘local’ versus the ‘global’ (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). In this sense, the mobilities paradigm has challenged the abstract and static explanations of tourism by accounting for the production of tourism across scales, localities, technologies and discourses. Through this reading, tourism is enacted through complexly patterned and organic relations, i.e. mobilities.

However, studying tourism mobilities research extensively has also sparked some concerns that have triggered the contributions that emerge from this work. The following tries to sketch this out.

### **Informing tourism mobilities research**

I believe my doctoral work informs tourism mobilities research in two ways. First, while I acknowledge tourism mobilities research for critiquing the representational lens of discourses, images and the visual gaze through a focus on socio-material performances (Edensor, 2000; Larsen, 2012; Molz, 2009), I find that the empirical presentations of non-representational practices and backgrounds remain neglected. By non-representational backgrounds I mean ‘latent worlds that, by their virtue of their routinised, “unremarkable but unforgettable” (Gerhardt, 2004) natures, make certain aspects of the events we constantly come across not so much hard to question as hard to even think of as containing questions as all’ (Thrift, 2008, p. 19).

From this I want to contribute to tourism mobilities research by fully embracing the prospects of non-representational theories. This concentrates on the everyday of tourism mobility and how it is often experienced through affective and sensuous dispositions set in monotone, repetitive, boring, ambivalent, straightforward and apparently unremarkable worlds. Indeed, ‘[s]tillness, waiting, slowness and boredom may be just as important to many situations, practices and movements as sensations and experiences of speed, movement, excitement and exhilaration’ (Merriman, 2014, p. 177). My doctoral work seeks to address the effects and embodied experience of this plodding of

unvaried, unnoticeable and even dull events, which by their very straightforwardness, seem to wiggle free of any attempt to categorise them or inject them with symbolic meaning (Anderson & Harrison, 2012). Yet, as suggested by Crouch (2000, p. 68), working non-representationally in tourism research is difficult because in ‘interpreting tourism it is easy to note the representation and not the practice, partly because of the requirements of appropriate research methods’. This relates directly to my second contribution to tourism mobilities research.

There remains a continuing paradox in attempts to *theorise* and to *write about* the body as existing outside our linguistic structures as this simultaneously, and inevitably, inscribes the body into those very same linguistic structures (Shusterman, 1997). This dissertation extends recent research to develop innovative ways to enliven the immanent multisensory nature of the visual (Edensor & Falconer, 2012; Scarles, 2010). My doctoral work contends that the prevailing symbolism and textual interpretation in tourism mobilities research can be further developed by embracing non-representational methodologies that shed light on ‘...how life takes shape and gains expression in everyday routines, and sensuous dispositions’ (Lorimer, 2005, p. 84; Obrador Pons, 2003). This means taking on the challenge of adapting and developing innovative methods capable of engaging with topics that evade traditional methods:

Current methods...deal, for instance, poorly with the *fleeting* – that which is here today and gone tomorrow, only to reappear the day after tomorrow. They deal poorly with the *distributed* – that is to be found here and there but not in between – or that which slips and slides between one place and another. They deal poorly with the *multiple* – that which

takes different shapes in different places. They deal poorly with the *non-causal*, the *chaotic*, the *complex*. And such methods have difficulty dealing with the *sensory* – that which is subject to vision, sound, taste, smell; with the *emotional* – time-space compressed outbursts of anger, pain, rage, pleasure, desire, or the spiritual; and the *kinaesthetic* – the pleasures and pains that follow the movement and displacement of people, objects, information, and ideas. (Law & Urry, 2004, pp. 403-404)

This type of empirical research is beset with challenges, and recently Xiao et al. (2013, p. 376) argued that many tourism researchers might find non-representational concerns ‘...obscure, opaque and unreachable in the current climate of scientisation, relevance and impact’. Yet this research climate is precisely the reason to continue the pursuit towards tourism scholarship seriously concerned with ‘the visceral experiences, atmospheres, vibes, emotions, and affective capacities that are currently mostly rendered inaccessible by the underlying philosophy of our current methodologies...’ (ibid., p. 376). Departing from these observations, my doctoral work particularly embraces the prospects of non-representational theories to adapt and develop innovative styles of representation. Before turning to this, however, let me briefly address the ideas behind non-representational theories.

### **Non-representational theories – A brief overview**

Few recent strands of thought have been as influential to geographical imaginations as the diverse work associated with the poststructuralist stream of non-representational theories (Anderson & Harrison, 2012; Dewsbury et al., 2002; Thrift, 2008). These multifaceted thoughts are

often traced back to Nigel Thrift's manifesto, *Spatial Formations* (1996), in which a 'new' style of human geography and analytical imagination was drawn. To avoid early misconceptions, let it be clear that non-representational work cannot be characterised as *anti*-representational. Perhaps inadequate naming has caused unease among unfamiliar readers, which is why some supporters have proposed alternative headings such as 'post-representational' (Vannini et al., 2011) and 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer, 2005) as more precise headings for the attempt to:

...take[s] representation seriously; representation not as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather representations are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings. The point here is to redirect attention from the posited meaning towards the material compositions and conduct of representations. (Dewsbury et al., 2002, p. 438)

While too often neglected in contemporary adaptations of non-representational theories, their aspirations and outreach are not radically new, but grow out of the critique of essentialism raised by both American pragmatists (Dewey, 1896; James, 1976), post-structuralist movements (particularly influenced by Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Whitehead, 1929) and the 'crisis of representation' that characterised the turn towards a 'new cultural geography' of the 1980s and 1990s (Cosgrove & Jackson, 1987; Cresswell, 2010). Next to these, the classic sociological contributions of authors such as Michel de Certeau (1984), and Erving Goffman (1959) fit relatively well with non-representational theories' sensitisation of the everyday and its mundane practices. These

historical backbones acknowledged, I believe there are at least four main traits of non-representational styles of work.

First, non-representational theories offer a *radically constructionist* rather than social constructionist account of the social (Anderson & Harrison, 2012). Henceforth, non-representational theories work to break from the social constructivist preoccupation with ‘representationalism, or, discursive idealism’ (Dewsbury et al., 2002, p. 438) where the focus is on what things symbolise – what they denote and connote, what codes they inform, what values they defer and refer to (Vannini, n. d.). Rather than seeing action as an expression of deeply-rooted ideas and meanings, the analytical gesture of non-representational theories sees action as shaped by complex assemblages. This relates to the relational ontology subscribed to by actor-network theorists (Latour, 2005) and mobilities scholars (Urry, 2000). Through associative thinking, the social comes into being through relational materialism (Law, 1992), that is, through the *networked* effects generated by a range of actors including objects, machines, infrastructures, atmospheres, affects, sensations and humans.

Second, non-representational theories focus on *unfolding and everyday practices*. This means that ‘...meaning comes less from their place in a structuring symbolic order and more from their enactment in contingent practical contexts’ (Anderson & Harrison, 2012, p. 7). The focus thus falls on the embodied and environmental affordances in the ‘hum’ of ongoing everyday activities. This is an energetic or vital ontology focusing on the *becoming* of events (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Thrift, 2008; Whitehead, 1929) rather than static accounts and structural explanations. Henceforth, it favours ‘verbs rather than nouns’ (Franklin,

2004; Law, 1994, p. 15). In non-representational theories, as in actor-network theories, ‘structures’ and ‘classes’ are networked processes before they are apparent results (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1988). Importantly, in this context, non-representational studies seek to reverse the modernistic logic of inversion (Ingold, 2011, p. 68) by avoiding abstract reductionism through critical animism that tries to recover the openness, poetics and virtues of the lines of life that make up the social.

Third, non-representational theorists illustrate how *affective atmospheres* interrupt, change and solidify social relations and (pre)conditions. Within the social sciences there is a growing literature on the concept of atmosphere (Bissell, 2010a; Böhme, 2003). Atmosphere appears to crystallise par excellence a non-representational ‘subject’ that is both obvious, immediate and influential yet still strangely shadowy and unknown (Anderson & Ash, 2015). In my doctoral research I work with atmospheres as spatialised affects that emerge through bodies that affect one another (Massumi, 2002). Whereas earlier literature on atmosphere focused on its individualised actualisation through the subjective human body (Anderson & Ash, 2015), approaching atmospheres through a non-representational lens is a way to include the diffuse and collective origins of the affective:

Thinking about affective atmosphere also draws attention to how affects can be “collective” and be transmitted between people. Such atmospheres “form part of the ubiquitous backdrop of everyday life” but a backdrop that is at the same time “forceful and affect[s] the ways in which we inhabit...spaces” (Bissell, 2010, p. 272) (Adey, Brayer, Masson, Murphy, Simpson & Tixier, 2013, p. 301).

Affective atmospheres are the (un)common individualised *and* collectivised ground from which subjective states and their attendant feelings and emotions come into being. I support Böhme (2003), especially because he emphasises the spatiality of affective atmospheres. While his definition remains deliberately vague, there are two different spatialities that characterise affective atmospheres. The first is the sense of a certain type of *surrounding intensity*. Imagine how particular atmospheres ‘surround’ you during long delays, in silent compartments or in dark couchettes as you try to fall asleep. Here, Böhme uses the word ‘sphere’ to indicate a particular form of spatial organisation of affect. The second spatiality is a *dyadic space* in which atmospheres ‘radiate’ from one individual to another (Anderson, 2009; Anderson & Ash, 2015; Bissell, 2010b). In both cases, atmospheres are interlinked with the material design of specific places but also based on the forms of socialisation and affective circulation that characterise places.

Consequently, affective atmospheres not only occupy places, they permeate them. This is why various trainscapes might be recalled or experienced as monotone, tense, anxious or pleasurable. I find affective atmospheres particularly promising for further investigation in tourism research. This is because they remain widely under-researched, and because they mark an exciting repopulation of the social, supplementing passports, keychains, bicycles and objects with the less-treated effects of subtle atmospheres, anxieties, affective urges, emotions and vibrant materialities (Bennett, 2010; Ingold, 2007b). This aims for a deeper understanding of the subtle everyday sensations that inform tourist mobility. Think of how atmospheres are sealed off – and others created



– through material interventions such as non-openable train windows, fully automated climate systems, lighting design and seat arrangements. Understanding the non-representational implications of such material affordances allows for innovative sensuous tourism research. In this context, the idea of affective engineering (Adey, 2008) is central to further explore how design and (lack of) calculative architectures have implications in the creation of the affective and atmospheric.

This relates directly to the fourth tenet of non-representational theories. Non-representational theories are avowedly *experimental*, and pull energy out of the performing arts, the creative and the playful in order to animate the richness of the researched. I find that non-representational theories work best when used to spark original empirical accounts that push the hegemony of textual discourse through surprising, artful and multisensory animation. This is important because it is imperative to understand that the various sensations that operate and overwhelm us during research most often work beyond what can be represented through traditional ‘reading techniques’ (i.e. the discursive and the textual), which linger on in tourism research.

Now, as much as I admire non-representational theories, some cautionary notes must be made, which the following discusses.

### **Problematising non-representational theories**

First, in line with the critique raised by Tim Cresswell (2012), I occasionally find the writings of founding non-representational theorists to be sectarian (if not incomprehensible and elusive) and paradoxically produced through references-upon-references, abstractions, which,

rather than providing empirical hymns to unfolding events, solidifies the prospects of non-representational theories in recursive and textual discourse. This, I think, is a lingering shortcoming within the ‘school’ of non-representational theorists: too few are empirical, exploratory and experimental in comparison to the abundance of theoretical elaborations and philosophical accounts. Yet there is clearly a will to be more creative in writing strategies amongst the empirical practitioners of non-representational theories (Bissell, 2010a; Cook & Edensor, 2014; McCormack, 2008; Vannini & Taggart, 2013; Vannini, 2012; Watts, 2008), who, time and again, have eased my frustration with the occasional highbrowed rhetoric of certain non-representational theorists, and reminded me of the far-reaching analytical potential provided by this stream of thought.

Second, the neglect of traditional ‘categories’ such as class, identity, race, and gender in the determination of the ‘subject’ in non-representational theories has caused unease (Cresswell, 2012; Tolia-Kelly, 2006). Indeed, non-representational theorists work with an assembled subject and often walk quite a distance to avoid representational, preconditioned or structural thinking. I favour seeing non-representational theory as a subset of geographic thoughts that flavours and supplements e.g. critical or feminist research, but by no means substitutes for them. Rather, the pragmatic combination of theoretical insights offered by non-representational theories and the detailed attention to the political, economic and cultural geographies of the everyday is my preferred way to engage with non-representational theories (see also Nash, 2000; Vannini & Taggart, 2015).

By pushing forward this ambition to avoid representationalism, there is another pressing concern related to non-representational theories. These theories derive primarily from Western European, even more specifically, British, male geographers. Although spreading to North American audiences (Vannini, 2015), I note these demographic details because non-representational theories appear, still, to reach out to a limited, esoteric and supportive audience. Consequently, non-representational theories appear predominantly addressed through discursive, gendered, Eurocentric and disciplined scholars. By saying this, I do not intend to cut the bough that I, too, stand on, but rather invite wider audiences in tourism and beyond – particularly female scholars, non-geographers and researchers from the southern and eastern hemisphere – to engage with non-representational genres of research. In this process, I hope that my practical adoption of non-representational theories will allow others to see especially the *empirical* opportunities in non-representationally inspired analyses.

Finally, and subsequently growing out of the focus on events, Cresswell writes: ‘My question is this: if every microsecond of everyday life is full of the possibility of things being different, if we are always already erupting with creativity, what accounts for things staying more or less the same?’ (Cresswell, 2012, p. 103). This relates to the apparent obscuring of power relations and structures in non-representational analyses. The relational ontology of non-representational theories avoids framing analysis, too rigidly at least, through agency/structure divides. As my own work is partly shaped by mobilities-oriented sociology, this has meant a relatively relaxed adaption of non-representational theories

favouring the rich description of the multisensory everyday without jettisoning the analytic implications of politicised and designed material environments. Similar to Crouch (2000), Edensor (2000) and Larsen (2005), my work does not oppose non-representational and representational thinking, but shows how the non-representational emerges through everyday practices, affective circulations, sensuous negotiations, discourses, infrastructures and design interventions.

Having sketched out the general development of non-representational theories, how have these diverse thoughts then informed this PhD-by-publication? And how can non-representational theories more generally inform future tourism (mobilities) research? Let me use the final chapter to speculate on the prospects, opportunities and constraints that face non-representational analyses in tourism research.

## Chapter Four

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### Reanimating tourism mobilities

First, let me be clear that this dissertation is inspired by the work of relational theorists (such as mobilities- and actor-network theory inspired researchers). Although I gained much inspiration from these schools, another side of me has occasionally felt distanced by the relatively crude *associative* rhetoric of these strands of thought, as if human sensations and affects should be addressed and represented first and foremost as relational effects. I have used this dissertation to opt for a relational approach that does not completely jettison the phenomenological, the lived immediacy of experiences, without any reflection on it (Thrift, 2008).

In their surely correct insistence that action is a property of the whole association, actor-network theories tend to recoil with horror from any accusation of humanism. Quite rightly, they fear the taint of a centred human subject establishing an exact dominion over all. But the result of their fear is that actor-network theory has tended to neglect specifically human capacities of expression, powers of invention, of fabulation, which cannot be simply gainsaid, in favour of a kind of flattened cohabitation of all things. (Thrift, 2008, p. 111)

My approach is based on a relational, or flat, ontology yet I find that dropping the human subject seems to be a step too far (Thrift, 2000a). Inspired by non-representational theories' focus on affects, the sensuous

and the embodied, I have sought a style of tourism mobilities research driven by a thoughtful questioning of both relational materialism and human expressions set in the everyday. This is in line with other authors who suggest that there is room in non-representational theories for a ‘residual humanism’ (Cresswell, 2012, p. 101) from which particular human capacities such as affective urges, sensuous responses and imaginations can be animated. This deserves an example.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

Publication 3 exemplifies how a multisensory phenomenology can embrace non-representational sensitivities. In this paper, three sensescapescapes encapsulate our understanding of interrail mobility: rhythmscapescapes, soundscapescapes and thermalscapescapes. The last, thermalscapescapes, is a notion developed by the authors, and one that seeks to widen the traditional conception of ‘materiality’ to include the spatio-temporal and embodied implications of *temperatures*. To exemplify this, an empirical extract from the paper includes the following audio-visual impressionistic tale:

‘They are treating us like animals!’ an American woman cries out, aiming her outburst towards the train personnel, as the heat in the compartment continues to increase. It is late July, and the central-European summer is providing tedious temperatures around 40 degrees Celsius. Furthermore, the air-conditioning has stopped functioning. ‘It happens every summer!’ the conductor remarks, despairingly asking everyone to keep their windows shut, to avoid the hot air from outside interfering with the air-conditioning system. Some people have started taking off their shirts (some children dressed only in boxers), others have found [unforeseen value in newspapers and train tickets](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFhvJ8pv098)►[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFhvJ8pv098>], now suddenly

transformed into hand-driven fans. The enduring heat is leaving uncomfortable traces as sweat patches on shirts and trousers. The sighs and obvious corporeal struggles to find thermal comfort embrace the compartment in a sensuous collectiveness. You try to stand up, yet find yourself glued to the synthetic leather seat, in what seems to be a watery amalgamation between you and the seat. After hours of sighs and drowsy movements, the conductor decides to let all exit doors stay open during travel, which immediately creates a congregation of travellers standing at each door, refreshed by the wind.



**Figure 14:** Sweat patch on leather seat. Author's photo, July 2013. Notes: This audio-visual impressionistic tale was originally published in Publication 3, p. 71.

Through this and other examples, Publication 3 illustrates how a specific thermalscape creates collective performances of swaying newspapers and tickets through which travelers negotiate thermal comfort. In this particular example, the access to 'adequate' temperatures becomes a fundamental resource, a

human right, materialising as a sensuous ‘subject’ leading to discussions between both train personnel and co-travellers. Varying temperatures partake in the production of particular thermascapes; e.g. frequently re-dressing to adapt to changing temperatures as trains cut through mountains, flatlands and urban landscapes, each with quite diverse, and sudden, temperature shifts; sticking one’s head out open windows, g(r)asping for fresh air and cooler temperatures, and preparing oneself for extended travel with cold drinks, are all some of the embodied practices revolving around the subtle effects of particular thermascapes. As a result, the embodied knowledge informed by the sensuous apprehension of material places generates a range of unreflexive, conscious and instrumental touristscapes (Edensor & Falconer, 2012).

By calling attention to the effects of temperatures, the paper addresses a new type of ‘materiality’ – the thermal pressure of the atmosphere. Surprisingly, this influential component of tourist experiences has been largely overlooked, and by demonstrating how temperatures ‘seep into’, transform and shape tourist experiences, we provide an alternative approach to conscious-centred phenomenology by enlivening it with a sensuous, materially dispersed and non-representational focus.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

Surprisingly, temperature acts as a determinant factor that influences the location of tourism, as a resource supporting a wide range of activities, and as a primary ‘attraction’ in its own right (Martin & Belén, 2005). While the embodiment of temperatures is perhaps one of the most enduring and interceptive sensuous dimensions in tourism, its study oddly remains little more than a footnote in tourism research.



Going back to the opening argument, this interlude (together with a whole host of other examples included in the submitted papers) exemplifies how I prefer to work around a ‘relational materialism with a phenomenological flavour’. In this way, the ‘social’ is invigorated through the sensuous, affective and practical implications of a situated body entangled in the ‘co-responsive movement of occurrent things’ (Ingold, 2012, p. 437; Bissell, 2010b; Publication 6).

Growing from my engagement with non-representational theories, and partially exemplified by the interludes included in this dissertation, I would like to close this dissertation by speculating on three research areas that I believe offer exciting potential for non-representational studies in tourism.

### **The prospects of multimodal methodologies**

First and foremost this dissertation paves the way for the development of *non-representational methodologies in tourism research*. Tourism research has repeatedly relied on occularcentric accounts that order tourism through text, symbolic structures and socio-cultural codes, and tourism researchers have approached their studies through traditional methods such as the interview and participation observation. This doctoral work uses multimodal renditions, impressionistic tales, audio clips, opaque photographs, sweat patches on synthetic leather seats, dirty footprints on station floors, sweaty feet, farts and piano tones ringing in high-ceilinged train foyers to illustrate the overlooked yet far-reaching implications of the sensuous in tourism. This empirical orientation provides creative, playful and even childish ways of representing and informing scientific

investigation in tourism. Doing so, I contribute to a stream of tourism research engaged with non-representational and performative tourism research (Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010; Scarles, 2010; van Hoven, 2011). While such banal experiences may provide little essentialist or abstract meaning, they nonetheless make a crucial difference to tourist experiences as the empirical examples have shown.

My empirical work builds on recent work that has examined the multisensory experiences of tourists hiking by integrating video material (van Hoven, 2011) as well as research using auditory clips and impressionistic rendition techniques as ways of conveying research (Vannini, 2012, 2015). In tourism research, however, there remain vast opportunities to further promote audio-visual impressionistic analysis, and pragmatically mix a range of traditionally separate methods such as survey, netnography, audio-visual recordings, field notes and interviews. The reflexive engagement with visual research (Publication 4); the calls made for revitalising tourism research through audio methods (Publication 5); the work around audio-visual impressionistic tales (Publication 3), and not least the innovative mixing of methods (Publication 6) all point towards opportunities in adapting, merging, developing and experimenting with methods in tourism research.

In this process, I have contributed to performative strands of tourism research by animating relatively neglected sorts of embodied performances emerging through erratic and unintentional events. In relation to this, Nigel Thrift (2010, p. 10) argues

Too often, the recent turn to corporeality has also allowed a series of assumptions to be smuggled in about the active, synthetic and purposive

role of embodiment...it is assumed that bodies are bodies-in-action, able to exhibit a kind of continuous intentionality, able to be constantly enrolled into activity. Every occasion seems to be willed, cultivated or at least honed.

I have unravelled the practical mishaps, disorders and ‘noise’ that, rather than making realities less intelligible, in fact provide valuable insights into the (non)coherent realities of people and things (Hannam et al., 2014; Veijola, Molz, Pyyhtinen, Höckert & Grit, 2014; Publications 1 & 4). From this reading, working with embodied methodologies is just as disordered and overwhelming, straightforward and unnoticed, as it is cultivated by desires, imaginaries and idealised projections. So while purposive or meaningful performances may rule the greater parts of social life, it would be unwise to neglect the unremarkable, the subtle trip-overs, the non-representational minutiae, because they enrich and nuance how we value what tourism is (and can be). The key distinction with this approach is that it relishes the failures of structural thinking and incites researchers to unsettle the systematicity of procedure and to view the impossibility of empirical research as a creative opportunity rather than a damming condition (Vannini, 2015, p. 15; Dewsbury, 2010; Thrift, 2008). This is an act of opening the black box of knowledge generation (Latour, 1999) through empirical examples that stem from unapologetic researchers. Rather than silencing the non-representational, I encourage researchers to give voice to the untold stories and reverberations of tourism through embodied, artful, multimodal and reflexive ethnographies.

On this background, the following addresses the prospects of a new material movement in tourism, and coins the term ‘vibrant relational materialism’ to support it.

### **Vibrant relational materialism**

My second goal is to see the poetics of *materiality* further sensitised in tourism research. Arguably, materiality has played a key analytical role in tourism research for at least the last two decades, and has been popularised by the wave of relational materialists such as actor–network theorists and many mobilities researchers (Haldrup & Larsen, 2006; Van der Duim et al., 2012). Here, and rightly so, objects are animated for their associative implications and often represented as parts in momentary snapshots of an associative network (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011; Paget, Dimanche, & Mounet, 2010; Rodger, Moore & Newsome, 2009). My doctoral work is indebted to relational theorists, and most distinctively favours the type of relational thinking that does not reduce the network to a purely spatial construct (Ingold, 2013), but invigorates the performative, transformative and durative attributes of objects as they reposition and circulate (Walsh & Tucker, 2009). This perspective animates materialities in tourism through longitudinal examples that illustrate the pathways, viscosities, textures, frictions, breakdowns and (non)coherencies that characterise enlivened objects. Indeed, it ought to be the organic *web of life* (Ingold, 2012, p. 437; Thrift, 2000a) or the continuity of socio-material *work* that is foregrounded, and this is why some suggest using the word ‘worknet’ instead of network (Latour, 2005; 2011). Building on the contributions from relational materialists, I

suggest that material accounts be enriched through critical animism, or for lack of a better word, ‘phenomenology’ of materials. Throughout this PhD I have been increasingly inspired by materialist thinkers such as Bissell (2010b), Bogost (2012), Ingold (2007b, 2013), Harrison and Schofield (2010), and Bennett (2010), all approaching objects as energetic and vibrant matter.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE \*\*\*

A rather odd empirical example is put forth by Publication 6 and includes three photos of a deteriorating interrail pass:



**Figure 15:** Interrail pass cover transforms between June 27 and July 25 2013. Author’s photos. Notes: These photos were originally published in Publication 6, p. 11.

Set within the context of the paper, this example illustrates how a simple object, such as the cover of an interrail pass speaks as a designed ‘subject’ that dissolves through its movements along a web of life. Ingold (2011) argues that focus on materiality has tended to be an abstract semiotic of dead objects. Rather, materials can be invoked and ‘livened up’ by focusing on their properties, textures and transformations along paths travelled. The decay of the pass thus manifests the inconvenient relationship between the pass design, its texture, fabric and size, and the hurried, bumpy and often confined spaces of interrail mobility.

Working as ‘vibrant materialists’ (Bennett, 2010), we try to linger in the type of moments where we find ourselves fascinated by objects, drawn to them as clues to their material vitality. With ‘vitality’ the capacity of things not only informs relational agency, but acts as a force with ‘phenomenological’ propensities and tendencies. Through this argument we seek to cultivate a more careful sensory attentiveness to the qualitative aesthetics of materialities, one that breaks from the image of the object as dead matter, and sees the evocative powers of materials to aid or shape, confine or break, overwhelm and affect us and not least, to tell stories that more often than not are silenced. This ‘material schematism’ (Thrift, 2008, p. 8) or ‘ecology of materials’ (Ingold, 2012, p. 427) is our attempt to inject into tourism mobilities research an object-oriented wonder that may nuance and enrich modernistic tourism research approaches.

\*\*\* INTERLUDE COMPLETE \*\*\*

Studying the materialities of tourism in this way can be fascinating and equally difficult given that everyday objects are often astoundingly familiar and forgettable. Making a ‘biographical’ or archaeological investigation of objects can draw out histories of extraordinary scale and complexity (Harrison & Schofield, 2010; Hoskins, 1998; Knowles, 2015). Encapsulated in the banal example of a deteriorating interrail pass, my claim is that it simultaneously communicates the frictions, tensions and everyday material entanglements of being an interrailer-on-the-move, and makes up the inevitable material evidence of discursive transport politics, design interventions and complex organisational negotiations.

Concluding on these thoughts, I am intrigued by the potential of ‘archaeological’ object analyses (Gosden & Marshall, 1999; Kopytoff,

1986) that account for the ‘voices’ of the non-human, describing how things are not solely functional or morphological entities, but storytellers of the pathways, people, events and parallel lines of life they come across. This is a style of research inspired by the anthropological attempt to reveal relationships through the unravelling of object histories (Appadurai, 1986; Hoskins, 1998; Knowles, 2015). Mixing relational materialism with ‘vibrant materialism’ (Bennett, 2010; Bogost, 2012) (the term ‘*vibrant relational materialism*’ seems appropriate to me) appears particularly promising to innovate material tourism studies through material archaeology and critical animism that revalue the qualitative moments of materialities (ranging from physical ‘things’ such as passports, travel passes and books to less treated materialities such as winds, temperatures, water, luminosity and atmospheres).

Having clarified how non-representational approaches can be furthered in tourism research, the third tourism research area that I would like to see further developed relates to the promising link between *mobilities design* and *non-representational theories*.

### **Mobilities design**

Third, adapting concepts from the emerging ‘mobilities design’ subfield (Jensen, 2014; Veijola & Falin, 2014), tourism mobilities research is given a vocabulary through which to further explore the intricate links between designs and tourism mobilities. By drawing upon Jensen (2014), the concepts of ‘mobile assemblages’ and ‘the networked self’ are adapted to inform rail mobilities studies (Johnson, 2010; O’Dell, 2009; Watts, 2008) and tourism mobilities research. Together with these concepts, the

‘staging mobilities’ framework (Jensen, 2013) has been introduced as a heuristic framework through which to decipher tourism mobilities through multiscalar and material design-sensitive analysis. The analysis has shown that interrail mobility is ‘viscous’ in the sense that mobility potential is continuously negotiated and stretched through complex patterns of designed materials, technologies and infrastructures. Publication 6 has paved the way for further mobilities design research, driven by non-representational theories, and represented through impressionistic modes of expression. Together with the ‘phenomenological’ reading of the pass, I am equally interested in the *design politics* of objects and how materials are conjured into being through the effects of various discourses. The awkwardly large and fragile paper pass not only create practical inconveniences, but is the direct result of organisational design decisions informed by the multiple and incompatible rail operational management systems, and the complex revenue negotiations and distribution systems that characterise the 30 national railway operators of the Eurail Group (Publication 6). The lack of durability is an effect of the specific organisational, infrastructural and practical configurations through which the pass moves, and stability is henceforth not inherent in the material itself (Law, 2009). Despite not being fully explored throughout this doctoral work, the interlinking of non-representational theories and mobilities design thinking has the potential to enrich tourism mobilities research by exploring phenomenological questions related to affective engineering through design (Adey, 2008) as well as atmospheric architectures (Böhme, 2003; Seamon, 2015). Thinking back on the photo montage of train seats



(Figure 4), it takes little imagination to envision how designed material settings afford, shape and prevent particular interrail practices (such as sleeping, eating, socialising, reading, etc.). The main aim of this field of tourism research should be to link situated material analysis with design, planning and even architectural schools of thought to provide understanding of how tourism emerges through the interactive tension between situated embodied performances and designed material intentions and interventions.

### **From here? Non-representational theories and tourism**

I want to recap the main points from the dissertation and fold them into a discussion on the prospects of non-representational theories for current and future tourism research.

Firstly, working non-representationally means *revaluing* what tourism is and what tourism can become. This is an ontological and epistemological critique that breaks from the abundance of conceptually-driven, disembodied and textual tourism research accounts. This dissertation approaches tourism research anew through embodied, sensuous, affective, reflexive, experimental even playful framings. Being inspired by non-representational theories raises the critical commitment to continuously reflect upon the principle question: What has been omitted in tourism research? What stories are left untold? What voices remain marginalised? Asking these questions, it remains, if not the biggest, then one of the most indispensable paradoxes that tourism – a global phenomenon rooted and driven by human desires, affective urges and sensuous dispositions – have been researched and reproduced through

textual accounts and reduced to abstract and disembodied behaviouristic models obsessed with the conspicuous, extraordinary and structural ‘nature’ of tourism.

To provide a counter exposition I illustrate how under-researched values and virtues of tourism, such as the rich sensuous everyday, can be voiced through multimodal strategies of representation. In doing so, this dissertation has contributed insights into different types of sensuous, embodied and everyday values generated by tourism. This is not a matter of ‘truth telling’ (which for me seems to be an overtly bold ideal), but a modest orientation towards the researched through ‘story telling’. In this process, the challenge to represent tourism richly and more sensitively ‘...lies in the huge gap between what the 9000 or so words of an article are able to express and the richness of the world that they wish to describe’ (Xiao et al., 2013, p. 379). Perhaps part of the solution is to *dare* think less in terms of intellectual words and models, and more through multimodalities, arts, prose, impressionistic renditions, creative animations, sounds, photos, performances and videos. This ‘turn’ will be challenged by the methodical timidity of mechanical review processes, journal requirements and institutional politics. Yet, what is needed is *not* one revolutionary overturning of conventional ways of studying tourism, but a gentle introduction of supplementary ways to breathe life into the abstract and textual orderings of tourism: How can we reimagine tourism? What new narratives can be generated?

Secondly, working non-representationally means readdressing how tourism research is constructed. This is an epistemological sensitivity that illustrates how tourism research is *constructed, incomplete* and generated

through *ontological politics* (Mol, 1999). Working non-representationally, in this sense, has less to do with a ‘set of theories’, and more as an *orientation* to continuously reflect upon the implications of practices, positions, temporalities, spatialities, powers and politics in knowledge creation processes. Non-representational approaches thus contribute and extend the ‘critical turn’ in tourism (Ateljevic et al., 2007; Pritchard et al., 2011; Ren et al., 2010; Tribe, 2010) by providing innovative, experimental and avowedly creative styles of expression that may work to animate more fully the ambiguousness and malleability of tourism research.

Thirdly, there is a great challenge for tourism researchers to be more creative and to push the boundaries of representation in journals, PhD dissertations and other knowledge dissemination outlets (Xiao et al., 2013). Indeed, as research moves to represent the sensuous and embodied places of tourist experiences, tourism researchers must be methodologically equipped to embark on such a journey (Scarles, 2010). Growing out of the two previous points, non-representational theories allow for methodological innovations driven by curiosity, multimodality and even creative playfulness. This ‘methodological turn’ marks, I think, the most important future research trajectory for a tourism research environment that has provided an abundance of concepts and theoretical frameworks, yet surprisingly few methodological innovations.

There is nothing wrong in sharing illustrating data, but there is much to be desired in making ethnographic and qualitative knowledge entirely subservient to theory and utterly secondary to it, so much so that knowing takes precedence over telling and silences it under heavy introductions and even bulkier formulaic literature reviews, discussions, and conclusions. The very accepted format of the typical journal article

with its focus on what happened during research procedures indeed might very well be the most forceful weapon with which the hegemony of timidity asserts its conservative power (see Stoller, 1984; Vannini, Waskul, & Gottschalk, 2011). (Vannini, 2015, p. 13)

Non-representational approaches break with traditional, realist or overtly analytical ethnographies by acknowledging the strengths of embodied and arts-inspired approaches. I am captivated by the prospect of injecting life back into tourism ethnographies by allowing them to ‘...take on new and unpredictable meanings, in violating expectations, in rendering them (on paper and other media) through a spirited verve and an élan that reverberates differently among each different reader, listener, viewer, and spectator’ (Vannini, 2015, p. 119). Importantly, this does not imply that speculation, poetry and semi-fictional accounts replace detailed and engaged fieldwork, but suggests that creativity and imagination can play a much greater role in animating, empathetically representing and not least caring for the researched.

Fourthly and finally, this is an opening for new innovative research to rethink the experiential significance and effects of the straightforward plodding of the everyday, and by doing so, better understanding and *designing* for the largely unattended and inconspicuous practices that make up large parts of tourism mobility. Indeed, a fundamental question raised by this dissertation is: *How can we rethink the aims, ideals and implications of mobilities designs by understanding non-representational experiences?* Publication 6 has opened the way for empirical research that takes seriously the non-representational in tourism mobilities. This paper exemplifies how non-representational styles of expression may illustrate both the embodied,

affective and situated experience of interrail as well as the conditioning and designed materialities that are complexly patterned across multiple scales. With this argument I point to the vast opportunities in exploring more fully atmospheric design (Böhme, 2003; Seamon, 2015) and mobilities design (Jensen, 2014; Lanng, 2014) in relation to tourism.



## Chapter Five

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### Conclusion

The interrail phenomenon is a surprisingly durable travel concept endorsed by over three generations of travellers and it continues to thrive. Reasons for this ongoing popularity are often explained through symbolic consumption or around behaviouristic frameworks. This dissertation has opened a new perspective on interrail through which it unfolds along ordinary, affective and sensuous places. This ‘humdrum’ of everyday train travel has a surprisingly insignificant appearance, yet, as the analysis of this dissertation has suggested, it still makes a crucial difference to our day-to-day experiences through precognitive, inconspicuous and unreflexive effects. Through this exploration, the dissertation has informed tourism research threefold.

First, this dissertation has contributed to tourism research by developing a range of innovative embodied methodologies. Most distinctly, the adoption and development of audio methods has been central to this work, and in this process, the application, SoundCloud, has been proposed as a promising tool for sound studies in tourism research (Publication 5). The proposition of ‘distorted representation’ (Publication 4) has sensitised particular non-representational practices and places, and opened up a new genre of reflexive visual studies in tourism research. Finally, this doctoral work has illustrated how phenomenological studies in tourism can embrace non-representational

theories to provide novel multimodal accounts of tourism mobility as an affective, atmospheric and sensuous disposition (Publications 1, 3 and 6).

Second, this dissertation exemplifies how the adoption of non-representational theories provides a new 'canvas' on which to animate tourism. Here interrail unfolds in ordinary, occasionally boring, monotonous and subtle atmospheres. In applying non-representational theories, one does not read the 'social' through social constructivist or symbolic interactionist frameworks but rather as socio-culturally, sensuously and materially entangled. This means that the ecology of experiences is understood through the creation of the 'social' in which the sensuous circulates, producing collective atmospheres and social relations. This argument reaches beyond the context of this doctoral work but feeds back into tourism research more generally. By complementing the abundance of modernistic approaches and their flamboyant conceptual explanations of tourism, with non-representational illustrations of tourism, I hope that further projects will find inspiration and courage to challenge and enrich tourism research through alternative animations and valuations of what makes up tourism. Indeed, tourism is such a diverse field, reverberating with untold stories (hardly reducible to either 'economics' or 'management'), and these may be given voice through creative, pragmatic, embodied, reflexive and non-representational approaches.

In order to support the development of non-representational strategies of representation, this doctoral work has developed a few notions that may support future research. Importantly, this is not a call for all-encompassing theories that neatly order the complexities of



tourism, but rather an attempt to complement empirical descriptions with heuristic concepts that support non-representational analyses. In this regard, the adoption of phenomenological research embraced by non-representational theories, the development of the notions of ‘thermalscapes’ (Publication 3) and ‘distorted representation’ (Publication 4), and not least the idea of ‘vibrant relational materialism’ as speculated upon in this dissertation, are all concepts, or as I prefer to see it, ways of sensitising particular omitted non-representational aspects of tourism mobility, that grow out of this doctoral work and contribute to tourism research.

Third, the dissertation has suggested that the subfield of mobilities design offers a promising framing and vocabulary for tourism mobilities studies. I have suggested that tourism mobilities research engages with the very pragmatic question ‘What design decisions and interventions afford, shape and prevent mobile situations?’ (Jensen, 2014, pp. 41-42). This means breaking from a purely social or symbolic explanation of tourism (mobility) and approaching it as a complex assemblage made up by situated and non-representational sensations, embodied practices and discursive and materially and technologically mediated structures. To understand this tension field, this dissertation has argued that design offers an innovative research angle. Such an approach provides tourism research with an interventionist and experimental framework around which to engage with the manifold, yet still unvoiced, values, voices and reverberations of tourism. In this process, critical research is to continuously reflect on the simple, yet far-reaching, principal question: What is tourism? I still often find myself drawn to this question, and

recently I found a handwritten note from the beginning of my doctoral work. I was surprised by how its words, three years later, still encapsulate my attempts to invigorate the more-than-representational:

[I cannot conceive myself] as the simple object of biology, psychology, and sociology, nor shut myself up within the universe of science. All of what I know of the world, even though science, I know on the basis of a view, which is mine, or on the basis of an experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is constructed upon the lived world, and if we want to conceive science itself with rigor, to appreciate exactly its sense and scope, we must reawaken first this experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. viii).

In this process we will always fail, since we inevitably will get caught up in representational practice. Yet, as Dewsbury (2009) argues, maybe our job as non-representational researchers is to modestly and unapologetically fail better, more elegantly and more compassionately. For this reason, the prospects of non-representational theories linger on in future tourism research.

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## Appendices

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Attached next to this dissertation, the reader will find the six submitted papers. They are:

- Publication 1: Jensen, M. T. (2014). Engaging with mobile methods. Tourism research and the production of the mobile. In J. W. Megeed, B. S. Blichfeldt, L. A. Hansen, K. A. Hvass (eds.) *Tourism Methodologies – New Perspectives, Practices and Procedures* (pp. 77–96). Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Publication 2: Jensen, M. T. and Bird, G. (In press). Rail tourism. In J. Jafari and H. Xiao (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Tourism* (p. xx). Springer. 2016.
- Publication 3: Jensen, M. T., Scarles, C. and Cohen, S. (2015). [A multisensory phenomenology of interrail mobilities](#). *Annals of Tourism Research*, 53, 61–76.
- Publication 4: Jensen, M. T. (2015). [Distorted representation in visual tourism research](#). *Current Issues in Tourism Research*. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2015.1023268
- Publication 5: Jensen, M. T. (In second-round review). Tourism Research and Audio Methods. *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- Publication 6: Jensen, M. T., Gyimóthy, S. and Jensen, O. B. (2015). [Staging interrail mobilities](#). *Tourist Studies*. DOI: 10.1177/1468797615594740

Next to the publications, four USB sticks have been submitted as part of this doctoral work, and are available for the evaluation committee only.



## SUMMARY

Tourism encapsulates human experiences driven by desires, affective urges and sensuous dispositions. This dissertation is a hymn to the embodied and affective experiences of one particular mode of tourism mobility, interrail. I suggest that mobility means much more than functional movement between A and B. Rather, mobility is explored as a socio-material, embodied and non-representational experience set in the mundanity of ordinary train travel. While such everyday experience may appear banal as we come across them they are in no ways trivial. By adopting and developing innovative and multimodal methodologies, this doctoral thesis explores the analytical prospects of non-representational theories in tourism research. The dissertation points toward a richer understanding of the ‘social’ which encompasses under-researched topics such as the implications of affective atmospheres, the sensuous and vibrant materialities. Consequently, this doctoral work wrestles with questions pertaining to the ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies of tourism research, and extends and contributes to post-structural movements in tourism studies.

Martin Trandberg Jensen is part of the Tourism Research Unit at the Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University, Campus Copenhagen. ‘Sensing interrail mobility: Towards multimodal methodologies’ is his Ph.d. dissertation.