**‘Walking Out’: The Mobilities of Love**

**Abstract**

In this article, I propose that mobility performs a crucial role in the production and sustenance of intimate relationships and focus, in particular, on courtship practices and their modern-day equivalents. I pursue this discussion through close readings of literary and autobiographical texts from the nineteenth century through to the millennium, and by means of a framework that triangulates the work of Tim Ingold, David Seamon and Henri Bergson. My focus here is on how the mobilities we practice during the everyday routines of courtship - i.e., the paths we make, the routes we take, the roads we travel, the journeys we repeat, the transport we use - come to characterise the relationship concerned and impact upon its progress. Both Ingold’s work on “lines” and Seamon’s on “place-ballet” are conceptually suggestive in this regard and speak to recent work in mobilities/cultural geography on the significance of *patterns of movement* in the praxis of relationships.

**Keywords**

Mobilities; love; courtship; romance; relationships; automobilities; wayfaring; place-ballet; everyday life; lifecourse.

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“Everybody has their own personal path and is known by it . . .

Paths have their stories, just as people do.” (Ingold 2007, xvi)

In his book on the foundational significance of lines, traces and pathways to human societies and cultures, the anthropologist Tim Ingold pitches the question “How could there be places . . . if people did not come or go?” (2007, 2-3). Although mobility is implicit, rather than explicit, both here and throughout Ingold’s book, the form this question takes - together with its acknowledgement of the pervasive to-ing and fro-ing of everyday life - echoes my own fascination with the significance of mobility in the generation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships: namely, “How could there be *relationships* . . . if people did not come and go?”

This article seeks to answer or, at least, explore, that question *vis-à-vis* the mobilities associated with romantic affiliations, and with reference to three literary and autobiographical texts from the nineteenth through to the twenty-first century. These are: the courtship diary of a stonemason named Arthur Peck, dating from the 1860s (Creaton 1991); Rosamund Lehmann’s novel *The Weather in the Streets* (1936), which tells the story of an extra-marital affair; and Ian Rankin’s crime fiction, *The Naming of the Dead* (2006), in which Detective Inspectors Siobhan Clarke and John Rebus pursue the everyday intimacy of a twenty-three year long relationship that (just) stops short of romantic involvement. In the first section of the paper, I perform close readings of each of the texts in order to identify the contrasting mobilities associated with each of the relationships both in terms of the modes of transport involved (walking, driving, passengering) and the geographical mapping of the relationships concerned. The second part of the paper then reflects upon the implications of the patterns of mobility associated with each set of relationships *vis-à-vis* Tim Ingold’s concept of ““wayfaring”” (*contra* “navigation” (Ingold 2007, 16)) and proposes that variety, counterpoint and adventure are significant factors in helping a romantic encounter transition into a long-term commitment. This complements the structuralist analysis of literary romance which, following Vladimir Propp (1971 [1928]) and Janice Radway (1978), has posited that all love-relationships require a period of *temporal* separation to catalyse the lovers’ affections for one another (in ancient fairy tales and folk songs this was typically a period of seven years). While it is, of course, impossible to equate these textual representations of the “geographies of love” (Wylie 2009)1 with practices in the material world, it is my hope that the discussion that follows will contribute to recent theoretical work on the significance of *patterns of mobility* to the evolution and maintenance of relationships (see for example Bissell 2013 on neighbourly proximity and “the loop” and Thien 2017 [2005] on the “elastic experiences of intimacy”) ) and serve as something of a corrective to the prioritization of the temporal in literary and philosophical studies on love (see Radway 1978, 134-50; Pearce 2007, 12-13; 89-90).

The concept of ‘walking out’- a now largely archaic phrase used in the north of England to describe the act of courtship - is something of a gift to my thesis inasmuch as it makes explicit the link between personal mobility and sexual and emotional intimacy. Although, as Clare Holdsworth has observed (2013, 50-53), one of the distinguishing features of this model of courtship is its public face, the continuous present of the verb also implies exploration and process: the couple concerned are still learning about one another and are not yet bound by the commitment of marriage. In this article, I purposefully contrast the practice and performance of ‘walking out’ in its most conventional form - the very public and very prolonged courtship of the stonemason Arthur Peck and his fiancé, D.B., in the mid-1860s - with the automobilities that characterise the clandestine affair between Olivia and Rollo in Rosamund Lehmann’s novel, *The Weather in the Streets* (1936), and the ‘real-time’ peripatetic and domestic intimacy of Inspector John Rebus and his professional partner, DS Siobhan Clarke, in Ian Rankin’s *The Naming of the Dead* (2006). As with the wider project from which this article emerges2 my objective here is to use the texts in question to theorise the significance of mobility in the production, or facilitation, of relationships (and, indeed, the way in which certain modes/patterns of mobility may work *against* that process); further, to speculate on the ways in which the routes, journeys and transportation employed during courtship become part of the enduring character and “atmosphere” (Anderson 2009) of our relationships. The discussion of each text will be structured according to what I have perceived to be the key dynamic in the performance of intimate relationships — namely, the vectors ‘travelling to’ and ‘travelling from’ in contrast to the synchronicity of ‘travelling with’.

The trio of theorists who made the significance of mobility to the generation of our everyday intimate relationships newly visible to me are Tim Ingold, David Seamon and Henri Bergson: all ‘processual’ thinkers with a common interest in space, place, mobility, temporality and embodiment. While Bergson’s work on perception, movement and memory has proven invaluable in helping me theorise the way in which the ‘lines’ we lay down during the inception and development of a relationship are integral to both its everyday re-iteration and its memorialisation, my focus in this paper on the initiation and progression of romance owes more to Ingold and Seamon. On this point I should also clarify that I am not proposing any specific connections between these theorists or their work (although Bergson’s influence is clearly present in Ingold’s *Lines* (2007)) but rather a ‘metaphorical’ convergence of the kind that Margaret Hesse (1980) identified as a key factor in the generation of new knowledge (see Pearce 2004, 110-18).

Although the principal tenets of Ingold’s thought have found expression in a great many related publications, the most important for my purposes here is *Lines* (2007) (together with its sequel, *The Life of Lines,* 2015), whose central conceit/observation - that “human beings generate lines wherever they go” (2007, 1) - speaks directly to my own hypothesis regarding the centrality of mobility in the production and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. While mobility remains largely unvoiced in Ingold’s original observations, the understanding that lines are not only what we create but also what we (subsequently) *follow* means that the two are inextricable. This is evident in the very rhetoric in which *Lines* is cast: “Everybody has their own personal path and is known by it . . . Paths have their stories, just as people do” (Ingold 2007, xvi). Indeed, in his evocative descriptions of the way in which people(s) are habitually creating and following lines in the course of their everyday interactions, Ingold also alerts us to their foundational role in micro- and macro-relationship building. As mobilities theorists such as John Urry have observed, a great many of our daily journeys are undertaken with the objective of cementing and valorising our relationships with others whether these be familial, professional or intimate (Larsen, Axhausen and Urry 2006; Urry 2007). Often there is no absolute necessity that we meet a colleague for coffee or ‘drop in’ on a family member, but the act - and the pathways we keep metaphorically free from weeds in travelling there - is absolutely integral to both the patterns and rhythms of human existence (see also Lefebvre 2004; Edensor 2010; Bissell 2013; Cronin 2014, 2015). Yet while the slippage between the literal and metaphorical is unavoidable when we speak of paths in this way, my objective in the textual analysis that follows has been to purposefully focus on the literal - the routes taken, the paths walked, the tracks laid - in the first instance. This is in order to bring to the fore the way in which, as embodied mobile practices, relationships are inseparable from the landscapes and interiors they not only inhabit but *traverse*.

Seamon, meanwhile - along with Tuan (1974), Relph ([1976] 2008) and Buttimer (1976) - is one of the geographers now credited with bringing a new awareness of embodied spatiality and movement to bear upon our understanding of the deeply relational practices of everyday life. Based upon phenomenological principles and methods, Seamon’s *Geographies of the Lifeworld* ([1979] 2016) reports upon ethnographic research conducted with an ‘environmental experience group’ at his home University (Clark, Massachusetts) focusing both on how the “body-subject” (Seamon 1979, 41) functions in familiar environments by non-cognitive means, and the significance of everyday movement in his/her “lifeworld” (Seamon 1979, 135). Most suggestive for my purposes here, however, is his conceptualisation of “place-ballet”: a term invented to account for the way in which subjects’ individual “time-space routines” choreograph with one another in familial, social and public spaces: “Body-ballets and time-space routines mix in a supportive physical environment to create place-ballet — an interaction of many time-space routines and body ballets rooted in space (Seamon 2016, 56)”. This vivid impression of how individuals, each marked by their own geography, are brought together in dynamic patterns of to-ing and fro-ing, interactivity and exchange, echoes Ingold’s conceptualisation of the “meshwork” (Ingold 2007, 83) created by “wayfaring” subjects and, once again, serves as a model for how we might map the traces of human relationships at every stage of the lifecourse. Seamon's spatial mapping of human interactions also chimes with the pioneering work of several scholars working in the field of emotional geographies (e.g.Jones [2005] 2017; Thien [2005] 2017; Jones and Garde Hansen 2012) who have proposed that it is our deep emotional connections with space and place (in practice and in memory) that ensures what Jones (following Thrift 2001) describes as a “spatiality of humanness” (Jones 2017, 206).

As noted above, Bergson’s contribution to this debate is most resonant when it comes to considering the role of perception and/as memory in both the laying down and retrieval of embodied mobilities . Although this is an aspect of my thesis that I am unable to develop here (but see Pearce forthcoming), it is nevertheless important to register the complicating role that memory plays when theorising our mobile practices; for even as a subject is establishing new routes and pathways in the context of her current relationship, so may she also be rehearsing old ones (with the same partner, a previous one, or a friend) in her mind. Further, as I propose elsewhere, it is clear that the processes of place-making and memorialisation (see also Maddrell 2013, 2015, 2016) commence early in our relationships even though they most often become visible following the loss of a loved one. In other words - and following Bergson on the way in which memories are formed, stored and retrieved (Bergson 2000, 47-8) - as soon as a path is laid down, so is it available for reprise. In this way, the apparently linear routes we pursue in the material world quickly become circuits in our conscious and unconscious minds - a proposition that echoes David Bissell’s figuration of our relationships with others (in a neighbourhood context) as a *loop* on account their repetition: “there and back” journeys assume the form of a loop when “repeated on a regular basis” (2013, 360) as well as Ingold’s discussion of loops in *The Life of Lines* (2015, 19) . This diagram of how individual subjects repeatedly converge and disperse as in a dance also echoes Seamon’s concept of “place-ballet” and Tim Edensor’s work on the rhythms of everyday urban life (Edensor 2010, 2011, 2014).

**‘Walking Out’: Some Textual Excursions**

The article now proceeds to close readings of the three texts introduced above. As noted previously, all depict intimate relationships which could be figured as courtships inasmuch as they feature involvements that have yet to proceed to a long-term commitment, even though - in the case of the lovers in *The Weather and the Streets* (1936) and DIs Rebus and Clarke in *The Naming of the Dead* (2006) there are serious, perhaps insurmountable, obstacles in the way of this. Meanwhile, my rationale for selecting texts from different historical moments was an attempt to capture something of the way in which the British transport revolution (1850-1930) impacted upon the mobile practices associated with courtship, both in terms of the embodied experience and the variable patterns of mobility pursued.

***Arthur Peck’s Courtship Diary***

Arthur Peck was 21 in 1860, and still living at home with his parents when his diary begins. The editor of the volume in which the diary appears observes that:

Not one to pour out his feelings, the entries relating to his long running courtship of ‘D.B’ are laconic but frequent. Their engagement passes without comment except for a neutral reference to an ‘engaged ring’ and a visit to the photographer’s studio, clearly for a celebratory portrait. (Creaton 1991, 52)

Creaton also speculates that ‘D.B.’ was in domestic service - possibly to several prominent local families, as she seems to spend her time moving about from one ‘great house’ to another. The section of diary reproduced in Creaton’s collection runs from 1 January 1860 to the end of 1863. At this point, Arthur and D.B. are still unmarried, though they are now engaged, and we must infer that the delay is for financial reasons. In 1861 Arthur went off to find work at another mason’s yard after a row with his father and remained in Chelmsford for six months - visiting D.B. and his parents at weekends - before returning home to work in the family business once again. The long journeys this desire for social mobility entailed - through assorted modes of transport (horse and cart, train and, of course, on foot) - are clearly indicative of nascent modernity and look forward to the multifarious, and often surprisingly‘integrated’, transport systems, of the *fin-de-siecle* (as has been demonstrated in the work of Colin Pooley and others (Pooley, Turnbull and Adams 2005; Pooley 2017)).

However, it is not Arthur Peck’s use of transport, per se, that I am interested in here, but rather the mobilities that facilitated his courtship. In purely functional terms, these fall into five main categories:

1. Visits to D.B. at her parents’ house and/or ‘walking her home’ after she had visited him at his parents’s house. For example:

March 30 1860: We was working marble all day. D.B. came here to tea and supper I went home with her. Patty came here from Watton got a ride with J. Harris butcher. Got a very bad cold. (Creaton, 57)

1. Longer walks from their homes in Hertford to D.B.’s work at several ‘big houses’ in the vicinity. For example:

January 7 1860: Sharp frost and fine. Ben went to Harlow. We gave him Brisk our dog. Father went to meet David. Jim and I was fixing chimney pieces for N.Green at Hertford Heath. I went to Cole Green C. Bailey’s for D.B. We sold 4 hens for 4/6d. I was very tired. Sharp frost at night and moonlight. (Creaton, 54)

1. Walks to and from the Chapels (they frequent several) and other church meetings. For example:

January 1 1860: Showery and mild. I went to the Wesleyan Chapel all day heard Mr Bartlett in the morning from the 9th chap Isaiah 6th verse in the evening from the 37th chap. of Ezekiel 9th verse. D.B. was here to breakfast. She went to Chapel. I was at her house to tea. Mr and Mrs Errington came here at night. Mr Rose gave an address to the School. Fine night. (Creaton, 52)

1. *Occasional* recreational walks - e.g.,from Hertford to the village of Hertingfordbury in connection with D.B.’s work. For example:

January 8 1860: Sharp frost and fine. I went to Wesleyan Chapel all day and heard Mr Laugher in the morning from 10th chap. of John 16th and 17th verses and in the evening from third chapter of Hosea 15th verse. I and D.B. went to Hertingfordbury for a walk. (Creaton, 54)

1. Letters - notably those exchanged between Arthur and D.B. while he was a Chelmsford. For example:

June 14 1861: I wrote to D.B. wishing her to come down here. Sent her half. sov. (Creaton, 64)

As noted previously, this is an account of courtship entirely devoid of the interiority we might hope for and expect. In the course of this three-year extract, Arthur Peck never once explicitly reveals his feelings for D.B.; his reports of their tiffs and seemingly endless ailments (headaches, toothaches, colds and generally “feeling queer”) being the only barometer of their fluctuating intimacy. However, a romance *narrative* of sorts emerges as a result of Arthur’s sojourn in Chelmsford; as in romance fiction, the period of separation appears to be the catalyst for his formal engagement to D.B.

Reviewing the diary entries specifically from a mobilities perspective I would suggest that, for Arthur Peck, courtship was very much part of the rhythm of everyday life: a rhythm whereby ‘walking out’ was incorporated into his everyday mobilities rather than a special or dedicated activity. Indeed, what the factual nature of Peck’s entries enable us to see is just how much mobility the everyday life of a mid-nineteenth century tradesman involved and how little of it was undertaken for the purposes of what we would think of today as recreation or time dedicated to loved-ones or friends.

Placed in this wider context of walking as an everyday and often arduous activity, it is clear that Arthur and D.B.’s ‘walking out’ had yet to evolve into the public “promenading” that came to be associated with the term in the English towns and cities of the early-twentieth century (Holdsworth 2013, 52; Langhamer 2007, 183). By contrast, the long days that both Arthur and D.B. work - often in multiple locations - means that their courtship is incorporated into what we would think of today as their *commuting*. Yet it is clearly important to register that this utilitarian walking was a working-class courting couple’s only opportunity for privacy (notwithstanding the fact that they remained, for the most part, in the public eye), and also that the repetition inherent in the almost daily travelling to and from each other’s houses created the conditions *and constraints* necessary for intimacy to be practised, tested and developed (Massumi 2015[2003]).(3)  Inasmuch as they frequently “walked out” together, Arthur and D.B. also performed their fair share of the affective mobility I have described as ‘travelling with’; however, it is very notably their six month separation - and the rather more emotionally charged departures and returns brought about by this crisis - that finally moves their relationship on.

***Rosamund Lehmann’s* The Weather in the Streets (1836)**

The relationship between Olivia Curtis and her married lover, Rollo Spencer, in Rosamund Lehmann’s 1930s novel, *The Weather in the Streets,* is singularly lacking in everyday mobility and its banal repetitions. The closest this couple come to everyday courtship practices is the occasional lunch in a restaurant where, unknown to the waiters and other customers, they can masquerade as an ordinary couple:

Thursdays we lunched at another place, not a dark, voluptuous lunch, nice in another way. It was right off our ordinary beat, pretty full, but not with the people either of us knew . . . It came nearer being a public relationship, a reality in the world there than anywhere else. Almost, the split closed up. (Lehmann 1991, 63-4)

The ‘split’ to which Olivia refers here is explained earlier in the novel in an extraordinary passage of ‘stream of consciousness’ free-indirect discourse which captures, in one stroke, the dislocated mobilities that characterise and define her relationship with Rollo:

It was then the time began when there wasn’t any time. The journey was in the dark, going on without end or beginning, without landmarks, bearings, lost: asleep? . . . waking? . . . Time whirled, throwing up in paradoxical slow motion a sign, a scene, sharp, startling, lingering as a blow over the heart. A look flared, urgently meaning something, stamping itself for ever, ever, ever . . . Gone, flashed away, a face in a train passing, not ever to be recovered. A voice called out, saying words . . . going on, on, on, eternally reverberating . . . fading out, a voice of tin, a hollow voice, the plain meaning lost, the echo meaningless. A voice calling out by night in a foreign station where the night train draws through, not stopping . . .

There was this inward double living under amorphous impacts of dark and light mixed: that was when we were together . . . Not being together was a vacuum. It was an unborn place in the shadow of the time before and the time to come. It was remembering and looking forward, drawn out painfully both ways, taut like a bit of elastic . . . Wearing . . .(Lehmann 1991, 144 [ellipsis in original]).

The extreme subterfuge in which Olivia, an upper middle-class women of ‘good family’, is compelled to live her life on account of her affair with a high profile baronet’s son, causes her to internalise the “split” that characterises the time she spends with, and without, Rollo. Significantly, the sensory imagery used to capture the temporal-spatial disorientation of a life of constant coming and going under the cover of darkness is the sleeper train: an evocative symbol of restlessness modernity (see Danius 2009)). Further, the foremost - and very materially defining - feature of Olivia and Rollo’s affair is that most of it is conducted in, or facilitated by, his car.

At the simplest level, the car’s ontological and symbolic significance is that of the ‘cocoon’: a distinctive feature of automobility - in contrast to other forms of transport - that has been noted y several mobilities theorists over the years (e.g. Urry 2007, 126). The fact that Rollo is always the one doing the driving also speaks to the stereotypically gendered nature of their relationship; however, as I have observed elsewhere, it is important not to assume that passengering is necessarily passive or lacks the heightened perceptual and cognitive awareness associated with driving (Pearce 2016, 28). Indeed, one of the most distinctive features of the car journey is that it facilitates a unique *shared* ‘window onto the world’ and is, in this regard, the material as well as the metaphorical embodiment of ‘travelling with’. An especially evocative passage from the novel illustrating this is the description, focalised through Olivia, of the lovers’ exodus from London on their first weekend away:

He called for me with the car on Saturday morning [. . .] We drove to his club to get some money [ . . .] It was such a heavenly day. We seemed to float out of London on the sun – champagne again, I suppose.We had no plans except to head for the coast and wander till we found somewhere we liked. It was one of those days when all of the landscape seems built up of intersecting planes of light and shadow; the tree-trunks’ silvery shafts wired with gold and copper, violet transparency in between the boughs. The hills looked insubstantial, as if you could put your hand through them. The damp road flashed kingfisher blue [. . .] Oh, I was happy that day. I kept saying “Look!. . .” The air was like April. It smelt of primroses, I said. (Lehmann 1991, 168-9 [my ellipsis])

However, the significance of the car in the facilitation of intimate relationships goes much deeper than its function as a mobile tryst or, indeed, its means of promoting a shared view of the world. Indeed, one of the effects of mobility upon relationships that interests me the most is the way in which it contributes to what Roland Barthes has identified as the “scene of romance”(Barthes 1979, 192-3; Pearce 2005, 521-38) by creating vivid, cinematic backdrops for all manner of events and - in the process - laying down memories that will come to define the relationship both in the short to mid-term and in perpetuity. The long extract on the dislocated spatiality/temporality of the affair quoted earlier is an eloquent exposition of this, with the imagery Lehmann uses to capture the whirling, yet paradoxically ‘stuck’, nature of the ephemeral time Olivia inhabits echoing her experience of travelling through the city night in trains, taxis and, indeed, Rollo’s “warm car” (Lehmann 1991, 170). In the same way, then, that the images (and sounds) snatched from a moving vehicle have the capacity to impress themselves powerfully upon the perception/memory of the traveller (in the manner of Henri Bergson conceptualisation of the way the two work together (Bergson 2000: 47-8)), so does a mobilised viewpoint appear to catalyse and unleash perceptions stored away years, or decades, previously.

**Ian Rankin’s *The Naming of the Dead* (2006)**

Like Olivia and Rollo, Siobhan Clarke and John Rebus - the two detectives who head up Ian Rankin’s Scottish crime fiction series - have forged their twenty-three year long relationship mostly by virtue of the unique intimacy afforded by the car. Whether bumping around the mean streets of Edinburgh in Rebus’s decrepit old Saab, or speeding along the M8 or A9 in Siobhan’s new Audi, DI Rebus and DS Clarke (or, after Rebus’s retirement, DI Clarke and *citizen* Rebus), have most certainly put in the miles, with each new excursion an opportunity to get to know one another even better.

This relationship, however, is not a courtship - or even a romance - in the manner of my previous case-studies. Over the course of some seventeen novels, the reader is repeatedly reminded of the age difference between the two detectives - Rebus is old enough to be Siobhan’s father and has a daughter of a similar age - and both pursue short-term relationships with what, on the surface, appear to be more suitable partners. The intimacy between them - a dynamic mixture of similarity and difference - is, however, profound, and fan websites make clear that, for many readers, the outside possibility that Clarke and Rebus might one day commit to one another is the series’ main attraction. By the time Rebus does finally retire (i.e., the novels following *Exit Music*, 2007), he and Clarke can read each other’s minds to the extent that their banter exposes every chink in each other’s psychological profile.

Like Arthur Peck and D.B., most of the time that Rebus and Clarke spend ‘travelling with’ one another is in connection with their work: they are either on a job, or on the way to one, and most usually in one or another’s cars. *The Naming of the Dead* is no exception to this, the car being their number one meeting place, followed by each other’s flats or the ‘third-spaces’ of cafes and restaurants. This is also a text in which the solo car journeys of both officers are integral not only to the plot but also to a testing of their relationship: for all the protagonists’ intimacy and ability to read one another’s minds, *The Naming of the Dead* is the novel in which Clarke begins to firmly establish her (professional) independence from Rebus, and the power balance between them shifts perceptibly in ways that both are aware of (Rankin 2006, 26). However, Rankin also uses these solo journeys as an opportunity to explore the pair’s unvoiced feelings for one another, meaning that these ‘driving-events’ (Pearce 2016, 23-30) are ultimately as important as the ones they travel together in moving both the plot and the relationship on. In this article, however, I focus not on the significance of driving to the development of the relationship but rather the ‘micro-mobilities’ of Clarke and Rebus in the domestic and ‘third’ spaces which they also inhabit. As noted in the opening comments, one of the three main concepts underpinning my analysis here is the cultural geographer, David Seamon’s, work on the significance of space, place and movement in everyday life. Most significant for my purposes is his theorisation of “place-ballet”: a term invented to account for the way in which individuals’ ‘time-space routines’ choreograph with one another in familial, social and public spaces: “Body-ballets and time-space routines mix in a supportive physical environment to create place-ballet — an interaction of many time-space routines and body ballets rooted in space (Seamon 2016, 56)”. This vivid image of how individuals, each marked by their own ‘geography’, are brought together in dynamic patterns of to-ing and fro-ing, interactivity and exchange, echoes Ingold’s concept of the “meshwork” (Ingold 2007) created by “wayfaring” subjects (see discussion following) and serves as a model for how we might begin to map the traces of human relationships at every stage of the lifecourse.

The “place-ballet” of Rebus and Clarke is most evident in Rankin’s descriptions of how they interact, and physically move about one another, in their own homes. In the following extract, we see the two having breakfast together at Clarke’s flat while working on a case:

So he told her about Cafferty, and by the time he was done her plate was empty.

‘He’s the last thing we need,’ she said rising to her feet. Rebus made the beginnings of an offer to clear the table, but she nodded towards the window instead. Smiling, he made his way over and eased it open. Cool air wafted in and he crouched down, lighting up. Made sure to direct the smoke through the gap; held the cigarette out of the window between puffs.

Siobhan’s rules.

(Rankin 2006, 109-10)

On such occasions, the two exhibit all the domestic familiarity of a married-couple as their eating and chat punctuate one another. The one indication that Rebus does not actually live there is his inability to ask Clarke if he can smoke a cigarette; however, the fact that she is aware of this without his asking, is, of course, indicative of the fact that the request has been granted many times before - as is his reciprocating smile. The wider context here is that Rebus knows that Clarke is gaining the upper hand in their professional relationship and, more to the point, is learning not to mind.

“Place-ballet” features again in the novel’s denouement, but this time with an expression of intimacy between Clarke and Rebus that is unusual. Following a bitter argument about the case on which they are working (where Siobhan has put herself at risk of being compromised by the series’ arch-villain, Gerald Cafferty), the two have not spoken for several days (each making their own solo road-trip), and are only reconciled though the intervention of the sort of ‘magical agents’ (see Vladimir Propp 1971) that are more typically found in a fairy tales and popular romance. Reconciled, they head off for dinner to mull over the case and, in the process, enact the role - and, indeed, the mobilities - of any other Saturday night couple:

He could feel eyes following them as he helped her to her feet and out of the bar. There was a sharp breeze and a smattering of rain. ‘Maybe we should go back to yours,’ he suggested. ‘We can phone out for food.’

‘I’m not that drunk!’

‘Fair enough, then.’ They started the steep uphill climb, side by side, not saying anything. Saturday night, the town back to normal: souped-up teenagers in their souped-up cars; money looking for a place to spend itself; the diesel chug of cruising taxi-cabs. At some point, Siobhan snaked her arm through his, said something he didn’t catch.

‘What are you talking about?’ he asked with a smile.

‘The naming of the dead,’ she told him, resting her head upon his shoulder. (Rankin 2006, 503)

Yet because the novel ultimately still belongs to the genre of crime fiction and not romance, this candid - and public - acknowledgement of their relationship, changes nothing. Monday morning sees Rebus travelling to London to take revenge on a brutish security guard without telling Clarke where he is going; while Clarke - unbeknown to Rebus - makes another appointment to see Cafferty. This rhythm - of moments of great intimacy and candour, interspersed with others veiled in well-meaning subterfuge – has, indeed, come to define their twenty-year long relationship. From a mobilities perspective, this means that while the relationship has all the hallmarks of a long and protracted ‘courtship’ in some regards, in others it conforms to the prerogatives of its genre by ensuring that Clarke and Rebus will continue to move around the world, and in and out of one another’s lives, as solo agents.

**Bringing it Home: Analysis and Reflection**

In the book *Lines* (2007), from which I quoted at the beginning of this article, Tim Ingold makes a bold claim not only for the line’s pervasiveness in everyday life but also for the importance of travelling along it in a certain way. In particular, he pits “wayfaring” - a mobility characterised by the subject picking his or her own way through the landscape - against passive “navigation”, whereby we follow pre-determined routes or “threads” (Ingold 2007, 16). For Ingold, indeed, this is a distinction that takes us to the heart of how life should be lived if it is to remain vital and meaningful - and not only for the individual but, more grandly, for the world in general:

“Wayfaring”, I believe, is the most fundamental mode by which living beings, both human and non-human, inhabit the earth. By habitation I do not mean taking one’s place in a world that has been prepared in advance for the populations that arrive to reside there. The inhabitant is rather one who participates from within in the very process of the world’s continual coming into being . . . (Ingold 2007, 83)

“Wayfaring”, thus defined, is a type of mobility - spontaneous, probing, responsive - upon which the creative renewal of all life depends; and it is also, I would contend, a concept that resonates with some - though by no means all - of the courtship mobilities that I have been exploring in this article.

This section of my article therefore compares and contrasts the mobilities practised by Arthur Peck and D.B., Rollo Spencer and Olivia Curtis, John Rebus and Siobhan Clarke, in the light of Ingold’s crucial distinction. To what extent does each of these couples lay down their own ‘line’ in the spirit of Ingold’s “wayfaring”, or, alternatively, follow pre-determined routes and pathways? What are the implications of such choices (both unconscious and conscious) for the relationship concerned? And which geographical factors and/or mobility-events are required to turn a courtship - however defined - into a successful long-term relationship? As noted at the beginning of the article, this is an investigation inspired by the conviction that mobilities are *constitutive* of relationships as well as *consequent* upon them (Holdsworth 2013, 3), and that literary and autobiographical texts are as interesting and important in helping us figure the *materiality* of this proposition as they are in their symbolic and/or metaphorical representations of the significance of space, place and mobility. In addition, the analysis which follows will be structured, in part, by the three vectors - *travelling to,* *travelling from*, and *travelling with* - that have helped organise the preceding discussion, though with the objective of complicating their value and significance in the facilitation of the relationships concerned.

I begin, then, by returning to Arthur Peck’s diary, whose mobilities, it will be recalled, are characterised by a regularity and repetitiveness now alien to large sectors of the world’s population (though by no means all of it). For all its freedom from mechanisation and timetables - those oft-touted harbingers of modernity (Kern 2000) - it is clear that Arthur Peck’s schedule afforded little time for anything resembling Ingold’s “wayfaring”. For while it was most likely Peck’s own ancestors who first laid down the tracks around Hertford that he later treads with D.B., the three-year diary extract bears not a single instance of the couple striking out in a different direction or creating a new pathway for themselves. With working lives that allowed minimal time for recreation, and courtships that had to be incorporated into the daily ‘commute’ to and from work, there was simply not the time or the opportunity to ‘stray’.

So, how might such tightly-structured, destination-oriented travel be seen to impact upon the development of Peck’s and D.B’s relationship? Does the very rhythm and regularity of their walks to and from church, to and from each other’s homes, serve to *grow* intimacy - it is, after all, a relationship characterised by the practice of ‘travelling with’ - or rather to stifle it? The narrative arc of the diary would seem to suggest both. Peck and D.B. clearly *do* get to know each other well in the course of their ‘walking-out’; so well, indeed, that by the end of the three-year period covered by the diary they are interacting like a married couple, even though no wedding day has yet been set. However, as we have already observed, it takes a crisis and temporary estrangement - namely the time Peck spends working in Chelmsford - to move the relationship on and commit the pair to an engagement. And while such a period of separation conforms to the conventions of courtship *fiction*, a cultural geographer’s reading of this critical ‘mobility-event’ would shift attention from its temporal dimension to the way in which it substitutes short-distance, repetitive and often circular walks with much longer ‘migrations’ - often involving different forms of transport. This, in turn, enables us to hypothesise the conditions necessary for the resolution of a successful courtship as *kinetic* - a change of speed, direction and rhythm - rather than simply a period of separation *over time*. To the best of my knowledge, this has yet to be observed in any of the literature on romance fiction even though some critics (Regis 2007; Fletcher et al 2016) have noted the importance of landscapes (both exterior and interior) vis-à-vis the “scene” of romance (Barthes 1979, 192-3).

When we return to the second text I presented here, Rosamund Lehmann’s *The Weather in the Streets*, we find ourselves party to a relationship in which ‘travelling to’ and ‘travelling from’ are the norm, and the mundane, repetitive - even boring - ‘travelling with’ enjoyed by Peck and D.B. an impossible dream. True, certain aspects of Olivia and Rollo’s affair *simulate* this mobility - their restaurant dinners and, most significantly, their rides in the car - but for all the kinetic materiality of the experience it remains a social illusion: ‘travelling with’ Rollo through life is what Olivia desires more than anything else but, sadly, it is never going to happen.

Further, for all its seeming adventures - the impromptu days out, the weekends away - there is no ‘true’ “wayfaring” in this text either. In the same way that their ‘travelling together’ is a simulation, so too is the spirit in which Rollo and Olivia set out for the coast with ‘no plans’ except to “wander till we found somewhere we liked” (Lehmann 1991, 68-9). The network of roads they travel, and the hotels, inns and restaurants where they stay, are policed by any number of people whom they half-expect to bump into, and - at the end of the weekend - there will be another period of temporary separation which, of course, foreshadows the relationship’s demise. For this couple, then, the vectors ‘travelling to’, ‘from’ and ‘with’ are imbricated in the most complex of ways and, for all its apparent spontaneity and freedom, their mobilities - both literal and figurative - are heavily constrained in ways that are not especially ‘enabling’ (see note 3). Around all the comings and goings and cosy car rides is thrown a symbolic line which, in this case, is also a limit-point. Rollo and Olivia can, indeed, drive to the country and lay down their own tracks, but only so far, and only for so long.

A similar line, or limit point, arguably circles the spatial and temporal movements of John Rebus and Siobhan Clarke. Although theirs is not an affair, there are other notable moral and cultural constraints that prevent their intimacy acquiring the public status of a relationship (even though, to all intents and purposes, it is one). As noted previously, the principal constraint is the age difference between the two as well as the professional codes of conduct that seek to keep working relationships distinct from personal ones. In terms of their psychological profiles, the Rebus series also reveals Clarke growing ever more ‘like’ Rebus: a tendency that can mitigate against desire. Yet in the same way that Arthur Peck and D.B.’s daily mobilities reveal them to be operating as a married couple years before they are one, so do the Rebus and Clarke move around one another, and one another’s spaces, with the familiarity of long-term domestic (as well as professional) partners.

In terms of mobility practices, specifically, what the preceding analysis has revealed is that Rebus and Clarke’s relationship combines the sort of local and habitual ‘travelling to’ and ‘travelling from’ that we observed in Peck’s diary (their meetings at various police stations or cafe’s, their visits to one another’s flats) with a great many longer-distance expeditions that bear all the hallmarks of Ingold’s “wayfaring”. Rebus is especially given to taking, or making, routes ‘off the beaten track’ (as demonstrated in this novel in Chapter 3), but their detective work involves both officers following leads, and devising routes, at a whim. As also noted, most of this activity is pursued in one or other of their cars rather than on foot, meaning that their experience of ‘travelling together’ is also one of ‘seeing-the-world’ together. In terms of relationship-building, this rather exceptional mode of automobility - which sees the techniques of “wayfaring” put to the pursuit of criminals - clearly serves to bond the travellers in a unique way. In signal contrast to Peck and D.B., Rebus and Clarke’s everyday life involves them in mobility-events - and, indeed, mobility *decisions* - that are full of excitement, adventure and (by implication) psychological revelation. In the same way that their excursions test their map-reading and route-finding skills, so too do they test - and develop trust in - the relationship. And, because of this, we might expect there to be less need of extraordinary mobility events - i.e., crises and periods of spatial/temporal separation - to move the relationship on.

However, in this novel, Rankin - somewhat unusually - builds an element of flight-separation-resolution into Rebus and Clarke’s relationship: even to the extent that it becomes a storyline in its own right. As discussed earlier, this may be read as a self-conscious *homage* to the romance genre on Rankin’s part; a decision to, for once, indulge his readers’ fascination with the Rebus-Clarke relationship. From a mobilities perspective, meanwhile, it inevitably draws us towards a conclusion that no one type of mobility-practice is ever sufficient to keep a long-term relationship on its toes, or commute an ambiguous involvement into a long term commitment. Even though adventurous “wayfaring” - and its associated risks - is built into Rebus and Clarke’s everyday mobilities, a singular crisis, solo journeys, and a period of separation (in the manner of literary romance) are still required to bring perspective to the relationship and remind them of their need of one another.

**Conclusion**

Through its close readings of three texts featuring the progress of intimate relationships in which mobility plays a central role, this article has sought to contribute to recent debates on the ways in which the geographical mapping of the mobilities practised by friends, family and partners reveals a great deal about how intimacy is generated, nurtured, sustained and memorialised (Thien 2017; Bissell 2013; Cronin 2014, 2015 [re. friendship]; Maddrell 2013, 2015, 2016 [re. mourning]). To date, much of the sociological literature on ‘mobile lives’ has focused on the ways in which the hyper-mobility and technological revolution associated with the twenty-first century is fundamentally altering the way in which the globe-trotting classes conduct their relationships and, in particular, how they have adapted to “living apart together” (Levin 2004; Elliott and Urry 2009). Other scholars, such as Clare Holdsworth (2013) and Lesley Murray and Susan Robertson (2016) have investigated the complex (and often non-linear) mobilities associated with transitional phases in the lifecourse (e.g. courtship, leaving home, moving in with someone and the mobilities associated with ageing). Their studies have been important in moving us towards a recognition of the *formative* role of mobility across the generations in social and ideological terms (e.g. unequal distributions of power (Murray and Robertson 2016, 6)), but have not considered the generative role of mobility at the micro-level of the emotions themselves as I have done. As outlined in the introduction, this realisation presented itself to me through a triangulation of the work of Tim Ingold, David Seamon and Henri Bergson; their common interest in the role patterns of movement play in the formation of both communities and the individual life led me to hypothesise that love-relationships, too, must be centrally dependent upon the mobilities by which they are repetitively inscribed for their special (and, indeed, memorable) qualities. The legacy of this can be seen in the role of ‘return journeys’ in subsequent memorialising practices (be this in the context of anniversaries and special occasions, mourning and bereavement (Wylie 2009; Maddrell 2013, 2015) or simply the everyday rituals by which we mark our bonds with significant others (see Pearce forthcoming).

What the indicative readings performed here have made strikingly visible, meanwhile, is the very different “mobility diagrams” (Bissell 2013:352) which distinguish and come to characterise relationships. A mapping of the journeys undertaken by Peck and D.B., Rollo and Olivia, Rebus and Clarke, shows that while some relationships evolve through the simple ‘to and fro’ of the partners, others depend upon the convergence of both at a rendezvous, or, indeed, the long-established courtship ritual whereby one partner collects the other and takes them to a public space (restaurant, cinema, museum) where they can (paradoxically) be ‘alone together’. Common to all these models is, however, a rhythm of reunion and separation that is not only spatial and temporal but also dependent upon an interval (and mode) of transport. Given the heightened sense of expectation that accompanies desire (see Barthes 1979, 37-40), it is therefore not surprising that these solo journeys to/from the significant other survive as vivid memories for the subjects concerned. However, as Bissell (2007) observes, “pointillist” mobility-diagrams of this kind (which show two individuals coming together in a single space/time) lose their destination-oriented linearity once an element of repetition is introduced and may be expected to impress themselves upon a long-term relationship as a circuit, or loop, which then serves to tighten the knot of intimacy.

As well as demonstrating the patterns of movement courting couples perform as they move to and from one another, the textual analysis performed here also foregrounds the significance of shared mobility - what I refer to as ‘travelling with’ - in characterising a relationship. This is seen both in terms of power-inscribed decision-making processes (e.g., choice of route; caution vs. adventure) and the powerful sensory, aesthetic and embodied experiences of ‘travelling with’ a loved one on journeys both habitual and exceptional. In the case of the nineteenth-century stonemason, Arthur Peck, and his fiancé D.B., such journeys were very much part of their everyday lives and consisted entirely of Peck walking D.B. home, going to chapel, or ‘commutes’ to the place of D.B.’s work. As with the pair’s solo journeys, these expeditions may be thought of as both linear and circular on account of the repetition, but Peck’s journal records no occasions whatsoever of the pair leaving the ‘beaten track’ to engage in mobilities akin to Ingold’s “wayfaring”. Because of the diary’s functional form, there is little means of deducing how the aesthetics and atmospheres of these walks contributed to embodied experience of the courtship, but we can be assured that they will have been woven into the fabric of the couple’s later life.

In contrast to these daily rhythms and routines, Rollo and Olivia’s affair in *The Weather in the Streets* could be seen to be characterised by *arrhythmia* (see Edensor 2014). Because of the clandestine nature of the relationship it is never certain when (or where) the couple will next meet, with the time in-between assuming the quality of suspended dis-reality for Olivia. The couple certainly do ‘travel with’ one another - near and far - but what might, on the surface, appear like spontaneous “wayfaring” is often an excursion devised to hide the couple from the gaze of people they know. The long-term ‘special friendship’ of Clarke and Rebus, meanwhile, combines elements of both Peck and D.B’s diurnal rhythms and the ‘one-off’ journeys and ‘adventures’ that Olivia lived for. Conceived as a mobility-diagram, the intersecting lines traced by the two officers’ lives are rich and complex, encompassing both their solo journeys and those they make together in pursuit of criminals. The rhythm of the everyday thus vies with the unpredictability of their not knowing (quite literally) where the next crime will take them; as ‘free-spirits,’ both relish this opportunity for adventure, with Rebus, in particular, always looking for an opportunity to get ‘off the beaten track’. Spanning two decades, this fictional couple’s shared travels - mostly by car - have come to epitomise the relationship, with the landscape viewed through the windscreen (mostly Scotland’s ‘central belt’) closely aligned with their psyches. This said, the “place-ballet” of Rebus and Clarke incorporates the whole of Edinburgh and its environs as their lives weave in and out of numerous public and domestic spaces (as discussed above): often together - but equally often apart.

As well as arguing for the foundational role of mobility in the generation of intimate relationships during the courtship process, this paper has also reflected upon whether certain mobility patterns, and practices, are more likely than others to foster the transition to a ‘successful’ long-term relationships. While it is impossible to extend such speculation to the social realm without further research, the long-standing assumption within the literary and philosophical tradition that the trajectory of love is *always* dependent upon a period of *temporal* separation does, I feel, warrant the supplementary hypothesis that spatial exploration (both exceptional and everyday), and the mobilities deployed to facilitate it, is of equal significance. However, rather than proposing that any one journey or mobility type is of most importance in this regard (be this the quest of romantic legend or Ingold’s “wayfaring”), the textual readings performed here highlight the importance of variety and contrast. Most obviously, this acknowledges the importance of daily commutes as well as spontaneous adventure as a means of getting to know someone; yet it may also be seen to speak to the way in which we require counterpoint - in our mobilities as in everything else - in order to make the richness of the material and symbolic ground on which our relationships depend visible. Public promenades, private strolls, epic adventures and scenic road-trips all, arguably, play their part; as do the solo journeys partners make when meeting and leaving one another. Taken together, these mobile practices - and the landscapes through which they pass - become the blueprint by which a relationship is defined and the means by which it evolves and endures.

**Notes**

1 “Geographies of Love”: This phrase is also used by John Wylie’s in an article from 2009. However, its use there (i.e. as a mark of the impossibility of recapturing the presence of our lost loved ones through memorials in the landscape), is very different to my own. Here I wish simply to signal the way in which our interpersonal relationships are produced through spatiality and mobility, as well as temporality, and may be mapped.

2 See my new book project (Pearce forthcoming), *Mobility, Memory and the Lifecourse in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture* which has a chapter on the link between mobility and memory and memorial practices of different kinds (i.e., not simply in the context of mourning).

3 Thanks to David Bissell for alerting me to Brian Massumi’s concept of the ‘enabling constraint’ which speaks to the ways in which the very ‘boundedness’ of Arthur Peck’s and D.B.’s mobilities was productive and defining of their rural working-class relationship, in contrast to some rather less ‘enabling’ limit-points in the intimacies between Rollo and Olivia and Rebus and Clarke.

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