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Designing Retracement:  
Evaluating National Historic Trails as artifact, strategy, and experiment in flow

by

Evan Scott Elder

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:  
Professor Louise Mazingo, Chair  
Professor Andrew Shanken  
Professor Michael Southworth

Summer 2020

Designing Retracement:

Evaluating National Historic Trails as artifact, strategy, and experiment in flow

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Evan Scott Elder

Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning

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Professor Louise Mazingo, Chair

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This dissertation investigates the concept of cultural routes, how they are planned, designed and developed as a unique type of landscape-based memorial/narrative project, and, as they ultimately present a possibility of travel, what sort of experience in mobility they afford a user. Cultural routes, taken globally, represent a broad and diffuse field of scholarship and an even broader physical setting. Therefore, this work considers specifically the case of cultural routes projects of the US National Park Service (NPS), the National Historic Trails System. The nineteen such National Historic Trails (NHT) in the NPS portfolio represent more than 37,500 miles of linear territory and are overseen by multiple US governmental agencies and citizen interest groups. However, the NHT are most often invisible to the eye and only loosely understood insofar as how this immense undertaking and those who “use” them are to activate the landscapes at hand. Almost no scholarship exists to look directly at the NHT despite their clear investment in the overlapping fields of landscape and public history.

This dissertation first attempts to situate the NHT within larger, established frames: the landscape Picturesque, pilgrimage and the anthropology of tourism, historical retracement, and the advent of neoliberal dynamics in historic narrative creation and the institutional approach to landscape and meaning-making. To draw these investigations together, an overarching theoretical framework of mobility geography emerges: the NHT are an unseen provider of a specific type of mobility. Therefore, in order to both test and synthesize the NHT, the aforementioned historical interrogations



serve as a foundation for an experimental-method-driven attempt to capture the mobile experience.

In addition to a utilization of traditional methods of landscape history, this project proposes and reflexively tests its own experimental method, "hodology." A convergence of other tools available for the research of cultural landscape phenomena, drawing from mobility geography, anthropology of pilgrimage, tourism and embedded ethnography, hodology goes one step further by integrating emerging geolocation technologies while simultaneously considering their own role in the design and experience of the NHT themselves.

The resulting research draws together disparate chapters in landscape history to reveal of what NHT are actually comprised. The synthesis offered by the hodological analysis builds upon this and represents a preliminary effort in capturing what the NHT offer as a mobility. However, operating within a wider gap in scholarship, it is the critique of this new method that serves as a building block for further focus and study, applicable to the expanding field of cultural route study and design. Critically, hodology places landscape architecture in a central position with respect to this field and its overlap with mobility geography.

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This project is therefore dedicated to Moji (1954-2013). Without her force of originality and originality of force, I truly don't know who I would have become. Her death provided the shock and spark to re-question my course and get back to work.

I would also like to thank a few of the other key disruptor/educators encountered along the way: Stan Heard, Alison Snyder and Suenn Ho (don't worry, I don't expect any of you to remember me). Also to thank, a disruptor/designer, John Fraser, who provided another pivotal exposure to a new, paradigm-shattering world of synthetic design, art and research, as well as the opportunity for lunch with the hippos for a summer.

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## Introduction

*“Hodology is part geography, part planning, and part engineering—engineering as in construction, and unhappily as in social engineering as well. That is why the discipline has a brilliant future.”*

-J.B. Jackson, “Roads Belong in the Landscape,” *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*, 1994

I embarked on this study of trails after finding that my apartment in the Hayes Valley neighborhood of San Francisco sat upon some sort of mapped, sinuous strip designating one of many parks within the National Park Service system. It is significant that I had already lived there for eight years before gaining awareness of this presence. The physical environment offered no cues, so I had to learn that I lived *on* a park from an NPS interactive website. This “park” under me was actually a “trail,” appearing to stretch from the northern tip of my city some twelve hundred miles southeast to the Mexican border in Arizona. Intrigued, I gathered information, volunteered in this trail’s administrative office, and centered this dissertation topic on my findings. Those findings have never led to a tidy, centered body of scholarship or “inside field” to lean upon; the characteristics of that trail, the manner of memorialization, of the agency that created it, the eighteen other trails included in the National Parks Services’ system, and the tools developed to explain and expand them exist on the periphery of other scholarly topics.

My initial fascination with the trail underneath my house is traceable to my years spent studying urban design. Rather than the traditional school of thought embracing traditional, pre-World War 2 urbanism, emphasizing street sections and block proportions, my education had tilted towards issues of the metropolis, its scale, and interconnectivity, to globalization, economics, and narratives of urban competitiveness. From these angles, urban design is a study of interfaces and reciprocities: “the city” is the entirety of culture, webs, and interplays across all inhabited territory, distances, and

intensities long and short. The method of capturing even a fraction of this complexity is that of mapping, and the registration is that of flows. The concepts of sociologists Saskia Sassen and Manuel Castells<sup>1</sup>, for instance, imagining the real spaces of the global city, at once specific and generic, fixed place and streaming connection, borne of flow, all seemed to translate fairly easily into research/design work by the likes of Rem Koolhaas.<sup>2</sup> To design art for this metropolitan context was to create various registrations of assorted flows, creating from them “armatures” of “interventions” as well as “infrastructures” of “mobile network interchange.” As students, we all drank deeply from this well. As employed urban designers answering to the needs of a capitalist real estate sector, the well ran dry. My discovery of an NPS Trail beneath my house strongly suggested that something might be flowing again; this trail was undeniably a real design project seeking to take information from a mapping project and create a registration of a flow within real space.

As I quickly learned, specifically, this flow beneath my house was a registration of the overland northbound journey of Juan Bautista de Anza and several hundred settlers. The mapping project undergirding the design was the product of Anza’s own documentation cross-referenced by that of two accompanying catholic priests, then synthesized and published by a prolific historian. The design project was instigated by impassioned public interest, engaged and formalized by the National Park Service. To my eye, this was not quite as seductive as the armatures of my past, but REAL—an actual case, calling for study. Actual, but nearly invisible; a formal plan and effort with little material product. There was plenty of narrative, webpages, curriculum, and pageantry affiliated with the trail project, but as my own house would attest, scant and ambiguous manifestations on the ground, in lived space. What seemed the most clear from this beginning was that the design project, if it was about space at all, was about suggesting and facilitating a movement through space, simultaneously within the imagination as well as bodily, long-distance, across the vastness of the landscape.

The NPS Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (NHT), as well as the eighteen other NHT park units in the NPS portfolio, are unique as mobility design projects, historically based and more abstract than infrastructural. The NPS manages them underneath the same umbrella as other National Trails (three categories: Scenic, Recreational, and Historic), all unofficially drawing upon the famed Appalachian Trail concept for validity and reference. But, by any physical/literal footpath or long-distance roadway typology, the NHTs are not trails at all. No other effort matches the historic trails’ length and scope, nor their blurry mission and execution (and it is undeterminable whether they are achieving any set objectives). Therefore this effort is to know them by intersecting a scholarly tracing the history of their introduction and an experimental tracing of the mobility and spatiality they produce.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*; Sassen, *Global Networks, Linked Cities*; Sassen, “The Global City.”

<sup>2</sup> Koolhaas, *The Generic City*, 1995.

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To think, design, analyze, interpret, or critique mobility is to perform a difficult contortion, away from the primacy of place in our lived framework. Basic movement can be discussed, even empirically, as something that occurs as a result of velocity, frequency, energy spent, etc., but once abstract qualities such as intention or culture enter the equation, the tendency is to refocus on what is stationary, to peel back the layers and look at “what happens here.” Mobility eschews the “here.” It upends how we know where to look for meaning, and it is frustrating. To reduce it to something nodal, even multinodal, a set of attractors and push/pull reactions is to ignore a substantial chapter of human experience. Relegating the infinite circumstances of mobility to a lacuna of “betweenness” has represented more than a gap in scholarship, rather a gap in thought for a lengthy period, at least here in the West. This has begun to change, possibly brought on by the impossible-to-ignore frenzied state of globalized interconnection; the spotlight is dragged away from the comfort of place so as to showcase mobility on equal footing. But predictably the results are hard to follow. Interrogation frequently turns to mapping, a highly useful but abstracted and stationary endeavor. Mapping, so far, has disconnected mobility study from knowing the narrative or logic systems, perhaps indigeneity, of the mobility-maker in favor of the map-maker. Again, this is changing and the emerging toolbox is increasingly digital, sometimes referred to as Geospatial Narration, and falls foremost in the hands of geographers. There is an older mechanism by which to study certain mobilities, prefiguring Geospatial-anything—a seldom-used term: hodology—the study of paths. Hodology might be viewed as the essential curiosity required to scuttle *Here* and *There* and *Place*, to unpack the intertwined system and experience of the movement they require to interrelate and coexist. It is circuitry on its own terms.

There may be potential in hodological study to unite a grand arc of mobilities from thought sequences in psychology to black holes in quantum physics, but to begin, this project aims to situate human mobility as core within socially produced movement. This is to say that the focus is on movement as it conflates with meaning, building spaces of future movement that overlap with relationships, knowledge, cultural practice, etc. Lest this only suggest a view to a yet-unwritten future, we can also utilize such a hodology to consider mobilities of the past and chart an idea of growth into a truth about spatial practice and subsequent human experience.

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The core of this work will be illustrated in Chapter 6, which comprises the methodological experiment and its results. This is organized in three sections: an introduction to my proposed framework for conducting hodological analysis; a critique



of how the method performed as the analysis was being completed; and three case study segments of trail which I have personally retraced as framed by the hodological analysis itself.

Before reaching the experiment in Chapter 6, however, this dissertation unpacks what exactly the NHT are and from what conceptual and theoretical realms they have emerged. The further I looked, the less I found that Saskia Sassen's ideas of the Global<sup>3</sup> and Manuel Castell's evocative suggestions of Flows<sup>4</sup> were producing anything central to the concept of the NHT. Personally this was and is still disappointing, but in other ways revealing and rewarding. The process of interrogating the NHT is, in a way, a "trail" itself—an act of following theoretical breadcrumbs as they each partially reveal the whole of something that is linear, enormous, but scarcely physical at all. The intervening chapters can represent these breadcrumbs, or, seen another way, each is a slice of a long and invisible organism, each revealing an organ, a function, and collectively telling how the organism is actually real.

Chapter 2, *A Continuum of Path*, explores the history of designing mobile experiences. We see the emergence of picturesque values and methods trace into separate areas of landscape design and regional planning, then reconvene in midcentury mobility values and become central to National Park Service vocabulary.

Chapter 3, *Synaptic Pursuits in Search of a Groove*, shifts the analysis to that of the user, of human action. The motivations that convene to enter the landscape, traverse the unfamiliar, repeat the steps of others, find locations and destinations, seem elusive and illogical. The lens of memory studies lends a firmer background to such memorials of movement, and a contemporary evaluation of geolocation gaming technologies reveals how these motivations might begin to be tracked.

Chapter 4, *Retracement*, expands on the concepts of Chapter 3, but places the specific (but consistently ignored) function of retracement into the space of historical research methods. Through the work of historians, the NHT receive their operative narratives. However, the key element of collecting historical and experiential data by physically moving through the space in question is always given short shrift. This particular element, retracement, is the source of significant personal bonds which serve to perpetuate historical research, and create unlikely alliances with the power to forge institutional recognition.

Chapter 5, *Trailing through Neoliberal Territories*, we look at the political climates and institutional contexts that begat and maintain the NHT. The idea of a trail has ricocheted through a postmodern course of creating grand, national narrative celebration and design-by-committee. The result is a perpetual work-in-progress and celebration of

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<sup>3</sup> Sassen, *Global Networks, Linked Cities*; Sassen, "The Global City."

<sup>4</sup> Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*.

grass roots efforts. Within this milieu, the mission becomes cloudy, particularly with regard to NHT in urban settings. Looking to poststructuralist urban theorists, we see the terrain the NHT most clearly fail to recognize, interpret, and narrate, but also better understand the interior contours of the failure itself.

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This work ultimately draws from several definable areas of thought and associated scholarship and literature.

### **Mobility Paradigm**

Situating the NHT as a type of mobility project is perhaps to invite controversy; as my research progressed it seemed increasingly clear that the NPS itself does not place mobility concepts as a particularly high or coherent priority. However I contend that this factor is so central the premise, narrative, and understood use of NHT, that, for this body of scholarship, it takes the leading role. I also contend that the weakest aspects of the NHT as executed stem from a reticence to see, prioritize and design for this factor, purposefully engaging the landscape and imagination in service of creating new, didactic terrain in the consumption of mobilities.

To understand the academic space of “mobility studies” or “mobility geography,” we should give credit to several historical turns, keeping the premise of the NHT in mind. Dating back at least to Ibn Khaldun there have existed theories on the duality between conditions of settlement vs. nomadism as primary to all that is social.<sup>5</sup> History, in its broadest sense, rises from this tension. The transition to increasingly sedentary, stable populations may have given rise to much of the infrastructure needed develop institutions, including academia, and absorbed the majority of focus. Despite the primary foci of study revolving around fixed units (nations, regions, etc.), disconnected research on the non-static has concentrated on conditions and patterns such as transport or migration. Sociologist Georg Simmel’s pioneering work interrogating life in the modern metropolis of the early 1900s moved urban mobility into a academically central position and thus laid groundwork for ideas on movement to coalesce.<sup>6</sup> Currently the intellectual commons is established around the term “mobilities,” suggesting an inclusivity and opportunity to compare and overlap. Topics of research within this area range widely from global flows of travel or freight to the migratory patterns of the aged as they approach end of life. Tracking intangible flows of meaning qualifies as well. This area is primarily within the territory of geographers (Tim Cresswell, John Urry, and Mimi Sheller are identifiable leading figures<sup>7</sup>) but there is a

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<sup>5</sup> Cresswell, *Geographic Thought: A Critical Introduction*.

<sup>6</sup> Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life."

<sup>7</sup> Sheller and Urry, "The New Mobilities Paradigm."

small overlap with landscape studies viewing landscapes of mobility as its own subarea. This might include the obvious “non-space” spaces of airport runways or the nuanced pathways of sleeping patterns amongst the homeless. Cresswell summarizes “Culture, we are told, no longer sits in places, but is hybrid, dynamic—more about routes than roots.”<sup>8</sup>

The mobility turn is mostly ahistorical. Contemporary, of-the-minute conditions of mobility are favored as are scenarios with ample overlap from virtual space or GIS-enabled analysis. Hodology, as proposed herein, requires an integration of past/repeated experience or an imposed interpretation mechanism. Tim Cresswell perhaps foresaw some of these factors finding limited support within the mobility paradigm he has been building and recently proposed a framework for a “politics of mobility.” This aims to structure a discussion on issues of “classes, genders, ethnicities, nationalities, and religious group...” with mobility lying at the heart.<sup>9</sup> Without a deliberate means of looking to the past and present simultaneously, ideologies, embodiments and visualizations of various 21st century mobilities fail to cohere. He frames the question thusly:

1. Why does a person or thing move?
2. How fast does a person or thing move?
3. In what rhythm does a person or thing move?
4. What route does it take?
5. How does it feel?
6. When and how does it stop?

These questions appear simplistic but they set up a consistent set of factors by which to observe equity, evolution, agency, and, perhaps most central to a hodological framework, channeling. Cresswell explains of question number four: “Routes provide connectivity that in turn transform topographical space in topological and indeed, dromological space.”<sup>10</sup> (The “dromological” is a useful subcomponent here. Coined by Paul Virilio, he defines this as “science or logic of speed:” the rate of passage changes that which passes, and increased speed through space implies increased control of space.<sup>11</sup>) Once the constituent parts of this framework have been explored then historical and political perspective can begin to take shape. The chasms between transport, migration or daily mobilities cease to separate them as comparable practices. Likewise, precedent builds into present case studies and vice versa.

As a lens, mobilities ultimately offer a useful frame through which to interrogate the otherwise slippery instances of, for instance, picturesque tourism, pilgrimage, or retracement, that the NHTs hazily embody. As well, the lived experience of following

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<sup>8</sup> Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*.

<sup>9</sup> Cresswell, “Towards a politics of mobility,” 21.

<sup>10</sup> Cresswell, “Towards a politics of mobility,” 23.

<sup>11</sup> Virilio, *Speed and Politics*.

and analyzing any of the NHTs as a route or spatial corridor necessarily sets the researcher squarely inside the framework of mobility studies.

### **Imaginaries and Pilgrimages**

At times frustratingly, the NHTs offer significantly less physical presence than one might hope. Much of the physical space that any of their mapped corridors delineate are just that: space. The presence of the Anza Trail beneath my house went unnoticed by me for years until a map on a website alerted me. Once informed, this idea of a trail existed mainly in the mind. Similarly, reason for its being exists to provide a chapter of historical narrative to the overarching metanarratives of US nationhood, migration, Spanish colonialism, Mexican heritage, etc. To explore the intertie between these imagined states of belief/being and the motivation to physically move one's self through space to a new location (a mobility) based upon them, the concept of the Imaginary proves useful. Complementarily, the more familiar concept of pilgrimage actually nests within the framework of the Imaginary, shedding light upon both the elusive motivations behind pilgrimage as well as that which is produced by the act of pilgrimage and its inherent repetition.

Humans ascribe a personal vocabulary of meaning or value to landscapes through experience. Often a new or repeated experience during childhood might lead to a lifelong and direct connection between certain landscape characteristics or a specific place and memory in the form of sense or narrative. But this scenario exists first only in the mind's eye, then potentially expands to a collective value—a “bottom-up” paradigm. Ideas about how landscape should be seen, felt, or read can also emerge from a “top-down” mechanism whereby culture, and institutions within, suggest and then construct new frames of meaning with a certain end goal. The new frame can be considered an *Imaginary*, a concept first introduced by Benedict Anderson as a tool for exploring the mechanisms utilized to form nations out of diffuse communities, a core function of Modernity.<sup>12</sup> The Imaginary, according to Anderson, can be traced at least three centuries through history, is linked to the emergence of the “print economy,” and is itself an artifact. At the very least it is “socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and that are used as meaning- making and world-shaping devices”.<sup>13</sup> One can easily imagine that such a device would prove critical in wedding together unprecedentedly vast territories, convincing the diverse communities within that they were now in some way one people. Imaginaries are inextricably linked to mechanisms of power. Of course the example of the creation of France is rife with nation-making Imaginaries ranging from the abstract, sensory value of terroir in culinary culture<sup>14</sup> to the interlocking places and economic

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

<sup>13</sup> Salazar, "Imaginary, tourism," 864.

<sup>14</sup> Guy, *When Champagne Became French*.

value of the Canal du Midi seen as part of French National material culture.<sup>15</sup> This latter example suggests that Imaginaries may be place-based or spatial, a scenario better settled within Human Geography than Political Science. Also, as Imaginaries proved useful in nation-formation they were widely employed within the framework of colonialism and are a key concept within Edward Said's theories of Orientalism.<sup>16</sup> Newly established nations and their surrogate colonies required transmittable belief systems so as to merge the benefits of unity with those of otherness. On yet another level, nations and their empires utilized Imaginaries to transmit beliefs to other nations and empires. And lastly, dominant nations may impose Imaginaries upon subjugated ones, recasting their belief schemas both globally and internally, reconstructing otherness in a mold helpful to them. These means of contact and the human experience surrounding such a mediated otherness is central to the field of anthropology, in particular the study of tourism.<sup>17</sup> A key question repeatedly emerges as to how Imaginaries may prove reifying—the feedback loop from constructed, imposed belief systems invariably alter original beliefs. The experience of landscape-as-place formed internally and experientially merges with imposed beliefs, messages, and narratives.

### **Non-representational Theory**

Building upon the difficulty presented by the relative non-physicality of the Imaginary, it is helpful to recognize that many of the NPS park units are dedicated to something which is significant historically but physically gone, lost, or completely in the past. For instance, the site of Gettysburg Battle is now a well-recognized NPS national historic park, visited by millions, but it is also an ordinary series of rolling farm fields and woodlands. All of the subsequent statuary, visitor centers, archeological projects, interpretive material and lived history events serve to create various accessible representations of an important reality that does not offer its own representation. All intangible heritage projects operate somewhere within this conundrum: how to best add representation while not obliterating the qualities of absence and ordinariness that the present place, space or landscape inherently provides. The space, on its own, is empty but somehow charges with its own value, and we lack the tools and vocabulary to describe or analyze this important attribute.

Nigel Thrift sets forth a theory of the Nonrepresentational, proposing ways of better describing and locating meaning in that which is not there.<sup>18</sup> The non-representational borrows from ideas of affect, suggesting inroads to several areas of critical theory, but ultimately remains helpful to consideration of landscape-related topics by privileging latent dynamics to be interrogated within physical material or space over behavior or identity. Expanding and distilling Thrift's premise, Hayden Lorimer provides an introductory framework of three categories:

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<sup>15</sup> Mukerji, *Impossible Engineering*.

<sup>16</sup> Said, *Orientalism*.

<sup>17</sup> Graburn, "The Anthropology of Tourism."

<sup>18</sup> Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

1. Events and Auras: “currently considered as a means to apprehend the provisional, immaterial dimensions of social life”
2. Rhythms and Cycles: “binding themes for work that tracks the timings of life according to passages, episodes, echoes, movements, intervals, rotas and repetitions”
3. Flows and Codes: “takes notice of how spaces for living are being understood as ever more ‘on the go’, and life itself an entity programmable into new biophysical formats.”<sup>19</sup>

Taken in total, it highlights the interpolated, allows for instinct, and emphasizes the oft-repetitive actions of the “everyday.” The role of mobility in “reading” these types of non-elements is privileged, actually validating the potential for seeing/sensing via motion over the potential while stationary. Mobility surmounts place, a rare advantage for this project in particular.

Thrift’s work is challenging and experimental, phenomenological and drawing from a lineage of poststructuralist philosophies.<sup>20</sup> It is wide-open to criticism but proposes a potentially useful lens through which to observe the many qualitative factors of a hodological study. Paths are amongst the most ephemeral spaces knowable; only occasionally concretized into roads or recorded in maps. Even once physical or representative, paths poorly communicate the volume of their use or the experiential variety of the users. This notion is beginning to blend with the presence of the digital and a landscape scale, viewing the proliferation of app-based field and flows of information that guide, inform, geolocate, track, and re-represent users within the landscape.<sup>21</sup> The potential that the system itself absorbs the patterns of use and, cyclically, place absorbs the patterns created by the system, makes for a quantifiable means of measuring the non-representational. In the circumstance of ephemerality and invisibility in landscape-shaping forces, non-representational theory at least partially bridges this divide.

### **Archival and Ethnographic Research**

The work herein depends significantly on archival research, my own and that of others. Most obviously, I owe a debt of gratitude to the Bancroft Library at University of California, Berkeley as well as to a variety of archives within the NPS and affiliated trail associations. While the Bancroft represents an enormous and powerful institution, most other archives used are less formalized collections and access depends on personal relationships and casual negotiations. These less formal record collections and the passionate volunteers who manage them fail to get an adequate credit for their years of commitment; hopefully this project can illuminate some of this value.

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<sup>19</sup> Lorimer, “Cultural Geography,” 89.

<sup>20</sup> Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

<sup>21</sup> Speed and Shingleton, “The Landscape as Database.”

Subsequently, this work references secondary source material essential to both the significant, extant body of trail literature, as well as historians and anthropologists providing critical synthetic insights on the topic. Civil War-era authors, most illustriously Colonel Henry Inman, brought the narrative of various pioneer trails into the popular imagination through heroic prose and dogged research, compiling hundreds of informal collections of diaries and mappings. A few generations into the future, scholarship has shifted and focused on the creation of American institutions, including the NPS. Ample research since the 1960s has illuminated various phases of institutional evolution and specific chronologies of NPS subunits, the political contortions and reformations, etc.; this body of scholarship forms another foundation upon which my work is constructed. While scholarship specifically focusing upon the NPS is relatively plentiful and locatable, it is divergent and uneven. This illuminates an institutionalized mission that has taken on an increasing number of social agendas. Some, such as ecological management, are thoroughly documented and critically analyzed. Others, such as intangible heritage, are widely discussed but veer towards program and curriculum, analyzed for value as success or failure in cognitive or emotional response. Frequently, scholarship focusing on topical areas such as the displacement of native peoples will, for example, delve into the Trail Of Tears NHT, but one quickly finds that this work circumvents any critical gaze at the landscape, spatial system, or experience, in favor of the craft of the narrative or acceptance of the idea of atonement into popular culture. A great deal of NPS-centric literature documents policy shifts. Very little focuses on trails and less, still, on the abstract NHTs.

Lastly, while this work is not a full ethnography, I gathered much information and insight through long-form interviews. I am grateful for the time taken by many trail-affiliated people for explaining historical sequences, insightful anecdotes, managerial evolutions and protocols, and future plans and hopes. Critically I have attempted to balance this sort of information given with a detailed explanation of the human being imparting it to me. I ask of their motivations, memories, relationships, and the sociospatial context in which they work and form opinions. In the absence of much material evidence, physical design, or discernable spatial products, in the spirit of Latour's Actor-Network Theory, these human makers and users emerge as near-literal trail elements.<sup>22</sup>

The ethnographic methods adhered to reflect the Extended Case Method (ECM), a contribution to this methodological field by sociologist Michael Burawoy. ECM creates a new approach ethnographic field work with greater depth as an "extended case," deeply invested in ethnographic work and expectation of open-ended results.<sup>23</sup> The Extended Case Method begins with a case study but then presumes a pronounced duration and participation by the analyst. This upends every tenet of positivist research and qualifies itself as highly experimental. It prioritizes "reflexivity" as a way to

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<sup>22</sup> Latour, *Reassembling the Social*.

<sup>23</sup> Burawoy, "The Extended Case Method."

interrogate systems and institutions, how they evolve, learn or fail, over packaged instances and analyses of reality limited to the contemporary moment. Burawoy explains:

rather than arguing that there is one model of science that is best carried out with reflexive awareness, I propose a methodological duality, the coexistence of and interdependence of two models of science—positive and reflexive. Where positive science proposes to insulate subject from object, reflexive science elevates dialogue as its defining principle and intersubjectivity between participant and observer, knowledge and social situation and its field of location, folk theory and academic theory. The principles of this reflexive science can be derived from the context effects that pose as impediments to positive science.<sup>24</sup>

Simply stated, my role as researcher, interviewer and traveler are reassessed in this work to be non-neutral. I affect this system by operating within it; this is unavoidable and not to be seen a detriment. My presence, contribution, and duration are treated as a given, reflexively analyzed parallel to all other data and observation. And my participation in the mobility of the trails themselves must be considered as both analysis and input, simultaneously.

### **Basics/Foundations of Hodology Method** (expanded upon in Chapter 6)

Building on this ECM platform, I am a participant and agent by operating within this research domain as well as within physical space and the ongoing design processes giving form and meaning to the NHTs. Therefore, as stated previously a key component to this work is a test of an experiment in method. Here I have created a means of gathering information on the space and experience of a route by following and observing the space, interrogating elements alongside institutional overlays, eventuating in a new, informed awareness from which to encapsulate the “whole.” I have named this method “hodology,” in reference to J.B. Jackson’s use of the same word.<sup>25</sup> I will explain the process, background, intention, and results in Chapter 6. To introduce this experimental method in advance, however, it is important to briefly situate it with regard to the aforementioned areas of theory and literature, to validate the potential utility of this un-established analytical practice.

MOBILITY - As I am proposing it, hodological study seems to belong somewhere within this mobility paradigm (or “turn”), regardless of whichever academic discipline might be pursuing it. One likely productive subtlety to note is that the work of mobility scholars often spatializes mobilities into “constellations” rather than lone routes. The suggestion is that that which we identify as a “route” does not exist in isolation and proposes to

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<sup>24</sup> Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*, 39.

<sup>25</sup> Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*.



presume complexity rather than to reduce and clarify. Landscape architecture has been slow to embrace this level of sociospatial complexity on its own terms. The Landscape Urbanism sub-movement attempts to integrate into design what could be seen as constellatory dynamics as metropolitan realities such as transportation circuits, economics of freight and toxic remediation become part of the design brief.<sup>26</sup> This endeavor has by no means been universally successful in design or scholarship. Hodology, by contrast, might subtly focus study on one pathway and the constellation secondarily. It could lend an element of grounding clarity useful to design thinking overlooked by the purely academic mobility theorists of other disciplines. Another challenge for landscape studies is that the condition of mobility itself easily slips from grasp once attention turns to the system that enables it. If it is to succeed as a subset of landscape study, hodology must find a way to bring this into balance: the path, its space and elements weigh evenly with the state of moving through, simultaneously accepting guidance and creating.

THE IMAGINARY - Hodology enters the paradigm of the Imaginary when any instance of mobility is fitted with a narrative or belief system that stretches beyond the base purpose of transit. (This is not to minimize the sophistication of mobilities serving only the purpose of transit; even the simplest animal trail from home to food source includes a great deal of information and logic specific to its builders.) Perhaps the clearest instance can be seen in the figure of the pilgrim, imbuing the route and the activity of walking it with sacred meaning to be found at the end or along the way. A pilgrimage, though a concept older than that of the Imaginary, situates both the actor (pilgrim) and the network (pilgrimage route) outside of everyday life. It intertwines mobility, repetition, and memory to landscape in a way that prefigures the creation of nations, but spreads an Imaginary based in religion across territory. The pilgrim is not the only actor in the system; all stationary populations along the path interacting with pilgrims are in reciprocity with the feat of mobility being undertaken. Pilgrims travel out of belief and memory of scripture as much as memory of previous pilgrimages, thus stepping directly into the historic Imaginary at hand.

THE NON-REPRESENTATIONAL - Hodological instances are imbued with an indefinable quality of similar actions that have taken place in space, but left little or no evidence. Non-representational theory allows for the possibility of “things” without any tangible, visible, or material (representational) presence to animate space. Non-representational theory underscores the critical role of mobility within space as something of a creative act, an occurrence which necessarily leaves an invisible but real and cumulative trace.

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In 2008, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) set forth a new agenda and global charter focused on cultural routes.<sup>27</sup> This indicates the growing

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<sup>26</sup> Lyster, “Infrastructural Cartography: Drawing the Space of Flows.”

<sup>27</sup> ICOMOS, “ICOMOS Charter.” [https://www.icomos.org/charters/culturalroutes\\_e.pdf](https://www.icomos.org/charters/culturalroutes_e.pdf)

interest in such overlap of memory and routes as a firm frontier in what they label the “macrostructure of heritage.” This charter calls for four principal objectives:

- To establish the basic principles and methods of research specific to the category of Cultural Routes as they relate to other previously established and studied categories of cultural heritage assets.
- To propose the basic mechanisms for the development of knowledge about, evaluation, protection, preservation, management, and conservation of Cultural Routes.
- To define the basic guidelines, principles, and criteria for correct use of Cultural Routes as resources for sustainable social and economic development, respecting their authenticity and integrity, appropriate preservation and historical significance.
- To establish the bases for national and international cooperation that will be essential for undertaking research, conservation and development projects related to Cultural Routes, as well as the financing required for these efforts.<sup>28</sup>

Setting out to find “Defining elements of Cultural Routes: context, content, cross-cultural significance as a whole, dynamic character, and setting,” the charter makes three assertions, attempting to solidify this dynamic character:

1. The dynamic of a Cultural Route does not obey natural laws or casual phenomena, but rather exclusively human processes and interests, and is therefore understandable only as a cultural phenomenon.
2. This vital fluid of culture is manifested not only in material or tangible aspects, but also in the spirit and traditions making up the intangible heritage of Cultural Routes.
3. By understanding a Cultural Route as a set of dynamic elements of cultural communication between peoples, its cultural heritage assets can be appreciated in their true spatial and historical dimensions, which allows for a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the conservation of the Route as a whole.<sup>29</sup>

The following chapters seek to add to this area of research as the charter does not delineate HOW to access this particular area of knowledge. My work seeks to establish context and then to truly step into this so-identified “fluid culture,” more than simply observe it. Called out here as a cultural phenomenon, my attempt must necessarily be an experiment, an operational undertaking grasping at the phenomenological. My aim (and faith) is to bind together and capture some of what makes this perplexing “vital fluid” a locatable element for future work to build upon.

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<sup>28</sup> ICOMOS, Charter, 2.

<sup>29</sup> ICOMOS. Charter, 4.

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## A Continuum of Path

### The National Historic Trails as Picturesque Infrastructure

*History is not an account of 'change over time,' as the cliché goes, but rather, change through space. Knowledge of the past, therefore, is literally cartographic: a mapping of the places of history indexed to the coordinates of spacetime.*

- Philip Ethington, *Placing the Past: 'Groundwork' for a Spatial Theory of History*

While the notion of most National Parks conjures up a scenic, fixed site, having boundaries and often set at a distance from urban agglomerations, it is often overlooked that the National Park Service (NPS) ambitiously attempted to diversify from this traditional model during the 1960s and 70s. At first, flush with post-war might, this period of expansion saw a system-wide update, new graphics and some crisp (though controversial) modernist architecture.<sup>1</sup> However, the 1970s was a less rosy period, one where political institutions unraveled and the very foundations of a cohesive national public slipped into post-modernity in an unchartable transmutation. During this period, the NPS quietly unveiled a new type of park, the National Historic Trail (NHT), and over the ensuing forty years created 19 such trails, each commemorating mobility of some form within United States history. Whether focusing on exploration, migration, or relocation, events of exceptional human motion across distance were remade by NPS planners, landscape architects, and historians into a specific park-designation, the "trail," and added to the national body of public history. The presence of a physical trail or path, however, is optional in a NHT, and the resulting route moves horizontally through rural and urban space, private and public space alike, an intertwined vector of memory, borrowed infrastructure, and plannerly representation. The NHTs represent the most abstract of the NPS's endeavors and struggle to find their voice and form. This chapter aims to contextualize the NHTs by analyzing and uncovering the deeper history of paths in design, particularly as a function of the Picturesque Movement and its evolution, and also to interject some contrary theories in order to better understand this particular type of designed memorial.

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<sup>1</sup> Carr, *Mission 66*.

## Case Study

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail commemorates the first organized and documented overland settlement strategy carried out at the orders of Spanish colonialists, moving a viable and interconnected European population into the current territory of Arizona and California. Initiating the journey in 1775, Anza was not the first Spanish explorer to reach this region, nor was the presence of Spanish settlement and Catholic missionary intervention new within the region. What makes Anza's expedition worthy of commemoration is that the journey was carefully documented by Anza and two accompanying priests (Garces and Font) and later carefully mapped.<sup>2</sup> This mapping exercise also illustrates a foundational colonialist plan: the sequencing of temporary campsites and later missions, as well as particular adjacencies and places of strategic opportunity, such as presidios, projects a certain future spatial growth concept for Spanish rule.

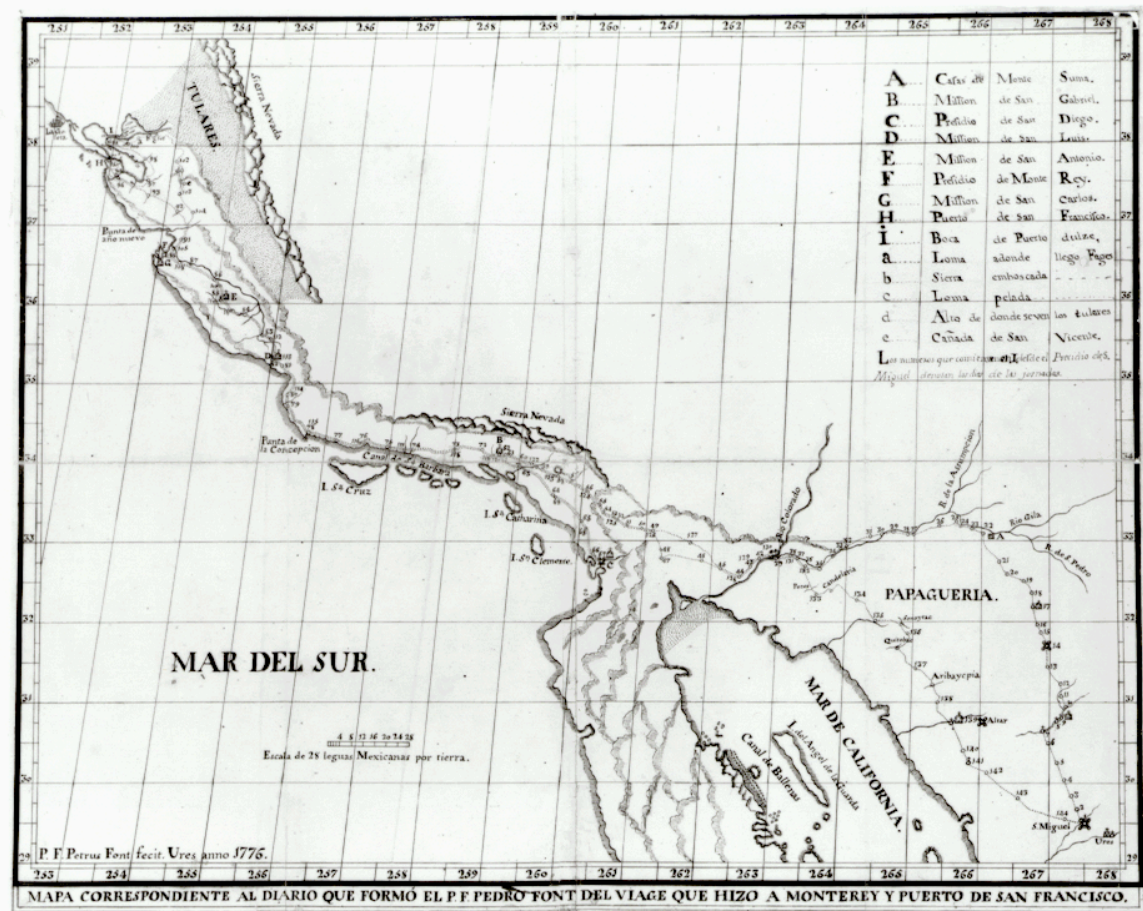


Figure 1. Pedro Font map of Anza Expedition, 1776<sup>3</sup>

The map portrays a narrow, strip-like civilization bounded by sea and mountains. In reality, the map documents a strategy for settlement that conquers the deadly desert

<sup>2</sup> Brown, *With Anza to California*.

<sup>3</sup> Bolton, *Font's Complete Diary*.

barriers of the Southwest, then imagined as insurmountable. It also portrays an approach to the interior of modern-day California that claims many of the smaller, fertile inland valleys of the coastal mountain ranges first – interfaces with the sea are selective and the vast Central Valley (marked “Tulares,” meaning “reeds” in native Nahuatl language) is shown as only partially understood, likely as a marsh, by a stipple pattern. The easterly and westerly extents are both blank/white inferring a certain indifference to what is beyond the Sierra Nevada Mountains, as if it is as uncharted and featureless as the Pacific Ocean.

### The Commemorative Trail Model

Moving forward in history by 240 years, the National Park Service maps this massive, regional form-giving expedition, settlement, and documentation project for interactive public consumption thusly:



Figure 2. Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail web portal “Trail Explorer”<sup>4</sup>

As stated in the website’s header, this interactive device is to help the viewer “explore.” The term “explore” is open-ended in contrast to “travel;” it implies a non-committal

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.anzahistorictrail.org/visit/explorer>



curiosity and permission to self-select and edit while browsing. Standard graphics familiar from Google Maps present a relatable map with the extents of the Trail snaking diagonally from southeast to northwest corners. In default setting, land is white, water is light blue, major roadways are lavender, preserved areas such as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land is a dusty green, and there is a light shadow of topography; these underlay treatments can be swapped out for “satellite view” or “terrain view.” Regardless of underlay setting, the modern NHT concept is illustrated in an assertive but discontinuous brick-red color. In fact, this color only indicates “Recreational Trail” which, as discussed, is not a primary component of the NHTs. Beneath this red layer and visible only upon zooming in, is a lighter, translucent tan colored belt labeled “Historic Corridor,” and overlaid (seemingly arbitrarily) nearby is a strong black line indicating “Auto Route.”

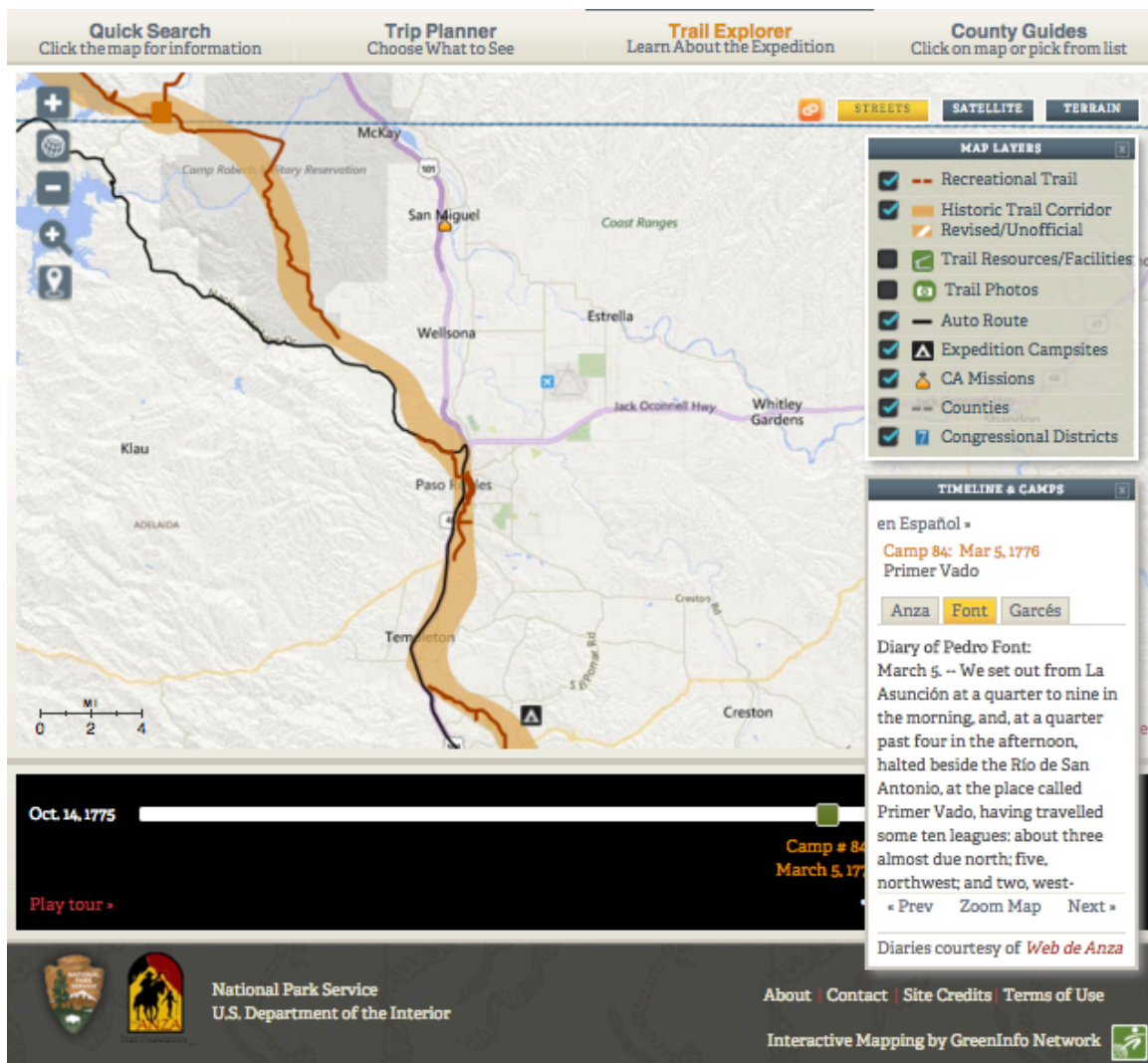


Figure 3. Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail web portal “Trail Explorer”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.anzahistorictrail.org/visit/explorer>



The closer one looks the less clear it becomes where in fact one would find an actual, usable, familiar trail like the one that could be imagined from the expedition of 1775. More importantly it becomes evident that this concept of a “trail” combines at least three linear spaces and it is unclear how to occupy any of them in order to experience the intended narrative. Instead of physically occupying the trail’s spaces, one can find a more legible version in its mapped image, quickly relating the present-day NPS NHT design to the historic expedition map. But even as an image, the NHT becomes arbitrary and seemingly cluttered with redundancies when viewed more closely at sub-regional, metropolitan, or local scales.

### **Historic Conception of Routes and Paths**

To understand this design and its ambiguities, one must look into the origins of paths and routes as they acquired first aesthetic value, and subsequently a touristic value. This is a wide area of thought and scholarship; the sanctity of certain routes is explored through a variety of cultural lenses showing a range of subtle differences. The idea of a path simply as one of many kinds of lines suggests a relationship with the work of William Hogarth. One of the earliest contributors to the emerging Picturesque Movement in the arts, Hogarth was both an artist and an art theorist, intent on formalizing the existence of beauty in opposition to capricious fads and trends, thus “fixing the fluctuating ideas of taste.” Hogarth’s so titled *The Analysis of Beauty*, published in 1753, included the idea of the serpentine line as a type of ideal form as a catalyst of two out of his six key principles.<sup>6</sup> The serpentine line, or *Line of Grace* or *Line of Beauty*, was deemed beautiful because it was imbued with an implication of movement, that to follow it with the eye made for an oscillation of perspective, hence making for a condition of “variety.” *Variety* is one of the six principles and the major function of the serpentine line, but secondarily there is also the principle of *Intricacy*. The serpentine line relates to *Intricacy* as it operates within one’s “mind’s eye” as well, duplicating its movement.

Looking back to a physical path, the genesis of the aestheticized path in Western culture often pinpoints the Grand Tour as the beginning of all impulses toward capturing the *Sublime* in any of its potential forms.<sup>7</sup> If the institution of the Grand Tour instilled a collective linkage between the emotion and the increasingly broad experience of territory and geography amongst Europe’s elite, then it is the work of William Gilpin who interpreted Hogarth’s principles, connected them almost exclusively to the visuals of nature, effectively honed a so-named theory of The Picturesque and disseminated the ideas and analytical techniques into the popular imagination.<sup>8</sup> Coincidentally, Gilpin produced the theories of the Picturesque during the same time period that explorers of New Spain ventured northward throughout North America. Gilpin posited a key

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<sup>6</sup> Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*.

<sup>7</sup> Price, *Essays on the Picturesque*; Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*.

<sup>8</sup> Ballantyne, "Genealogy of the Picturesque."

difference between “Beautiful” and “Picturesque” qualities to be found in scenes, objects, settings, views, and also journeys. Concentrating first on fixed portrayals, Gilpin’s methods of critique quickly found traction in the creation process of paintings and prints and, subsequently, the design of gardens. In all of these, the intended achievement of the Picturesque aesthetic value system could be found in instances imbued with a certain depth where physical space, imagined history, and piqued emotional response ran together. A crumbling ruin placed in the distance, a smoothed surface fading to rough or shadowed, a view which curled around out of sight behind the massings of forest, or a path visually leading the eye off to an unknowable destination—all could be deployed for similar effect. But Gilpin introduced a second and less immediately identifiable principle in the form of Picturesque Travel.<sup>9</sup> The motivation here may be obvious: to find picturesque instances, train one’s picturesque eye, and create picturesque representations, one must travel to find picturesque moments. However, what underlies Gilpin’s ideas on travel is that there is a value not only to the picturesque moments found, but also the form and character of that which delivers the viewer to and from the moment: the pacing, ordering, and mediating of these moments and transitions. In 1770, Gilpin set out to describe the encounters of the Picturesque as experienced traveling the River Wye in Wales by guided boat tour. His resulting book, *Observations on the River Wye, and several parts of South Wales, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty: made in the summer of the year 1770* (published 1782), included some predictable sketches of key scenes from the voyage, but more importantly collects a type of “analysis” of the river itself, its textures, route within the geologic setting, and also phenomenological character. Then, the story of Gilpin’s ingestion of the landscape as guided by the river’s path and mediated by the condition of its edges, rate, and choreography ensues chronologically, captured in a rhythm of sequenced text and illustration.

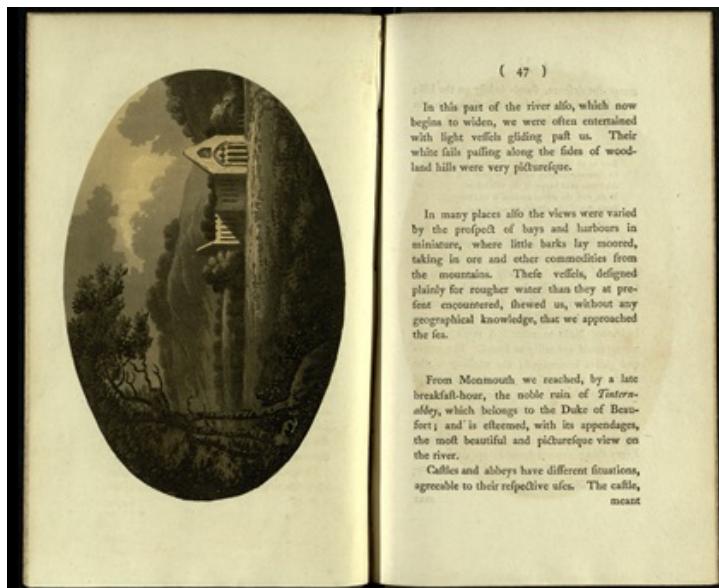


Figure 4. Gilpin, William, *Observations on the River Wye*, 47<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Gilpin, *Three Essays*.

<sup>10</sup> <https://archive.org/stream/observationsonr00gilpgoog#page/n40/mode/2up>

Gilpin's connection between place and route, his promotion of the conscious mobile perspective, ushered in a giddy period of Romantic creativity amongst a burgeoning populous of non-gentry British middle class, a demographic increasingly enabled by and also weary of the changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution. The "Wye Tour" became an institution, particularly during the prosperous late-Georgian and Regency periods while continental Europe was unfit for travel due to the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>11</sup> In this period of popularity, multiple writers increasingly analyzed the travel component of Gilpin's work on the Wye, expanding the ideas of how travel and tourism operate while in motion.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Picturesque and Pragmatics of Growth**

It is here in the realm of productivity and industry, exploding in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, that the Picturesque tradition splits: a wave of well-studied, sentiment-guided art and literature set the vanguard, but less dramatically the Picturesque also develops a more progressive and camouflaged arm. It is critical to point out that when Gilpin introduced his ideas on Picturesque Travel, and the mobile perspective in general, life for the majority of people saw only limited mobility. During the ensuing 19<sup>th</sup> Century, mobility would increase dramatically in terms of speed, distance, complexity, and availability. At the time, even the burgeoning working class, for whom leisure-oriented travel was still hopelessly out of reach, felt an emerging new sense of distance, an imagination of places far afield and familiarity of the connections (rivers, roads, rail lines) that intertwined the local to the regional or global; these abstractions became ever-present factors in daily life even if travel remained socioeconomically unavailable. Raw materials for factories arrived from distant locales and the goods produced within then departed to somewhere altogether different; local rivers transformed dramatically due to pollutants or resource or energy extraction activities which might be occurring far up- or downstream. Of course, the urgency to "solve" the increasingly dystopian condition of industrialized urbanity began to pervade discussion of how to design space. The innocent pursuit of the sublime impulses valued by the picturesque eye seemed decreasingly worthy. Instead, the role of the picturesque would have to expand and take on a mantle of pragmatism.<sup>13</sup> It would serve as the de facto aesthetic for a new type of healthful, public landscape for designers such as Joseph Paxton in Birkenhead Park, and later this same purposeful Picturesque would cross the Atlantic to captivate the imagination of Frederick Law Olmstead.<sup>14</sup> However, the dynamics of distance, sequence, route, and multiple perspective captured in Gilpin's River Wye observations would prove more elusive in a new age where mobility and distance were not only ubiquitous, but also threatening.

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<sup>11</sup> Moir, *The Discovery of Britain*.

<sup>12</sup> Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque*.

<sup>13</sup> Ballantyne, "Genealogy of the Picturesque."

<sup>14</sup> Ballantyne, "Genealogy of the Picturesque."

One intriguing figure to focus upon during this period is Patrick Geddes, Scottish biologist and regional planner. Geddes's pioneering innovative work contributed significantly to the fields of geography and sociology and, even though he was firmly dedicated to the sciences, he bravely discussed abstract questions of phenomenology, beauty, and nature within an empiricist framework.<sup>15</sup> He was interested in placing humanity, in terms of both economics and memory, in a world of sequential relationships covering everything from watersheds to the views and orders of neighborhoods.<sup>16</sup> During Geddes's 19<sup>th</sup> century period of explosive urban expansion, rapid obsolescence, and acute poverty, he saw value in aging places with settled but struggling populations and crafted a planning process for the central core of Edinburgh, merging the city's poorest living quarters with integrated, productive green spaces and rehabilitated facilities for the University of Edinburgh. His aim was a synthesis of social conditions with academia at the heart, set symbiotically within in a thriving city-relic at the center of a superregional context. Atop one of the taller structures of the University of Edinburgh's medieval buildings in the city center, Geddes created his own sort of panoptic teaching laboratory, the Outlook Tower.<sup>17</sup> Here, the lifeways and economics of the city beneath could be observed from the same vantage point as the vast Scottish landscape beyond; the regional setting and long tentacles of mobility that both reinforce modernity but also suggest escape and solitude could all be viewed simultaneously. Geddes dipped into what might be considered Eastern philosophies by pursuing ideas on "wholeness" and "place"—the Outlook Tower was to be a place to "ponder the imponderable" and find a space of knowing where the pace of industrial life usually evoked only impressions of fracture.<sup>18</sup> He compared Edinburgh's Midlothian setting and hilltop form to Athens and the Acropolis. Geddes did not prioritize the core of Edinburgh or the pathways coursing out of it because they would make for a pleasing painting, but within his concept of beauty he did choose to inhabit something of an urban ruin and view it as foreground for the great beyond, the mystery of the city's complexity contrasted with its furthest extents, interlinked by flow and movement. It is doubtful that Geddes's beliefs about beauty and interpretations of regional context, distance, and connection could have taken the form they did without the preceding work of Gilpin, situating the Picturesque as an aesthetic base.

### **MacKaye: A Return to the Path**

Patrick Geddes becomes critical to the story of trails in America when he is introduced to an innovative forester, planner, and regionalist, Benton MacKaye. Their connection came via Lewis Mumford, a friend of MacKaye and disciple of Geddes, who fortunately captured their immediate intellectual connection.<sup>19</sup> Geddes had published a book, *Cities in Evolution*, in 1915 just before MacKaye had first publicly introduced an idea for

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<sup>15</sup> Welter and Lawson, *The City After Patrick Geddes*.

<sup>16</sup> Welter, *Biopolis: Patrick Geddes and the City of Life*.

<sup>17</sup> Ferreira and Jha, *The Outlook Tower*.

<sup>18</sup> Welter and Lawson, *The City After Patrick Geddes*.

<sup>19</sup> Dalbey, *Regional Visionaries and Metropolitan Boosters*.

a long-distance trail through the Appalachian Mountain Range to serve as the spine of a complex, utopian, conservation-based planning proposal.<sup>20</sup> Geddes's own work in situating a planned, interlinked civilization within the dynamic larger landscape closely prefigured MacKaye's still-forming ideas. It seemed Geddes saw not only the regional plan but also the binding flow-through dynamic of the path. Geddes saw the Appalachian Trail idea as "landscape making" meeting "city design" in its newest, vastest, Modernist potential. After meeting Geddes, MacKaye and Mumford would expand and refine the idea together with new knowledge of the legacy of great ideas which it inevitably furthered.<sup>21</sup>

The inspiration Geddes bestowed on MacKaye may most easily be considered utopian in spirit, but also technical in practice. Geddes enthusiastically labeled MacKaye's emerging body of thought and work in the planning sphere as "Geotechnics," and "showing what ought to be," as opposed to "Geography," which he thought merely descriptive.<sup>22</sup> Others, including Mumford, highlight a strong element of the Transcendentalist tradition in MacKaye's work, always situating man as opposed to the Machine Age, describing opportunities to reconfigure a society where man as individual may interface with nature as a form of societal non-cooperation.<sup>23</sup> Hailing from rural New England himself, MacKaye was a devout disciple of Thoreau; his views on wilderness and the value of submitting to one's greater environment through wandering, internalizing experience, are plain to recognize in his writing, planning, and persona.<sup>24</sup> But despite the obvious Transcendentalist motivations, what MacKaye created would assertively revive the ideal of the path as understood from the tradition of the Picturesque. MacKaye's conception of the Appalachian Trail represents an epic-scale regional plan, but it is based on the simplicity of a footpath, the human motivation to follow it, and the awakening it might evoke.

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<sup>20</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*.

<sup>21</sup> Wojtowicz, "Lewis Mumford: Builder of the Regional City," 133

<sup>22</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*.

<sup>23</sup> Mumford, "Introduction."

<sup>24</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*.



Figure 5. The Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning, *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*. Volume 9. 1921

Benton MacKaye’s initial conceptualizations emerged from a frothy political counterculture, against the conditions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century’s global war, competitive spirit of capitalism, and increasingly industrial approach to nature and agriculture. MacKaye first imagined a vast, planned alternative society, founded on cooperation and with recreation providing a new paradigm of productivity, able to instill a “socialized industrial life for the workers of the nation.”<sup>25</sup> What this envisioned, literally, was a growing series of large recreational camp communities linked by trails that could unite a huge, inter-state swath of the Appalachian Mountain region and create a something of a parallel utopian/arcadian state counterbalancing the adjacent, urbanized eastern seaboard.

However, from MacKaye’s earliest conception this was not a zone, area, or place, but a “Trail.”<sup>26</sup> The name and the mapped representation command a sense of movement and flow. Although generalized, the sinuous wandering line of the main trail and its “branch-trail” arms seem to echo the character of the Atlantic coastline as well as watershed forms shown: the St. Lawrence, Ohio, Susquehanna, and Tennessee rivers. In the published mapping, political boundaries are reduced to weak dashed lines and begin to appear subordinate to the “organic” logic of the trail and its territory. The map appeared first in 1921 in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* and was entitled “*The Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning*,” situating itself within the growing discipline of planning but also apart from it, alternatively highlighting the

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*, 145.

<sup>26</sup> MacKaye, “An Appalachian Trail,” 325.

hinterlands as a new site for responsible civilization, marrying imagination and logic.<sup>27</sup> While the nascent field of planning in the 1920s already possessed a certain growing enthusiasm for automobility, the quality of movement represented in MacKaye's Appalachian Trail plan was captivating, almost a suggestion of a migratory thrust north and southwestward, away from the clogged Mid-Atlantic chokepoint. The idea that the movement's thrust itself could be human-powered and that its outcome could be one of land conservation on a national scale was revolutionary.

The Appalachian Trail proposal at first found traction amongst regional hiking clubs, key supporters but not visionary in their goals. A few sections were constructed and MacKaye oversaw the convocation of an Appalachian Trail Conference to unite the widespread constituents. Beyond this, the "roaring" prosperity of the 1920s would ultimately fail to connect the prosperity of the times with the humility of a trail project. The depressed and socially minded 1930s, however, would reignite passions for simplicity as well as national-scale plans. With significant manpower provided by President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA), the trail was largely complete by 1937, although reduced in scope and not entirely under MacKaye's leadership.<sup>28</sup> The utopian recreational camps and foot-powered society did not exactly materialize, but the contiguous footpath through the continent and the line on the map did.

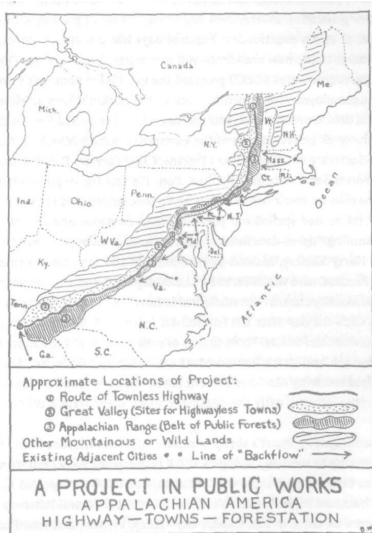


Figure 6. "The Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning," by Benton MacKaye.

MacKaye had a way of proposing exceptionally utopian plans that would never be executed in their original form. He would suffer though many years of setbacks and processing ideas with technocrats. There appeared to be a parallel scenario of MacKaye's defeat and departure with his process of refinement. Over the years, despite

<sup>27</sup> MacKaye, "An Appalachian Trail," 325.

<sup>28</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*.

frustrations, his ideas would soften and internalize various pragmatic aspects. One such item, easily overlooked, were the concepts of the “Town-less Highway” and “Highway-less Town.” Emerging around 1928, this was a regional planning sub-strategy that sought to control rampant automobility by planning highways, formally, as subordinate to conservation areas and also removed from small urbanities. In the case of the Appalachian Trail project, the WPA would find this hierarchical road-planning aspect agreeable, creating several sensitively-inserted auto corridors.<sup>29</sup> Soon thereafter, another massive WPA project would emerge in the lower Appalachian region, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and MacKaye would occupy an influential though fraught role. Few of MacKaye’s plans were implemented, but he served as a leader of a de facto brain trust within the planning division. The TVA’s strategic and integrated network of conservation areas, watersheds, roadways, and villages, as constructed, is an extension of MacKaye’s formula of “Town-less Highway” and “Highway-less Town.”<sup>30</sup>

### Mid Century: Trails as a Formula

The trail produced a type of culture that, while not as prescribed by MacKaye, has produced a unique population of users and enthusiasts. The Conference evolved into the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, now a model conservation organization. States along the West Coast created a duplicate trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, which in turn formed a similar Conference-style body and included the YMCA and Boy Scouts organizations in the route-planning stages. In 1968, the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trails were folded into the National Park Service through the National Trails System Act, redesigned as National Scenic Trails (NST). Nine additional long-distance trails have since been added to this collection, some as NSTs and others as National Recreation Trails (NRT), a less stringent designation with a stronger emphasis on activity and less on landscape protection. The creation of new NSTs requires Congressional approval whereas NRTs do not.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 7. NPS National Scenic Trails System map<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Myers, "The Line of Grace."

<sup>30</sup> Anderson, *Benton MacKaye*.

<sup>31</sup> National Trails System Act of 1968, <http://www.nps.gov/nts/legislation.html>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.seattletimes.com/life/outdoors/a-journey-of-thousands-of-steps/>



Even in a graphically unsophisticated mapping, the image of National Scenic Trails system produces an immediate realization that the territory of the Nation can be walked. It also suggests that something can be known only through this mode of experiencing or reading the landscape on foot, pulling in the sequenced, scenic scenes and internalizing them, first by the individual and then by the larger society. Lastly, the mapping also creates an intense motivation to connect gaps and make networks out of fragments; for instance, the Pacific Northwest Trail and North Country Trail shown here may one day join to create the Sea-to-Sea Trail.<sup>33</sup> Eastern Montana and western North Dakota are unlikely to contain enough hiking inhabitants to create this connection alone, but the desire to encapsulate the Nation by crossing it stems the gap.

All of the National Scenic Trails have provided the same kind of travel armature that the River Wye provided for William Gilpin. A wealth of books, blogs, sketchbooks, slideshows, and stories comprise an expansive body of experience with the role of the path and the Picturesque at the core.<sup>34</sup> The representation of a trail experience is always found to involve the mobile perspective; the romantic impulse to be pulled forth into the scene, drawn out over days, is critical to both the deeply individual and later shared experience.

### **Trails Deconstructed**

As simple and elegant as the National Scenic Trails are, and as snugly as they fit into the revived form of the Picturesque mode of seeing, they are not the final chapter of evolution for this movement. The sense of unity and national purpose forged in the 1930s, embodied in the New Deal and physically built by the Works Progress Administration began to unravel during the late 1960s at exactly the moment that the National Park Service took control of the trails from their individual conservation societies or “conferences.” The NPS did not fully usurp these entities; they remain intact with NPS providing overarching coordination, branding and advocacy. Over the next decade, several key shifts encapsulate this period:

- while accommodation for automobile tourism had been a difficult issue for the National Park Service for several decades, the era of the 1950-60’s, including the so-named “*Mission 66*” initiative, of system-wide modernization included

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<sup>33</sup> Ron Strickland, founder of Pacific Northwest NST, 1970, (see: Strickland et al., *Pathfinder: Blazing a New Wilderness Trail in Modern America*) proposes a 7,700-mile Sea-to-Sea Trail connection to North Country and Appalachian NSTs. [http://www.ronstrickland.com/rs/Sea-to-Sea\\_Route.html](http://www.ronstrickland.com/rs/Sea-to-Sea_Route.html)

<sup>34</sup> There are multiple examples of trail accounts and guides as well as more personal, self-transformation narrative nonfiction books utilizing these trails as their site and organizational device, some reaching deep into popular culture and bestseller lists. See: Bryson, Bill. *A Walk in the Woods*. Random House, 1998. Strayed, Cheryl. *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*. Vintage, 2012. Ross, Cindy. *Scraping Heaven: A Family’s Journey Along the Continental Divide Trail*. Mountaineer’s Books. 2016. Watkins, Andra. *Not Without My Father: One Woman’s 444-Mile Walk of the Natchez Trace*. Word Hermit Press. 2015.

significant planning for auto-specific experiences, both inside and between parks.<sup>35</sup>

- in 1966, President Lyndon Baines Johnson had initiated a federally-overseen Bicentennial commission for planning the upcoming 1976 celebration year and, more abstractly, to reframe the concepts of revolutionary patriotism during the tense climate of the Vietnam War.<sup>36</sup>
- liberal political power, which might be more inclined to support the NPS, shifted from labor-centric core cities to more dispersed, suburban, metropolitan-scale political landscapes.<sup>37</sup>
- a period of economic contraction led to a crisis for the academic history profession and an increase in the role of Public History within planning, design, and curatorial practices.<sup>38</sup>
- a shift towards increased cultural value for diversity and sociological exploration of the disenfranchised redirected impulses for preservation.

Given these changing circumstances, the role of the Picturesque in the creation of trails would undergo another transformation. Instead of prioritizing the visually picturesque, the value would shift to the documentation. This is to say that preexisting, historical accounts of journeys could be used to create metaphorical trails of retracement. The aesthetically scenic value of the unfolding landscape was no longer the primary goal, but rather the activation of the mobile perspective for the sake of “reading” the landscape. Many of the NHTs have no formal plan component for creating any walking trail space of any kind; those that do include trail-creation do so by waiting for federally managed lands, counties, or park districts to build their own trails or bikeways near the corridor and the NHT will then propose to designate the trail as a route segment. Minor historic artifacts and sites, such as wagon wheel ruts, are incorporated as a passive preservation measure regardless of their location, often on private land. A raft of postmodern concepts emerged during this period to bolster this impulse, including the human geography of J.B. Jackson and the historiographic theories of Michel de Certeau.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, this development in trail-creation had a number of practical benefits: multiple small historic sites could be preserved by one agency, trails could traverse urban areas allowing greater exposure between the NPS and suburban voters, trails could be implied as a linear space independent of public/private property (rather than a

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<sup>35</sup> “Mission 66” was instigated in 1955 and resulted in a major financial infusion for the NPS. It leveraged post-war prosperity to address system-wide deferred maintenance from the 1930s and WW2. However it also sidelined the previous standards for rustic and deferential design, instead asserting an unprecedentedly modern aesthetic to architecture, signage projects, tourism branding, and, more critically, to the concept of trails, pushed forth an aggressive enthusiasm for automobile culture and usage. This was executed in the spirit of the post-war era but has been reconsidered as controversial in recent decades. See: Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*.

<sup>36</sup> Spillman, *Nation and Commemoration*.

<sup>37</sup> Geismer, *Don't Blame Us*.

<sup>38</sup> Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*.

<sup>39</sup> See, e.g., De Certeau, *The Writing of History*; Groth and Wilson, “The Polyphony of Cultural Landscape Study,” 13.

constructed footpath on public land), and educational programming could supplant recreation. These possibilities were enacted in a 1978 amendment to the decade-old National Trails System Act, creating the separate legal and planning infrastructure for National Historic Trails (NHT).

The first five NHTs, including the Oregon and the Lewis and Clark trails, were ushered into existence by the 1976 Bicentennial's surge of patriotism and event planning. All depended on diaries, maps, and recorded histories of various experiences of pioneers, explorers, prospectors, Revolutionary War soldiers, etc. Several follow water-based routes for part of their distance. By the mid-1980s several trails began to explore more controversial topics, such as dispossession of Native American tribes, Civil Rights, and Spanish colonial history, the latter including the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail.

### **Picturesque Reframed**

While it is certain that William Gilpin would not be able to recognize his version of the Picturesque in this history-driven iteration of trails, with this new strategy, a trail could potentially be created from Gilpin's own account of the River Wye. This hypothetical project would only be made historically richer if portions of the river's course had become urbanized or manipulated over time, whereby Gilpin's information could provide textual and visual means of comparison. It is still very much within the strategy of the Picturesque to admire relics and ruins for precisely this reason: the patina and mystery of layered time is another key component of the sublime.<sup>40</sup> If one can consider the entirety of any of the National Historic Trails as a disassembled sort of ruin, then the Sublime is a mode of interpretation that only requires a technology from which to view the subject matter. That technology is the road.

As defined earlier, the architecture of National Historic Trails includes several intertwined spatial devices, including adjacent roadways, to comprise a designated "Auto Route." This road component is often the most complete one, as the roads used are in place and maintained independently of the trail's narrative needs. But it is also perhaps the most disappointing component from the perspective of designers, viewed as banal and incidental in character. The shield-shaped symbols for various NHTs appear along with other signage, the only element to differentiate an ordinary road from a "trail."

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<sup>40</sup> Gilpin, *Three Essays*.



Figure 8. Juan Bautista de Anza NHT Signage

However, one highly unlikely architectural critic might have disagreed and could aid in reordering the components of the National Historic Trails so as to reassert their Picturesque capacities. Reyner Banham usually looked unequivocally to the future for inspiration, eschewing sentimentality and the quaint, preservation-minded English tradition. He wrote short articles criticizing the canon of English Picturesque garden design, saying while a few were innovative most were overhyped.<sup>41</sup> The closest he came to the work of Benton MacKaye was to visit the territory of the TVA, MacKaye's next foray into utopian, rural planning after the Appalachian Trail period. In this critique of the TVA, Banham mainly focuses on the timeless, restrained design palate applied to the various hydroelectric dams, a style which celebrates both the possibilities of technology as well as the democratic society creating and benefitting from them. More importantly and more to MacKaye's credit, though, Banham also praises the total TVA as a single technology, successfully managing a sustainable intra-state region, producing power, mitigating floods, harnessing agriculture, preserving forest, providing integrated recreation, and undergirding a complex habitat for an entire ecosystem, including that of humans.<sup>42</sup> In another more famous critique by Banham, the Los Angeles freeway system is reconsidered as a single technology and the most current phase of a "Transportation Palimpsest."<sup>43</sup> Like a true palimpsest, the routes of mobility in the Los Angeles region are mapped and remapped accretively, and therefore to understand the greater place, one must "drive" the road system and "read" the landscape including the erasures of bygone technologies.

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<sup>41</sup> Banham, *A Critic Writes*, "Kent and Capability," 87.

<sup>42</sup> Banham, *A Critic Writes*, "Valley of the Dams," 203.

<sup>43</sup> Banham and Day, *Los Angeles: the Architecture of Four Ecologies*, 57.



Figure 9a & 9b. Reyner Banham's "Transportation Palimpsest"<sup>44</sup>

Here, Banham illustrates in an exceptionally spartan mapping how the multi-centric street railway system was made and then erased and reinscribed as motor highways, the modern forms bracketing the city's contents serving as reinterpretations of several layers of past connections. Solidly within the Picturesque tradition of provoking impulses to move through and uncover the beyond, Banham suggests that one contemplate what lies underneath as well as ahead.

From this perspective, the role of the road within the NHT concept seems significantly less incidental. The road is the technology, begat by the very act of territorialization commemorated by the NHT, from which to view the route rather than occupy it. The route of Anza's expedition is the erased, the underlay, the basis of the palimpsest, or at least the Spanish colonial chapter of it. The road is the foreground, akin to the consistent textures of the edges of the River Wye that mediated all ensuing views and feelings Gilpin captured within his Observations.

<sup>44</sup> Banham and Day, *Los Angeles*, 80, 89.

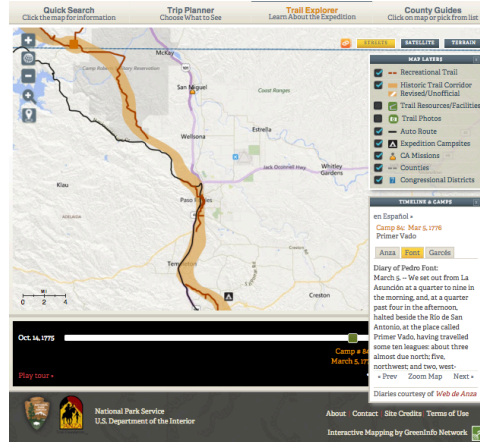
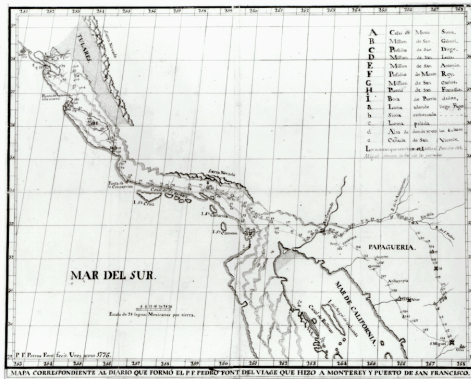


Figure 1 (repeat). Pedro Font map of Anza Expedition, 1776<sup>45</sup>  
 Figure 3 (repeat). Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail web portal "Trail Explorer"<sup>46</sup>

Reconsidering the Anza NHT's components, the road-based component may also mediate, but what does one know to see? The road frames all and therefore nothing: without the visual and re-representable goals of the Picturesque, might whatever is sublime (or sublime by proxy) become undetectable?

### Conclusion

If one wishes to see a direct design connection from the glory days of Gilpin's Picturesque through to modern infrastructure, one would be better served to look to the Blue Ridge Parkway, another NPS project in the Appalachian region. The Parkway is within MackKaye's strategy of the "Townless Highway," but more so it is the product of a direct passing-on of near-sacred Picturesque values.<sup>47</sup> The goals of crafted vistas and curves are cemented directly into the NPS planning toolkit, a formula for Picturesque road-making. The NHTs represent less of a direct connection. However, it could be considered that their disconnection from the consciously scenic qualities of landscape mean that they revert back to a pre-Gilpin conception of the Picturesque. Hogarth's serpentine line is recast across the map of the nation without any adornment on the part of nature. If it has a capacity to compel and move our "mind's eye" on its own, then the effect of its inherent beauty should hold true. Secondly, perhaps it is Gilpin's fusing of travel and documentation that brings the Picturesque to the NHT, still stripped of nature's adornment in the obvious form of the sublime. But the sublime can be interpreted as mystery, and uncovering historic instances in the banal space of everyday life might fit this definition. Coupled with historic narrative it may be possible to reach the Picturesque, but without the *picture*. During the 1960s and 70s, a bevy of architects and urban designers turned their attention to the roadway and how to "read" urbanity from its capacity to choreograph the view. Denis Cosgrove, Donald Appleyard, Kevin

<sup>45</sup> Bolton, *Font's Complete Diary*.  
<sup>46</sup> <http://www.anzahistorictrail.org/visit/explorer>  
<sup>47</sup> Myers, "The Line of Grace."

Lynch, and Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown produced groundbreaking work in this vein, validating the banal and expedient space of the road in every condition or proposing that it could be made better.<sup>48</sup> Their work evoked an abstract form of the Picturesque as a strategy for movement and reexamination. But where their work stops short of the NHT's is where they demand the road serve as a device for what *is*, rather than what *has been*; they honor the invisibility. Banham, by contrast to the others, seems to find the enigmatic history embedded in the very-new and ephemeral conditions of the spaces we occupy. To move alongside, nearby, or perpendicular to the route of an NHT, if aware, is to perform a small act of archaeology in Hogarth's "mind's eye," whereas to see on one the map is to activate the Serpentine Line. To try to occupy the spaces of the trail itself and follow its prescribed vector poses a mystery that perhaps cannot be solved; the trails after all commemorate something that occurred once and can never be repeated.

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<sup>48</sup> Appleyard, Lynch, and Myer, *The View From the Road*; Cosgrove, *Mappings*; Harris and Ruggles, *Sites Unseen*; Scott Brown and Venturi, "Highway;" Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour, *Learning From Las Vegas*.

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## Synaptic Pursuits in Search of a Groove

### Intersections of pilgrimage, memory, and geolocation-based gaming

*“Well, we have been here, so...”*

- JStu

This chapter explores the idea of pilgrimage though not from a familiar angle, rather from two contemporary angles, both incomplete at present. Whether the grand, classic and sacred framework of the Hajj or the more recent adaptations considering the tourist as modern-day pilgrim, most ideas about the topic stubbornly cling to some quotient of the epic and the far. With global mobility and individual pursuits reaching fever pitch over the last several generations, it seems as if the pilgrimage concept can bound any situation where a distance is negotiated and a perspective is shifted, even if only ideologically. Whatever may have occurred, it must seem sizable in order to be recognizable. Is it possible that the smallest discernable unit of pilgrimage is already operating in our midst but under an assumed name? While camouflaged instances of micro-pilgrimage might be summoned, frustratingly, through analysis anywhere and everywhere, this paper posits that within a recognized condition of fragmentation, the pilgrimage is remaking itself once again. It may no longer need to start reaching for epic, propagate on a vector of memory, and carve divots to be read and retraced. Rather, in its emerging iteration, it might hide and take root outside of the dyad set between gravitas and big fun, start small and scale up. But scale up to what? What “groove” might it begin to form? This other angle of pilgrimage to be examined holds that there are armatures of pre-pilgrimage also hidden in the landscape. The potential for a merger seems ripe and the result might produce a next chapter in the understanding of pilgrimage. The critical component of memory is still integral but built on an entirely new platform, and the cumulative denting of space and self may reveal a new version of path and pilgrim.

#### **Case Study 1: JStu Productions - “Our First Geocache Find!”**

Somewhere in the communities of Colorado’s Front Range, where the interface between towering mountains and sprawling plains is insipidly mediated by a stretch of exquisitely unexceptional suburbia, we encounter JStu lunching at a crowded Chick-fil-A.

JStu is actually Justin and Andrew, a duo of some web-based notoriety who perform and upload “Our First Geocache Find.”<sup>1</sup> After lunch, the pair reconvene in a suburban kitchen and excitedly exhibit a new app on Andrew’s iPhone which illustrates their membership with the Geocaching community and also a GPS-activated map showing a startlingly saturated field of “caches” eager to be “found” in their immediate area. Now in operation for about 15 years, Geocaching is a web- and app-based geolocation technology that in its simplest iteration tells participants (Geocachers) how to locate small hidden troves of simple objects (caches) placed in obscured places by Geocachers for others to find. The activity, billed as a “high tech treasure hunt,” by Geocaching.com, owned by Groundspeak Inc., claims to have amassed three million caches spread across the globe to pursue and an undisclosed total membership counting in the millions (presumably significantly more than the quantity of caches to find).<sup>2</sup> From the app Justin and Andrew enthusiastically select a nearby cache, choose a mode of transportation from their well-stocked garage, skateboard off down winding suburban streets to a neighborhood park at the undulating lower edge of the Rockies. After following the instructions and digital representation of a compass on the iPhone, the pair dismount and begrudgingly wade into the weeds at the edge of the park triumphantly finding their cache hanging in a lone scrubby pine. Their first “find” is a picture of banality, a film canister filled with a few pieces of gum, but it calls for a small celebration. But the spirit dips when it is realized that neither has a pen with which to sign a tattered paper log inside – this cannot be an “official” first find even though they successfully report the cache as found online via the app interface. After procuring a pen they attempt another find and are saddened when its given location reveals no cache. Their third attempt prevails and they locate an impressively larger cache beneath a larger tree inside a subdivision, declaring this patch of landscaping a “cool spot!” and sign the log, making this second triumph valid. They become more ambitious, scaling up to a car, traveling to a different park twenty minutes away at the edge of a forest in search of a more remote cache. As they traverse the landscape they recall visible scars – a construction project has cleared some land at one edge where they remember filming a previous prank, later they comment on the charred evidence of a recent forest fire. They locate the cache, logging the find online and signing the tattered document inside the cache, validating this one as well. With palpable excitement and a bit of melodrama, Justin exclaims that the log indicates that someone else has signed just two days prior. The significance of this fact is ambiguous but the strange delight derived from it is not. They move onward, meet a snake, encounter a fort and find yet another cache, this time marveling at the first log entry with a photograph of the “ancient” Geocachers who placed the cache four years before. Returning home they have covered a considerable distance, left their mark of sorts at several found destinations, considered their place in a certain legacy of each discovery, and layered this experience in with their sense of place, home, and periphery.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njLHIQI0-QA>

<sup>2</sup> <https://newsroom.geocaching.com/>

JStu Productions shares an ongoing video series or “vlog” starring the two young men pulling innocent pranks around town, participating in viral video challenges and occasionally traveling internationally. As of this interview they had been online since 2011, had acquired just over one million YouTube subscribers, 150 million views and produced hundreds of uploads. Their numbers have climbed exponentially, since. Justin also proposed to his wife as a part of a flash mob project; three million people have watched the proposal, executed inside a themed shopping concourse at Universal Studios in Sherman Oaks, California. Many of JStu’s exploits take place inside an anonymous college library, grocery stores, or fast food drive-through lanes. Back yards and parking lots frequently appear as backdrops. Justin and Andrew themselves appear as affable, extroverted meatheads perhaps seeking only lighten the mood of their aimless early twenties. Further research reveals, however, that halfway into the five-year life of JStu Productions the pair was hired out of a community college film program to become content creators at Nickelodeon, a subsidiary of Viacom Media Networks, a position of significant public presence and influence.

### **Case Study 2: Behind the Scenes – National Historic Trails**

The aforementioned Front Range region of Colorado is also part of the wide and storied landscape of countless tales of American Pioneers who, here, after weeks of jostling over the prairies on their journey westward, first encountered the Rockies, a granite wall of forthcoming tribulation. This is a landscape of high specificity. Over time, the pioneer mythos created an idealized and reverential character, but the thousands who crossed this terrain were not necessarily any less silly, curious, or coarse than are Justin and Andrew. The transition forged heroes out of remarkably plain folk. They doused the landscape with affective memory although only the nobler pioneer persona stuck. (The palpable presence of the Rocky Mountain misfit or bandit would come along later and expand with the mining economy.) The pioneers were linear; they left a legacy, roughly mapped, of pikes and cutoffs and gouged ruts in the dirt. The maintenance of this pioneer-era memory has since been institutionalized by the National Park Service, operating a series of Historic Trails—linear abstractions invisibly snaking westbound through farms, subdivisions parks and whatever privately held lands might now overlay these former corridors. The NPS’s aim is to cultivate and curate a type of contemporary spatial imaginary and at least the sense of a pilgrimage along these routes. They harness local interest wherever possible, designate byway auto routes along adjacent highways, and attempt to preserve ruts or other physical signs of pioneer mobility wherever an amenable rancher might cooperate with them. But despite some emphatic lines on a continent-scale map, the trails are vague when encountered up close. The impulse to stir motivations of potential pilgrimage by showcasing the epic and the far is indulged with full commitment. However, the actuality of the NHT project represents a park typology predicated on building relationships and linking landscapes ideologically and has struggled to define any sort of distinct spatial strategy. With the emergence of GIS technology, interactive web-based mapping and interpretation have generally supplanted any urgency to creatively address the physical space of the trails. Recently,

however, the Santa Fe NHT has created a Geocaching overlay with the assistance of its non-profit Friends group. A series of 73 caches punctuate the 900-mile route and imply a sort of connect-the-dots approach to traversing the linear landscape as a pilgrimage experience and in effect adds an intriguingly spatial and virtual component to the NHT corridor. The caches encountered by Justin and Andrew in the course of their vlog posting were not the Santa Fe Trail caches, but they easily could have been. Understanding these two mechanisms and how they might interact will reveal at least a suggestion of where the concept and practice of pilgrimage are headed.

### **Geocaching as Game**

At first glance it is easy to identify Geocaching as a type of game. It appears to merge the legacy of multiplayer online gaming with outdoor orienteering and package the resulting product in a web-savvy graphical style in step with the gaming industry's app-based offerings. In the spirit of Web 2.0 business practices, Geocaching Corporate Headquarters, located in Seattle, rolls out a consistent feed of cute ephemera, rewards, and titles to promote the finding of caches as cumulative points and hence competitive. In fact the headquarters site itself is promoted as a special type of cache to visit: "HQGeocache." The Geocaching.com Corporation humanizes what might otherwise be an anonymous system by maintaining a blog written in a relatable voice of the communications department's young employees-cum-Geocaching-enthusiasts as well as a "spokes-critter," a grinning, cartoon-like green frog named Signal. There are monetized levels of status so that as one ascends in enthusiasm, one pays for higher grades of membership to gain access to increasingly "premium" caches. Most tellingly, as a body of literature emerges, Geocaching is consistently presented alongside Ingress and the Pokemon Go platforms, which rest upon similar geolocation technology but situate the user squarely inside a fantasy game-space of characters, points, levels, etc. Geocaching, despite the branding and potential for competition, leaves the question of value open-ended and in the hands of the individual Geocacher. The incentive to move oneself into the space of the find is either purely whatever one privately believes or it can be customized by a third entity adding a narrative. In either case, as demonstrated by Justin and Andrew, from the moment one activates the Geocaching map on a cell phone and sets forth to locate a cache, one has left behind the conditions of "normal life" and entered the "Magic Circle" identified by Johan Huizinga as a critical framework for understanding any form of play.<sup>3</sup> To Huizinga, play prefigures all culture and becomes the root of deeply institutionalized practices, from religious ritual to the performances of jurisprudence. As well, play can be misunderstood as simply fun (a recent linguistic invention, he adds) while in truth play is profoundly serious and structured beneath whatever pleasure it may invoke. The space of this Magic Circle has been repeatedly identified and often spatialized – the baseball diamond, the craps table, the Barbie house – and as gaming has exploded in the virtual world, the possibilities of designing the Circle into an entire complex universe have of course expanded

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<sup>3</sup> Huizinga, Johan, *Homo Ludens IIs*, 1949.

immensely. In the case of Geocaching, the Magic Circle is bounded only by the edges of one's perception, beginning with the selection of a cache and ending with a combination of the act of logging the find (virtually and manually) whereby one stakes a position in the memory/sequence of past and future finders, the encounter with the physicality of the cache contents and the assessment of the surroundings. The end of play does not necessarily correlate with the end of the game; the act of returning home afterwards may also be understood as still existing within the Magic Circle, or it may suggest a condition of fade, a gradual completion; regardless, this return can still serve as an integral part of the cycle.

### **Pilgrimage as Game**

Another significant component of Huizinga's theory of play contends that play has a particular relationship with certain forms of knowing. The construct of the riddle or secret problem to be solved, perhaps through a code or sequence of tricks, suggests an end condition of duality and discord being reframed and brought triumphantly together. At its most rudimentary, this model might include the timeless and basic game of hide-and-seek. In an entirely separate body of literature, Victor Turner conceptualizes pilgrimage as a journey from the center of known life to the center of a larger meta-world, positioned elsewhere at a distance.<sup>4</sup> He traces this through various adjustments through time, beginning with early agrarian man voluntarily uprooting to revisit ancestral memory, medieval man cast about within a feudal order and gaining through suffering, and Renaissance/Western man venturing forth as an exercise in expansion of self and nobility, even statecraft. Dean McCannell and Nelson Graburn join the conversation here to explore how versions of pilgrimage past morph yet again within the framework of Modernity, finding pilgrimage embedded inside the wide spectrum of tourism.<sup>5</sup> The gap to be traversed in this conception is the deep-seated dissatisfaction with an alienating home milieu and a supposed possibility of true authenticity to be found afar. Erik Cohen believes in the existence of a pilgrimage of Modernity but subtly disagrees and proposes that the relation of convergence to divergence is inverted and problematic within McCannell and Graburn's model, stating that the more firmly institutionalized nature of pilgrimage separates it from the more self-electing tourism.<sup>6</sup> Simon Coleman and John Eade emphasize how the role of mobility has been somewhat deemphasized by prior analysts of pilgrimage, and that within the context of Modernity that mobility and its kinesthetic powers of embodiment are now even more crucial.<sup>7</sup> All of these conceptions, through the ages of practice and more recent decades of scholarship, fit within Huizinga's linkage between play and knowing.

Additionally, postmodern theory has ample consideration spent on the function of walking as a method of knowing. Perhaps most significantly with Bourdieu and his

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<sup>4</sup> Turner, "The Center Out There."

<sup>5</sup> Graburn, "The Anthropology of Tourism;" MacCannell, *The Tourist*.

<sup>6</sup> Cohen, "Pilgrimage Centers."

<sup>7</sup> Coleman and Eade, "Introduction."

concept of *Habitus* (describing the multifaceted physical embodiment of cultural capital) and its subcomponent *Hexis* (role of the body, position and movement in contributing to *Habitus*), walking is considered one of the several key modes of the *hexis* and therefore serves as a lifelong means of ingesting and ingraining a certain body of external information.<sup>8</sup> Later as an output, humanity moves forth what has been gleaned as affected by the means by which it was incorporated and embodied, thus creating future reality, values, and the next “rules of the game.” Pilgrimage is an act passed onward—a journey made in part because others have before and others still will presumably follow later. It begins to feel increasingly convincing that this possibility of knowing accretively becomes a body of knowledge; like a riddle, a newcomer is impelled to repeat (or play) in order to join the reality of those who know. Justin and Andrew’s obvious and contagious excitement (seemingly both performative and genuine) over finding the cache—a useless, hidden object that has been already found and re-found, repeatedly—brings a human face to this theory.

It may be difficult to clearly see the potency of this accretive knowledge as a motivator and shaper of space as it remains blurred and embedded with life’s panoply of bodily movement (*hexis*); consider the extreme example of Hikikomori in Japan, a phenomenon of people entering early adulthood and refusing to leave their childhood rooms or participate in any sort of external life, living thoroughly outside the shared milieu of movement and exchange. Hikikomori devotion to online games and the fantasy world at hand is well documented and through this media behaviors akin to the creation of new religions often emerge.<sup>9</sup> With the emergence of geolocation-based searching practices including Geocaching and Ingress, Hikikomori are voluntarily venturing out of their hermitages to participate in the collective space of society as structured by the non-virtual landscape of placed caches and systems for locating them. Clearly as conditioned by an affinity for virtual-world games, Hikikomori are participating in a game as they geolocate caches. But consider what kind of knowledge they build for themselves in traversing such a significant and exposed distance, and imagine what is passed forward to whomever will follow suit. Play and pilgrimage are clearly in dialog with seemingly productive results, standing in stark contrast with an otherwise acutely internal life, decoupled from much spatiosocial participation.

### **Geocaching as Pilgrimage**

When Justin and Andrew step outside of everyday life to allow themselves to be led to a cache, they are drawn through familiar territory which becomes new inside their quest. They venture forth with the dim understanding that the pursuit of their chosen cache has been attempted before, likely multiple times, and their eventual memory of the process endured will become part of a minor legacy, held by the institution and community of Geocachers. Once they find the cache, the objects inside will likely serve

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<sup>8</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*; Scully, *Disability Bioethics*.

<sup>9</sup> Jang, "Creating the Sacred Places of Pop Culture."



only the purpose of being physical enough to be hidden and found, less materially significant even than, for instance, a lock of hair in a reliquary. The cache's contents are likely absurd in their insignificance, establishing a custom of irony expected of the items. Their find will be logged on site and in virtual space, both concretizing the knowledge of the journey to, and solving of, the riddle of the hiding. The system of Geocaching will record their find, thus growing the number indicating popularity for that precise spot on earth to be visited for the same reasons, repeatedly.

The likeness of a pilgrimage seems increasingly clear, but we have come to expect that pilgrimage necessarily contains a deep meaning, a transference to a *specific* new state by taking part. Are we to believe that this specificity is detachable or optional? Or is what transpires in a Geocache find only a husk of a pilgrimage, incomplete until injected with something transcendental? This might be best described a type of synaptic pilgrimage, decoupled from meaning and let loose in a global domain of fragmented environments and frenzied mobility. It does not preclude the possibility that a tourism experience, traveling a great distance to pursue authenticity in a deeply foreign culture or a solemn trek to a holy site would not remain a viable pilgrimage typology, but as the mystery of distance itself is depleted in an atmosphere of international production and seamless telecommunication, it is perhaps fitting that the performance of pilgrimage could be undergoing a reorientation, exploring distance as simultaneously craved and negligible.

To refocus upon the NHT's version of pilgrimage, we see a typology nearly as contemporary but inverted. A route of travel cemented into memory through a top-down narrative-crafting instrument of public history and a bottom-up hunger for heritage, the NHTs essentially declare the possibility of pilgrimage while offering no concrete reason to perform one. Here, the tricky question of destination emerges. While pilgrimage is certainly about journey, the magnetic quality of Turner's "center," Modernity's "authenticity," or the cache itself suggests destination as a critical element conspicuously absent in the case of most NHTs. Consideration of the role of authorship and collecting as a less apparent component of pilgrimage suggest a potential overlap between Geocaching and NHTs. Several examples explore this:

- Derek Alderman unpacks the cultural practice of coming to Graceland, former home of Elvis, and writing on the perimeter wall of the estate. Thousands have performed this act, creating a palimpsest of memory, affect, and claiming whereby the enigmatic concept of Elvis is continually remade and the motivation for pilgrimage kept alive.<sup>10</sup>
- Jill Dubish sees the embodying performance of reading, touching, and creating rubbings of names inscribed on the walls of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC, combined with the kinetics of motorcycle travel, as the cohesive elements responsible for perpetuating the Run for the Wall pilgrimage among

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<sup>10</sup> Alderman, "Writing on the Graceland Wall."

Vietnam Veterans. The blend of these actions is reframed and collectively felt as a healing.<sup>11</sup>

- Seeta Chaganti looks into the deeper past by half a millennium to consider the reliquaries of the Middle Ages, often the intermittent or final touchstone for medieval pilgrims. The reliquary combines objects which would be difficult to decipher if the reliquary itself, often lovingly improved over time, did not hold them together as a symbol of their comingled devotional qualities. Also, pilgrims' repeated moments of reverent visitation, sometimes adding a token of appreciation, create a certain patina of observance, memory, and mystery, thus sustaining the pilgrimage institution itself.<sup>12</sup>

The Geocache process combines many of these elements at the point of arrival at the cache itself—the marking of the log, and handling and swapping the contents of the cache vessel itself. Additionally, though the markings perhaps feel ephemeral, as an audience, Geocaching functions on the scale of its ten million members; technically speaking, everyone can see everyone else at any moment. Alternately, the NHT has implemented a (somewhat juvenile) system of collecting visitation stamps in a trail passbook. These instances approach the qualities of marking one's presence in time, but lack the clarity of transcendence and connection to what is outside oneself seen in the previous examples. This component of marking, and remembering through the presence of marks, appears to be on the verge of change, a rebooting of the possibilities of evidence.

### **Effects on Space and Place**

In the early stages of Geocaching, the National Park Service reacted with alarm at the idea of Geocaching taking place inside of parks due to the potential risks of damage by cache-hiders and seekers trampling ecologically sensitive areas and hiking off designated trails and in dangerous areas, as well as the physical presence of the non-biodegradable caches themselves scattered throughout what is supposed to be pristine nature. Geocaching was banned from all NPS spaces outright, and is only now beginning to be reconsidered in sanctioned formats and lands with low sensitivity. But this begs the question of what Geocaching could be doing or imprinting upon the space within which caches are left and found as well as the amorphous realm of travel.

At first look, Geocaching appears to be completely ephemeral—the location of a cache is as random as it is hidden. Geocachers come to it from anywhere and leave with minimal disruption and no intentional mark save for their name written in the log. Hard evidence of flows to, from and between caches is impossible to gather into any firm category for analysis. A better way to look at what might be created by this virtual webbing of the caches upon the physical earth would be through Nigel Thrift's premises of non-representational theory and Hayden Lorimer's subsequent attempts to

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<sup>11</sup> Dubisch, "Heartland of America."

<sup>12</sup> Chaganti, *The Medieval Poetics of the Reliquary*.

categorize its approaches and products.<sup>13</sup> Namely, Lorimer suggests subcategories of “auras” and later “rhythms and cycles” and “flows and codes.” The qualities of cyclical activities at the fixed point where a cache has been planted suggest a temporary, but perhaps lingering, invisible mark of cumulative instances of finding, which could be called an aura of sorts. As Justin and Andrew walk deeper into the forested park to find a cache, they peer out of the Magic Circle-space of their game/pilgrimage to note places they have utilized previously now being disturbed—the connection of awarenesses and rememberings suggest a coded flow, and this might congeal into a representational form with the submission of a story of the find submitted to the Geocaching site at the moment the find is logged. Also to note, Justin and Andrew validated the presence and value of a rhythm when they delighted in the reveal of a long series of prior visitors, a quality standing in stark contrast with the seeming out-of-the-way insignificance with the place of the cache. Equally slippery but not to be ignored, in the special case of Justin and Andrew, the video documentation of the experience and dissemination to several hundred thousand viewers (the representation of the non-representation qualities of Geocaching) is one of many building blocks moving the duo into a certain position of authority. In this small and diluted way, the evidence of participation builds networks, relationships, and identities not only between Geocachers, but feeding into broader virtual channels, in this case Viacom.

The space of the NHTs takes this idea of a coded flow and moves it into the realm of the representational. The historic conditions are interpreted and strategically aimed at desired target audiences and the mapped representation makes its own statement of remembered connectivity. But like the ambiguous sites of Geocaching, the NHT reveal nothing in person except for the very occasional preserved object of remembrance. The events of the past can sometimes be preserved in the place names one encounters, which give a hazy allusion to mobilities of the past. For instance, on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, multiple pioneer trails (now NHTs) converge in an exurb of Salt Lake City referred to as Emigration Canyon, which, for pioneers, topographically offered the easiest westbound exit from the precarious mountain trails into the flats of the Great Basin. For Mormon pioneers in particular, the canyon formed the vestibule to a new life in the promised land of the Salt Lake area. As if to make the imaginary of the path of descent more clear, Emigration Creek gushes westward, draining the snowmelt directly into the fabric of Salt Lake City and eventually the lake itself. The presence of the named creek, as connected to the canyon, forms an ecological/infrastructural memorial as it crosses the city.<sup>14</sup> In the Central and Mountain regions of North America, sometimes ungraciously referred to as “flyover country,” the presence of traversals outweighs the coastal areas’ presence of edge; nostalgia-based cultures of pioneer virtues and aesthetics, homesteading and so-called “Plain Folk Americanism” pervade the aura of the region. If one could trace this particular mode of Habitus back to its original delivery system, the feeder lines for a particular cultural convergence, the space of the highways

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<sup>13</sup> Lorimer, "Cultural Geography: Worldly Shapes;" Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

<sup>14</sup> Mitchell, "Being There."

of the past would light up not only on the map but as threads through the banal spaces of past migration and present settlement, in every instance fueling the cultural reference points left in their wake.

For Geocaching and NHTs alike, looking to the non-representational feels to be a highly viscous exercise. Perhaps the non-representational theory gaze is only possible at the current historical moment and nothing that can be supposed would hold any validity by the time that postmodern pilgrimage can be viewed in hindsight. But one element will be permanent and may affect outcomes in a very real way. This is what Nigel Thrift would call “Qualculations” and speaks to the present practices of compiling large quantities of subjective reactions as a form of data, and then the application of this data to make designs and decisions into the future.<sup>15</sup> Both Geocaching and the NHT make a significant investment in gaining as many pieces of personal input as possible: the more available, the better. Beyond the relatively clear Geocaching-derived data collection, the NHT themselves monitor and survey school groups as they participate in narrative, ranger-led activities, keep tabs on the array of interest groups, their membership, participation and motivators, and also periodically conduct web-based surveys for users or researchers and in-person focus groups or vision sessions. Such information amassing and aggregating millions of peoples' behaviors and movements in and of itself has a significant value, a type of potential energy waiting to be sold and unharnessed when currents are detected, decisions are made, and plans are laid. Geocaching presumably utilizes this information for its own business practices, profitability, and promotion of additional services. The NHTs will continually tweak their interpretive programs based on curriculum feedback. Crucially, funding for each NHT as a park unit is based partly on quantifiable participation and interpolated qualitative reactions. Not only is whatever gleaned by this accumulation of data understood as helpful to future planning, it adds a new belief to the institution doing the gathering, which holds that a fuller view of reality can be enjoyed. This is like a newfound confidence which may affect outcomes in a variety of ways beyond logical planning considerations; it is a belief in a clearer future path emanating from an increase in volume.

The value for data shifts the role of authorship within pilgrimage. What was formerly simply an accretion of acts of marking and possibly catharsis is now expanded to a wider range of information. A Geocaching member's name, presented when logging a find, can be instantly categorized in terms of gender, home location, interests, income, career, etc. Their travel preferences can be quickly derived from a map of where they have logged cache finds, giving insight towards potential trends as well as producing a unique travel/spatial fingerprint, also to be seen as the shape of accumulated pilgrimage. As Geocaching is currently organized into levels from *Basic* to *Premium*, as well as a growing body of educationally oriented, geographically distinctive *EarthCaches* among other places of special interest, the growth of such “qualculative” data may increasingly

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<sup>15</sup> Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

begin to organize the placement of caches into a less random world-scale constellation of points. The more organized and charged with site-specific info, the more change may register in the data culled analyzing the spatial shape of individual travel patterns.

Here is the point where the overlap of Geocaching and the specific space and meaning of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail will slowly begin to alter each other's future. If we can imagine Justin and Andrew locating one of the 73 caches planted along this NHT, we would see that their practice of reaching at random into their greater environment can be disrupted by a preexisting directional flow. In order for this to make sense, a convergence would necessarily occur combining interpreted history delivered from the NPS and embodied memory from the now-200-year-old landscape of Pioneer patterns and settlement. To Justin and Andrew, the perception of a cache as a point would shift to that of a line or network and the dual languages of pilgrimage fold into each other. It would be impossible to say in advance whether a preference for seeking such sequenced, trail-specific caches might follow, but the activation of spaces afforded by a practice of Geocaching shifts slightly into a new mode. And of course all of the data affiliated with such a shift, subjective and empirical, can be collected by both controlling entities, adding to an increasingly "qualculated" future.

#### **(a sense of) Conclusion**

Though it will likely not radically alter the course of human history, this merging of two ideas of contemporary pilgrimage suggests the threshold of an approaching modality that cannot yet be understood. It remains to be seen what motivations people develop to bind venturing with memory and what armatures, if any, they will adhere to when doing so no longer fits comfortably in the expected frame. In particular, these instances explored here pose a minor disruption to two otherwise dependable frameworks: Benedict Anderson's spatial or geographic Imaginary and also that of Pierre Nora's *Lieu de Memoire*.<sup>16</sup>

Nora's *Lieu de Memoire* is of course a concept fundamental to the evolution of heritage as the productive convergence of memory and national history. Memory, though imprecise, inventive, and mutable, if honored, will best serve to reinforce the believed core of an otherwise blurring society. The fuzzy role of memory present within a Geocaching experience, or shared amongst the Geocaching community, appears to run the risk of being subsumed by narrative projects including ecological and history-oriented landscapes. As Nora believes that history replaces true memory, the tabula rasa afforded in Geocaching to interact with sites of memory (virtually and personally) and compose something new may be threatened by this slippage, by adaptations to history-based narratives. The synaptic nature of Geocaching as seen as micro-pilgrimage where one, to borrow Turner's terms, attempts to move outward, along society's edges, to find "center," repeatedly, may be upended by an attempt to make the edge *become*

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<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Nora, "Between Memory and History."

the center.<sup>17</sup> Geocaching, the corporation, in pursuit of profit and growth seeks to team with groups seeking to orchestrate a tour out of the Geocaching's spatial spontaneity and relationship with memory and thus blurs Nora's boundaries between memory and heritage in ways we cannot yet predict.

Generally defined, *the imaginary* is a shared set of presumptions, including omissions and exaggerations, imposed from a mentality of dominance over another which then becomes a target of a multiplicity of individually imagined beliefs collectively creating a certain momentum.<sup>18</sup> A spatial or geographic imaginary includes a dimension of the imagined or preferred notions about a physical setting. The ingredient of heritage is often one of the foundational shared premises of a workable imaginary; the NHTs are therefore attempts to create various heritage-based spatial imaginaries. With the advent of geolocation-based travel, the concept of the imaginary might require another look; the united set of presumptions at the helm may be subtly but repeatedly destabilized by the rush of gathered knowledge and experience rising from beneath. The gatherers have no agenda; they form patterns of pilgrimage on a capricious basis and accelerate any nascent feedback loops at work within the imaginary.

Looking beyond these disrupted models, Maja Klaussen takes a most forward-thinking, inquisitive approach to Geocaching as it intersects with other forms, structures, and bits of life.<sup>19</sup> Both the spaces of and reactions within a performance of the cache search and find must operate within a "space of hybridity," stating that this quality "resides primarily in the interweaving of the digital-and-physical space afforded by location-aware technology and the user's appropriation hereof."<sup>20</sup> We can see this in the particular moment Justin and Andrew find themselves with the newfound agency of a Geocaching participant to wriggle their way under a suburban, privately owned tree, find their cache and report the event back to the Geocaching community outside of this curious spot, transmitted via their otherwise unassuming cell phones. Klaussen connects this to Huizinga's concepts as well and considers the whole enterprise as a "Spatial Expansion/a Playful Invasion"—in her analysis focusing on Geocaching inside a crowded city, she considered bystanders, city folk, as part of the game too.<sup>21</sup> The delight of the space, potentially sublime delight including awe or suspense, is extended to the delight of a reaction with those outside of the "game," a condition shared with that of pilgrimage. In the space of pilgrimage, however, the consistent density of people, happenings, and possibilities is made cyclic and erratic and drawn out into the line of travel. Like Justin and Andrew under the tree, it is the crannies, fragments, and happenings which separate the *Lieux de Memoire* from the spaces of history. The contemporary NHT pilgrimage bisects infinite moments such as these, but in a hope to sculpt a heritage too influenced by history, they ignore these opportunities, leaving the

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<sup>17</sup> Turner, "The Center Out There."

<sup>18</sup> Salazar and Graburn, *Tourism Imaginaries*.

<sup>19</sup> Klausen, "Re-Enchanting the City."

<sup>20</sup> Klausen, "Re-Enchanting the City," 199.

<sup>21</sup> Huizinga, *Homo Ludens IIs*.

influence of potential “qualculative” data with nowhere to go, nothing to shape, and no hybrid places to playfully invade. At least for now. This merger between Geocaching practice and NHTs is in its infancy and whatever shiftings and hybridities, forms, spaces, and practices of pilgrimages and games may result, however minor, will have to be viewed from down the road. What sorts of spaces this will take place within also remains to be seen, but fertile ground seems to exist where the edge conditions, programmed underlays, and data pileups come together.

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## Retracement

### Invisible method, uncelebrated design tool of the Cultural Landscape

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We make a mistake if, says Seamus Heaney, driving down a road between wind and water, overwhelmed by what we see, we assume we will see 'it' better if we stop the car. It is there in the passage.

-Elaine Scarry on Seamus Heaney's 1996 "Postscript."<sup>1</sup>

The objects which exist together in the landscape exist in interrelation. ... The situation is analogous to that of history, which may be divided among economics, government, sociology, and so on; but when this is done the result is not history.

- Carl Ortwin Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape," 1925.

This chapter focuses on retracement, an activity in every way secondary and overlooked. To retrace, one is never the first and, unlike the celebrated concept of pilgrimage, the task itself is never the ultimate goal. In a matter of weeks I will actually perform a retracement, traveling between Santa Fe, New Mexico and Independence, Missouri. By occupying a space and action installed by other retracers, designed and imbued with their own aims, I hope to gain insight into the nature and experience of trails, though I have some doubts about fitting this experience into a scholarly framework. In fact, the prospect of gathering and sorting the uncountable and indistinct influences that shape and color a nearly-900-mile drive sounds as intimidating as the trip sounds fun. I will be directed by the National Park Service to think about pioneers, but I will be following roadways promoted and markers placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution. And there will be the invisible aura of perhaps thousands of dutifully piloted motorhomes that have come before me. On the return trip I will retrace the lower section of the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail from the Arizona/Mexico border to Los Angeles. I will be directed by the National Park Service to think about a single expedition of 1775, but I will be skirting the study laboratory of historian Herbert Bolton and traversing the equestrian dreamscape of horseman

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, 51.

George Cardinet. I will drive this in a 2003 Mazda Protegé5 at freeway speed, stopping at intervals in Kansas to log my presence at sequential Geocache nodes. And like these others, my retracement will become writing, an act and product serving as component of my exploration of hodology. Retracement creates. What it creates becomes the invisible part of the Cultural Landscape, the multiplicity of frames through which it becomes an artifact. What it creates is in motion, unlike the land itself, pushing and receding like a glacier. To retrace is to catch a current but it is also to create anew.

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When Carl Sauer set forth the concept of the Cultural Landscape a century ago, he repositioned the scale at which the geographic gaze might seek to operate. Under his influence, looking upon the scope of culture's subjective possession of, or interaction with, a space within an objective and greater areal dimension began to take on a critical capacity.<sup>2</sup> This suggested a new dilemma with regards to the general size of places. If a cultural landscape is merely a subdivided portion of, say, a continent or geologic region, then the world is a patchwork of overlapping and subtly shifting cultural landscapes. But if the cultural landscape is not a function of simply being, but rather one of assessing or gazing upon, then the world is instead an ongoing, patchy series of the invasions of perception. Perhaps "invasions" is too strong a term, but the dominant, forward thrust of the seeing eye as we literally move, bodily, into new territory, whether we passively view it, actively judge it, or methodically analyze it, is no minor action; a cultural landscape is a designation, outlook, and overlay.<sup>3</sup> To most of us, whatever the result, it is made manifest in the form of a map or description of the aforementioned patchwork nature. To the geographer at least, Sauer gives a nod towards the idea of action, musing, "Explorations have been the dramatic reconnaissances of Geography. The great geographic societies justly have accorded a place of honor to explorers."<sup>4</sup> But he stops here, saying no more about the vectoral force and directionality of the revolutionary assessment method he subsequently introduces. Only tangentially, in visual studies and especially the experimental art world of the 1960s, did this possibility of movement as a device of aesthetic creation gain any traction.<sup>5</sup> In particular, the work of Richard Long, "A Line Made by Walking," makes this idea manifest.<sup>6</sup> (However, we again see in this genre a predilection towards walking as the preferred method.) This chapter seeks to explore this role of the explorer, though not in the traditional sense; the explorer is not the only mobile agent at work in *creating* cultural landscapes through perception and assessment coupled with motion. The explorer instigates and gathers knowledge through experience, but subsequent retracers shape the knowledge, mythos, and lore, and structure ensuing beliefs—they mediate a shift into public memory or scholarship

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<sup>2</sup> Sauer, *Geography of the Upper Illinois Valley*.

<sup>3</sup> Macpherson, "Landscape's Ocular-Centrism."

<sup>4</sup> Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape," 317.

<sup>5</sup> Phillips, "Cultural Geographies in Practice."

<sup>6</sup> Roelstraete, *Richard Long*.

or popular culture. The cultural landscape idea can be thought of as a type of occupation and/or aesthetic product or artifact. The idea that the explorer figure was literally the first to enter and see has been disavowed, so the “honor” of the explorer falls instead to his or her relationship to the charting of a course. An explorer may very well have been following an uncharted course made by others previously. And, to the focus of this work, the explorer’s path may be retraced subsequent times in the ongoing *creationary* process of making the cultural landscape out of the neutrality and multiplicity of area. The retrace becomes an explorer; the retraced, a subtle new artifact.

This chapter will not deliver any conclusive points. The function of retracement has not enjoyed any academic focus although it has served widely as an uncelebrated method from the “heroic” to the “social” modes of inquiry. There is no focused, developed body of literature on the subject of retracement from which to draw.<sup>7</sup> The topic might be served better to focus on its relative absence from literature. Retracement should not be confused with walking, which, as a method, has indeed been the focus of research.<sup>8</sup> While the act of retracement may benefit from an on-foot, overland means of mobility, to center upon walking limits the scale at which a so-deemed cultural landscape can comfortably exist. J.B. Jackson thankfully presents ample evidence and enthusiasm that the gaze from an automobile, from the space of the roadway outward, framed by the dash and windows, is an essential means by which to absorb the contents of landscape.<sup>9</sup> The general bounds of a cultural landscape can be easily imagined in the case of Jackson’s beloved Upper Rio Grande Valley environs, but what might be the bounds of a cultural landscape like that of the Silk Road? Must it be walked to be understood as a single artifact? Walked in its entirety? Re-walked? Is he or she that revisits to retrace thereby the owner of the mobile gaze and therefore the progenitor of said cultural landscape? Or alternatively could an ongoing process of multiple retracements continue to make, change, or embed the result?

The idea of the “trail,” something past and invisibly still present to be followed, sets forth an interesting field in which to ask these questions. Like the example of the Silk Road, the landscape and its cultural overlay are dimensionally as long as the journey.

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<sup>7</sup> The Situationist movement certainly celebrated a mode of entwined urban movement and awareness and knowledge production, creating what could be seen as something of a foundational literature, culminating in Michel de Certeau’s “Walking in the City,” 1980. More recently, Rebecca Solnit has revived a curiosity in the history and meaning of walking, spanning between academic and popular culture with *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*, 2001. The ideas of retracing and repeating appear indirectly in these works, but always with respect to the activity of walking. As well, the described value of any such retracing is arbitrary, personal, and produces knowledge incidentally and cumulatively. Retracement, as a method and action, need not only be a function of walking, and the knowledge it produces can be deliberate, even planned. On this latter definition, no body of scholarship appears to exist.

<sup>8</sup> Ingold and Vergunst, *Ways of Walking*.

<sup>9</sup> Jackson, “Roads Belong in the Landscape,” 189-205, in *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*.

The question of width, however, could be understood as ranging from the width of the pathway used to the extents of a user's field of vision to the extents of an established cultural network. A subsequent act of retracement considers multiple scales and leaves this ambiguity unchallenged. The question of force, push, or forward motion proves even more elusive. Repeated retracements each lay forth an affirmation of cultural significance. Neither the first nor the last, interim retracements can be teased out and examined on their own terms. As a case study, the Juan Bautista de Anza "Trail" represents an exemplary arc: after being "blazed" and recorded by Anza himself and two accompanying Spanish priests, the settlement expedition's pathway was physically retraced by historian Herbert Bolton and then by recreation advocate and horseman George Cardinet. The efforts of these two men arguably brought Anza's pathway into the status of a cultural landscape. Institutionalized by the National Park Service and now embedded with various pluralistic narratives of American nationalism, their physical retracing of the route is no small part of the formative process for this particular cultural landscape. As a "park," their retracement can become "your" retracement.

Bolton's and Cardinet's retracement efforts can be seen as obviously foundational to the NPS's Anza Trail project, but they can also be taken as stand-alone creative acts with their own goals, means, and outcomes. This specific mobile work of retracement has thus far not been comfortably situated in any category of mobility or method, which may be because it exists in a liminal space between performed event and created aesthetic product. To examine this tension, it may be helpful to situate each man's retracement effort in the context of his lived experience and personality. This will serve to give needed weight and context for retracement actions that otherwise slip from focus. It seems we respond best to the value of retracement when it is allowed to couple with the nuances of the individual, with their character.

### **Herbert Bolton**

To search for Herbert Bolton's fingerprint on the legacy of Anza's expeditions opens a door to a terrifyingly vast body of work. Bolton rose from profoundly humble origins to become the director of U.C. Berkeley's Bancroft Library, which now holds his papers, many of which document his vast and prodigious work as a professor of history at the same institution. Born in 1870, Bolton grew up in Wisconsin and led an essentially ordinary, if ambitious, life of farm work and rural schooling. One perhaps pivotal experience may have been the Bolton family's late attempt to follow the footsteps of American pioneer migration to settle new farmland in Nebraska: leaving their farm near Wilton, Wisconsin in 1873, they ventured close to Lincoln, Nebraska only to encounter dismal conditions and return to Wisconsin where they would by necessity take on a new farm with poorer soil than the first, and in an unknown community a hundred miles away.<sup>10</sup> While a three-year-old may not remember such a journey, the family memory and circumstances loomed large over his subsequent destitute upbringing.

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<sup>10</sup> Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*.

The idea of setting forth over a great distance as a pioneer may not necessarily have been tinged only with regret or, if it was, this was sure to be questioned once Bolton arrived at the University of Wisconsin and aligned as a mentee of historian Frederick Jackson Turner, the preeminent historian of the American Frontier. Turner's work arguably defined the frontier, expanding the meaning to more than physical space but concurrently a condition, a change agent, and a result.<sup>11</sup> Turner, as well as his contemporary historian Francis Parkman, had during the nineteenth century successfully reframed traditional notions of American history by illuminating the critical importance of the slowly-pushing edges of nationhood. Simply put, Parkman concentrated on the threads of French and English exploration which begat notional conduits such as the Oregon Trail (made legendary by Parkman's own scholarship); Turner formulated his Frontier Thesis concentrating on the glacially accretive push of pioneer society, simultaneously "taming" the prairies and forging a grand democratic institution beyond previous coastal-colonial versions. Both Parkman and Turner have more recently received criticism for presenting history rife with cultural bias, but regardless they created a historical method and gaze that set forth distinct space and landscape as a primary participant and imbued it with a similarly distinct thrust of directionality and pace. Parkman and Turner, heroes themselves of the academic history-writing community, solidified their prominence by physically reliving these movements, popularizing historical narrative by melding it with personal experience, including florid observation of the natural environment and complementary vignettes of danger or frontier friendliness.<sup>12</sup>

Bassin analyzes the nature of Turner's concept of frontier and hypothesis as a fundamentally "distinct mode of analysis in nineteenth-century historiography."<sup>13</sup> Turner blends a premise of the scientific into the structure of social history, deeming growing societies to be "organismic" or "protoplasm", ostensibly capable of growth by movement. The setting for this example of lifelike growth was the frontier—an artifact—and the combination fits comfortably into a nineteenth-century model of nationalism that would first propel and later undermine his work. Shades of this type of thinking would strongly color Bolton's subsequent work but not fully resolve within it. Bolton would not ever endeavor to solidify a final, single hypothesis, but rather rested upon Turner's logic with the caveat that it could represent one of several structural and organismic pushings over multiple iterations of frontier.<sup>14</sup>

The first success of Herbert Bolton's career, and exposure to a parallel frontier concept, came in the form of a position at the University of Texas. There, he initially attempted to establish himself as a Medievalist but found the University's proximity to Mexico and a wealth of untapped archival material left over from several centuries of Spanish colonial

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<sup>11</sup> Weber, "Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands."

<sup>12</sup> Moore, "Francis Parkman on the Oregon Trail."

<sup>13</sup> Bassin, "Turner, Solov'ev, and the 'Frontier Hypothesis,'" 475.

<sup>14</sup> Weber, "Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands."

rule to be a superior area to focus his attention. To greatly oversimplify a complex and prolific life and career, Bolton came to academically “possess” the entirety of this body of knowledge, the documentation, narrative, and territory of Spain’s slow push northward into the space of modern-day United States. He bound together all such fragmentary efforts, from the seaside establishment of St. Augustine, Florida to the chain of California Missions, into one spatialized concept—the Borderlands.<sup>15</sup> After several years in Austin, he would be hired at University of California, Berkeley in 1911 (aided by Turner himself) and continue the Borderlands project from this northwestern-most promontory of Spanish history.<sup>16</sup> He oversaw 104 doctoral students and would teach thousands of undergraduates this idea of an imbricated territory, a push northward, a merge with space and landscape, and a subtle undergirding of all we now know as Americans of the West. Put another way, “In the process, the Bolton school offered a valuable balance to the chauvinism of the Turnerians, who had come to see the term ‘frontier’ as synonymous with the Anglo-American frontier.”<sup>17</sup>

This “Borderlands” descriptor only makes sense with relation to the current US/Mexico boundary line as it both splits and defines a certain zone from about 26- to 34-degrees North latitude. Bolton’s moniker asserts the possibility of a line also operating as a space, a territory. In order to understand how Bolton “built” this concept of the Borderlands, this role of the line as a space-creator becomes critically important. To be sure, Bolton spent an immense amount of time finding archives, translating, writing, and teaching (not to mention directing University of California, Berkeley’s Bancroft Library and overseeing a family of seven). But he also painstakingly and enthusiastically retraced the routes of key Spanish explorers. The first such endeavor centered on the expeditions of Father Eusebio Kino and the establishment of what Bolton dubbed “la Pimería”—the primary lands.<sup>18</sup> Bolton’s biography of Kino explains that Bolton himself “retraced nearly all his endless trails and identified most of his campsites and water holes—all this in an effort to see Kino’s world as Kino saw it.”<sup>19</sup> This would refer to no less than thirty-six retracements.

Hurtado describes Bolton’s efforts:

...his “Map of *Pimería Alta*” implied a transnational and multicultural history. It identified general tribal areas and dozens of specific Indian communities as well as the locations of Spanish missions and *visitas*, places where Kino occasionally preached. Bolton traced the routes for thirty-six of Kino’s journeys out of Mexico north to the Gila River in Arizona and west to the Colorado River. The trails make a pattern like a gnarled ironwood tree spreading across the Sonoran Desert. Bolton did not bother to include the international boundary between the United States and Mexico, a lapse that reinforced the impermanence of the national borders even though Kino’s travels spanned modern national boundaries and, in

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<sup>15</sup> Weber, “Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands.”

<sup>16</sup> Weber, “Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands.”

<sup>17</sup> Weber, “Turner, the Boltonians, and the Borderlands.” 37.

<sup>18</sup> Bolton, *Rim of Christendom: A Biography of Eusebio Francisco Kino, Pacific Coast Pioneer*, 1936

<sup>19</sup> Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*, 119.

Bolton's point of view, perhaps transcended them. By following and interpreting Kino's trails, Bolton himself became a transnational figure—a historian of Native America, Spain, and Mexico as well as the United States.<sup>20</sup>

To be clear Hurtado is not reacting to Bolton's physical travels; the retracement is not consistently performed physically in the field, only occasionally so. Regardless, this act as a single method has substantial impact in addition to the visual product of the research, the map. To do this apparently gives Bolton the perceived capacity to "transcend" a national fixity. As well, in the making of the map, the act of having retraced these trails seems to give or augment Bolton's license to decide which lines to place on the map. The national border is omitted, Kino's trail structure, like an ironwood, serves as the skeleton of the *Pimería*—no questions asked.

The academic and social capital attained by Bolton's retracement actions can never be fully separated from the rest of his methods of scholarship so as to define their absolute value. However, this small sampling of influential supporters that Bolton gathered sheds some light on the topic. A key figure in Bolton's arena was Horace Albright, the second director of the National Park Service and brother of one of Bolton's doctoral students who was unfortunate enough to die on a research trip to Seville.<sup>21</sup> Albright's seemingly inauspicious intersection with Bolton actually proved prescient, with Albright recognizing that a number of sites under the NPS's jurisdiction via the Antiquities Act were integral to the figures and narratives that comprise Bolton's research. In 1917 Albright proposed an open-ended collaboration, alluding to a spatial understanding of history, declaring "I want to find out how we can fit our work in with yours."<sup>22</sup> Another order of support would materialize shortly thereafter: beginning in 1922, Sidney Ehrman, a San Francisco attorney married to the Hellman family fortune, began to underwrite all of Bolton's California-history-focused research-related travels and publications. Ehrman entertained the Boltons at the San Francisco Opera and at their cabin-mansion on Lake Tahoe; Bolton entertained Sidney Ehrman by inviting him along on several southwestern trail retracement excursions.<sup>23</sup> Bolton also forged a friendship with colleague Carl Sauer of the Department of Geography at Berkeley. Sauer, a historical geographer by training, is understood as the "father" of the concept of the cultural landscape. In a review of one of Bolton's books, Sauer explains

His greatest interest lies in exploration and colonization, in newly found lands and their appropriation by Spanish institutions. He speaks therefore directly to the geographer in a manner that the more conventional historian does not. For

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<sup>20</sup> Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*, 119.

<sup>21</sup> Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*.

<sup>22</sup> Hurtado, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*.

<sup>23</sup> Bannon, John Francis, *Herbert Eugene Bolton: The Historian and the Man*, 1978.



another physical environment and another culture he has carried on the frontier tradition of F. J. Turner.<sup>24</sup>

With this endorsement, Bolton and his methods are immediately resonant in the context of other work concerning cultural landscape studies, particularly J.B. Jackson and Grady Clay.

Once firmly ensconced at Berkeley and with Ehrman's support, Bolton's attention turned to the history of "Alta California," a spatialized concept handily organized by the trail of Juan Bautista de Anza, the first organized, successful, and documented overland Spanish-led expedition through the brutal Sonora Desert towards the coast and then northward, up through small valleys to the tip of the San Francisco peninsula. Several hundred settlers followed with Anza, equipped with livestock and provisions for agriculture, and deposited at intervals to populate missions and presidios at strategic locations. Two priests and Anza himself documented the journey in diaries, describing landmarks and sketching diagrams of their path, rate of travel, and even the variable width of passage reflecting variable terrain, animals' needs for grazing, and volume of party diminishing as settlers decamped along the route. This description had been mapped previously by a local history enthusiast, Zoeth Skinner Eldredge, in 1909, coinciding with the city of San Francisco's Portolá Festival, but without any physical retracement effort. Beginning in 1927, with Ehrman's backing, Bannan describes that Bolton:

had a first real chance to put into practice a technique which was to be one of the very distinctive and characteristic marks of his later writing, which he would use on Kino, the Coronado, and the Escalante. He would try to combine fieldwork with manuscript study. In a word he followed his heroes on the trail, with document or diary in hand. He retraced their expeditions and movements step by step, summer after summer, during semester breaks and Christmas holidays, or whenever he could find the time and had the funds to indulge this passion for exactness.<sup>25</sup>

Starting with the Anza research, retracement is consistently performed physically and integrated with the mapped and written product. Bannan overstates Bolton's commitment to "step by step" mobility; Bolton sometimes utilized a horse and often affectionately appropriated an anthropomorphized Studebaker as part of the retracement retinue. These methods of mobility are important and timely, given the emergence of automobility culture during the 1920s and the beginning of encroachment onto a West experienced on horseback. Bolton's methodically scribbled notes reveal the necessity of negotiating terrain utilizing all means—automobile, horse or foot—and the need to communicate readily with locals to both glean historical information and find

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<sup>24</sup> Sauer, Carl. "Review of *Anza's California Expeditions*, by H. E. Bolton." *Geographical Review* 21, 1931, 503.

<sup>25</sup> Bannan, *Herbert Eugene Bolton*.

one's way onward. As mentioned, Bolton took copious (if garbled) notes and also relied on photography to capture a wealth of informative, though often acutely ordinary, scenes of the landscape. Photography, like the automobile, would have also been newly accessible for such a method, snapping hundreds of images to ascertain some sort of holistic view at a later point in the research process. Ultimately, Bolton would publish an epic five-volume work covering the Anza expedition in 1930, including maps and photographic work from his retracement also underwritten by Ehrman. Carl Sauer would write of the work, "Not only does Bolton know the whole sweep of Spanish-American colonization as does perhaps no one else, but has the extraordinary flair for the geography of exploration. It is his pastime to trace explorers' routes on the ground."<sup>26</sup> Despite the onset of the Great Depression, Bolton's "pastime" translated immediately to the automobile-oriented media and so, for instance, on January 26, 1931 the *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial page proclaimed "Now We Have A Chance to Make Anza's Acquaintance" followed by, "There is no longer any reason for not knowing Juan Bautista de Anza, the great frontiersman who laid the foundations of San Francisco. For this we have to thank Professor Bolton. And we also have to thank Sidney M. Ehrman of San Francisco, whose generosity has made possible the publication of this complete treatment of Anza's connection with the exploration and early settlement of California."<sup>27</sup>

### **George Cardinet**

Born in 1909, George Cardinet, Jr. is popularly understood as the "father" of today's National Park Service Anza Trail Park Unit, having rallied public interest not only in Anza but the landscape of Anza's route through two reenacted horseback rides from Mexico to San Francisco, California. For Cardinet, the horse was the central and single reason behind a long and forceful life of public service as well as the glue used to bond together an army of supporters. Cardinet was born into a life of simultaneous privilege and grit which could almost certainly only be lived in the American West. He never needed to truly work for a living, having inherited a family candy company and capitalized on California's post-war housing development economy by selling parcels of his formerly affordable ranchland. However he worked doggedly on causes dear to him while creating a persona of a salt-of-the-earth horseman with no time for passive leisure.

George Cardinet Jr.'s grandfather, Emile Hippolyte Cardinet, had immigrated to San Francisco from Rouen, France in 1848 at the age of 18. He spent two years in the center of the gold rush territory in Tuolumne County before returning to the San Francisco Bay Area with its burgeoning produce markets. Emile Cardinet life was not atypical of a gold rush participant except for his French and Catholic heritage which was comparatively

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<sup>26</sup> Sauer, Carl. "Review of *Anza's California Expeditions*, by H. E. Bolton." *Geographical Review* 21, 1931, 504

<sup>27</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Now We Have A Chance to Make Anza's Acquaintance." January 26, 1931, 16.

rare; only a surge of French immigration at precisely this time created a French presence in California perhaps 10,000 strong, only to shrink and fade into the melting pot as “gold fever” waned.<sup>28</sup> The legacy of the Gold Rush holds that this mass migration ushered in a significantly Protestant base arguably still present in California. While Italian-Catholic immigration to the city of San Francisco created an identifiably tight subculture, a similar French equivalent did not materialize. Emile Cardinet married a French bride (Estelle LeFebvre) and produced ten children. Somewhat tellingly, he joined the California Society of Pioneers in 1868.<sup>29</sup> The large Cardinet family’s long-term presence in the San Francisco area suggests a successful but cloudy story of assimilation, combining French heritage with the fervid manifest destiny and mobility brought west from the American pioneer experience. Emile’s two youngest sons, Emile Jr. and George, eventually opened and co-operated a candy company out of the industrial rail convergence zone of West Oakland.<sup>30</sup>

The eldest of George’s five children, George Jr. was fortunate to grow up a young man between the World Wars; he experienced a comfortable childhood of a respectable, business-owning family, but tempered by Depression-era values of labor and humility. He worked for a summer at a ranch and developed a lifelong love of horses, henceforward building an identity as a *horseman*. The particular blend of characteristics at the core of this identity prove crucial in understanding the success Cardinet would experience in building a support community, promoting mobility, and defining space on a grand scale. Although the horse has a long history intertwined with the establishment of territory in the Americas, Cardinet simply enjoyed horses and horse-related activity and culture. A 1948 article in the Chicago Daily Tribune announces Cardinet’s cousin Thomas Roger Cardinet (son of uncle Emile Jr., co-owner of the candy company with George Jr.’s father) as having been killed in a plane crash in 1948 and describing him as a “candy fortune heir.”<sup>31</sup> This description suggests that for George Jr., as a similar “heir” and nearly independently wealthy man, he could afford to appropriate the world of horse culture for his own enjoyment. With the mythological figure of the cowboy looming large in American fiction and media (as well as the Cardinet family’s Gold Rush/pioneer status) the imaginary of the horse, serving as a vehicle, icon, and companion was well understood in popular culture. However, the iconography of the horseman did not include privilege: the horseman was the opposite of pretentious, an earthy, tough outdoorsman with an implicit, long-term connection to the landscape in its broadest sense. Effectively, at mid-century the mythology attached to horses allowed for a covert bond amongst upper class Californians. It validated any possible rough personality traits to be found in newly wealthy suburban characters hailing from country beginnings; it brought meaning to a popular frustration with California’s increasing

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<sup>28</sup> Rohrbough, *Rush to Gold*.

<sup>29</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Emile Cardinet Dies at Hayward Home: Was Pioneer of the State, Having Arrived Here in 1848." Jan. 07, 1916, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Blake, *Greater Oakland 1911*. 160.

<sup>31</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*. "Candy Fortune Heir One of Pair Killed in Plane Collision." May 03, 1948, A2.

population, affiliated restrictions, and fragmentation of private land; it bonded together influential people of means who often owned large parcels of land at the exurban periphery while simultaneously undermining any perception of such folk as “the elite;” and it was fun.

Having moved the candy business to Crockett, California and his family to a small ranch in nearby Clayton, Cardinet began to build a tight, active community of horse enthusiasts throughout the entire San Francisco Bay region. Although Cardinet’s identity is still firmly planted in the image of a horseman, what he began to build from his Clayton property illustrates a seamless and growing relationship with post-war planning, park creation, and real estate. After moving to rural Clayton in 1940, he served as a subcommittee secretary for California’s Commission on Reconstruction and Reemployment.<sup>32</sup> This agency operated between 1943 and 1949 aiming to develop natural, social, and economic resources to provide a post-war economy and environment ready to retain the thousands of war workers that had already relocated as well as the thousands more servicemen intent on settling on West Coast at war’s end.<sup>33</sup> With an immense breadth, the commission's subcommittees addressed all facets of growth, from economics to education, and included planning for parks and recreation in the spirit of the muscular planning practices of the previous New Deal era.<sup>34</sup> Cardinet’s role is not known, but the exposure to such multifaceted regionally scaled socioeconomic and physical planning endeavors afforded anyone involved with a new view of what might be possible as the state’s future was designed. Through the subsequent half century, George Cardinet focused his entire life’s purpose and strength of character on the promotion of equestrian trails and the public right-of way or park space that would contain them.

The specifics of this major event are still vague, but in the late 1960s or early 1970s, planners for the forthcoming 1976 National Bicentennial celebrations expressed ideas

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<sup>32</sup> Hubbard, *Favorite Trails of Northern California Horsemen*.

<sup>33</sup> Rhode, *After the War Boom*.

<sup>34</sup> Massively influential but scarcely focused upon scholarship, in 1943, the California legislature established the “State Reconstruction and Reemployment Commission”, with the stated goal: *..to develop the natural, social, and economic resources of the State, promote development of new industries, create new markets; promote the reemployment of discharged servicemen and readjustment to displaced war workers, and the conversion of industry and commerce from war to peace standards; to provide for post-war adjustment and reconstruction, and to encourage economic and social improvement of the general public.*

This resulted in a wide array of recommendation reports on topics ranging from housing, urban blight, aviation infrastructure, public education policy, agricultural policy, population growth, public participation in urban planning, trade economics, and various county-specific endeavors.

*Problems of American Small Business. Hearings Before the Special Committee to Study and Survey Problems of Small Business Enterprises, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., Part 42, Developing the West Through Small Business: III, Field Hearings Portland Oreg., (July 28, 1944) (statement of Col. Alexander Heron, California State Reconstruction and Reemployment Commission), p. 5335.*

about what California should do with its funding, suggesting certain historical narratives to highlight. As the event's planning teams were originating from Washington DC, they unsurprisingly suggested various topics situated in East Coast lore. The reaction in the far-off west was one of a bureaucratic cultural resistance; California was to instead pitch something alternatively related to Spanish/Mexican history: a horseback relay ride from Nogales, Arizona to the San Francisco Presidio. Cardinet took the helm. Although a great deal of effort was spent securing use permits for roads, the ride needed only to approximate Anza's route rather than adhere to Boltonian accuracy. Riders dressed in costume as eighteenth century Spaniards and an event-planning public relations team activated local media outlets along the way via press release to document the visuals of the event and capture the reactions of onlookers along the 1,200-mile route.

I have interviewed three of George Cardinet's supporters: Nancy Dupont, a former newspaper sales manager and equestrian; Robert Doyle, director of the East Bay Regional Parks District; and Doni Hubbard, historian, teacher, and planning commissioner.<sup>35</sup> All three immediately describe Cardinet's forceful persona using such words as "tireless," "unyielding," etc. His passion for horses and equestrian community was contagious and he drew others in and built community by organizing group rides which were always fun but rigorous, with early-morning starts and a tough schedule. He also equally loved to build trails and ride his own horse over self-built and/or still raw and challenging terrain. This, however, is where opinions diverge as to Cardinet's more subtle motivations.

Robert Doyle states emphatically that Cardinet was entirely, elementally focused on making trails, initially solely for equestrian use and later for a broader range of mobilities. This later flexibility came about only with a recognition that broader use meant more support. He claim Cardinet was not particularly interested in history. After a friendship and working relationship spanning many decades, Doyle does not know what religion Cardinet might have been affiliated with.

Nancy Dupont believes that Cardinet recognized that historical narrative was another means to rally enthusiasm for sustained trail support. His awareness had been sharpened by the 1976 Anza ride experience, and he subsequently convinced her to join him in creating a non-profit lobbying organization, the Heritage Trails Fund, in 1980. She recalls a class they took at Diablo Valley Community College in which it was emphasized that one should "play up" heritage narratives to gain support.

Doni Hubbard claims that Cardinet was a full-fledged, passionate citizen-historian, with deep knowledge and love of the role of the horse in the landscape over time and of all

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<sup>35</sup> Nancy Dupont, interview with author, March 1, 2017, at her home and business—Castle Rock Stables—in Walnut Creek, CA.

Doni Hubbard, interview with author, April 14, 2017, by phone.

Robert Doyle, interview with author, March 9, 2017, at his office in the East Bay Regional Parks Headquarters in Oakland, CA.

things California. She believes that he expressed this to her individually because they shared a mutual understanding of such topics. She also believes that his Catholic faith was deep and guiding.<sup>36</sup>

Doyle, Dupont and Hubbard may all be correct, despite contradictory impressions. It is certainly possible that some facet of Cardinet's Catholic heritage brought him into a more profound connection with the story of Anza's two-hundred-year-old presence beneath a burgeoning post-war California. If this could be the case, then the exposure to such a narrative and notion of mobility in a cultural landscape context would likely be from the work of Bolton as dispersed by media coverage of his trails and retracements or by his doctoral graduates populating Catholic education systems around the state. By the time Cardinet produced the planning framework for the NPS's Anza Trail comprehensive management plan, he grounded the entirety of spatio-historical research on Bolton and his five-volume manuscript on Anza and his journey. All of these potential, subtle influences herein would be concretized in a congressional decree of law, authoritatively establishing a national park and a mandated plan formulating its execution.<sup>37</sup>

### **Retracement: essentialized in landscape/performance art but overlooked by history**

English sculptor Richard Long performed a seemingly simple gesture in 1967 by walking back and forth across a field enough times that his route left a straight line in the tamped-down grass. He photographed the line and has apparently since forgotten the exact location of the exercise. This produced a simple image, entitled "A Line Made by Walking" (fig. 1) that proposes both the possibility of turning time into space and the potential for that space or its representation as a pure aesthetic output. The next year, Long produced several typically available maps of countryside around Britain's Exmoor Forest and inscribed the line of a walk taken, entitling the series "A Ten Mile Walk" (fig. 2) and introducing the walk and "tracing" of movement as a sculpture. Mobility, time, and landscape context emerge as elemental as the work's materiality reduces to a minimum. Long initiated a long artistic period of unapologetically framing movement as aesthetic product, the space of a walk leftover from the act recast as a thing and the supporting spatial field as the generic substrate to contrast. In this boiled down version, Long perhaps activates that with which history and cultural geography struggle in holding the retracement act and its creative output in view. Dieter Roelstraete, revisiting Long's work in a 2010 retrospective, asks Long how he might find the field used for "A Line Made by Walking", compelled by the image and secretly hoping that he

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<sup>36</sup> Doni Hubbard, personal interview, April 14, 2017. Hubbard is also the author of *Favorite Trails of Northern California Horsemen*, (referenced herein) - a guidebook of sorts published in 1980 which itself achieves a unique blending of mapped routes with social histories by privileging the stories, preferences, and motivations of riders over the facts of the physical landscapes.

<sup>37</sup> "S. 465 (101<sup>st</sup>): Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Act." February 28, [www.GovTrack.us](http://www.GovTrack.us). 1989. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/101/s465>

might visit the site and retrace the line himself.<sup>38</sup> Disappointingly, Long did not remember the location. However, he was aware that there was apparently a significant market for “re-enactments” of performative, site-centric artworks and supported several recent versions of “A Line Made by Walking” but with new context, for instance a landfill and a desert as sites. Thus, for the art world as well as the original artist, the walk as aesthetic product is an essentializable and portable concept, that ultimately bears little sacred relationship with its original site or substrate. However, the impulse and appreciation for retracement proves strong and enduring.



Figure 10. “A Line Made by Walking.” Richard Long, 1967.  
Source: Tate Gallery, London

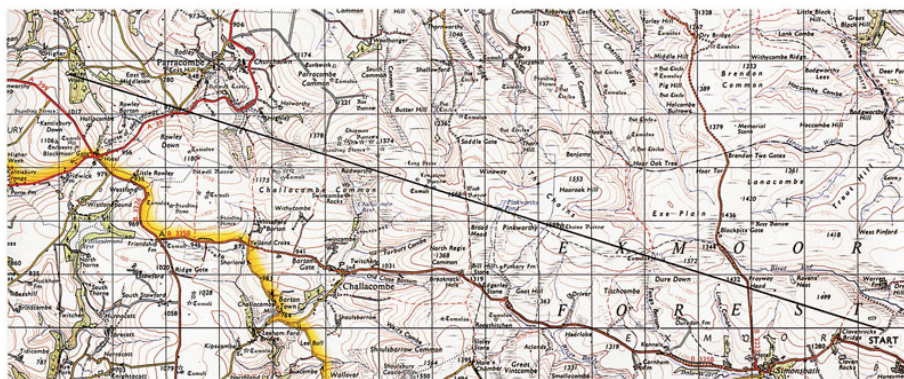


Figure 11. “A Ten Mile Walk.” Richard Long, 1968.  
Source: Tate Gallery, London

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<sup>38</sup> Roelstraete, *Richard Long*.

Eminent historian of the West, Patricia Nelson Limerick, served as principal scholar overseeing a trail-centric mobile exhibition entitled “Trails through Time”, shown in five western states in 1989 and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The event concluded with a symposium at the National Trails Convention and a subsequent anthology entitled *Trails: Towards a New Western History*. After years of preparation, dwelling on trails as central subject matter, scholarly discourse and even traveling with the exhibition, in her own contributing essay Limerick speaks about everything to do with trail-related history *except* retraced trails and the act of retracement.<sup>39</sup> Her only mention of retracement is a childhood anecdote of impatiently whiling away time in the back seat of her parents’ car; the example serves as nothing more than an icebreaker, it seems to diminish the value of retracement within the larger method of history, especially in light of the volumes of scholarly work went into the project, not to mention the “trail” theme itself. In her example Limerick draws only a simplistic parallel with her perception of “slow” change in the field of western history and used the concept of “trail” as analogy to journey and arrival when prodding her colleagues for new work. Compared to the example of Richard Long’s artwork, it seems that the premise of the cultural landscape or concept of the frontier itself obfuscates retrospective action or gaze as itself an ingredient of the landscape’s cultural makeup. Limerick’s example suggests that historiography has failed to see or value the possibility that cultural geography is dynamic. Bolton and Cardinet, however, assert this value not only with the fruits of their labor but with the breadth of respect they cultivated as a direct result of their passion for physical retracement methods. A federally mandated park unit now exists resting entirely on their legacy, with sanctioned legal capacities to manage a 1,200 mile long cultural landscape. Yet their retracements are barely considered historiographically and never as fundamental to the cultural landscape itself; they were merely a “fun” extension of research or an exercise in team-building. A binary framework seems fixed in place: original explorations are motion, whereas landscape is static. It is not. And hopefully when I hit the road eastward, this mobile frame and creationary thrust will gain a trace of clarity.

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<sup>39</sup> Limerick, Milner, and Rankin, *Trails*.



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## **Trailing through Neoliberal Territories**

### **The NHT experiment in poststructuralist geography**

After several years of research, observation, and site visits, the tenuous nature of the relationship between the National Historic Trails and the physical landscape becomes all too evident. This is not without disappointment and frustration for those who may hazily imagine some coherent linkage across vast distances, unprecedented in scale, and more so in execution. These quasi-imaginary lines have a perplexing relationship with the basic principles of what we know as a “park,” favoring instead an emphasis on human relationships. As well, they pose a peculiar relationship to the categories of urban vs. rural—NHTs are present (through designation) in any and all conditions, from densely populated to sparse countryside, despite the clear intention to support community efforts to make a critical chapter of their history visible and emphasize cultural connections above all other intentions/goals. These scenarios, wherein something hovers between place and project, real and imagined, and seems to negate urban/suburban/rural classifications, run parallel to various descriptions of “neoliberal” urban dynamics, except that the role of increasingly unfettered capitalism—key to understanding a growing neoliberal order and conditions—seems mute within this NHT corollary. By looking to the NHTs for non-conclusions and gaps in definitions, they can be situated as a typology at least close to serving as an intellectual space for coming to grips with dispersal and stratification, the role of place and the State in a neoliberalizing condition. This scholarship often relies on metaphors of “path” or “web” or “network” to implicate complex relationships outside of known centralities or hierarchies. This chapter explores possible congruities without necessarily determining parity. It examines several examples of coordinated but fragmenting efforts, and the leaders who spearheaded them, of the 1960-70s. These serve to partially dismantle traditional approaches to parks and celebration, and privilege community over physical space. This leads to an attempt to find theoretical space in which to set these widespread and unresolved efforts, finally giving this topic a “place at the table” within recent discourse on urbanism (even if “urban” proves an invalid lens).

#### **A day in the (organizational) life...**

In November of 2018, the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Park Unit held a visioning session. The goal was to instigate a “Strategic Vision Plan” for 2026, the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Anza’s expedition; in a broader sense the two-day event held at the Pacific Regional Office in San Francisco sought to update, brainstorm, and

align goals amongst the disparate vested interests along the trail's 1,200-mile course. As a kick-off exercise, participants visiting from a variety of communities throughout California and Arizona were asked to hand draw the trail in a way that would illuminate some of their core passions and then share the outcome. For this exercise nearly everyone drew a map and, upon explaining, revealed with a little embarrassment that their map concerned only the segment of trail/region that they themselves knew, what lay beyond was simply less clear. This collective admission that a 1,200-mile space is difficult to know in totality thoroughly validated the meeting convocation itself and the need to align the disparate representative views. Of the approximately 25 attendees, only three represented environmental design fields and two of these were NPS employees. As brainstorming produced a wide array of potential goals (from new slogans to inclusive outreach concepts to updated GIS libraries to heritage curriculum modules aimed at diversity), notably few creative impulses focused upon the physical realm. Ultimately the resulting *Strategic Action Plan* called for simply "increasing the quantity of established trail through partnerships," a goal already included within the trail's existing comprehensive management plan. Any sense of invention and possibility for the future instead tilted significantly toward human relationships, growth and commingling of communities, and dissemination of the trail as an idea. Though frustrating to the more spatially inclined, the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (internally coded "JUBA") as a "park" is truly more of a multi-pronged public history *project*—the mapped trail and its terrestrial counterpart are seldom in direct dialog and trail design is a low priority. This type of collected efforts bundled together by the terms "trail" and/or "park" seems to have been shaped and boosted during the period of the late 1960-70s. While the literature is sparse and specific corollaries are rare, NHT is situated among seemingly related concepts of public space and program that seek to engage while dispersing, to activate meaning while disassembling familiar types, to increase exposure while minimizing commitment, to answer an "urban" call while eschewing notions of spatial centrality, and to foreground community while rescaling reciprocities. By looking at the NHT as a product of their era we can see several ingredients of an increasingly slippery sense of space and place, one that postmodern geographers Edward Soja and Neil Brenner have subsequently attempted to define, and urbanist Paola Viganò has attempted to operationalize<sup>1</sup>The process evident at the JUBA visioning meetings takes on new meaning, and the position of NHT, with respect to concepts of park, space, and society, purposefully tilts into diffuse territory.

### **Controlled Dismantlings**

In conversation, National Historic Trails tend to defy description. The tendency is to assume a correlation with a Scenic or Recreational trail—all long-distance footpaths—and when it becomes evident that no such consistent, familiar infrastructure exists, understanding (and interest) tends to fade. This is subtly evident within the National

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<sup>1</sup> See: Soja, *Thirdspace*; Brenner, *Implosions/Explosions*; Viganò, *Territories of Urbanism*. This chapter will lastly attempt to define and situate the NHT within these authors' theoretical perspectives.

Park Service's own literature. In 1985, the NPS Division of Publications produced "The National Parks: Shaping the System" and neglected to mention any trails despite 17 years of work subsequent to the 1968 Trails Act.<sup>2</sup> The Conservation Foundation within the Mellon Foundation produced a more substantial report in the same year and, as well, failed to mention trails, although it devoted a telling chapter to park elements within what it termed "The Unsystematic System."<sup>3</sup> Herein we are introduced to a fleet of innovations of the late 1960s through early '80s with emphasis on historical programs, urban parks, and recreation areas. Upon closer scrutiny, the NHT have more in common with these three areas of innovation than they do with literal trail projects, despite being managed together within a single *National Trails* division. It may be that the comparison with something as relatable as the Appalachian Trail is a false one and undermines the notion of what the NHTs seek to become or aim to imagine. Regardless, all of these "innovative" developments take place within the late post-WW2 period, a phase of reinvention and ambiguity, postmodern geography, and the conundrum of hegemony as central. Instead of looking to definable cultural actions of tourism and pilgrimage or aesthetic mechanisms of nature, walking, and the Picturesque, the NHTs ask to be considered from a perspective of dispersals.

#### **CASE 1: NPS LEWIS AND CLARK DOCUMENT**

"The National Parks: Shaping the System" neglects to mention one particular 1969 advancement that represents a significant turning point in the evolution of institutional trail planning and infrastructure. This was not an accident as it had not actually been conceived within the NPS, but within a short-lived competing agency, the Bureau of Recreation.

In the generation prior, following the epic-scale conception of Benton MacKaye's Appalachian Trail, the imagination of a United States territory physically united by walkable footpaths proved intoxicating, fueled by a sense of possibility and scale of the Progressive New Deal and Post-WW2 eras. By the 1960s, several continental-scale trails were complete and producing their own culture and mythology, and part of this mythology increasingly celebrated the future possibility of a nation-spanning interconnected system. The logical place for such dreams to land and refine was within a set of late-modern federal agencies, the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC, convened by Congress in 1958 with backing from the Department of the Interior to address overburdened post-war recreational systems, including but

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<sup>2</sup> Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System*;  
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/upload/National-Trails-System-Act-Amended-2019.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Conservation Foundation. *National Parks for a New Generation: Visions, Realities, Prospects*. The Conservation Foundation, 1985.

not limited to the NPS) and the Bureau of Recreation (BOR, a formal body also under the Department of the Interior, established upon the release of the ORRRC's findings report in 1962)<sup>4</sup>; both bodies answered to a complex and incipient consciousness that merged environmental concerns and an amalgam of intertwined issues of metropolitan concern—equity, public health, “urban open space,” new scales of access via automobile or transit, new forms of recreation, etc. Subtly, the establishment of these bodies served as a rebuke and a threat to the NPS, underscoring a failure to adapt and modernize.<sup>5</sup> Regardless, looking to build on the success of the Appalachian Trail model and its imitators, and to achieve the vision of an entirely connected nation, what the ORRRC and BOR saw as clearly needed was at least one east-west trail component to connect the collection of north-south alignments which followed logical geologic patterns of high “scenic value” and contiguous wilderness.

In the context of the North American continent, lateral (east-west) connectivity has been historically hindered by major north-south aligned mountain ranges, the very elements now providing optimal corridors for long-distance trail visions. East-west, by comparison, represents the geography of migration, hardship, nation-building, divisions, and variations. Connectivity in this domain is perhaps better vetted through a lens of human geography rather than physical geography; the BOR's first attempt at east-west connection, the Lewis and Clark Trail, would follow this thinking. The idea was not entirely new. The original 1804-1806 expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, from near St. Louis to the mouth of the Columbia River, had already been ensconced in the vocabulary of heritage by means of a world's fair, The Lewis and Clark Centennial Exhibition in Portland, Oregon in 1905; a subsequent commemorative renaming of a private higher education institution to Lewis and Clark College, in 1942; and a series of celebratory literary accounts, the most significant by Bernard DeVoto.<sup>6</sup> Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling, a cartoonist for the Des Moines Register, had already conceived of a series of contiguous Lewis and Clark related parks and preservation projects. As the original expedition had traveled significant distances via the Missouri and Columbia Rivers (as well as some major tributaries), these waterways would factor into both preservation and connectivity. Upon Darling's death in 1962, friends created a foundation set on advancing his particular ideas on conservation; this evolution may sound inconsequential but the establishment of such an entity, in essence, became the most central element in any NHT. The BOR's Lewis and Clark Trail Commission Report of

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<sup>4</sup> Udall, *Parks for America*.

<sup>5</sup> Foresta, *America's National Parks*, 62, 65, 174.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard DeVoto (1897-1955) wrote prolifically about the west for a readership primarily located in the east. He was an early authority on Mark Twain and by extension served as a representative for the mythos of a pre-industrial America in its early trans-continental stages of development. Throughout his work he championed an intellectual anti-urban value set. He proposed tough, self-sufficient characters types such as the rural “New England Yankee” as virtuous in the face of the early New Deal Era of government intervention. By the early 1950s, the figures of Lewis and Clark brought post-war mobility and wilderness heroism to the public through DeVoto's enthusiastically “edited and interpreted” publication of their journals (DeVoto, Bernard, ed. *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*. Houghton Mifflin, 1953).

1969 described a “Trail of Accomplishments” which would be built out of a medley of parts including historic sites, marked roadways, riverside natural areas, waterway preservation projects, grants for tourism projects on tribal lands, archeological efforts, tree planting programs, pageants, boating activities, award programs for Boy Scout Troops, presentations of historical “dramas” at Fort Clatsop, and the establishment of 11 permanent state committees to oversee the grand project. In fact, borne of a multiplicity of community visions, this now-official, federally proposed Lewis and Clark Trail design ran the gamut from intangible history and interpretive programming to physical places, setting forth a sort of incubator for linked but discreet public-interest societies to continue to envision and participate and grow. Blended, all the elements together were to eventuate in a “ribbon,” a totalizing and spatializing descriptor suggesting both ephemerality and celebration. This particular “ribbon,” as a new landscape type *and* strategy, would apparently be accepted as a suitable east-west connection between the literal footpath trails of the Pacific Crest and Appalachian range. This trail typology would be contiguous and connected only within the collective spirits and consciousness of its participants. With such a profusion of manifestations and constant efforts, who would notice that there was no actual physical armature on which to hang this diversity of elements? The trail would be the efforts.

## **CASE 2: NHT DESIGNATION**

Recently, Steven Elkinton, program leader for the National Trails System in the National Park Service’s Washington headquarters office, self-published a 2018 retrospective to commemorate the Trails Act’s half-century anniversary.<sup>7</sup> After a 25-year tenure leading the effort, it is curious that Elkinton dedicated only a scant 11 pages to the emergence of NHT efforts. This meager chapter is suggestively named “Imagining Historic Trails, 1971-75.” The role of imagination and imaginaries expanded as a series of feasibility studies in the early 1970s considering many already-conceived historic cultural routes at first dismissed as incompatible with comprehensive recreation planning visions of previous eras. In 1974, however, the power of imagination prevailed with a Bureau of Recreation Division Resource Area Study declaring that in the case of the much-storied Oregon Trail, a noncontiguous, “segmented” approach would suffice as it related to “remnants” of original route and historic sites.<sup>8</sup> “Segmented” and “remnant” propose a drastically different notion of space, scale of project, and relation to execution. The idea of prioritizing “remnants” either in terms of stretches of original path-of-travel or historical/archaeological sites frees up the overall endeavor to intervene strategically and incrementally, emerging at key points where traces have already germinated some measure of public enthusiasm. This breaks from the spatial imagination of a “ribbon” and recasts the concept of a trail as a type of “connect the dots” logic with human collaboration and initiative emerging as the most decisive driver. By 1977 it was clear that contiguity was perhaps an unrealistic goal for many trail projects due to predictable

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<sup>7</sup> Elkinton, *The National Trails System*.

<sup>8</sup> Eastman, “The National Trails System,” 201.

issues of cost and coordination. The National Trails Symposium of that year hosted a reckoning of sorts on this issue with some lamenting a failure of the original vision of a literal National Trails System and others celebrating new hope for cultural routes previously dismissed as infeasible.<sup>9</sup> With President Carter's signature in 1978, a period and presidency defined by contraction and fracture, the decade-old Trails Act was amended to include NHT as an alternate official designation as part of an enormous, billion-dollar omnibus bill loaded with budgeted studies, cost cuts, boundary tweaks, and bolstered land protections. Section PL 95-625 established NHTs to take form first as dedicated studies, then as advisory councils, then as comprehensive plans.<sup>10</sup> Critical to the notion of form, the NHT designation also dramatically reduced capacity for land acquisition, likely in reaction to a countervailing expansion of the Appalachian Trail park unit and in conjunction with Western conservative congressional districts' concerns over potential appropriation of ranch land. The resulting category and concept of NHT favors the virtual over the physical. A constricting state had finally reconciled with the immense cost and political alignment necessary for a "true" trail, per the half-century-old vision of Benton MacKaye, and fractured. Whether viewed as conceptually diminished or empowered, the forthcoming trails leave their own leader, Elkinton, with little to report except for piecemeal efforts and community processes—the whole was hoped to be greater than the sum of the parts.

### **Parallel Conditions**

#### **Part 1: NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS AND THE MEN WHO LOVE THEM**

The NHTs were far from alone in such a reformation of parts vs. whole. In the realm of park design, the concurrent advent of National Recreation Areas (NRA) may serve as a superior case in illustrating the recalibrations of the period and illuminate the emergence of interlocked values integral to the NHT concept. The NRA have motivated far more scholarship illuminating their conception as well as more subsequent analytical research and even speculative design proposals.<sup>11</sup> The NRA are undeniably urban endeavors, but they serve as evidence of how the concept of "urban," as a categorizer relative to rural or wilderness, was melting into a more hazy and ill-defined space during this late-mid-century period. While the NPS had been managing various parks within urban settings since the 1930s—all relating to monuments or historic sites—the priorities of NPS leadership would revolve around custodianship and modernization until the 1960s.<sup>12</sup> In line with aims set by the Great Society programs of the Johnson Administration, concern coalesced around a sweep of issues with an emerging sense of interrelation, a new, metropolitan-scale gaze melding topics such as industrial decay, unchecked growth at peripheries, indelible pollution, fiscal crises in urban governance, geographic disparities, changes in military land use, and urban ecology.

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<sup>9</sup> Elkinton, *The National Trails System*, 74

<sup>10</sup> Elkinton, *The National Trails System*, 77

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Rothman, *The New Urban Park*; Barnes, "An Ecological Study of Peregrine Falcons;" and Brash, Hand, and Orff, *Gateway*.

<sup>12</sup> Foresta, *America's National Parks*, 171.



As noted previously, the creation of the ORRRC and BOR represented a rebuke of NPS adaptability, an incursion upon some of its core functions, and therefore a threat to the agency's political relevance. Without detailing the entirety of the bureaucratic shifts which would ensue, the emergence of a comprehensive urban policy for the NPS came under the leadership of two particular individuals, key to foreshadowing the possibility of the eventual NHT concepts and projects. George Hartzog, led the NPS from 1964-1972 and Walter Hickel, the Department of the Interior for a short tenure, 1969-1970.<sup>13</sup> It is worth briefly contextualizing these two men as their life experiences would suggest the sorts of dichotomous conditions which played out in the fragmenting nature of the NPS new approaches to urban issues.

George Hartzog, a lifelong public servant within the NPS who would eventually lead the agency through its largest expansion, advanced within the organization through superintendencies in several mountain wilderness parks before taking the helm at the decidedly urban and strikingly modern Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (renamed Gateway Arch National Park in 2018). Between 1958-62, Hartzog expanded the original park from a controversial and complex waterfront clearance effort to the present-day striking backdrop to Eero Saarinen's iconic arch, completed in 1965.<sup>14</sup> Leading this high-profile park project from an urban vantage point, Hartzog gradually leveraged support from within St. Louis to advocate for a new type of wilderness preserve space in the nearby Ozark Mountains. Eventually reconciling the urban values of tourism and scenic preservation with the staunchly conservative rural values of property rights, isolation, and hunting, Hartzog secured the congressional approvals to create the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (ONSR) in 1964.<sup>15</sup> This, notably, was a new type of park with a new type of shape; a sinuous, linear connection built out of hundreds of contentious easements through both National Forest and private lands. Hartzog's urban-to-rural blending feat and the concept of river-as-park clearly factor into the amalgamated, linear, river-centric strategy of the Lewis and Clark Trail. Scholarship illuminates the Gateway Arch park's role in the growth of an NPS urban park strategy and policy emerging in the post-war period.<sup>16</sup> To view it in concert with ONSR, in dialog and presuming a symbiosis, the notion of this urban policy shifts to accommodate a range of spatially widespread reciprocities and, too, the material form of parks at both ends bends to become more virtual and implied, but just as official and "real."

Walter Hickel served as Secretary of the Interior for less than two years, being hired and then fired by Richard Nixon. However, during his quick tenure he proposed the catchy concept of "Parks to the People," a bite-sized message encapsulating and boosting first the emerging NRA concept and, later, the NHT.<sup>17</sup> Prior to his secretaryship, Hickel was

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<sup>13</sup> Mengak, *Reshaping Our National Parks and Their Guardians*.

<sup>14</sup> Hartzog, *Battling for the National Parks*, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Flader, "A Legacy of Neglect."

<sup>16</sup> Mengak, *Reshaping Our National Parks and Their Guardians*.

<sup>17</sup> Davie, Lawrence. "Hickel Tells Western Governors He'll 'Take Parks to the People,'" *New York Times*. July 31, 1969, 22.

the governor of Alaska. While hardly a state known for great urban areas and affiliated pressures, Alaska in the 1960s and 70s was an area of immense intensive and increasingly corporatized resource extraction. Neil Brenner has written extensively about how landscapes of mining, oil drilling, timber production, and other territorially consumptive extraction industries pose a challenge to the basic notion that urban and rural as dichotomous terms.<sup>18</sup> The spaces of the Alaskan North Slope, for example, are vast and sparsely populated but remotely controlled, intensively engineered, and critical to global capital systems. In the case of petroleum, the added element of required pipelines connecting vastly spaced nodes of production represent an added complexity. Hickel's Alaska, just emerging into statehood, toed a fine line between expanding the economic and political benefit of such resource lands with the countervailing current of thought holding Alaska's wilderness as the last of the untouched, pure, and wild landscapes under United States control. Coining the term "owner state" in reference to his economic vision, Hickel's expansive though often contradictory actions as a conservation figurehead were born of this crucible of tradeoffs played out over vast territory.<sup>19</sup> Population centers of Juneau and Anchorage, small but powerful, represented loci for impulses of global economics and human connection to gnash together. In Alaska this conflict greatly constitutes what emerges as the urban experience. Hickel titled his 1971 autobiography, tellingly, "Who Owns America?" and within, Part 2, "Return It to Us," Chapter 5, "The Obligation of Ownership," he includes the short story of the launch of the Parks to the People program along with adjacent subchapters on the Prudhoe Bay Pipeline, New York City's notorious power blackouts, potentials of Arctic resources, neo-slavery in the form of mining practices, and a proposal for a Clean Land initiative spurred by walking urban creeks in Anchorage.<sup>20</sup> When considering Hickel and his influences through a spatial lens, traditional categories utterly fail.

Refocusing on the NRA concept, Herzog and Hickel each demonstrate a key shift in perspective. As they navigate a post-Progressive-era national landscape wherein metropolitan- and territorial-scale reciprocities, early economic globalism, and constricting public expenditure, they invent new park types and consciousness. The "urban" NRA, as a type, may be the clearest manifestation of this era—Gateway, Golden Gate, Cuyahoga Valley<sup>21</sup> and Santa Monica Mountains NRAs exhibit the fragmentary, dispersed results of complex conservation negotiations all joined together within a single entity and brand. Amorphous, unbounded, sinuous, strategic in growth planning and firmly ensconced in philanthrocapitalism, the overall form(s) of these parks result from the push-pull of accretive public will in the mechanisms of a hyper-egalitarian premise of recreation planning as balanced and blended with conservation, access, preservation, and historical and ecological values. Despite this seemingly plastic

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<sup>18</sup> Brenner and Katsikis, "Operational Landscapes."

<sup>19</sup> Fay, *A History of Alaska's Mega Projects*.

<sup>20</sup> Hickel, *Who Owns America?*

<sup>21</sup> Following its namesake river and tributaries, wending through metropolitan Cleveland, Ohio, Cuyahoga Valley was planned and designated as an NRA in 1974 but redesignated as a National Park in 2000.

dynamic, over time, the form of the NRA shapes the region itself.<sup>22</sup> In the example of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the park's nonprofit support associations—the Golden Gate National Park Conservancy (established 1981) and Presidio Trust (established 1996)—spend millions on fundraising and frequently rally donations that exceed those of several of the NPS's largest parks' affiliated nonprofits combined. More than a park within an urban setting, these NRA are shapeshifting manifestations of current urbanisms, emerging across vast and unevenly populated regions and yoked to a neoliberal donor-based economy. It turns out this is what happens when you bring "Parks to the People." The NRAs are subject to a wide array of well-researched critiques. Holistically, Foresta dubs the entirety of the NPS's forays into urban park policy as "Decay of the Progressive Vision."<sup>23</sup> He explains that disruption and erasure at both core and periphery upended the previously accepted urban dichotomy of exploited vs. preserved lands and public vs. private, that the agency "tried to recast its own sense of mission on the basis of these involvements, a sense of mission which would free it from the old traditions yet would act as a policy guide the way the notion of progress had in the past."<sup>24</sup>

### **Parallel Conditions**

#### **Part 2: 1976: "JUST PICK SOMETHING"—BICENTENNIAL**

More so than the NRAs, the NHTs focus on various sub-narratives of national heritage. This suggests another concurrent evolution for consideration: the American Revolution Bicentennial (ARB) efforts, culminating in 1976. Proposed by President Johnson a decade earlier with the vague hope of offsetting Vietnam War negativity by reasserting a "shared" revolutionary spirit, the ARB was initially envisioned as a single major event, comparable to the scale of a world's fair, to take place in Philadelphia. In similar spirit to the shift in priorities seen in the National Recreation Area concept, the ARB was swiftly re-imagined by a raft of committees to take place in a dispersed fashion with each US state proposing a variety of celebratory manifestations to be vetted and then funded by a central administrative agency. Scholarship on this topic is sparse but Tammy Gordon captures the sheer breadth of the Bicentennial roll-out, which exhibited "social history, consumerism, distrust of federal government and cold war consensus, and a new cultural emphasis on the importance of the self," leading to "a mass search for the spirit of the American Revolution in the past and present."<sup>25</sup> Dolores Hayden identifies this as

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<sup>22</sup> In *The Politics of Park Design* (1982), Galen Cranz described four stages of park system design, with the final example as the "open space system." she described many aspects of how the NRA shape space at this metropolitan level but stops short of introducing the NRA. At the time, NRA had not existed long enough to warrant a place in a historical account, but in 2004 Cranz, collaborating with Michael Boland, Chief of Development and Operations for the Presidio Trust within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, updated the original idea and suggested a fifth stage,. Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design*. Cranz, Boland. "Defining the sustainable park: a fifth model for urban parks." *Landscape journal* 102-120. See, also, Walker, *The Country in the City*.

<sup>23</sup> Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 262.

<sup>24</sup> Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 263.

<sup>25</sup> Gordon, *The Spirit of 1976*.

specific to public history, stating that “The great strength of public history” being “its desire for a ‘shared authority’ (Michael Frisch’s phrase) or a ‘dialogic’ history (Jack Tchen’s term) that gives power to communities to define their own collective parts”.<sup>26</sup> As well, Hayden proposes that this multiplicity of voices can be mutually reinforced by a multiplicity of places, as a networked site and that the entire endeavor may ultimately be comparatively inexpensive, resting on a “labor of love” more so than material.<sup>27</sup> Tammy Gordon’s critique of spatially widespread and frenzied commercialization aligns with historian Lizabeth Cohen’s seminal scholarship illuminating a strategic agenda of consumption and citizenship in the postwar era.<sup>28</sup> While this concept proves cogent in hindsight, what Gordon acknowledges as a challenging reality of the Bicentennial was its individualistically driven exploding profusion of patriotic manifestations; in quoting actress Joanne Woodward’s statement that for her own individual commitment to the bicentennial she would work with Planned Parenthood towards a “healthy society,” she addressed all Americans adding, “Do you want to do something about the Bicentennial? Well I think it’s simple. Just pick something and do it.”<sup>29</sup> This sort of *carpe diem* message suggests that patriotism, in this context, is actually amplified by multiplicity and fragmentation.

Amongst this profusion of Bicentennial efforts, too numerous to begin to categorize, the thread of pilgrimage emerges. One of the most recognizable and famous Bicentennial activities, the Freedom Train, achieved the sort of multi-sited slippage condition wherein celebrating America by coming down to the railroad tracks, cheering as the train appeared on the horizon and grew into view, put one in dialog with the places the train had been previously and would arrive next. At nearly the same grand scale, Thelma Gray, founder of a Manhattan public relations firm, took Joanne Woodward’s recommendation to heart and rallied 60,000 volunteers to achieve the “Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania,” drawing hundreds of horseback riders and Conestoga Wagons to converge at Valley Forge. The ARB administration’s final congressional report describes the patriotic Smith family of Collins Missouri who on July 4, 1975 also heeded Woodward’s maxim embarking on a year-long bike ride through all 50 states, sometimes utilizing new bicentennial bike lanes. As if to echo this type of impulse, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) submitted to the ARB administration a “Pacific Coast Bicentennial Bikeway” intended to “to encourage Americans to reflect on the nation’s heritage—its heroes and accomplishments” and published a segmented map booklet proposing a ride down existing coastal roads and highlighting campgrounds and California Missions along the way.<sup>30</sup> No new infrastructure was proposed, only the curated suggestion of a *just-pick-something-and-*

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<sup>26</sup> Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 48.

<sup>27</sup> Gordon, *The Spirit of 1976*, 77.

<sup>28</sup> Cohen, *A Consumer’s Republic*.

<sup>29</sup> Gordon, *The Spirit of 1976*, 111.

<sup>30</sup> California Dept. of Transportation, and American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California. *Pacific Coast Bicentennial Route*. Caltrans, 1975.

*do-it* activity that affords a simple, embodied way, in the unassuming spirit of pilgrimage, to traverse more space as an American, to see and be seen just doing it.

Out of this myriad of efforts, large and small, a handful of alliances formed and interest-based communities bonded over unprecedented physical distances.

### **Where does this get us?**

NEIL BRENNER: neoliberalism and the “Global Urban”

Considering current discussion on the nature of “the urban” could the NHT (as situated with these aforementioned, contemporaneous shifts in NPS strategies, policies, and resulting parks) support the lofty idea of an increasingly planetary urbanism? Beginning with Henri Lefebvre, the possibility that centers and peripheries have become so intertwined that, with regard to space, human concentration, and material culture, the “urban” is everywhere.<sup>31</sup> Whether crowded or empty the “urban” is connectivity, and connectivity is thickening.<sup>32</sup> The identification of the “megalopolis,”<sup>33</sup> the “hypertrophic” and “hydrocephalic” city,<sup>34</sup> and “citizenship in which *perception* replaces passport and *horizon* becomes almost as important as habitat,”<sup>35</sup> all challenge the notion of an urban/non-urban divide, a familiar spatial order, and upend the ability to discern categorical lifeways pertaining to either. The NHTs, identified as federally supported chains of communities and their efforts (rather than as footpaths or strips or segments of park space), seem to play into the concept of a thickening connectivity. As well, the premise of living in spatial relation to any NHT puts one in dialog with such distributed communities, regardless of urban/non-urban/rural categories. While NHTs are not a driving force (such as resource extraction, energy markets, gentrification, or telecommunication) in achieving this distributed and fluid connectivity, they echo the global transformations of the period in which they were conceived. Brenner’s theoretical work seeks to question the “fetish” of urban form; in his view, NHTs might better propose systems which explode the modern concept of a park (form) into interlinked communities, assemblages of spaces, efforts, happenings and beliefs, and distributes these elements across territory independent of population concentrations.<sup>36</sup> Brenner calls for a “new lexicon of sociospatial differentiation in order to grasp emergent patterns and pathways of planetary urban reorganization.”<sup>37</sup> To this call, the NHTs, as well, break down the modern premise of “the urban” and provide a form-follows-theory example situating landscape architecture and environmental planning more comfortably within the debate at hand. To date much of the consideration of the role of landscape architecture within neoliberalizing world orders

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<sup>31</sup> Brenner, *Implosions/Explosions*.

<sup>32</sup> Brenner, *New State Spaces*.

<sup>33</sup> Gottmann, *Megalopolis*.

<sup>34</sup> Ajl, “The Hypertrophic City.”

<sup>35</sup> Merrifield, *The Politics of the Encounter*, 174.

<sup>36</sup> Brenner, “Theses on Urbanization.”

<sup>37</sup> *ibid* 192.

has leaned towards ecology and/or climate change and while this is of course critically important, it is not the whole story; in performing this breakdown NHTs exemplify a large-scale design effort, largely unrelated to the physical sciences, ecology, and affiliated emergencies, which manifest an important aspect of Brenner's proposed lexicon.

#### EDWARD SOJA: the trialectical "Thirdspace"

What the NHTs lack in responding to fraught geographies of capitalism, they make up for with this concept of "thickened connectivity networks." Rather than mapping a global web of email servers and traffic and piquing the interest of scholars such as Saskia Sassen and Manuel Castells, the NHTs start with the interests of the greater populace, targeting the imaginaries of public history rather than the futuristic sublime of globalization and critical theory.<sup>38</sup> From this angle, the NHTs and what is inside of this "thickening" may be considered through the framework of Edward Soja's concept of Thirdspace: "...as an-Other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality–historicality–sociality."<sup>39</sup> Thirdspaces "are not simply 'other spaces' to be added on to the geographical imagination, they are also 'other than' the established ways of thinking spatially. They are meant to detonate, to deconstruct, not to be comfortably poured back into old containers."<sup>40</sup>

Key to the concept of Thirdspace is the necessity to consider space as simultaneously real *and* imagined, and also to understand a quality that indefinitely requires the negotiation of Other-ing. The very basis of all NHTs rests on various historical intrusions or displacements of new people into the territory of others, of difference meeting, or in the terminology of anthropology, of "first contact" reconsidered as a line rather than a point.

Soja, participating in the Spatial Turn of the 1990s, permits more room for mythology, imagination and stories than Brenner's postmillennial pursuit of the present state of what is urban. Thirdspace is the space of simultaneity and feeds into the question of "the urban" by pursuing various possibilities of what constitutes the substrate or "glue" within the spreading, fragmenting, centerless, possibly global-scaled territory of humanity. Thirdspace also represents an enormous rebalancing, which is a work in progress, to position historicality, spatiality, and sociality into new relationships, a non-privileging trialectic. It proposes that not only can the social produce the spatial, but also the reverse. The premise of a NHT can be considered as an expression of this rebalancing. The mechanisms of historicality and sociality, already comfortably in dialog with each other, are inextricably *placed*. This *place* is undeniably linear in form, but blurs the edges between material space (Soja's "Firstspace") and mental space (Lefebvre's

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<sup>38</sup> Castells, *The Rise of Network Society*.

<sup>39</sup> Soja, *Thirdspace*, 57.

<sup>40</sup> Soja, *Thirdspace*, 163.

conceived space, “Second Space”<sup>41</sup>). The achievement of an eventual coherent footpath-trail, a positivist spatial product, is subverted by instead an open-ended, subjective, representative, sociohistorical conversation and whatever outputs that process may produce. But it is still axiomatically spatial—it thus breaks open the binary.

The city of Los Angeles served Soja as the laboratory in which to test the lens of Thirdspace. The structure (or anti-structure) of this particular urban agglomeration has already served as the progenitor of much post-positivist geographic theory. To Soja, Los Angeles’ inversion of established center-periphery patterns and the hyperbolic sense of possibility in its vast extents made for a fertile exercise in Thirdspace. Orange County, he labels an “exopolis... where everything is possible and nothing is real,” a place of “ecstatic disappearance,” and optimistically extends the condition to a useful and replicating typology, “creatively erosive postmodern geographies are being invented at a furious pace in every region in the country.”<sup>42</sup> Most succinctly, he declares: “To dig even deeper will bring us *back to the surface*, to an Orange County that continues to function symbolically as an exceedingly attractive lived space, undemystifiable because its (hyper)reality *is* mystification itself.”<sup>43</sup> Had Soja perused the aforementioned 1969 *Lewis and Clark Trail Report*, and later explored the resulting linear mélange of heritage-narrative-centric places, events, linked communities, mobilities, themes, programs, neighborhoods, bureaucracies, and plans, it is possible he might have seen some similar ingredients and outcomes. (If not an exopolis, a *lineopolis*?) The NHTs never demonstrate the sort of urgent, pointed Marxist commentary on economics or equity, but in a quieter way they do present an experiment in Lefebvrian thirding, both in their historical narratives themselves and in their more Soja-esque evolving, socially produced *and productive* spatial assertions. Therefore, like Orange County itself with all its replicating versions, the NHTs become an ingredient within a blended, decentralized, networked territorial geography, material *and* imagined, no longer purely urban or anything else.

#### PAOLA VIGANO: an emerging “Territorialism”

Brenner’s planetary urbanisms and Soja’s thirdspace concepts lend little to anyone seeking to create an NHT. The superintendents for these particular park units work from a variety of locations and conditions—sometimes in large regional offices of the NPS (Mormon, California, Santa Fe, Old Spanish are all managed from a large, historic, pueblo-themed NPS administrative compound the outskirts of Santa Fe, NM, designed by John Gaw Meem), sometimes from a lone sublet rented room in a basic low-rise office building (El Camino Real de los Tejas is managed from an unassuming structure, a former Confederate Women’s Home, in Austin, TX); some are paired with their own dedicated public visitor center facility (Lewis and Clark is managed from offices within a

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<sup>41</sup> See Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom, and Schmid, *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*.

<sup>42</sup> Soja, “Inside Exopolis,” 121.

<sup>43</sup> Soja, *Thirdspace*, 278.

prominent and newer public landmark building in Omaha, NE). The internal organizational structures call for small staffs, usually comprised of a split between professional planners (city or recreation) and interpretive specialists who also function as public relations managers. Not surprisingly they coordinate efforts that fall, physically, between suburban school group trail visits, to signage planning for rural and urban highways alike, to wilderness trail landscape protection efforts, often within isolated areas of national lands. They also frequently visit and encourage interest groups, which may exist anywhere with human population. None of this is easily categorizable. The emerging premise, spearheaded by architect and urbanist Paola Viganò, of “the Territorial”, may prove relevant and helpful.<sup>44</sup> A scale as well as a frame, *territorial*, describes a scale which we do not see, larger than the urban, but inclusive of its functions both up close as well as afar. She identifies the condition of *isotropy* within the built environment, effectively merging and neutralizing the more common and loaded descriptors: *sprawl, exurban, rurban, etc.*<sup>45</sup> Critically, Viganò’s concept addresses dispersed concentrations, setting up a spatial premise that these are not contradictory but codependent conditions, and that designers (architects, landscape architects, engineers, etc.) can analyze as well as create in this space and at this scale. For example, a canal system and its associated economy and ecology operate at the territorial scale, defying urban vs. rural categories. Viganò deploys her theory to assert that the shape of the metropolis is increasingly dispersed but not dissolved and that certain elements (often in a “mesh”) hold it together. At this, she turns entirely to the formal and the physical (ecologies, hydrologies, or infrastructures) and gives no attention to other intangible elements such as designed cultural programming or heritage. The cultural infrastructure of the NHT would snugly fit into Viganò’s notion of the Territorial if only it produced enough discernable physical manifestations to capture the ultimately morphology-trained eye of an urbanist—for Viganò the porosity of the metropolis is a condition no longer to be filled but, still, to physically flow.

Building on Viganò’s platform but steering away from the physical, Ettore Donadoni draws from Paul Drewe to explore a “Morphology of Social Interaction Networks”, situating this as one element within an isotropic territorial condition.<sup>46</sup> Drewe originally proposes that architects and planners have long “neglected the vast flows of the networked world and the paradigmatic challenge of the concept of networks. They have certainly not seen the (sometimes hidden) infrastructure of cities as within their domain” preferring instead the image of a zonal urbanism.<sup>47</sup> Social networks have thus far been represented primarily in diagrammatic form, illuminating and producing a sort of “virtual city.” Social connection, beginning with the scale of the household, scales up to include the networks of companies, the internet, communications and “new economy” webs. While Drewe goes on to advocate for increased experimentation in

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<sup>44</sup> Viganò, *Territories of Urbanism*.

<sup>45</sup> Viganò, Fabian, and Secchi, *Water and Asphalt*.

<sup>46</sup> Donadoni, “The Morphology of Networks,” 8.

<sup>47</sup> Drewe, Paul. “The ‘Network City,’” 111.



visualization and bridges to urban design practice, Donadoni reminds us that the results might already be present within the isotropic structure of the Territorial.

This premise ought to empower the NHT superintendent who, ultimately as the designer of the system, creates a “virtual city” amongst dispersed communities, manages from a changeable physical location, ascribes meaning to a linear patchwork of open and repurposed spaces, and attempts to reveal the story and design to all adjacent. These makers are also the first users. The canvas, the paint, and the design studio are all to be found within the isotropic; the creation is territorial. Through Vigano’s lens the project of the NHT goes beyond the virtual and into the urban designer’s toolbox.

### **Places of organization / organization of places**

The current headquarters of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is on the threshold of moving shop. For the past eight years it has been located within the NPS Western Region Office at 333 Bush Street in San Francisco, a humming hub housing multiple NPS functions within the lowest three floors of a class-A office tower. The lease for such prime space was secured during a cratering real estate economy, before downtown San Francisco was remade as an urbane extension of Silicon Valley. As the country has emerged from recession, both commercial and residential real estate upticks have made this office unsustainable and will be moved onto the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site in Washington State, trimming 1.8 million dollars from the overall budget. Of the approximately 150 employees currently overseeing 60 parks and affiliated agencies, not all will relocate together, but of those that do, significant additional savings will be reaped by government salaried families no longer beholden to San Francisco Bay Area real estate and commuting costs.

Compare this scenario to the management of the Mormon, California, Oregon, Pony Express, Trail of Tears, Santa Fe, Old Spanish, and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trails: these eight are overseen by one superintendent from within a sprawling, picturesque Spanish Pueblo Revival complex, located in Santa Fe, New Mexico upon Santa Fe Trail itself, constructed of adobe in 1938 by the federal Civilian Conservation Corps in anticipation a dramatic increase in park projects, owned by the NPS and now itself a designated historic landmark. It is a hilltop compound and palace of park management, exquisitely inflexible in its enduring ownership and architectural symbolism of an interpreted cultural landscape.

The JUBA staff will not move to Fort Vancouver. As JUBA seeks to remain located near the historical route/site, it will split off from this regional office consortium and move to rented space within a municipal building in Richmond, CA, collocating with the Rosie the Riveter National Historic Site (RORI) offices. As the headcount for JUBA is never more than three employees (superintendent, planner, and interpretation/communications), this will save a nominal amount of rental cost, but likely lower the visibility of the small division significantly. Increasingly, JUBA will rely on virtual connection with other trails’

management clusters and will need to redefine its presence within the Pacific Regional structure. However, this new colocation with RORI illuminates an otherwise obscured historical linkage. RORI is part of a nebulous category of efforts increasingly referred to as “Partnership Parks,” a descriptor which includes National Seashores, Recreation Areas, Preserves, Wild and Scenic Riverways, Heritage Areas, and Corridors. Most of the aforementioned examples in this paper have attributes of a partnership park. Hamin defines several subtypes depending on simple relationships with concessionaires or non-profit friends groups, but emphasizes “park units that require significant cooperation between non-profit groups, land users, local residents or their governments and the NPS unit to achieve the unit’s particular management goals, *and that involve very limited acquisition of land by the NPS.*”<sup>48</sup>

The advent of the NHTs in the 1970s is one of the key developments leading to this blended and abstract concept. The widening field of how to make “park” with more participation and less acquisition, how to effectively sell an idea in Congress that maximizes exposure while minimizing expenditure, this is perhaps what the National Park System has “learned” from the NHT. Partnership parks are infinitely adaptable. While staging an unending process of goal setting and realignments, there glows a purposeful lack of finality. While many partnership parks churn away at balancing ecological-scale management efforts with the complexity of nature/culture functions, others focus their partnerships squarely on preservation of material culture at an urban scale. Without discussing all possible iterations of this type, it is worth noting that Hamin describes the entire endeavor as a “collaborative response to middle landscapes,”<sup>49</sup> indirectly referring to Rowe’s concept of the particularly American-invented medley of stretched sub-urbanity (office campuses, semi-rural zoning, byways, nature preserves, etc.) and the mythos holding it all together (pastoral historicism and utopianism), which, since approximately 1920, perpetuates form and meaning for otherwise capitalist/speculative land dynamics.<sup>50</sup>

RORI demonstrates this at an urban design scale. Through partnerships, it earmarks a non-contiguous variety of sites, remnants, buildings, and new recreation infrastructures peppered through the hardscrabble, gridded, post-industrial cityscape of Richmond, California, and repackages them as a collective amenity. This in turn drives future decisions to add parks, landscape improvements, sidewalks, medians, or signage to vaguely, incrementally (unendingly) “connect the dots”, catalyzing design expenditures from the city, county, or grant-funded endeavors, strategies at least partially hewn from the NHT. What is missing in comparison is the heroic scale and provocation of distance, movement and thrust implied by the trails’ imagined forms – always the most elusive quality to bring to design or lived space. Also to be interrogated is Hamin’s perhaps reductive description of partnership parks as a “collaborative *response.*” They may be as much of a *response to* as a *product of* or even *producer of* the middle landscape.

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<sup>48</sup> Hamin, “The US National Park Service’s Partnership Parks,” 124, emphasis added.

<sup>49</sup> Hamin, “The US National Park Service’s Partnership Parks,” 123.

<sup>50</sup> Rowe, *Making a Middle Landscape*.

Back at HQ, this banal restructuring, resembling any global corporate real estate machination, in explanation serves to underscore how the bureaucratic structures overseeing various NHT are subject to roughly the same challenges, pressures, and forces as the rest of modern management practices. And this condition of nebulous, placeless administration runs parallel to the ambiguous, a-spatial, intangible nature of the trails themselves. At its Bush Street location, JUBA has been symbiotically positioned on the same floor as the Trails, Rivers, and Conservation Assistance Program (TRCA)—an internal staff of landscape architects and planners providing a fleet of services modeled on corporate consultancy practice. While the TRCA services are available to all types of park units within the system, this physical adjacency has proven especially fruitful for JUBA as various opportunities for physical trail creation have emerged. This alliance will likely ebb within the upcoming restructuring, but a new synergistic adjacency may be possible. RORI represents another multi-location historic park type, this one focused on a narrative of the landscape of labor, racial justice, feminism, and militarism. These themes, spatialized, require an acknowledgement (from smallest to largest) of the industrial landscape of the San Francisco Bay, the Great Migration, the Pacific Theater, and World War. RORI, as a “site,” enjoys the clarity of a purpose-built visitor center situated within historic shipyards, but beyond this it occupies a nebulous constellation of historically relevant, vernacular housing and institutional sites, as well as some mileage of reconstructed waterfront esplanades. This loosely united set of visit-able places is overshadowed by a robust education program and, echoing the proposed Lewis and Clark Trail of 1969, it is the supported, ongoing efforts most strongly evoking a presence of place. The physical spaces augment but need not supersede the crafting of the message and the breadth of those it reaches. How this upcoming relocation might shape JUBA in the future is unknowable, but both RORI and JUBA management will continue to float in a Thirdspace ether as they work to further disassemble the physical premise of “park” to serve a territorial and global audience.

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## Doing the Hodology

*I and you encounter places and paths from a point of view, in both the literal and metaphorical sense of the term, through the medium of our bodies, and the character of this experience changes in relation to both the directionality of our movement and the posture of our bodies. The manner in which we understand places differs inevitably according to how we encounter them from within and the routes we take to reach places and the sequences of other places we experience along the way.*

*The phenomenologist undertakes a task that is simultaneously very simple and incredibly difficult. He or She 'resides' in places and walks between them. This is a humble, potentially subversive, and democratic project open to student or teacher alike, requiring no fancy technical equipment or expertise in using it, or money required beyond that of subsistence*

- Christopher Tilley, *Interpreting Landscapes: Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology*, 2010

This final chapter constitutes an experiment, one experimentally conceived and with ultimately unclear results. The most motivating attribute the NHTs share is the possibility to a) shape a long experience while in motion and, b) to shape the physical space and/or infrastructure utilized to have the experience – both the corridor and the movement it hosts. The proposition of actually *studying* this subject ultimately springs from a phenomenological approach to landscape, one spearheaded by Christopher Tilley in the 1990s, giving credence to the perceptual and egocentric, and upending the positivist analytical tools that long considered all space as neutral.<sup>1</sup> The phenomenological approach of course aided greatly in considering the deep past of the Paleolithic-Neolithic-Mesolithic landscapes and the onus of the endeavor is to learn about the experience of others in this deep past. It seeks to analyze or interpret only the past, rather than present-day creations for representing the past. Importantly in this phenomenological model, though, the roles of locale vs. movement play an elevated role; under the umbrella of temporality we can include paths, along with inscriptions, namings, social linkages, and, most of all, sensorial information, all together as correlated information. However as for the *how-to* of these correlations, Tilley left no

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<sup>1</sup> Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*.



instructions, no methodological approach, only an urge to “fully describe” and “take time.” He states:

Such a notion of space is complex. There is and can be no clear-cut methodology arising from it to provide a concise guide to empirical research. The approach requires, rather, a continuous dialectic between ideas and empirical data. From this perspective, the intimate connection of space with the social, with the formation of biographies, with action, event, power, context and subjectivity, materializes or concretizes its specificity and impacts the social world. We move from the irrational abstracted idealism of a geometrical universal space to an ontological grounding of space in the differential structuring of human experience and action in the world: a perspective which now requires examination in more detail.<sup>2</sup>

Movement, space, and meaning, phenomenologically interrogated, seem as if left to the unstructured phenomena of theory and observation; framing this capture is simply a moot point. I need to create this structure and dialectic myself.

The problem in the specific case of the NHTs, is that the effects upon either the physical corridor or the phenomenon of movement are so subtle or so vague it seems impossible to know if the physical corridor itself or the experience (exteroceptive or proprioceptive) it provides the human user has in fact been altered by the NHT. It is much clearer, by comparison, if one were to look at NHTs as linearly arranged sets of local projects with residents of multiple places getting involved, participating in various projects and narratives. But to do so would ignore what I see to be unique about a NHT. As well I feel this shortchanges the core meaning of the act commemorated and forecloses on any potential for pilgrimage or its particular infrastructure. And here the experiment begins: how to create a methodical frame to test NHTs to see if they “work.” But this is not a fair goal, really. The real test is to see if they are testable, and if not, what else they might reveal in the process.

### **Hodology**

To think, design, analyze, interpret, or critique *mobility* is to perform a difficult contortion, away from the primacy of *place* in our lived framework. Basic movement can be discussed, even empirically, as something that occurs as a result of velocity, frequency, energy spent, etc., but once abstract qualities such as intention or culture enter the equation, the tendency is to refocus on what is stationary, to peel back the layers and look at “what happens here.” Mobility eschews the “here.” It upends how we know where to look for meaning, and it is frustrating. To reduce it to something nodal, even multinodal—a set of attractors and push/pull reactions—is to ignore a substantial chapter of human experience. Relegating the infinite circumstances of mobility to a lacuna of “betweenness” has represented not just a gap in scholarship, but a gap in thought for a lengthy period, at least here in the West. This has begun to change. Possibly brought on by the impossible-to-ignore frenzied state of globalized

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<sup>2</sup> Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*, 11.

interconnection, the spotlight is dragged away from the comfort of place so as to showcase mobility on equal footing. But predictably the results are hard to follow. Interrogation frequently turns to mapping, a highly useful but abstracted and stationary endeavor. Mapping, so far, has disconnected mobility study from knowing the narrative or logic systems, perhaps indigeneity, of the mobility-maker in favor of the map-maker. Again, this is changing and the emerging toolbox is increasingly digital, sometimes referred to as Geospatial Narration, and falls foremost in the hands of geographers. There is an older mechanism by which to study certain mobilities, prefiguring Geospatial-anything, though, known by the seldom-used term *hodology*—the study of paths. Hodology might be viewed as the essential curiosity required to scuttle *Here* and *There* and *Place* to unpack the intertwined system and experience of the movement they require to interrelate and coexist. It is circuitry on its own terms.

There may be potential in hodological study to unite a grand arc of mobilities from thought sequences in psychology to black holes in quantum physics, but, to begin, this project aims to situate human mobility as core within socially produced movement. This is to say that the focus is on movement as it conflates with meaning, building spaces of future movement that overlap with relationships, knowledge, cultural practice, etc. Lest this only suggest a view to a yet-unwritten future, we can also utilize such a hodology to consider mobilities of the past and chart an idea of growth into a truth about spatial practice and subsequent human experience.

### **Framework of hodology**

A hodological subject is composed of three elements: a mobility, its space, and the consciousness in which it is held. (Note: in the near-impossible circumstance that no factor of consciousness can be determined, the consciousness is that of the observer.)

<p><b>A: Path</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time period</li> <li>• Route</li> <li>• Design, architecture, logic</li> <li>• Usage, single or layered</li> <li>• Condition, present and past</li> <li>• Landscape(s) traversed - physical and cultural</li> <li>• Nodes connected, if applicable (note: these are secondary to mobility itself)</li> <li>• Character of the act of the mobility itself, in context</li> </ul>	<p><i>The space of a mobility</i></p> <p><i>Consider all structural attributes of path(s) no matter the scale. Equally, consider the qualities of what transpires within those attributes.</i></p>
<p><b>B: Monument/Museum – retrospect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of original or subsequent narrative</li> <li>• Mode of reflection on past act/condition: didactic / commemorative / memory</li> <li>• Type of institution has been constructed to maintain consciousness? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Structure</li> <li>○ Maintenance</li> <li>○ Interpretation</li> <li>○ Relationship to adjacent conditions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Role of curatorship in co-assembling past: documentation, narrative, nodes, archeological findings, interpretive information, etc.</li> <li>• Relationship with established or emerging regional, national and/or transnational narratives</li> <li>• Visitorship: means to observe quantitative and qualitative, if important</li> </ul>	<p><i>Consciousness – external</i></p> <p><i>Regardless of what type of path or mobility or even if it is extant, culture creates and maintains a conception of the action in space as meaning.</i></p> <p><i>If to any degree this is institutionalized, a path or paths are held like artworks inside a museum or memories within a monument.</i></p> <p><i>These factors pertain to the makeup of the museum or monument as an overlay or container for a mobility.</i></p>
<p><b>C: Motivations/Embodiments - pilgrimage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of the adjacent landscape</li> <li>• Haptic experience</li> <li>• Interactions and/or relationships with humans/animals making movement into journey</li> <li>• Social structure/power relationships established/reordered/disrupted by experience</li> <li>• Spiritual motivations or discoveries</li> </ul>	<p><i>Consciousness – internal</i></p> <p><i>Paths are retraced for reasons beyond original utility; the reasons can be approached through anthropological method/technique, but expecting deterministic answers would be futile.</i></p> <p><i>Motivations and memories are individual, nonstructural and potentially fleeting. As well, extents of the path as an experience vary.</i></p> <p><i>Highly qualitative, these factors pertain to what can be understood as “journey”</i></p>

**Hodology: methods to draw from (or together)**

To speak briefly to the specific aims of this project looking to create a hodological inquiry within the context of public lands and their design and management structures, the task of choosing methods remains opaque. J.B. Jackson coined the term “hodology” (study of paths or roads, mobility) nearly four decades ago (he customized the term to become “odology” for his own usage, an attempt to update and reference automobile

culture, e.g., “odometer”),<sup>3</sup> but no legacy of methods has been forthcoming.<sup>4</sup> Paul Groth and Chris Wilson begin to approach the matter of this void merging hodology into a larger theoretical question of what to use to study cultural landscapes.<sup>5</sup> They emphasize the dilemma of there being little empirical data, little to measure within the parameters of the cultural landscape. Core concepts to be observed are diffuse in nature; memory is subjective and projects of historical interpretation are never “complete;” they are emergent. The way forward in this condition of emergence illustrates a divide or juncture. Given the methodological options available, my designed hodological method blends (and thereby tests) the following methods to address three key questions areas:

<p><b>A)</b> <i>What is the nature of <u>cultural landscapes</u> and what is hodologically relevant when they are linear, mobility-centric elements within the greater context?</i></p>
<p>&gt; METHODS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thick Description: [Clifford Geertz<sup>6</sup>]</li> <li>• Cross Sectional Analysis: [Grady Clay<sup>7</sup>] transect; merging ideas of Patrick Geddes and J.B. Jackson</li> </ul>
<p><b>B)</b> <i>What is the nature of the system of oversight, the informally cultural or bureaucratized establishment and management entity that provides the narrative or curates the hodological subject?</i></p>
<p>&gt; METHODS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnographic (informal material) &amp; Institutional History (archival material):</li> <li>• Case Study Method: multiple subjects, descriptive and comparative</li> <li>• Extended Case Method: [Michael Burawoy<sup>8</sup>] allows participant to include role of self in observational criteria, over extended time</li> </ul>
<p><b>C)</b> <i>What role does the virtual representation of site play in cohering the hodological subject? (i.e., traditional maps, interactive maps, interpretive material, or geolocation platforms) – this area bridges the gap between the physical site and management via data, surveillance, or interpretation.</i></p>
<p>&gt; METHODS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Humanities</li> <li>• Mapping: (analytical and/or perceptive)</li> <li>• Tomographic: [Martin Krieger<sup>9</sup>] serial, mobility-specific cross-sectional recording</li> </ul>

### **Taking a Trip—“Doing” a Hodology**

The original goal for performing this hodological experiment was to create a comprehensive hodological logging of one entire NHT. The best candidate for this seemed to be the Santa Fe Trail—it is in many ways the most complete in its build-out,

<sup>3</sup> Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*.

<sup>4</sup> Davis, “Looking Down the Road.”

<sup>5</sup> Wilson and Groth, *Everyday America*.

<sup>6</sup> Geertz, “Thick Description.”

<sup>7</sup> Clay, *Close-up*.

<sup>8</sup> Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*.

<sup>9</sup> Krieger, *Urban Tomographies*.

the most actively maintained by its friends groups, and the most monitored by its Geocache system overlay. In the summer of 2017, I drove the length of the Santa Fe NHT, from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Independence, Missouri. I will expand on this journey in a moment, but first I should explain how the original hodological goal shifted. After completing this 1,200 mile drive, I returned westward via the Southwest, and, upon entering Nogales, Arizona, I turned northward to follow the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT for a segment, as a potential comparison. I followed it for just short of 200 miles; obviously saw vastly different landscapes but more importantly followed a completely different kind of corridor, sequenced by a completely different kind of logic. At this point it seemed clear that the comprehensive hodology of the Santa Fe NHT alone was not as revealing as comparative hodologies of these two NHTs, and perhaps additional ones. I set about documenting these two experiences thusly, aiming for roughly 200-mile portions each. Lastly I was afforded an unforeseen opportunity when, in the late summer of 2019, I was invited to experience the portion of the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail on the south side of the Mexican border. This similarly 200-mile portion, originating at San Miguel de Horcasitas, is not technically under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service of course, so it cannot be called a NHT, but it is part of a surprisingly successful effort to create a trans-national trail and relationship with Turismo Sonora.

Specifics and impressions of the three hodological case studies performed:

1. Santa Fe NHT (single path, “Wet Route”), July 2017  
Portion accomplished: Santa Fe, NM to Independence, MO (all)  
Segment of focus: Great Bend, KS to Kansas City, MO  
Hodology logs taken: 71 total, 20 in focus area
2. Juan Bautista de Anza NHT (single path), August 2017  
Segment of focus: Nogales, AZ to Mobile, AZ  
Hodology logs taken: 13
3. Juan Bautista de Anza Ruta Historica & Turisma (loop)  
Segment of focus: Nogales, Sonora, Mexico to San Miguel de Horcasitas, Sonora, Mexico  
Hodology logs taken: 4

1. Santa Fe NHT

As stated, the Santa Fe NHT is considered within the NPS to serve as a model for other trails to emulate; it is perhaps the most complete—defined, signed, traveled, supported, and well recognized—of the historic trails. These are imprecise terms but it enjoys a certain indelible quality. I opted to use this NHT to begin my hodological gaze. I momentarily struggled with the pragmatic decision to follow the Santa Fe from west to east (not the directionality celebrated most within its lore) but ultimately reconciled, as it becomes evident while traveling that this corridor has always been bi-directional in terms of trade, though less so in terms of pioneer settlement. As well, I decided that my familiarity with the American West was greater than that of the Prairies, so for me

following the path eastbound would be most akin to a journey into unknown terrain and people.

After rolling through scenic New Mexico, including some grand, gateway-like passes, the Santa Fe NHT exposes a traveler to the immense flatness and wideness of the mid-continent. These spaces are majestic, but in them, it is painfully difficult to find specificity. Within this landscape, the lore of the historic Santa Fe Road centers on leftover wagon-wheel ruts and subtly manipulated contours – these tiny marks order the vastness and one learns as one travels how to read them as well as feel for them. Small towns repeatedly bring the historical gaze back to the symbol of the pioneer and Conestoga wagon. To my eye this seems reductive and tedious, but to the makers of the Santa Fe NHT, it is unifying and motivating. As my interviews and interactions tended to reveal, newer dimensions of more contemporary settlement and innovation (i.e., highways building, agricultural innovations, subsequent migration) are not considered particularly interesting and threaten to derail the core message of the trail and its enthusiasts. As the NHT corridor finds its way into the metropolitan area of Kansas City, it predictably gathers strength as a legend but loses its strength as a discernable space. Here one has to invest time learning and figuratively squint to find its presence in intriguing moments such as the Three Trails Interchange and adjacent Cerner Health Technologies headquarters campus. In order to keep a cadence for the hodology's documentation process, I opted to stop and "find" all 71 of the Geocache points set out by the Santa Fe Trail Society, thus logging my geolocatable progress and opening a window to whomever else might be traveling ahead or behind me.

## 2. Juan Bautista de Anza NHT, north of Nogales, AZ (USA)

At this segment of the NHT, Juan Bautista de Anza and his retinue of settlers followed a scenic river valley northward. The landscape is easy to follow as it naturally draws one through a channel between the hills. North of Tucson, however, the obstacle of the searing hot, dry, and barren Sonora Desert deflects travel westward and into some formidable terrain. In the present day, this desert area is home to irrigated crop land, pockets of exurban tract house development orbiting Phoenix, and a smattering of odd juxtapositions, for instance, a graveyard for jetliners. The historical route also dips into tribal lands in this area, arcing westward through the 587-square mile Gila River Indian Community (reservation) just south of the San Tan Mountains. Here the Trail is unmarked, uncelebrated, and unfelt. According to Naomi Torres, Superintendent, these federally recognized lands, as sovereign nations, have remained indifferent to participating with partnerships for the sake of on-the-ground projects, although occasionally more interested in programmatic projects for their empowerment or tourism. Though unspoken, she has registered feelings that the Anza Trail, or any NPS intervention, is ultimately a celebration of tribal dispossession and therefore usually met with silence. This poignant schism is gently explained in online NPS content, but as experienced in person, driving the Trail within tribal land, the landscape feels withheld and reserved and the Trail itself goes mute.

Rather than the predictable and user-friendly Geocache system of the Santa Fe NHT, the Anza NHT is better divided up by searching for the historically determined camping sites where the expedition stopped, slept, and replenished. Thanks to an ongoing effort by various historians, these places can be found as a part of the Anza NHT interpretation work, located on the interactive mapping tool, and occasionally marked with signage. However, these are not completely precise and occasionally inaccessible. For this segment, I opted to create divisions by combining the campsite locations with a set of randomly placed Geocache points. This was much more difficult than the Santa Fe system, geared for auto tourism, but it was also more interesting, leading me to curious, remote places. I certainly saw and appreciated the landscape from enticing angles by way of this methodical experience, but I cannot say whether it did or did not better acquaint me with the corridor Anza experienced nor can I state whether the corridor itself had absorbed some part of the mobilities within its space or structure. After several thousand miles, this predicament became acutely frustrating. As with all NHTs, the invitation to follow and thereby find something that is past and illusive is offered by the system and design. But as it was then, is now, and ever shall be, it is just land to move across, and the “finding” is whatever one wants it to be. One has no idea what has been “found” nor what should be considered evidence. The tribe for which the Gila River Indian Community was established is called *Akimel O’odham*, however the colonial settlers who encountered them called the tribe the Pima. The word “pima” is likely derived from the phrase *pi-nyi-match*, meaning, “I don’t know,” as cumulative instances of cultural non-connection solidified into a permanent identity. I cannot help but sense a corollary with the experience of the Anza Trail, offering repeated instances “I know I’m here but I don’t know what I’m here with.” One readily finds the ambiguity.

### 3. Juan Bautista de Anza Ruta Historica & Turisma, south of Nogales (Mexico)

This segment is testament to a surprising political alliance and a credit to the potential of NHTs as a park/space typology. Amidst a time of heightened tensions between the United States and Mexico, this united effort to create a trans-national contiguous trail was achieved in part by an agency of the very government amplifying the tensions. The possible diplomatic benefit of this effort remains to be seen (and may be moot), but at this unveiling it felt mildly triumphant. For this segment, I traveled in a small bus with several travel writers from Arizona and both employees of the NPS Anza Trail. I noted immediately that conducting a hodology is substantially easier if one is not doing the driving. This is significant because the ownership or authorship of the retracement is different when one is being taken rather than self-directing. As well, if one is not driving, one cannot determine how to segment the mobility and stop accordingly. Regardless, I took better notes and had more time to consider my surroundings in the present moment.

The landscape south of the US/Mexico border is hilly and appealing and in September also surprisingly green. The Anza Trail’s “turismo” route (half of a loop) follows the Sonora River and Valley which connects a series of early Spanish settlements and forms what is considered the “birthplace” of the frontier territory that comprised Nueva

Andalucía, later renamed Sonora. The historic route follows a wider and somewhat flatter expanse to the west, which Juan Bautista de Anza opted to traverse northward. Visiting Anza's specific origination point at San Miguel de Horcasitas is an odd experience—it is far off the main roadways and has been largely bypassed by growth and progress. The feeling of reaching a pilgrimage's end point is ambiguous but affecting.

### **Hodology Logs**

While this endeavor has been an attempt to “test” the NHT and gain knowledge concerning their character and performance, it is also a test of this method of hodology as well. The reality of populating the matrix of factors is in fact laborious, repetitive, and tedious. This may be also necessary, in keeping with the tomographic, repetitive “cuttings” (taken from Martin Krieger's Tomography method<sup>10</sup> – see Introduction) from which this hodological framework draws. The hope stands that such repetitive questioning and seeing, performed at each “cut” and subsequently logged, potentially capturing the nearly unchanging reality of land traversal for long stretches of time, will shift the ability to perceive. Having now performed three hodologies, I cannot claim to know if this is true, but I will discuss my observations about the method's strengths and weaknesses below.

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<sup>10</sup> Krieger, *Urban Tomographies*.



As one drives through space and time following a corridor, the hodology matrix asks that one consider the three main categories and several specific subcomponents. Here is a critique of the method after completing it via three case studies:

Original proposed categories of analysis:	<i>As experienced in the field:</i>
A. PATH	<i>This category is the most literal and all subcomponents must be accounted for in order to create a base for analyses in categories B and C to produce insight</i>
> Time Period	<i>As expected this would be exact windows of time (e.g., 2:52-3:11 PM CST) and in execution more typically general (e.g., “began drive early morning, just after sunrise...”). Determined that the latter was as relevant and captured subjective mood as well.</i>
> Route	<i>Functioned well if map knowledge was adequate (e.g., Larned, KS to Great Bend, KS) but sometimes difficult to include complex routings off of obvious highways. Ultimately feel that a subjective description is adequate (e.g., straight, flat routing on highway XX, followed by short travel northward on gravel road, on grid...)</i>
> Design/Architecture/Logic	<i>Subcategory attempted to track particulars of road design or innovations in signage, but for the NHT all signage is standardized and roadways are per usual Interstate or state highway regulations or simply gravel back roads. This analysis seems more aspirational than useful for the routes traveled in this project.</i>
> Usage: Single or Layered	<i>This subcategory proved problematic; all corridor uses are “layered” and there are too many layers/uses to know and record.</i>
> Condition: Present/Past	<i>Open-ended and useful category; led to considerations such as “preserved sequence of colonial towns – seeking relevance.” Could be expanded into several clearer points of analysis but may prompt useful observation as is.</i>
> Landscapes traversed – physical and cultural	<i>Found that in the context of the American Midwest, this is a repetitive condition to consider but over time subtly gains a certain voice. For instance conditions of horizon and sky vary and would have been relevant to historical participants as well.</i>
> Nodes connected	<i>More logistical than interpretive</i>
> Character of the act of mobility itself, in context	<i>Surprising records here, often shaped by group dynamics. Blends with subcategory of</i>

	<i>"Interactivity" from category C.</i>
B. MONUMENT/MUSEUM - retrospect	<i>This category proved the most tedious and repetitive. In the case of a NHT, the principal monument is unchanging and the delivery mechanism is the NPS. Keeping track of other institutions which may participate at intervals is not possible; only a partial inventory can be attained and the usefulness is questionable</i>
> Presence of original or subsequent narrative	<i>This subcategory is illuminating perhaps the biggest dilemma, as the "presence" is exactly what proves so slippery. Having the methodology method force one to consider this repeatedly in reality creates a "presence" above and beyond what may be imbued within the corridor itself. This category needs reconsideration.</i>
> Mode of reflection on past act/condition: didactic, commemorative, memory	<i>This subcategory is better reflected upon once travel/mobility has ceased. The question itself needs to be reconsidered to chart perceived strategy. Ascertaining true intention of contributing institutions is impossible.</i>
> Type of institution constructed to maintain consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Structure</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Interpretation</li> <li>• Relationship to adjacent conditions</li> </ul>	<i>As with the previous subcategory, this questions a set of institutional factors which are consistent along a very long corridor.<sup>11</sup> Since they can be assumed, it might be more informative to look for anomalies or evidence aside from the expected manifestations which can be learned and outlined outside of travel time. As well, the "Relationship to adjacent conditions" question is too broad.</i>
> Role of curatorship in co-assembling past: documentation, narrative, nodes, archeological findings, interpretive information, etc.	<i>This subcategory works well. Can be analyzed through perception as well as ethnographic observation.</i>
> Relationship with existing or emerging national or trans-national narratives	<i>This subcategory is difficult to capture when only observed space is considered. When coupled with tour narrative, this is easier to interrogate as a "relationship."</i>
> Visitorship: means to observe, qualitative and quantitative, importance	<i>Other NHT users are almost never visible. One case study NHT has the ability to track a small percentage of visitors via Geocache records, the other case study NHTs do not poses any means for</i>

<sup>11</sup> This should be the case for all NHTs overseen by the NPS. However, the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT is different: it is overseen by the NPS for the majority of its length in the United States, and by the government of Sonora for its shorter segment within Mexico. Officially speaking, this Sonoran segment is not a United States-administered "National Historic Trail" or part of the NPS park unit lexicon, but it is a collaborative effort, which will be explored in a subsequent case study in this chapter.

	<i>such tracking at all. This subcategory is problematic for these cases but may not be for smaller trail projects. As with questions of design, this could be considered aspirational.</i>
C. MOTIVATIONS/EMBODIMENT - Pilgrimage	<i>This category is the most subjective and captured interesting, momentary observations which may have easily been forgotten without the hodology method's repetitive framework.</i>
> Perceptions of adjacent landscape	<i>This subcategory is intentionally separate from the "Landscape Traversed" subcomponent in category A. Perceived attributes can also gather impressions from multiple observers and having this prompt gives such small human reactions a place to be recorded.</i>
> Haptic experience	<i>Could use more definition, however this subcomponent gives space for the uncategorizable, for instance during a majestic portion of scenery in New Mexico, I ran over a bird. Emotional response and establishment of meaning surrounding encountering road kill for remainder of trips. Became a symbolic overlay.</i>
> Interactions and/or relationships with humans or animals, making movement into journey	<i>This subcategory is acutely important and requires more thought. Hodological repetition may beneficially capture subtle instances as well as profound meetings, but needs to develop a more articulate set of relevant subcategories.</i>
> Social structure/Power relationships established/reordered/disrupted by experience	<i>As above, requires more thought. Many instances captured particularly when traveling with group. Power shifts are vivid and contribute significantly to historical accounts, therefore capturing them within hodological method seems appropriate, but unclear how to distill.</i>
> Spiritual motivations or discoveries	<i>Allows space for moments of awe or despair – requires further interrogation to integrate with mobility.</i>

Hodology, as a method that I myself am proposing, is in a stage of infancy and requires a significant level of refinement. As the author, investigator, user, and auditor of the method itself, I am confronted with a great deal of documented moments and a confounding sense of how it can be distilled. My own bias is no small factor; I see this as I hope to see it and cannot claim neutrality in judging the process nor the outcome. Such neutrality was never expected, however, as Burawoy's Extended Case Method fortunately allows for a self-reflexive participation within the system of both making and

observing.<sup>12</sup> The massive accumulation of physical and qualitative observations makes for a particular version of Carl Sauer's "landscape morphology" approach to defining place,<sup>13</sup> coupled with Clifford Geertz's "Thick Description," an expansion of this ongoing non-positivistic endeavor.<sup>14</sup> Hodology of course focuses not upon a location but rather a human movement either *through* locations or stretching the definition of "location" outward into a long line of motion. As in Geertz's work, the synthesis is the result of deep and repeated contextualization; in this case, it is the conditions of movement (or time spent in motion), which are contextualized and supported in a "web" of encasing factors.

### **The Case Studies**

Three instances of following and logging experience on two NHTs within the United States, and the inter-governmental collaborative extension of one of these within Mexico, constitute my three case studies.

### **Case Framework:**

- > **Essential information:** each case will be introduced by NHT name, trail segment traveled, and dates and precise coordinates of origination and terminus.
- > **Logs taken:** this corresponds to the amount of times the mobility experience was "cut" in the spirit of Krieger's Tomographic method.<sup>15</sup> At each "cut" the hodological question set re-interrogates what is happening and where one is. The answers are logged.
- > **The Reading:** in the spirit of Geertz's Thick Description, each case will begin with a *thin* followed by *thick* verbal assessment of the hodological experience afforded.
  - **Surface:** this is effectively a summary of main components with a minimum of subjective commentary.
  - **Thickness:** this is the core work, the detailed write-up, gathering and integrating movement with texture, tone, subjective experience, human interactions, mood, ambiguity, etc. This thick description also leaves open the possibility for creative visual output, experiments with how one might begin to augment the verbal description with mappings or photography. These are examples, not comprehensive studies in a complete state.
- > **The Conceptual Frameworks:**
  - **Tim Cresswell / Mobility Geography:** per Tim Cresswell's definition of mobilities, I will consider the cumulative experience of this journey spent *in motion* through three lenses, *Movement*, *Meaning*, and *Practice*.<sup>16</sup> When

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<sup>12</sup> Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*.

<sup>13</sup> Sauer, *The Morphology of Landscape*.

<sup>14</sup> Geertz, "Thick Description."

<sup>15</sup> Krieger, *Urban Tomographies*.

<sup>16</sup> Cresswell, *On the Move*.

assessed as a combined mobile moment, the result then figures with regard to *Power*, the shifts in position and selfhood relative to others resulting from the particular instance of mobility:

- Movement: basic displacement; what kind of distance and speed were involved, and participants involved
- Meaning: the subjective significance and social relevance for those involved in the mobility and those observing or encountered along the way (e.g., migration, race, stroll, pilgrimage)
- Practice: how might the instances of meaning coalesce into beliefs or narratives that remain and become categories?
- Power: how does the act of moving set up difference, distinctions of political expressions, or increases/decreases in power (individual or group) as a result of what has transpired?

- **Nigel Thrift / Theory of the Non-representational:**<sup>17</sup> key to assessing mobilities is the admission that many qualities do not represent themselves; there is no classifiable evidence of many factors contributing to the particular mobility. This final assessment gives voice to everything invisible, impermanent and unnamed.

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<sup>17</sup> Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

## CASE 1

### Santa Fe National Historic Trail –

**start:** *Santa Fe, NM, July 10, 2017 (N 35° 41.210 W 105° 56.274)*

**end:** *Sugar Creek/Wayne City Landing, MO, July 20, 2017 (N 39° 08.117 W 094° 25.483)*

**hodology logs taken:** 71 total, 20 in focus area

The Santa Fe Trail, as an experience *and* a space begins to parse out into several layers of experience:

#### -Surface:

A long drive, significant time spent in a car, landscape transition from mountainous to prairie to Midwestern agriculture and forest, punctuated by small towns, functional and abandoned farms, increased presence and constraints of grid pattern across territory.

Structured by the placement of Geocache points, all of which have been chosen for high ease-of-finding by the Santa Fe Trail Association, the movement and pauses across the trail are fairly regular and narrated in short bursts of historical insight.

#### -Thickness:

Moving eastward from mountains to plains, the presence of the sky and the palpability of width, flatness, and horizon increase as the space is traversed; each repeated hodological reading prompts a forced assessment of this widening and a reconciliation with feelings of awe or disappointment as this increasing sense of breadth generally amplifies over time. Because of these repeated assessments when stopped, one has the opportunity to become hyper-aware of the phenomenon while in motion. Highway speeds with the buffeting of increasingly humid mid-west air become a baseline condition with slower periods of focused searching. Sharper turns, deceleration, bouncing around after leaving asphalt behind interrupt this baseline, wake up my body behind the steering wheel, and indicate that something is nearby to be found—a narrowing-in and convergence of attention. Overall, driving this particular distance here takes on a sense of quest to reach increasingly wider vantage points. The transition *into* the spaciousness of the middle portion of the continent, when originating *from* the coastal and hilly/mountainous west, is a subtle but foreign feeling of vastness. Easing into this feeling incrementally offers a meditative component. Ostensibly this could be experienced in reverse. Westbound settlers occasionally recount the spatial surprises first of reaching the prairies and then the drama of the Rocky Mountains in diaries and other trail literature; this aspect of present mobility jibes with knowledge of these accounts (whether gleaned from NPS Santa Fe Trail interpretive information or otherwise) and a quiet, comparative tension emerges.

If following Anza's original journey's movement, the trajectory of the Trail is diagonal, from southwest to northeast. In New Mexico, the trail corridor often follows the actual historic route through valleys and passes. Particularly at moments like Glorieta Pass, the landscape offers such clear gateways that the routing feels almost

magnetized, as if one is pulled along by the contours. In fact, it has been exactly that for millennia, the Pecos Pueblo marking a gathering place adjacent to this monumental space of flow. This geologically-produced logic breaks down within the National grid system as the land becomes flatter to the east. After having experienced the landscape as a guide, entering the grid presents an impediment and a frustration. The idea of the trail is less something to follow and more something to see in the distance, as discrete sites. It possess a disassembled quality, and one's mobility in the present time is often made generic. Following the grid, one moves from state highways to farm roads to gravel back roads and back, orthogonally skirting and weaving over the historic route. Initially aggravating, it also fades into a more complex condition: the movement takes on a feeling of a hunt, a search. Moments where an intersection with the Trail is encountered, I record as triumphs. When the encounter is deep off of any main road and camouflaged by more recent agricultural or forest transformations of the landscape, the condition of finding the Trail is a small celebration. This would be impossible without the presence of NPS interpretive signage. The white-on-brown markers, so bland in appearance, remind one of the overall dowdiness of this endeavor and the plain-speak of the US government agency that happens to be holding one's hand as the path continues. My judgment makes me uncomfortable, but my aesthetic eye, the result of years spent inside elite design-production environments, nonetheless shapes how I consume this space and I cannot feign neutrality.

The monuments left by the Daughters of the American Revolution, however, possess a different aura set apart from the visual voice of the NPS. These generally appear as little graves, with their rusticated, reddish granite finishes, succinct text, and sans-serif fonts. Nothing florid, these are solemn testaments to pioneer grit. As physical objects, they seem meager in the valleys of New Mexico but weightier in the context of the flat, gridded prairies. They take on some of the magnetic qualities of the mountain passes and invisibly compel one to move forth and find the next one in the series, thus subtly shaping the mobility itself.

The historical overlay ascribed to the trail by local residents clearly celebrates the figure of the pioneer more so than other historical travelers. The imagery of the Conestoga Wagon is ever-present. Smaller towns frequently offer a Santa Fe Trail museum (or similar concept) and the hodology question structure requires that these be noted. There are in fact so many such museums that the compilation of hodological information makes evident that this type of small institution (and its repeated message of pioneer primacy) rivals other familiar institutions, such as county courthouses and Presbyterian churches insofar as prominent landmarks in the townscapes. As well, it suggests that the repetition of the message might be considered as sacred.

Multiple interviews conducted confirmed this. Larned, Kansas is home to the Santa Fe Trail Center and Research Library, housed within a long and low stone building set back from KS Route 156 amidst farms and a historic cemetery. I made an appointment to meet the staff and tour the facility in advance and was met by Linda Revello, Martha Scranton, and two other volunteers in the reading room, a utilitarian space with fluorescent lighting and office furniture from the eighties. All in attendance had lived in various other locations and returned to the Larned area by choice, either for

or in anticipation of retirement. They were all fairly circumspect with regard to what drew them to this place but clear in the fact that it was their choice location. I gathered that they valued the place for its peacefulness and continuity with their extended family, as well as the potential to live at a rural spatial scale.

There was a common thread of demonstrable pragmatism in all aspects of personhood as well as a waiting defensiveness, a communal, practiced protectiveness upholding the values of modesty and simplicity within the Plains culture. The Santa Fe Trail *story* was valuable in part because it touched a great deal of space and simultaneously upheld this value of shared simplicity. Simplicity and basicness, as I was being educated, were not necessarily reductive, not replacing the reality of complexity, multivalence, or cosmopolitanism; these qualities could be quietly celebrated and held as a priority, encoded as a way of life and a guiding goal. The opposite of imperious, Linda and her friends attempted to acquaint me to this idea using the Trail as exemplar. They described the collective interest in preserving the culture of farms, many of which were struggling. When I asked if the emerging presence of wind farms in the prairies might fit into the narrative, looking at interpreting change over time, they were thoughtful but decisive—no, that would be too much of a stretch. The library, they said, was severely lacking in patronage due to availability of online sources and their remote location. However, the adjacent museum had received a grant and hired an exhibit designer to update both the dioramas as well as the message. This new interpretive strategy alluded to a wider range of trail users as well as resituating this particular example of human movement within prehistoric migrations, preceding the patchwork of tribal lands that undergird pioneer stories and present a binary tension. I found this added context appealing and cautiously wondered if Linda would think otherwise, favoring a simpler message. Quite the opposite, this was unequivocally welcomed as an improvement in the museum's objective and would be great for children to learn. Linda apologized for many insignificant shortcomings, for instance that the lawn had not been mowed that week, and at first I protested at every instance with insistence that I did not in fact have higher expectations. Everywhere in this region there seemed to be an assumption that judgment was right around the corner, coming from anyone with ties to elsewhere. After some time I realized this was a figure of speech more than a real sense of fear in that particular moment—many cultures value demonstrations of deference in various forms. However it led me to wonder how the seeds of this could have been set with the earliest settlers staking claim to farm parcels in the prairies and then having to endure years of the traversals of those going further than they had, wagons filled with families moving through with their sights set on something further, tougher, more. It seemed possible that the story the Trail was telling might include a slight pathos, the shared pioneer mythology might in reality have shades of envy or sanctimony blended in that this culture sought to quell.

Interrupting the mobility experience of the Trail in stopping at the Geocaches demanded a logic and method. Here, in order to meaningfully situate these breaks into the hodology framework, I attempted to use them to record a detailed sub-sequence of steps, still in the service of movement rather than stasis. Approaching each Geocache by car, I would get as close as the app allowed, park. Taking photographs, I would move on



foot toward the hidden Geocache to arrive at the right point, the position of the cache box. I would open it, sign my name in the paper log book, and lastly take a final photograph from the place of the cache aimed in the compass direction of the cache in the sequence I would be moving toward next. This series of photographs corresponds to the exact latitude/longitude position of that Geocache and also situates my discovery of it in a chronology of everyone else who has done so before or after.

The Geocache system keeps a spatiotemporal record of me, a captured retracement. I had hoped that this utilization of the Geocache sequence and system would place me in contact with trail users. In fact I only met any people on the Trail using these Geocaches, twice. The first instance was on July 11, 2017, inside the lobby of the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico—this is the “final” Geocache in the sequence for those following the trail west from Missouri, marking one’s arrival in the main Plaza of Santa Fe, and here I encountered two families from Oklahoma, traveling together to a church convention. They explained they simply enjoyed finding Geocaches, likened them to a treasure hunt, but they were not following the Santa Fe Trail. At another instance, on July 13<sup>th</sup>, I met a teacher from Chillicothe, Ohio as we both approached “Boggsville,” also the site of the homestead of Kit Carson. She was on a road trip to Denver for an education convention and was attempting to collect as many Geocaches as possible while traveling. She spoke enthusiastically and urgently, before quickly sprinting away from me back to the parking lot, as her husband was apparently going to be annoyed if they were not quickly back on the road. Aside from these two interactions, every other Geocache location was devoid of people.

I include these two only to give dimension to the random and fleeting quality of meeting trail “users.” This is important both in terms of experience (the Trail is a wide-open and solitary place) and in terms of study (the “users” are not plentiful and difficult to separate from other travelers who happen to be in the same place at the same time). I had known from the outset that user-centered data would be nearly impossible to attain; these two instances were the reality of that fact. The National Park Service subunits depend on user data to secure funding, so this situation, specific to the NHTs, is a problem for them as well. They substitute volunteer hours and quantities of school children involved with interpretive events in lieu of actual users of the Trails as traversable space. The portion of my hodological reports where the question of human interactions repeatedly remained blank drew out a connection to the dilemma of the non-representational. The actuality of “users” is that they exist but are not found, only known-of and sensed. In fact this is no different from the Trail itself, and the most essential quality of mobility—things or beings displacing space such that one is never in the exact position of another. The act is simultaneously beginning and over at every instance and the likelihood of adjacency and/or sharing is greatly reduced. Mobility is fleeting and that quality has variables and nuance. It is the intention of the hodology method to give space to capture that nuance, but the larger problem is that we lack the words to give it the correct name. What I suspect we *know* beyond language is the condition of doing something others have already done. Attempting to make *following* more explicit and descriptive, different than simply *going*, is in most aspects a fool’s errand. The hours spent driving, the significant elapsing of mobile experience, is

accompanied by an anxiety-provoking ambiguity and a tenuous hold on how the experience is really particular, how the space is different. But by contrast, the occasional reminder that one is *following*, that this is a *space of followings*, that there is evidence and reminders of this condition, serves to either reset or supplant the ambiguity with a kernel of certitude. In fact this small certitude may be the only element that makes the generic space of one's car, modern roadways, farms, and main streets different when traveling this trail as a mobility.

A secondary means of "cutting" the trail was delivered by circumstance. At the first instance, while driving through an especially scenic stretch of New Mexico near Fort Union, I hit a bird. Hearing its body thump beneath the undercarriage of the car was visceral and surprising yet incredibly ordinary. I had been enjoying myself and suddenly was not. I noted the feelings in the hodological reading at the next stop. It occurred to me that this incident had been thoroughly embedded within the truest mobility condition of the overall experience: I had not needed to *stop* at a Geocache to experience this profound interruption and hodological reset. Likely, this kind of interruption is present in all long journeys, from expeditions to pilgrimages, and spontaneously finding instances of death while in this act of mobile displacement takes on a quality of a spiritual nature. These instances are markers too, though the message is unclear. I did not (knowingly) run down any more creatures on my retracement drives, but when road kill appeared any time subsequently, it became part of an ongoing sequential storyline absorbed only by me in this particular order.

In a short detour from the Trail's corridor, I visited Joanne VanCoevern, Association Manager of the Santa Fe Trail Association and perhaps the most influential figure in promoting the trail's concept and organizing the diffuse and linear distribution of enthusiasts and volunteers necessary to maintain it. Joanne has a steady and serious demeanor; she lives in a comfortable, traditional home with a generous verandah overlooking a pond at the end of a private driveway on the outskirts of Salina, Kansas. The backdrop provided by the porch, pond, breeze, wind chime, and leafy quiet made for a long morning interview where conversation flowed easily. We quickly agreed upon the mysterious quality of growing into appreciating wagon wheel ruts. We explored how odd yet compelling it is to find these and want to find more, see from above, put a puzzle together. In discussing what she feels motivates the SFT's existence, she alluded to her own discovery: as a child visiting her family farm 20 miles outside Dodge City, Kansas ("middle of nowhere"), she first found ruts there in the ground to be fun to drive over, fast, in a truck. Later she added to this embodied thrill an interest that her grandmother had used whatever this was as a road to arrive overland from Kansas City, after emigrating from Germany. Simple as that. Finding and mapping the ruts on their own property followed, and "you realize it isn't just a one-topic thing". The Trail, as a topic, starts to touch every other relevant historical development from Native Americans to Civil War, etc. Growing into the life she has now, settled in an exurban home that enables a passion for caring for horses, she travels frequently but usually regionally and by car to various equestrian locations, and in doing so she traverses the same landscape repeatedly. Doing so means that she is in motion, retracing, and also able to build and amplify the network of associated interest groups. Originally an idea

floated by trail stakeholder John Schumacher, Joanne spearheaded the Geocache system, placing it within the updated SFT Strategic Plan, and claims it has brought a massive uptick in participation. Joanne and Linda differ on their opinion of this system: Joanne underscores exposure and the most basic qualities of visitorship whereas Linda sees this as a failed effort to augment Association membership and therefore a waste of effort. Regardless, the Geocache system has shed light on the mobile user in a way not previously possible. I pitched the idea that the Geocaches parallel with pilgrimage (reliquary contents, compulsion to find and find next, etc.) and Joanne recognized the importance of a “treasure hunt,” a sort of underlying quest as central to retracement and pilgrimage alike.

The last stretch of my drive led into the outskirts and then suburbs of Kansas City—Kansas and Missouri. Here, Joanne placed me in contact with Larry Short, president of the Association, who would spend several full days with me, revealing his insights, trail projects, infrastructure, and emerging ideas. Larry, similar to Joanne, has a sturdy, friendly, and matter-of-fact personality. He wears “sensible” clothing and drives a Ford Fusion, though unlike Joanne, he has traveled extensively outside the US, and in retirement had moved back to his state of origin after living in Denver. The Santa Fe Trail is a primary passion for Larry and he devotes an immense amount of volunteer time to it and its subcomponents, including the publishing of a quarterly newsletter. Upon meeting me, Larry admitted that he had been anticipating my arrival by “watching me,” monitoring my progress through my Geocache log entries. The previous day I had visited a site significant as a major fork in the road, where pioneers would have made a life-shaping decision to take one route towards New Mexico or a different one towards California or Oregon. My logged entry had stated that the site “must have been a hell of a party”—Larry appreciated the joke and mentioned he had not thought of that aspect before. This innocuous exchange was made virtually through geospatial technology and seeing this as an act of benign but still unforeseen surveillance added a new quality to my movements from then onward. Larry took me first to an indoor picnic for the Historical Society of Raytown, Kansas where I was treated with friendly suspicion as a doctoral student hailing from a coast. Still, I logged the geocache the Society held behind their reception desk amidst more dioramas of pioneer trappings and a model wagon. We left early and drove on to arguably the first truly urban site since leaving Santa Fe: a small, tidy new park filled with prairie grasses and a picnic kiosk, sited upon a bluff overlooking an enormous interstate highway interchange and the corporate headquarters of Cerner, a massive provider of healthcare-related information technology, their “Corporate Innovations Campus.” Adjacent to a huge pit mine, the interchange as well as an adjacent industrial park complex were both named “Three Trails,” making visible the presence of three cultural routes diverging beneath this subsequently urbanized landscape. As an urban designer, this sort of fractured, postmodern metropolitan *mélange* of homes, infrastructure, and industry is acutely inspiring. The presence of the SFT—what I have come to see as an infrastructure of memory—mixing with all this periurban context was exactly what I had sought to find somewhere. However, as I have come to expect of such scenarios, the concept of Trail becomes impossibly diffuse with competition from this complexity, and the mobility

premise blurs with all other means of movement. Its massive scale, formation-story narrative, and experimental spirit wither to near-nothingness under the crush of present-day conditions. Driving along uncharacteristically winding Blue Ridge Boulevard, the actual historical route itself as well as an organizational suburban arterial and spine, reveals nothing. I kept this to myself as Larry explained the project of the park itself and how it fit with the management plans laid out by the NPS, creating precisely located and appropriately signed footpath infrastructure honoring the routing. The small park had been named for Lou Schumacher, a former landowner and housing developer in the immediate area, who had first pushed to chart and protect historic roads on his own landholdings. He seemed to have at least partially appreciated that this narrative, if exposed, could reshape this otherwise anonymous exurban territory and possibly augment the value of his own property. His son, Lou Junior (who used the name “Lou Austin”) lived a small, historic home next to the park; my next stop with Larry was to go meet Lou Austin at his office.

Housed in a small strip mall, well past its prime, Lou’s office was a large and dark cavern of a space. Entering was to simultaneously dive in *and* catapult out of the Midwest—Lou was a small and gruff figure, slightly defensive and quick to anger as one might find in a New Yorker. But he was clothed in overalls, a nod towards a resolute passion for trains, and paraphernalia relating to railroads and railroad-era antiques littered the walls, floor, and tables. Lou was a developer at the core, maneuvering to leverage his properties’ value within a greater effort to raise the perceived value of the Southeast Kansas City area. But this office was hardly a space of real estate economics, transaction, proformas, RFPs, and handshakes; it was more like a cluttered trophy case for Lou’s key interests in place and history.

Southeast Kansas City, more specifically “Hickman Mills” where the Schumachers have owned land for several generations, is a mixture of lower-tier tract housing, marginal businesses within strip malls, empty forested patches, and large but poorly integrated economic drivers like Cerner and the mining operation. The area is the site of Ruskin Heights, Kansas City’s first true post-war, merchant-builder suburb in the character of Levittown. Ruskin Heights was less than a decade old when it was largely pulverized by an F5 tornado in 1957, the light construction of the post-war housing coupled with a regionally uncharacteristic lack of basements made for a deadly scenario. This memory seems to linger in the air. The site on which Cerner is now opening its sparkling, gated campus, was formerly the site of the Bannister Mall. Built in 1980, the massive mall was the commercial heart of the area until it failed and closed in 2007. In the 1990s, Marion Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, the US-marketer of thalidomide among other products, built the beginnings of a “dream campus” to the west of the mall only to quickly shutter the facility for decades. All of these massive, corporate development components, and their perceived failures or tragedies seem to back up a sense of a lost purpose overshadowing Hickman Mills. The current of Cold War-era priorities, economics, and downfall is thick. The population now is primarily African American and while the ability to move to such a suburban setting from any of the deeply impoverished inner city neighborhoods might be seen as a success, the external perception holds that Hickman Mills is a “problem” neighborhood in need of leadership,

investment, and course correction. While much of Kansas City and the surrounding suburbs in Missouri and Kansas are organized upon a grid, Hickman Mills is more free form, loosely following hilly topography. Blue Ridge Boulevard forms a central, curving spine and follows the Santa Fe Trail's historic route through much of the area. Where the trail deviates from the modern roadway, it occasionally reappears within other open parcels. A commemorative footpath identifies the route on the property of a school; at several instances, large well-preserved ruts are visible amongst residential properties. As the Santa Fe Trail roadbed had been formally "purchased" by the United States Government in 1825, official records supported its exact location in the area. Lou, with his knowledge of archival methods, brought this dusty paper trail into the urban-scale imaginary as a "real" trail, dovetailing with the NPS efforts at the national scale.

Lou and Larry and I discussed the Trail's presence within the complexity of the area for several hours and Larry's efforts towards an ever-stronger multi-state trail experience and awareness and Lou's efforts within suburban Southeast Kansas City were synchronized. Lou's views on this complex socioeconomic situation were admirably, upliftingly nuanced. Having attended University of Missouri for a Bachelor's Degree in History, Lou's graduation in 1969 would suggest he might have been participating in the discipline at the apex of the Social Turn, often qualifying a statement with the emphatic maxim, "history is about *people!*" He seemed genuinely concerned that any efforts to bring investment should ideally augment rather than displace the African American population present. He was convinced of the underlying and near-invisible presence of the Santa Fe Trail as the key meaningful catalyst for a host of investment efforts that might also have the power to embrace difference. The most startling idea Lou set forth in this vein is his pet project of a charter school with a curriculum devoted to trails at every grade level, from kindergarten to eighth grade. Lou died on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the age of 71, so his school will remain only an idea. His emotional investment in the area remains in many small gestures that reveal historical chapters, the Santa Fe Trail as the most organizing feature. Lou was also instrumental in supporting Cerner's investment which is now aggressively expanding Kansas City's economic prowess in the medical services sector. The French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi Aventis recently purchased the Marion Merrell Dow property and resold to Cerner. The Three Trails Interchange, Interstates 49, 435, 470 and SR-471, hums to the west of the Cerner site, distributing cars, trucks, their drivers and contents to Topeka, Des Moines, St. Louis, the Ozarks and beyond. Investment and divestment still chase each other erratically through Hickman Mills' hills and forested patches, and the historical echo of thousands of pioneer mobilities emerges only at interpretive panels or book talks at the library.

It bears mentioning that Lou's approach represented a vision running closest to urban design that I have witnessed in any instance of NHT execution. From the outset of this project, I have hoped to find something in this realm. This represents a bias on my own part: as someone trained in architecture and then urban design, I harbor my own vision of NHTs and other trails as a particular kind of catalyst. My own hazy, utopian vision favors the territorial scale and envisions trails as an ill-defined armature that could produce impulses beyond the basics of heritage expression or recreation

infrastructures, and could somehow make some mobilities more explicit, meaningful, and rich, exposing and simultaneously producing frameworks in which to remake the many long swaths of contemporary settlement which value nondeterministic flexibility over fixity and place. To my experience, my view is not shared or even imagined—the NHTs tell stories; they do not catalyze anything beyond historical awareness and participation. Lou and I were not in perfect alignment by any definition, but he relished the widest vision of trail-as-catalyst that I have encountered in this research and it pains me to learn of his so-recent death.

Larry and I spent a final swelteringly humid day together, following the Santa Fe Trail eastward beyond Kansas City's edges. The township-turned-suburb of Independence is home to the National Trails Museum, a squat reused industrial building surrounded by a small collection of refurbished historical houses and railroad station structures relocated on the grounds. The museum's message was, as ever, narratives of pioneer bravery and grit, tempered by narratives of Native American displacement or cooperation or strife. We ventured on to a series of roadside markers that Larry and the SFTA had spearheaded, and I terminated my journey and hodology at the Wayne City Landing historical site—an overlook high above the Missouri River demarcating one of many sites of crossing for westbound pioneers. The river's edge below is now inaccessible, the site of a fenced-off cement factory and barge port. Larry and the SFTA, however, had added a narrative nod towards the lost condition of mobility with a short interpretive trail winding down a portion of the escarpment and at the end, by the fence, they had placed the last Geocache I would log. This site, the first one to meet the barrier of the Missouri River, seemed like as good as any other to declare my own eastern terminus. Unlike the western end which spatially, culturally, and sensorially terminates unambiguously in the iconic Plaza of Santa Fe, the eastern end is not at all distinct, beginning for many at whatever site they gathered upon to prepare for the road. In reverse, I met the end at the cement plant.

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The final step of this hodology is the most experimental: a visual exercise merging mapping with geolocation and mobility process. This is an attempt to test an alternative layer of synthesis and, in combination with the written hodology framework (see matrix above), I believe it has the potential to capture additional knowledge of the mobility, place, and conditions.

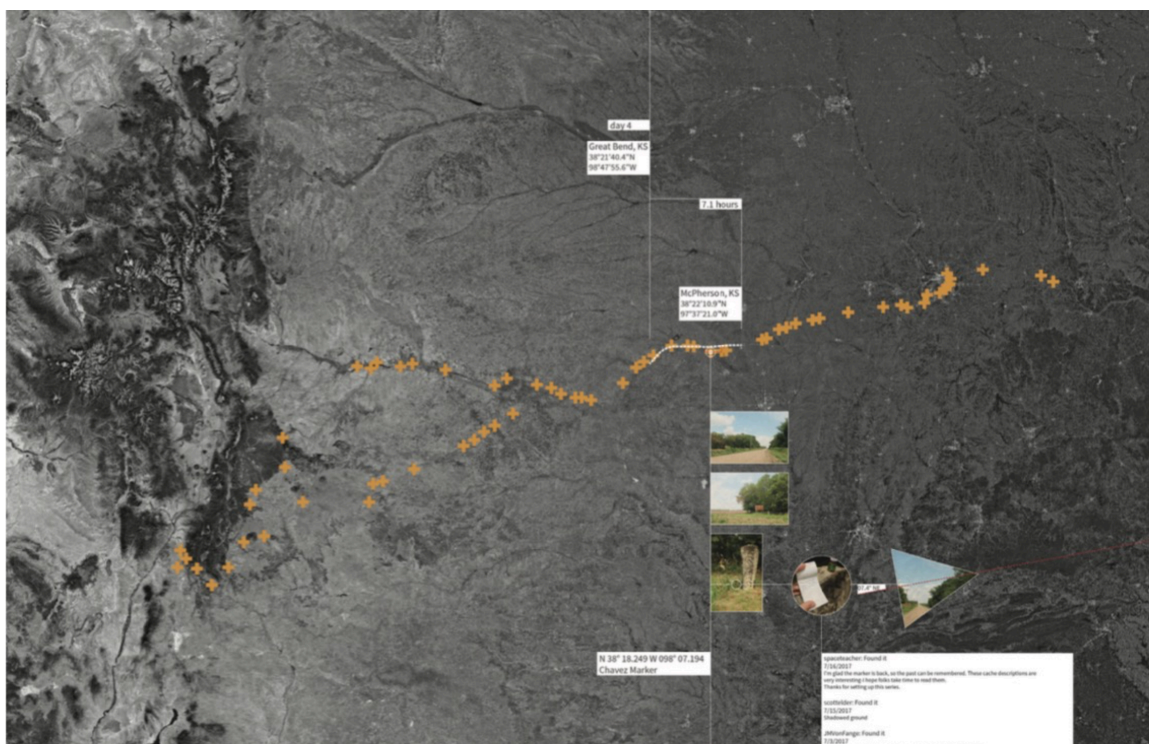


Figure 12. Experimental hodological representation for Santa Fe NHT. Example callout information for “Chávez Marker” commemorating trader Antonio Jose Chávez’s murder at Jarvis Crossing, April 10, 1843, (N 38° 18.249 W 098° 07.194), Saxman, Kansas. Visited and recorded geocache log for this hodology July 15, 2017, 2:15pm. This single representation constitutes one “cut” of the trail experience, referring back to Martin Krieger’s Tomographic method.<sup>18</sup>

Each “+” represents a Geocache location along the Santa Fe Trail sequence. In a comprehensive hodology, each “+” would represent a moment of “cutting” the Trail’s mobility condition and then be visually defined with geolocational specifics; the journey is divided into dates and affiliated travel segments, photographic documentation of the condition of reaching the moment of “cut” (using the Geocache as a stand-in), a registration of the human act of following or retracement (revealing the Geocache user log with time and date of “cut”), and lastly a directional photograph (triangle) aligned with the angle of aim, the resumed mobility and intention/motivation of direction. This template may be further augmented with an additional layer of collaged imagery from the roadway, or simply a more surreal array of visual associations from the experience of that extended moment.

The visual mapping study is then paired alongside the gathered responses (in text form) from the matrix and organized into a diptych format occupying facing pages in a bound book. Each “cut” would be represented by a page spread:

<sup>18</sup> Krieger, *Urban Tomographies*.



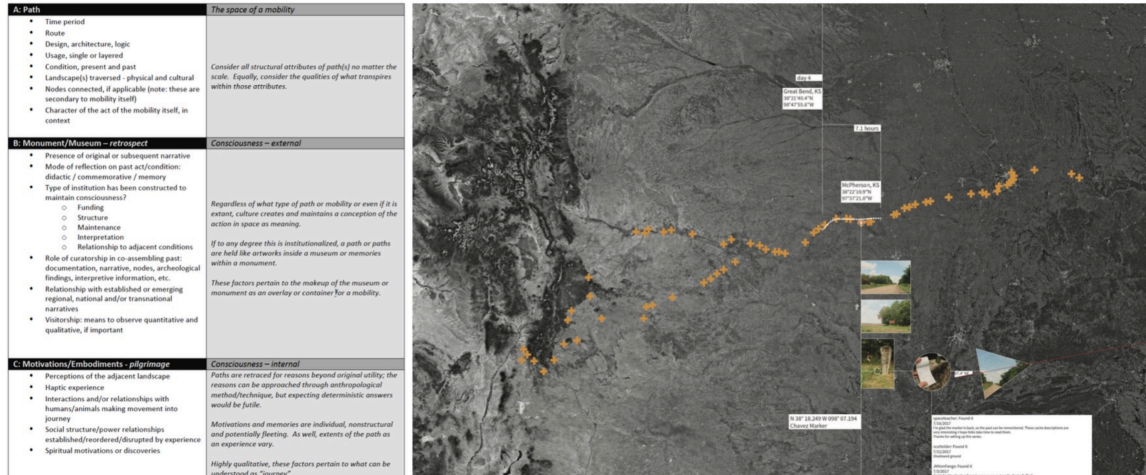


Figure 13. Example of page spread; intention for hodology matrix recording to pair with image of “cut”, together creating a dialectic, referring to Christopher Tilley’s theories of the phenomenological landscape.<sup>19</sup>

The inherent problem with this bound-book format is one that follows throughout this work: the page represents the “cut” and is too easily confused with what would otherwise be a point of stoppage or a place, a location of stasis. The mobility therefore exists in between pages, out of sight and out of knowledge. An alternative organization would be a video capture, the moving image of landscape whizzing past through the car window (or whatever other means of travel employed). However, this is literal, 1:1 visual information. It does not reveal anything that would not be seen if the trail retracement were simply repeated by someone else. Placing this literally moving imagery adjacent to these interpretive visual experiments above would, I feel, actually diminish the possibility to view them on their own terms and on one’s own time. This visual aspect of the hodology therefore remains as problematic as it is enhancing.

## Frameworks

**MOVEMENT:** Hours spent driving alone, often at highway speed, occasionally more slowly and carefully on gravel farm roads. Mapping route supplied by National Park Service and Apple maps,

**MEANING:** Blue Mazda with California license plates appears increasingly out of place as rural Midwest unfolds. Unfamiliar and unprepared for onslaught of insects. Air conditioning blasting, stereo off, in silence attempting fully absorb visual surroundings. Fully engaged in culture of “American Road Trip” mythos, solitary and self-directed, utilizing franchised food, fuel and lodging infrastructure, and relying on affiliated signage to organize breaks and overnights. Combination of boredom/tedium, light anxiety

<sup>19</sup> Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*.



concerning purpose of trip, excitement of distance, speed, and independence. Indulging in visual vocabulary of Southwest landscape (color palate, rocky contours) fading to Midwest landscape (flatness, dominance of sky and agricultural patterns on land). Connection between trajectory and flat, gridded landscape results in heightened sense of displacement and existential anonymity on roadway.

**PRACTICE:** Attempting to tease apart how “research trip” and “road trip” differ; solidify practice of research by dividing journey into discrete parts through hodological readings, recording voice memos on recording device, focusing on repeating small-scale details and added precision of geolocation technologies. The nuanced qualities of finding and then leaving Geocache points emerges as a window to subtle motivations for movement unforeseen in simple context of “road trip.” Using mobility of trail retracement to both activate and frame interviews with trail makers/participants/users is successful but impossible to disentangle the ways in which my movement shapes experiences and responses. Ethnography conducted as linked by spatial movement suggests relationship with “Walking Interview” techniques.<sup>20</sup>

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**POWER:** My participation in this hodology work indeed shifts my position of power through an increase in both personal knowledge and credibility derived from seeing space and connecting with those who know it along the way. I am growing a certain knowledge base as a university-sanctioned *retracer* of the NHT. But the specificity of how retracing one trail as opposed to another would be discernably different remains unclear, at least at this point after participating in the particular mobility that is the Santa Fe Trail NHT. Overland tourists already “collect” various negligible tokens of power by completing various American pilgrimages in the form of the NHTs; communities of volunteers and local history enthusiasts similarly “collect” knowledge and/or authority on the historical topic of the various trails—how am I, and this specific retracement mobility act, different? I, the retracer, become a contributor to the perpetuation of the act within the space, but no specifics appear knowable.

> Per Nigel Thrift’s theory of the non-representational, I will consider how the mobility conditions above either sit within, shape, or are shaped by the physical space of the trail.<sup>21</sup>

Thrift proposes that non-representational elements of reality be interrogated through the consideration of highly subjective attributes. Considering the presence of

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<sup>20</sup> Ingold and Vergunst, *Ways of Walking*.

<sup>21</sup> Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory*.

an “aura” or the condition of “viscosity” propose a sympathetic alliance with ideas of the liminal or queer and steering fully into the premise of affect. The space of the Santa Fe Trail did not, to my senses, vibrate with the aura of pioneers or apparitions of tried and true narratives. It did take on a characteristic of absence which, perhaps tellingly, increased over miles traveled. The emptiness of trail ruts has a certain quality of silent witness; more importantly the ruts build upon each other until this quality is palpable. Also noteworthy is that ruts are extraordinarily subtle and must be visually summoned from the uniformly grass-covered ground. However, once seen, one is compelled to move—to see from a mobile vantage point makes these meager contours “pop” as if undulating relative to the rest of the landscape. This, however subtle, is in fact a representation. The non-representing quality is what must transpire between viewings of ruts or other consumption of trail-related visuals, texts, material, etc. The experience with viewing ruts flavors the rest of the movement; it trains the minds’ eye and prompts one to believe that physical traces are present but invisible, that the banality of the present space of the road, fields, neighborhoods, are comprised of hidden cues.

In the same vein, the banality and monotony of the driving experience is deeply affecting. One must wonder if the distributed mass of others on the roadway, experiencing the same long hours of droning sound and flow of scenery can be thought of as a single community as one might see a group singing together or watching a film. Further, time becomes unhelpful, as this latent community cannot be subdivided over eras: movement though space continues. Factors of automobility have been addressed within the gaze of the non-representational, but not as cumulatively affecting and *specific* to space.

Lastly, the product of the Santa Fe Trail that is a linear community depends on various affective qualities to maintain common bonds, especially over distance. There is a difference between *following* vs. *going* (or especially *lost*) when one is traversing a significant distance and bracketed by the condition of far-from-home. The shared sense of physical displacement and then arrival is key to all motivations related to the maintenance of the Trail’s core idea. It binds the volunteer community together and is one portion of the currency used when admitting new members or competing for seniority. As well, it supports a common experience with the “original users” which can be deployed as needed to connect with any mobility narrative of choice. The Santa Fe Trail begins to *feel* etched into a landscape broader than one’s peripheral vision can accommodate. Still, however, it seems that most users sway to understand the Trail as a collection of points or sites and the affect of mobility is subordinated in service of this identity or concept.

The rhythm of taking hodological readings brings some of these aspects to the front of mind. The easily-lost, momentary details of shifting power relationships and synaptic connections prompted by the method preserve at least some of the ingredients necessary to crystalize insight on micro-reactions that may support a non-representing body of knowledge. The repetitive nature of this questioning and interrogating one’s place and mobility begins to seem second-nature and a hazy new vernacular floats up to just under the surface.

## CASE 2

### Juan Bautista de Anza Trail

**start:** Nogales, AZ, July 29, 2017 (N 31° 23.429 W 110° 57.291)

**end:** near Picacho, AZ, August 1, 2017 (N 32° 40.109 W 111° 33.093)

**hodology logs taken:** 13

The Juan Bautista de Anza Trail, as a comparative experience *and* a space, parses out into several layers of experience as well, but of a different character.

#### -Surface:

For this segment, my journey began at the USA/Mexico border fence in Nogales, Arizona in the parking lot of a Burger King. Another long drive, but this offers a transition between the hilly, mesquite-covered countryside of northern Mexico and the baking-hot, rocky Sonora desert. Along the Anza Trail, beyond this would be the comparatively softer, fertile interior valleys of Southern California but my journey ended at a random point amidst dusty, abandoned cropland, 15 miles southeast of Casa Grande, Arizona, as I left the trail behind, reconnecting with the interstate bound for Phoenix. From Nogales to my stopping point, the Trail vaguely follows the Santa Cruz River, through the region known as Pimería Alta during the Spanish colonial period.

Similarly to the SFT case study, I structured this hodology by the placement of Geocache points, but these are, by contrast, “rogue” Geocaches, placed by individuals with their own priorities and interests outside of the Anza Trail and its official narrative—I chose the particular Geocaches that overlay or sat adjacent to historically located campsite locations which, themselves, created the condition of “cuts” within the overall, 1,200 mile historic journey northward. The movement between these campsite locations and pauses across the trail are fairly regular and narrated in short bursts of historical insight.

#### -Thickness:

Moving from the border wall northward, the first Anza campsite (#13) is several miles into the interior of present-day United States territory. The day I arrived there, it was torrentially rainy and humid—a surprise for what I thought would be dry desert. Driving was legitimately scary and sometimes impossible. The environs directly around the border and crossing point feel contested and uncomfortable with a great deal of surveillance, tense pedestrians, traffic, and pushy commercial activity. I was struck by the realization that at the time of Anza’s expedition there was no border to cross and therefore all of this strain and strangeness has been added subsequently, and could potentially be erased. Regardless, this characteristic dissipates quickly as one drives north into unremarkable neighborhoods. Campsite #13 is also called Las Lagunas and has endured as a wetland area, now part of a brushy park. Since the campsite-adjacent Geocaches are not placed by the Anza Trail Association nor the NPS, they are much more ambitiously hidden. At this location, given the heat, rain, mosquitoes, and brushy,

muddy terrain, I failed to find the Geocache. I had to reconsider how I would photographically document a failed search and decided that it would follow the same format but with a blank emblem (such as a black circle) at what would otherwise show the cache and paper log. This was an irritating circumstance. Several times I interrupted a romantically motivated teenage couple as I pushed through dry tules and creosote.

This was beginning to play out as a distinctly separate experience from the Santa Fe Trail drive. It began to solidify in my mind how the nuance of the *present* retracement, *my* experience, needed greater bandwidth within the hodology's scope of capture. I would have to simply wait to see how any synthesis might incorporate what had transpired at a later date.

The Anza Trail follows present-day Interstate 17 northward. The Santa Cruz river valley is scenic, comfortably scaled and, at this time of year, startlingly verdant. The valley possesses the sort of magnetic quality previously explored, where one is seemingly sucked through space, compelled onward with a sense of purpose offered up by the topography. The next campsite (#14) is at Tubac, a Spanish settlement which predated the expedition of 1775. There are two NPS-operated historic sites here, Tumacácori Mission and Tubac Presidio, both of which seductively represent a century of regional pride in Spanish colonial heritage. Tumacácori especially, mediates the visitor experience of an archeologically preserved mission complex with an exquisite visitor center with downright luxurious landscaping, courtyards, and loggias. The southwest-themed imaginary almost overpowers the actuality of what is there to be seen. This portion of the Santa Cruz Valley is popular as a retirement destination and the surrounding real estate harnesses this rural Spanish Colonial aesthetic to create a slight air of exclusivity—the NPS park units feel like centerpieces in this creation.

Inside the office spaces disguised behind a motif of Spanish Colonial gentility, I spoke at length with Anita Badertscher, Chief of Interpretation for Tumacácori National Historic Park. Despite being from Ohio, Anita possessed a toughness of character specific to the Southwest—a combination of warmth with abruptness, a wry sense of humor always accompanied by a loud, sharp laugh. She stated an appreciation of open-ended humanities projects such as mine but also explained that the Anza Trail actually had a fairly light presence within the various historic narratives of the Valley. It seemed the area enjoyed such a strong sense of place that the Trail was hardly thought of as connected to other places. Rather it was simply one of the “pieces” of history *in the Valley*. This was one of the first clear indications of a situation endemic to the Anza Trail. The Santa Fe Trail also exhibited some ambiguity in understanding itself as a single corridor or mobility vs. a set of discrete, fixed, stationary places, however I came to believe that the ever-present counter-narrative of the wagons and pioneers as well as the width of the horizon seemed to keep safety of fixity in check. By comparison the Anza Trail is often seen by locals as something also local and little more—the mobility narrative evaporates. Anita related how the Santa Cruz Valley communities rallied around the Anza Trail most passionately when it lent credence to the more tangible idea of building a riverside walking pathway, an attractive project already underway. Riparian restoration work and enthusiasm followed. The validity and value added by the Anza concept, as well as the additional support brought by the NPS and internal trail

initiatives, is hardly insignificant. As such, all of the NHTs serve to leverage history for governmentally supported recreation infrastructure in various forms. Anita made this specific, real, and respectable. The haziness of the questions I had come to explore were refreshing and interesting, but she had a job to do.

Locating the Geocache nearest this Anza campsite revealed the riparian setting of the new river trail more than expected. This cache had in fact been placed to work in tandem with visiting the NPS sites and Anza Trail, but was situated with a level of “difficulty” I had not encountered with any of the Santa Fe Trail Geocaches. I hacked my way deep into the foliage to find the box hidden among roots. More than anything, this was annoying and dirty; I wondered about the premise of the caches as motivators. Challenge did not seem attractive, but the easy finds of the Santa Fe also began to seem conversely weak. Based on this cache’s online log it is in fact relatively popular and no one complains about the terrain. I ultimately appreciated that despite the brushy buildup, this was in fact within the historic corridor zone and that change over time was evident and palpable.

Upon leaving the Tumacácori and Tubac sites, the journey and its Geocache/campsite stops began to take on a strange quality in the vein of Reyner Banham’s “Scenes in America Deserta”.<sup>22</sup> The next campsite, #15, La Canoa, is now the site of a sprawling suburb named Green Valley, constructed in the 1980s with flat-roofed condominiums and golf courses, clearly a real estate market geared toward retirees. The nearest Geocache was titled “Home on the Range” as it had been placed in a golf course that had gone bankrupt and closed. The fairways were now dead and brown and monsoon rains had recently scoured out grooves in the once-smooth terrain. The Geocache itself had washed down a golf cart path and was scattered and soggy. According to the Geocache log, no one had been there in a month and no one would come again for another three.

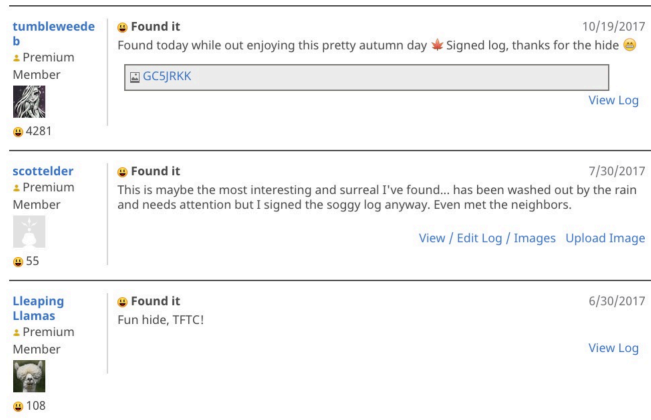


Figure 14. Registration of Geocache “find.” N 31° 49.277 W 111° 00.944, Green Valley, AZ. Visited and recorded geocache log for this hodology July 30, 2017, 4:34pm.

<sup>22</sup> Banham, *Scenes in America Deserta*.

To the west, beyond the condominiums, loomed an immense and eerie earthen berm. While searching for the washed-out Geocache, I met Tim Bixenman, a tan, spry septuagenarian, relocated from Texas, who was genuinely amazed that the Geocache and Anza Trail had both been present but invisible to him. In this regard, we had something in common: living upon the Anza Trail route without knowing it. After helping me find the cache, he enthusiastically invited me into his brown-brick condominium on South Placita de Acacote so I could write down internet addresses for everything related and he could learn more. His wife, Judy, seemed less enamored with the idea and clearly wondered what I was doing in her kitchen. Tim also sought to have me try to connect him to the “owner” of the Geocache in the golf course so he might help maintain it. He proudly pointed out that the enormous berm behind us was actually the edge of an even more massive mine tailings pond; while he was mildly annoyed at the condition of the dead golf course, the bizarre scale of the pond berm/wall seemed to him as more of an intriguing curiosity than a liability to the suburban idyll and aesthetic regularity. He was instantly passionate about this newly revealed presence of the Anza Trail, as if this was the perfect addition to a locale chosen for retirement. The abstract idea of trails seems to resonate and motivate some people, for example, Tim. His thrill was palpable and I imagine him possibly relating the story to neighbors or friends, using the new knowledge as an opportunity to join something. The hushed space around him—condos, golf courses, xeriscaped yards, leftovers from resource extraction enterprise—none of it factored into or interrupted the Trail idea. The physical space of the Trail has nothing to do with lived space; for most, it remains an unimportant idea, separate from the one that compels.

Moving forth northbound from Tim’s neighborhood, I encountered several more Geocaches adjacent to historic campsites, now invisibly embedded in suburban fabric. In the blazing heat, all were devoid of characters like Tim. Also within this Green Valley sub-segment is a Titan Missile silo; left over from the height of cold war technology and now a museum. I also paused here to indulge the strangeness of this apocalyptic weapon planted within the space of this historic corridor. Returning to the campsite search, one site was still under construction and the Geocache was located at a footbridge over a wash, hemmed in by tract houses on South Silent Still Glen Terrace, West Golden Meadow Path, and Interstate-19. The next was at the site of San Xavier Del Bac mission church, still used and well preserved. The next two, adjacent to Campsites 18 and 19, were especially challenging. Number 18, was now built upon and well embedded within a gritty and anonymous swath of the city of Tucson. The nearest Geocache was within a recreation area adjacent to a wash—the monsoon rains had recently badly damaged the area and was inaccessible. Campsite 19, near Puerto de Azotado, offered an adjacency with a Geocache next to a wide, suburban boulevard. As I approached, a massive wasp hive rendered this cache similarly inaccessible. The next proximate cache was a short distance down the boulevard at the edge of a park, Frisbee golf course, and retention basin. The Geocache was this time simply not findable and the temperature was well over 100 degrees. After twenty minutes of searching in a mesquite thicket next to the muddy basin, I retreated to the car. Searching was literally dangerous and the reality of the Sonora Desert as an obstacle to migration with insects,

cactuses, brush, and mud, became palpable. Anza had timed his crossing to the winter of 1775-76 and thus avoided some of these conditions. Here, beyond my own discomfort and frustration, it bears mentioning that the park itself, called “El Rio Preserve” was in an attractive location with houses situated at the base of small hills of red rocks. The park was designed with a set of Anza interpretive panels and rusted corten steel Anza Trail signage. Slightly to the south was an archaeological preserve, “Los Morteros” (the mortars), focused on rock formations of the Pima tribal legacy in the area. The blend here between Native/Tribal, Anza/Colonial, and modern suburb seemed remarkably balanced and the multi-layered history effectively observable, so long as one had an air-conditioned car to view things from.

Leaving metropolitan Tucson also meant departing from the I-19 corridor. Thus far, movement between these sites was fluid, fast, and predictable. Beyond Tucson, one briefly follows I-10 but then deviates onto local roads, and also back to the gridiron pattern, more Midwestern and rationalist than Spanish Colonial and landscape-dictated. Also, while the presence of NPS-created Anza Trail signage is generally sparsely distributed, calling out the trail corridor in only the most visually basic and efficient way possible, leaving the Interstate meant the trail “goes quiet;” no markings of any sort illuminate the space of historic movement. The hodological method requires a repeated questioning of institutional overlays and without this prompt one would likely fail to notice such a subtle change. Campsite 20 is named *Oytaparts/Oitaparts/Oyt Par* after the Pima term for “Old Town,” as the site was once a significant indigenous settlement until the neighboring Apache tribes destroyed it. Thus it is again a multi-layered site of memory. Its present condition is that of a massive, fenced-off airfield, jet repair center, and airplane “graveyard.” Row upon row of junked and tarnished jets, each bearing decals representing airlines from around the globe, give this location a spirit of simultaneous mild gloom and delightful absurdity. More than anywhere else, maintaining a gaze on the historical undercurrents is difficult here, as there is so much in the present moment to baffle the eye. It seemed the Anza Trail as a commemorative device was leading me to uncover deeply rewarding visual, spatial, meaningful instances in the landscape, but the Trail was effectively diminishing and erasing itself in the process.

Next and finally, Campsite 21, *Pichaco de Taca*, drew me deeper into the irrigated farmlands overlaid on the desert. Gridded farm roads and contrasts of green crops against beige horizons was extraordinary yet ordinary. Navigating the roads was more difficult than in the Midwest as, despite the grid logic, some were private or cut through small processing facilities, and others were muddy to a level suggesting one should turn back. To get a car stuck in the paste made from wet desert would leave one not only stranded and hot but also glued to the earth. I did not have enough water and began worrying at a level that obscured observations. The Geocache most adjacent to *Pichaco de Taca* campsite, entitled “No Rest for the Wicked,” is located in the most bizarre site I have encountered. Barren, flat, dusty, and midway down the oddly yet aptly named South Sunshine Boulevard, a two-lane farm road with no unique features whatsoever, sits a row of abandoned shacks for migrant farm laborers. The concrete tilt-up construction was in various stages of collapse, the site littered with detritus of

possible past residents (toys, car parts and furniture) and interlopers (beer cans, shell casings and lurid graffiti). Similar to the airplane graveyard, absurd and hilarious as well as sad and affecting, this would mark the end the end of my first hodology case study of the Anza Trail, observing it in segments, but for the Anza Expedition, this would not even be half-way. The idea of migrant farm labor in the Southwest, when juxtaposed with the migration of Anza's time, align in discomfoting ways. Then again, was this not the essence of colonialism? I would later see a complementary dose of this sensibility on the next segment of Anza Trail to be interrogated with this hodological method, at a place called Arizpe, Mexico. On this day, however, I departed the Anza Trail at N 32° 40.109 W 111° 33.093 and reentered a standard vocabulary of utilitarian mobilities, reaching Phoenix early that evening.

#### Frameworks

**MOVEMENT:** Hours spent driving alone, often at highway speed, occasionally more slowly and carefully on gravel farm roads. Mapping route supplied by National Park Service and Apple maps,

**MEANING:** Blue Mazda and California license plates are less conspicuous in Arizona. I am starting this segment at the official "beginning" of the NPS Anza Trail, but the true point of origination for Anza's expedition is in Mexico, several hours' drive south of Nogales. As before, air conditioning blasting, stereo off, in silence attempting to absorb visual surroundings. Also, fully engaged in the culture of "American Road Trip" mythos, solitary and self-directed, utilizing franchised food, fuel and lodging infrastructure, and relying on affiliated signage to organize breaks. The landscape of the Southwest is still an education in wide, open space but not similar to the Plains. The sense of emptiness derives from a sparse vegetation pattern and a literally spare quantity of things in one's gaze. Colors and rocky textures may provoke a sense of awe more so than the simple breadth of the horizon. However, these qualities are not always present; valleys and farmland areas are often dusty and banal. There is an ever-present character of absence as the extreme heat drives people indoors and the Southwest gains its own existential groove from this above all else. The landscape fades from benign to threatening but is all the while brown, dry, and nearly mute.

**PRACTICE:** All elements of practice remain fundamentally the same as compared to the Santa Fe Trail hodology. However, the relationship of "cuts" made by Geocache stops is different. In this hodology, I effectively placed myself more centrally as a constructor of the framework; I "cut" the mobility where I saw an adjacency (mapped, historic campsite and random Geocache) as I saw fit, and this alters my sense of agency in the potential reading of the space. It resulted in an experience with substantially more dimension than merely "heritage" and with a tilt towards the idiosyncratic. But in this way, the mobility was even more solitary than in



the experience of the Santa Fe Trail with no strong sense of *following*; the pilgrimage was of my own design.

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**POWER:** Having now completed a second hodological reading on a separate NHT, I have a basis for comparison. This is a fundamental component of the method of case study and brings a measure of objectivity to what is otherwise a deeply, expansively subjective analysis. If the Santa Fe Trail experience had left me with a suspicion that “no specifics appear knowable” regarding the mobility component of following any trail, then at this juncture it seems that the specifics of difference may only lie in the subsequent recounting. The *doing* of the hodology *includes* the synthesis, and the writing act subsequent to the period of movement reveals at least some of the differences. This has been an effective reminder that a substantial share of the power of the analysis lies in the act of writing itself. Without that act, the collected observations about movement fail to cohere. This also sheds light on the unique version of power inherent in pilgrimage (especially repeated pilgrimage) which endures through logs, diaries, accounts, and the like. These elements may augment the power of the participant but seldom transfer that power to the space of the mobility at hand.

> Looking back to the potential non-representational factors in this hodology:

While the potential affect derived from *following* is necessarily present in any retracement trail, a key difference between narratives of the Anza Trail and the Santa Fe Trail is that the Anza commemorates only one overland journey and the Santa Fe Trail commemorates an established road used by thousands over multiple decades. While a mobility is always a spatiotemporal event, these two offer a substantially different “base condition” for a *follow-er* to engage with. One might dissect this further in the assumption that a known road, trodden upon by the masses for the better part of a century, *becomes a thing and a place*; a single expedition, by contrast, has only the most tenuous relationship with the space it occupies. An expedition might create a route, knowable through representation in map form, but no thing or place is created in the wake of the expedition alone. Subsequently, would the aura of the past scenario be different in a way that alters the conditions of a retracement act occurring in the future? From this second case study I would be inclined to say that in fact, retracing or following are either generic or that I am as of yet unable to locate difference. With the fundamentals of movement remaining unchanged (car, road, maps, NPS-created guidance), though the scenery and narrative change, the affect derived from retracing remains the same.

### **CASE 3:**

#### **Juan Bautista de Anza Trail, Mexico**

**start & end:** *Nogales, Mexico, September 27-29, 2019 (31°19'57.8"N 110°56'34.9"W)*

**loop itinerary destination:** *San Miguel de Horcasitas, Mexico September 28, 2019 (29°29'15.4"N 110°43'34.9"W)*

**hodology logs taken:** 4

#### -Surface:

An entirely different kind of journey, covering a different segment of the already-tested Anza Trail. In this case study, the Anza narrative remains central, but a tourism program originating in Mexico, effectively borrowing and extending the NPS model with some noteworthy adaptations, authors the institutional overlay. Additionally, the experience of mobility is significantly altered with the presence of a group of fellow travelers, riding in a van piloted by someone other than myself.

The group convened in Nogales, Mexico and was shown a looping auto route, newly established, following Anza's mapped historic route south to the trail's true origination point (the place of embarkation of the Anza mission) and then returning north via a separate roadway, apart from the historic corridor but possessing other touristic value.

#### -Thickness

This third hodological case literally began in Tucson, "stepping" onto the Anza Trail again on Interstate 19, close to the San Xavier de Bac mission site and Anza Campsite #17. I had been in this spot two years earlier, logged the Geocache at the grand mission church and headed off northward. This time I was going south and not by myself. Naomi Torres, NPS Superintendent of the Anza Trail, had invited me to attend a tourism familiarization trip sponsored by Sonora Turismo to unveil the "extension" of the Anza Trail into Mexico. This is of course not actually an extension: Anza's expedition originated in Sonora and the absence of this crucially important segment was only missing from the official NPS JUBA Park Unit because it was in a separate country, obviously not under NPS's jurisdiction. Mexico does not have an equivalent nationally scaled park department; rather it has several national tourism agendas which operate in concert with various states' tourism departments, an overall structure that seems to be rebuilt with each new shift in leadership.

Naomi had rented an SUV. We picked up Christopher Bentley, the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT's (JUBA) newly-hired interpretive ranger who had previously lived in Tucson and worked at Coronado National Monument, and retraced my previous retracement along I-19 to Nogales. We drove fast, the SUV having a notably smoother ride than my Mazda, and discussed Christopher's new workload and his insights on the Sonoran region. I noted immediately how different this hodology would feel with other people present, reacting, and sharing. As well, I was in the back seat and able to focus on the landscape aside rather than the road ahead.

We departed at sunrise with coffee from our respective motel lobbies. The Santa Cruz Valley was beautiful and green again in monsoon season, and the contours pull one southward as easily as northward. In Green Valley, where I had encountered Tim Bixenman on the dried-up golf course by his condominium two years earlier, the ease was interrupted by the presence of an injured deer in the roadway. I was immediately brought back to this strange and affecting repetition of roadkill, serving as an unforeseen punctuator of long-distance retracements. Parking near the congested border crossing, we bypassed the early-morning clog of vehicles and walked into Mexico. While our luggage was perfunctorily scanned in a scuffed up x-ray machine, no one looked at our passports and we emerged out of the grubby immigration tunnels in another land. Neither the precise moment of crossing nor a visible line or gate is visible as one moves through and the abstraction of a borderline remains an enigma.

The space of the Mexican/US border has been especially contested throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, exacerbated by cartel territorialism, general inequity, and more recently President Donald Trump's declarations on border security and the purported need for massive walls for protection of US interests. One subtle effect of this time and tone has been a winnowing of southbound tourism visiting the various sites and landscapes of these northern states of Sonora and Chihuahua. A result, in large part, of Naomi Torres' long-standing interest in the anthropological possibilities of the southwestern trails and skill in forging alliances, Sonora Turismo has completed their own segment from the Nogales border crossing to San Miguel de Horcasitas, Anza's point of departure, and thereby effectively completed the entirety of the Anza Trail, now officially memorialized from start to finish. With official permission, Sonora Turismo appropriated the same white-on-brown signage that the NPS uses to demarcate historical points on US roadways, and includes the NPS Anza Trail shield design. The first of these on Mexican territory is placed immediately beyond the crossing, visibly prominent to entering drivers.

Here, Naomi, Christopher, and I met the other invitees: three travel/culture writers from Tucson and one woman from Los Angeles who figured prominently within the Anza Trail's volunteer society (among LA-centric preservation efforts). The trip was organized by a Sonora Turismo staff member, Jorge, and an independent travel promoter, Elsa. Both of them enthusiastic and effusive, we completed perfunctory warm welcomes, ate a lavish buffet breakfast at a once-opulent Spanish Colonial-style restaurant catering to formal events close to the border crossing. With the current political climate, the restaurant appeared to have adjusted to a more exclusively Mexican National-oriented clientele. Photos of famous entertainers from both sides of the border covered many of the walls, gaily portraying a seemingly happier time of trans-border and trans-cultural fluidity. Linda Ronstadt, who I would hear mentioned more times in the coming days than ever before, was heralded as the de-facto exemplar, embodying the possibility of regional and cultural cohesion in Sonora despite the border. Ronstadt herself was cultural amalgam of Spanish, German, and US-based Anglo-Americanism, having roots on both sides of the border, truly "of" Sonora, who accessed all of these threads in her singing career, propelling herself to global fame. She was the diametric opposite of all the forces of marginalization which now appeared to

paint these borderlands—US and Mexican—as divisive and repellant, spurning curiosity and traversal for all but the most indispensable motivations.

Our group piled into a small, comfortable black van and drove southbound on Highway 15. As mentioned previously, the conditions for taking hodological information were immediately upended from previous travels—I was not driving, therefore not stopping or planning the “cuts” in which observations could be gathered. Rather, I could do all of this as observable insights presented themselves. Another key difference in analysis was that I had not pre-arranged any interviews. Conversations were organic inside the van and the possibility to overhear others or note shifts in group dynamics over distance was more accessible but also more complex. At the outset everyone would be at their most affable and greet every new scene with demonstrable delight.

The delight was not disingenuous. This northern edge of Mexico revealed none of the lurking danger that the current American media has so floridly described. It may or may not exist, but none was evident. The geography is essentially the same as that of the Santa Cruz Valley south of Tucson: rolling, scrubby and green in late monsoon season. Some areas are moderately more mountainous, but fundamentally the appearance of the landscape was consistent through three days of touring with this group. Elsa brightly described Sonoran lifeways in many aspects we already knew from familiarization with the US Southwest. Ranching-centric values, country music, trucks, horses, beef, and such drew many parallels with basic notions of “The West.” However, the structure of townships obeying the Spanish colonial Law of the Indies, consistently with a central, well-used plaza as the rule rather than the exception, added strong point of difference. The heightened overlays of Catholicism, sometimes melding with shrouded pre-Spanish belief systems and sacred places, also made this land seem foreign again. This condition was obvious enough within towns with their requisite plaza-adjacent churches, but more interestingly to the hodology was that we happened to be driving south during an active pilgrimage.

The Pilgrimage of Magdalena occurs in late summer, drawing around one hundred thousand visitors to the medium-sized town of Magdalena de Kino, 55 miles south of Nogales and the border. An excellent corollary to the story of Anza, “Kino” commemorates Jesuit Father Eusebio Kino (also Chini, Chinus or Kühn). Born in Trent, near the German-Italian border, and educated in Innsbruck, Austria, Kino’s Jesuit order linked him to the Habsburg Empire and thus to the project of New Spain. He was sent to Pímeria Alta, now Baja California and Sonora, in 1683. He amassed an impressive and synthetic knowledge of geography, astronomy, and cartography, forming an important early record of this time of contact. As a missionary, Kino opposed some aspects of Spanish enslavement practices and was relatively generous as an educator. Historian Herbert Bolton has subsequently identified him as “the first rancher” in *The Padre on Horseback: A Sketch of Eusebio Francisco Kino S. J. Apostle to the Pimas*, Bolton’s first extended work organized on the contribution and geographical sphere of influence of a single person.<sup>23</sup> Kino individually embodies a key mobility of the Enlightenment, the

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<sup>23</sup> Bolton, *The Padre on Horseback*.

sort that aggressively blended, shrank the imagined vastness of the earth, dominated and plundered, drew populations great distances, and produced both mapped and written records of their mobile endeavors. Himself understood within this record as kind and giving, Mexicans revere the figure of Kino, lining up to touch a figure of the town's patron Saint Francisco Xavier, and acknowledge Kino's grave every year, and effectively extending Kino's essence of mobility forward generations, by purposefully walking from great distances, regardless of borders, to reach this place where his life stopped moving.

While driving alongside an active and functioning pilgrimage, the presence of walking bodies along the road dramatically changes and energizes the landscape. I mentioned to the others in our van that we were also participating in a pilgrimage ourselves, overlapping with the one visible outside the windows. At first they reacted as if I was making a joke, but I was not and told them so. It seemed that the premise of *pilgrimage* seems more *othering* than accessible even though we were clearly all en route to visit a specific point of origination and, later, a final resting place for Anza himself. The view out the window however showed the sacrifice in the heat, sore feet, and dogged camaraderie within groups trudging for days. Catholic dioceses set up roadside stands for food, water, and respite for the pilgrims. At these waystations one could clearly observe the moment of informal greeting as the nomadic pilgrims met the stationary supportive locals. Inside our van, all of the same dynamics were at play, but in air-conditioned comfort, with no aesthetics of the ascetic to bring the similarity into view.

Our guides instructed our driver to stop in the mid-sized town of Imuris to show off some new Trail signage and interpretive panels positioned at the Plaza and an adjacent main intersection. With the sun beginning to beat down at a mildly hostile degree, the town was devoid of people. Interrupting the stillness, four pilgrims on horseback appeared and were affably appropriated by our guides for a photo-op. These four were members of the Sonoran gentry with horses and the correct riding equipment to show for it. At one moment the four slipped through the space of the town like a boat in a stream; the next moment we had halted them to pose in front of a church (incidentally bearing a plaque acknowledging the Kino routes). Their flow was interrupted and became inorganic.

Moving down the roadway in tandem with the pilgrims provoked a heightened awareness, amplified and made explicit by the hodological method. The repeated question of institutions within the space of mobility had always seemed too difficult to contain, as well as too simple, given that the NPS was ever-present along the entire length. Here, the NPS was absent and something more enigmatic had taken its place. However the enigmas of pilgrimage were obvious and activated, not only implied by signs, websites, or designed Geocache sequences. The space of mobility had for the first time exposed the sort of clear evidence that one expects within the corollary concept of *Place*. It seemed stunningly simple, but hints at the possibilities of procession to go beyond retracement in shaping physical space. Momentarily we all merged with the Kino pilgrimage, stopping in Magdalena and proceeding on foot through the same shrine as everyone else to pray at Saint Xavier's figure and viewing Kino's remains in a nearby shrine. Upon leaving Magdalena, with its town center preparing for the main

feast and events, and returning to the main highway, we broke with this confluence, no longer flowing to the pilgrimage destination with the others. The walkers on the roadway dwindled as our travel disconnected from this evident and poetic mass journey, external to ours but momentarily combined.

More sites, signage, and rolling scenery filled the remainder of the day. Elsa and Jorge transitioned from their role as greeters to one of explainers, more collegial. We came to understand the dilemmas of Northern Mexico and the frustrations with border-related fears and purportedly false mythologies and dangers. The region felt, to us, as a distinctly laid back and trusting place. From the window of the van I watched a young boy furtively jump into the bed of a strangers' pickup truck to hitch a ride, a moment of three mobilities combining in space, demonstrating to me an ordinary but foreign way of relating, sharing, and trusting. The members of our group followed suit, relaxing into the ride and beginning to form some friendships and preferences. Of my fellow travelers, I could see Tucson-based travelwriter Edie's New York sarcasm as a common language but, inversely, Los Angeles-based philanthropist and trail volunteer Marian's platitudes as incompatible.

Elsa pointed out the regional custom for creating small permanent memorials, and sometimes graves, along the side of the road. Again, an adjacency foreign to a stateside sensibility, but casual and right in this context. Once noticed, these monuments were actually prolific in their distribution. These emerged as a major ingredient in the architecture of the roadway itself in the way that billboards, guardrails, medians, or light standards often operate together to make a path into an articulated space. Except that this datum of monuments are sublime; they seem to hold the road to the earth, fastened repeatedly at the edges and creating a low, humming reference to the spiritual. One of course cannot read to whom or for what they are dedicated, and often it is related to a fatality on the site, but the sharpness of tragedies are blunted by the multitudes passing by in ordinary, everyday movement. The mobility flattens the distinction between living and dead: all share space of the road.

We drove south for several more hours, travel fatigue setting in, toward what in some ways should have been the end. After the majority of the day spent on Sonora highway 15, around dusk the van curled back to head northeastward on narrower country roads. We were aiming to reach San Miguel de Horcasitas, the point of embarkation for Anza's expedition. This origination point is of course essential to the concept of a commemorative trail and verges on sacred for anyone following the route. Knowing that the San Francisco Presidio—a former military base and present-day park, major tourist attraction, and commanding promontory, central to the history and geography of the entire metropolitan region—serves as the terminus of Anza's expedition and the NHT created from it, then the remote and sleepy region around San Miguel makes for a surreal antipode. Bypassed by the highway and seemingly a century of economic relevance, San Miguel reveals almost nothing of the colonial garrison from which Anza organized his company of *pioneros*, livestock, and provisions. To make matters stranger, as we arrive in the normally desolate plaza, the municipality is setting up a stage, lighting, and barbecue equipment for the annual celebration of Anza's

departure, held on September 29. Oddly, given the amount of planning on the part of Jorge and Elsa, we were there too early for the festivities by just one day.

San Miguel de Horcasitas feels suspended, just as did our ill-timed arrival. According to expedition diaries, the day of departure itself in 1775 was similarly off-balance: after a protracted mass blessing the forthcoming journey, the expedition company exited the imposing church on one side of the plaza, assembled, and trundled out of the garrison's protective gateway on the opposite side, crossed a short, marshy expanse to the north and subsequently set up camp for the night – having left so late in the day, they had scarcely achieved any significant distance. The feeling of anticlimax Anza's company may have felt that first night could still be in the air as we ourselves puzzled over this pivotal but odd location and circumstance. Regardless, reaching the ending commands a certain solemnity. I, in particular, felt that to be here was profound. Every step of Anza's journey, every decision about every turn and straightaway and every logged detail, collectively, made it possible for me to have found myself living atop this route 237 years in the future. This odd discovery begat this research project and whatever it may catalyze.

However, in the spirit of the oddness of San Miguel, past and present, despite reacting this end of the route, our group was not in fact at the end. We were here to see the loop created by Turismo Sonora, and this was the midpoint. After a comfortable night at an anonymous, business-oriented hotel in the large nearby city of Hermosillo, our group reconvened to head back northward on a route further inland with arguably more to see and offer than does Sonora Highway 15, despite its close alignment to Anza's historic route taken. The inland route along Highways 14 and 89 follows the Sonora River and occupies a nominally deeper valley terrain, slightly more scenic, with less traffic and other signs of modernity. More importantly, this section of the Sonora River Valley holds together a chain of colonial towns that together comprise the historical heart of Sonoran settlement and culture. The touristic value of this landscape is in tension with the historic value of Anza's original route: these towns represent the society from which the entire northbound expedition party emerged, but not the space they used for the journey. This segment has been signed as the Anza Trail *Ruta Turistica* and overlays a separate tourism agenda of the *Ruta Rio Sonora*. Anza himself is considered a hero in these picturesque towns and the gentry of wealthy ranchers and heritage-minded townfolk preserve this particular imaginary with conviction. Here the message is about colonial life and its triumphs, with less emphasis on associated mobilities. Our group's internal dynamics solidify, friendships take root, and several prominent Sonorans join us for the drive; the van is packed full. We have a breakfast of *ropa vieja* at a home on the central Plaza de Zaragoza in the town of Ures, visit a church, a museum, and a remote cliffside with hot springs and waterfalls. The tourism agenda is rolling out in full force and while I am enjoying the experience, I worry that it is opening up an ambiguous relationship with the research intention at hand. This is an add-on to the core purpose of a National Historic Trail, but it reveals a recurring dilemma: the reality of misalignment between expedient routings and sites of historic, scenic or recreational value. This seems to be an excellent example of an unrectifiable tension that undermines all such historic route projects.

The third day is trying. The group's energy is waning and I am distracted by a situation at home that I am unfortunately anxious to return to. As we begin to drive again, the topography becomes more mountainous and this scenic uptick remedies the tensions. While we are not at particularly high altitude, the increasingly winding road and absence of flat, buildable land makes this area feel remote and languid. Our guides reveal that our final stop will be the site of Anza's interment, *Iglesia de Juan Bautista de Anza* in Arizpe and that I, as a scholar from Berkeley, am of special importance. Apparently, in the 1960s, local historians enlisted University of California, Berkeley's Anthropology Department to validate Anza's burial site inside the church and the bones within. After determining the site to be accurate and the tattered military uniform found on the skeleton, the Berkeley anthropologists pronounced the bones and grave to be Anza's. A plaque was installed at the grave and the contents revealed through a Plexiglas casing. However, shortly afterwards an historical document revealed that Anza's grave was in fact on the other side of the church. The local historians informed the anthropologists of the error and were then chastised for having misled them. Our guides all believed this to be a significant source of shame, a mistake which the illustrious UC Berkeley had undoubtedly never forgiven. Therefore, my presence was at least a partial reprieve. Again, an anecdote that seems significant enough to find a place in a larger hodological reading; although more of a joke than an international atonement, my role as observer and interlocutor had collided with my identity of certain scholarly affiliation. I become part of the story.

Arizpe itself serves as a poetic point to believe this journey to be closed - not only because of Anza's final resting place, nor my scholarly endorsement of the grave location. Arizpe is sited on a dramatic hilltop and oriented northward. It is explained that this was intentional, the setting of the town was meant to motivate potential colonists to look to the north, to be inspired to set forth and claim the space beyond. With hindsight, this is of course a fraught and questionable proposition, one of dispossession and injustice. But through the lens of the colonial project, it was clear and virtuous. As a strategy of urban design, Arizpe is *designed* to produce the type of personhood we find in Anza and his expedition's participants. It utilizes a synthesis of geography and spatial planning to form both a crucible and catapult, forging and launching, and propagating spirit of mobility rather than stasis. It is oppositional to the belief that a Trail is a sequence of fixed places; instead it suggests that these places may be deflectors and energizers in service to a normative and central condition of mobility. Arizpe drove this point home.

After a long drive and interminable late lunch in Nogales, we used our remaining energy to produce a heartfelt parting and trudged back through US customs, recovered our rental car and hurtled northward to Tucson in relieved silence.

#### Frameworks

**MOVEMENT:** Traveling in a group, driven by a driver in a mid-sized passenger van. Generally slower pace than solo travel on US roadways. Principal difference is to not be in control of route and navigation. With passive



relationship to conveyance, more time and energy is allowed to observe and log

*MEANING:* Black van with tinted windows connotes a certain level of privilege and difference. Within Mexico our group periodically discussed how this travel experience might be different (and safer) than driving in a private car with US license plates. Regardless, taking on the role of “tourist” and allowing a guided experience further decreases mobility agency and places one in a unique relationship to both others inside and outside the touristic experience. In this case, the presence of regional travel writers and NPS employees shape a certain community within the journey/experience and also likely initiate a certain treatment by tour providers. As evidenced by the reaction to my comment that we were also on a pilgrimage, the collective sense of being “outside” of all that is occurring must be navigated. My own presence as a scholar, in particular from Berkeley, made me a far-from-neutral participant and I could not slip into anonymity.

*PRACTICE:* The group-travel aspect of this experience made for a completely different methodological approach. Advantageously, the hodological reading could be performed in near “real time” but, problematically, what I have relied on thus far as “cuts” had to be reinvented. Instead I simply divided readings where the route intersected with major towns. This approach felt haphazard and unstudied compared to the Geocache-based method; also there was no means to develop a formula for photographing transitions. This supports my belief that a further refinement of the method would involve both a rigorous set of “cut” points (Geocache or otherwise) as well as means of “real-time” capture for observations, though the simultaneous presentation of the hodological categories must not be compromised as the goal is to consider various observational lenses relationally.

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*POWER:* As mentioned, this case study was not planned; rather I was invited and chose to include it. My invitation is indisputably tied to the relative position of privilege I occupy as a scholar with established connections to those responsible for the Anza Trail’s creation. I had failed to assess that I might be in such a position until this invitation made it obvious that my work and previous hodologies have not, in fact, been conducted in a vacuum. With the help of the NPS Anza Trail’s collaboration with a foreign government entity, I gained exposure to an aspect of my research topic beyond its original scope. Hodologies focusing on cultural route retracement outside of the US would function principally in the same manner, but the consideration of guided vs. unguided travel proposes a new set of challenges relating to power within the execution of the analysis.

> Looking back to the potential non-representational factors in this hodology:

In a sense, this Mexico-based case of the Anza Trail cannot be separated from the US-based longer segment in terms of what is non-representational. It commemorates the same single-journey act with the same (now mainly invisible) campsites and supported by the same diary logs. However, Turismo Sonora's approach to signage suggests a slightly different cultural perspective on the role of Anza and the expedition. Signage revealing the *Ruta Historica* was often installed in places otherwise reserved for honorific displays – entrances, plazas, etc. It was not part of the project's consciousness to place signs along expanses of roadway where there was a *lack* of such cultural content. This has been a subtle goal component of the US-NPS Trails project, to inject culture to spaces of "between-ness" and suggest the presence of historic mobilities as a point of contrast to banal stretches of landscape, urban to rural. This difference in sign placement and the values it suggests could be further interrogated as a part of the hodology, and, as I had intended, the capacity of the method itself to become more articulate as comparisons amass suggests that an international means of comparison and interrogation is possible.

The motivations to create the Mexico-segment of the Anza Trail stem from different places than the US-based segments and the NHT project on the whole. As explored in a previous chapter, the political scenery of the US in the 1970s is incomparable to that of Mexico (particularly northern regions) in the 2010s. As I have proposed, the distinctly post-modern structure of US Bicentennial of 1976 is foundational to the NHT concept; Mexico is adopting a US-created strategy and it would therefore require a significant inquiry into Mexico's own legacy of commemoration and consciousness for cultural landscape to assess from where the differences in this trail's execution are derived.

### **In Summation**

Each of these three cases represents both an institutional attempt to make visible a particular imaginary and my own attempt to see that work. My hope is that this can be focused on seeing while moving, capturing the aspect of a designed mobility, but that remains elusive to capture. Each of these are hodological thick descriptions, a synthesis of multiple "reads" at points of "cutting" along a path. The ultimate test, now, might be to ask if the description of these journeys would be any different if I had simply driven them and described them later. I contend that they would in fact be very different, in terms of my own ability to overlay the analytical, observational lenses capturing:

- physical space (landscape)
- human reactions and interactions
- design and institutionalization of a heritage-oriented narrative and space.

These factors are amplified and better aligned by way of this experimental method. The role of landscape—particularly the designed confluence of heritage planning, cultural

landscape, and transportation infrastructure—moves toward a more focused analysis and understanding. However, hodology still has much room for refinement, whether in terms of my own definition and execution, or the larger endeavor of shifting gaze and primacy away from static place and towards mobilities. The field of mobility geography will need to make room for inquiry focused upon mobilities that have been created with intention, themes, purpose, in addition to its current enthusiasm for general, broad, immediate, and abstract mobilities such as “air travel.” In this way, a collaborative relationship with the field of landscape architecture would be valuable and rewarding: interrogating the imaginaries and geographies of mobilities can only stand to benefit from a stronger platform of case studies seeking to test designed examples. Were this subfield to expand, hodological scholarship focusing on United States’ National Historic Trails System might be assessed concurrently with China’s Silk Road-based infrastructure and transport megaproject Belt-and-Road-Initiative, Singapore’s Ang Mo Kyo, France’s Canal du Midi tourism programs and Japan’s Hokkaido pilgrimage. More importantly, the link between human experience and landscape *design* may remain intact, honoring a scale at which creative work overlain by institutional actants all but dissolves within the blurry multiplicity experience of the territorial scale.

The most disappointing aspect of this new experiment with hodological method is that it does not fully succeed in revealing great insight to the condition, practice, and space of retracement, specifically. The human motivations behind retracement remain elusive and the impact on space, or in these cases the design of corridors celebrating and prompting retracement activities, have not gained the degree of clarity initially hoped for. As explored in a previous chapter, retracement is not only a key component of pilgrimage, but also a widely used method in the academic discipline of history. However, academic historians have created no historiographic scholarship examining this method, leaving this work to social science disciplines interested in walking, hiking, driving, etc. This is a surprising gap, but I understand now how difficult it is to fill. With such a void space in the understanding of retracement, there is little to consider as knowledge insofar as how the practice either shapes space or the experience of moving within it.

This hodology is an early first step. It builds on several traditions of thought, but only tangentially. It is experimental, still, and rather than adding to a well-established base of data and to academic momentum, offers careful preliminary steps towards building hodological method. Despite their limits, these three case studies affirm an adequate measure of success that may be built upon with further refinement and future attempts interrogating a breadth of landscape/mobility convergences.

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## Epilogue

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019, one day shy of the 244<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Anza Expedition's commencement from San Miguel de Horcasitas, I visited this place of departure. The line begins here, at the doors of a baroque style colonial church where the expedition observed a lengthy mass before leaving. The line ends in the Presidio of San Francisco, 1,200 miles to the northwest and just shy of the Presidio, the line lies under my former home at 468 Hickory Street. This adjacency has provided the first spark of interest which would eventually lead to the creation of this document. As with any origin story, happenstance may collapse into self interest, but it struck me that if this group of settlers had left their church and adjusted their path even slightly, missing the site of my yet-unbuilt house, there was a strong chance I would never have seized upon this topic and, subsequently, I would not have been there in San Miguel de Horcasitas at all.

I cannot say this was not moving. However now, in 2020, it seems that memorials dedicated to agents of oppression have never been riper for questioning and/or outright dismantling. Juan Bautista de Anza would most certainly qualify as a problematic conquistador; in fact a statue of him located in suburban southwestern San Francisco, California, has been defaced. Graffiti declares "Decolonize" and "This is stolen land". This statue had been moved seventeen years prior from a pedestal in San Francisco's central Civic Center—an established site of protest—to its present foliated spot alongside Lake Merced at Brotherhood Way, a more sedate parkway lined by a string of midcentury churches and multiple relocated artworks, part of a half-century-old plan for a sort of auto-oriented harmonious citizenship. Currently, JUBA is considering a nuanced and affirming statement on the likely removal of the statue.

Clearly, the statue stakes a not-so-subtle heroic claim. A rugged and masculine Anza seated on a virile horse, the artwork was gifted by the State of Sonora to the City of San Francisco in 1967. As the inscription on the granite base describes, "...with purpose of strengthening friendly ties between the people of Mexico and the United States..." the ironies of both its present tenability as well as the current level of governmental "friendliness" are difficult to overlook.

Assuming the statue will be removed, no longer able to function as a public memorial but rather as an artifact with its own new cautionary narrative, the question shifts to the viability of the Anza Trail as memorial; is it perhaps better able to adapt to this more nuanced and atonement-oriented capacity? Is the lack of physicality and emphasis on story-telling, accretive public process, going to prove adaptable enough to deflect

criticism of the project as yet another glorification of colonialism worthy of removal? More to my own interests, does the capacity for mobilities inherent (if underdeveloped) in this memorial typology play any role in its survival?

In the spirit of arriving in San Miguel de Horcasitas a day too early, this dissertation project falls short of its original intention to interrogate the entire body of NHTs as a single system. The thousands of miles of landscape involved, infinite situational relationships and declared unfinished status of all eighteen historic trails required a reduced scope. I was not able to include case studies of the Trail of Tears NHT to a level I would have liked, nor the Selma to Montgomery NHT. These, the newest of the NHT portfolio, speak most directly to the call for collective introspection and likely also some as-yet-undetermined atonement. Given the events of 2020, this call is particularly urgent. While the Trail of Tears is 5,045 miles long (forming four routes, traversing through nine states) and the Selma to Montgomery Trail is only 54 miles long, both propose an invitation to know and empathize with the plight of others. To do this, the invitation, specifically, calls for a sequential visit to city, suburb, exurb, farmland and wilderness – alike. It calls for a questioning of categories and boundaries and a blurring of divisions, and it does so by utilizing landscape at a territorial scale to do so.

This dissertation ends where something else should begin. I feel the next step, though, is not another dissertation, but a design effort in the spirit of Paola Vigano’s project-as-method. But is that not what the NHT already are? Perhaps the methods proposed could have asked more aggressively what that should be. Or perhaps this research has resulted in the answer no one wants: the next step lies too far outside of any extant discipline. I advocate that urban design (my own “home” discipline and what I believe brought me to this inquiry) is the discipline in possession of the best tools and scale of operations, but I also feel that it is woefully underdeveloped, driven by simplistic passions for “place”, and usually too entrenched in architecture-driven and city-centric values to successfully commit to the sort of dilemma posed by the NHT. In the design world, Vigano’s Territorialism theory and framework, with the multidisciplinary enthusiasm it has prompted, resonates as the best hope but still offers few clues on what to do next.

The research project herein has met its edges, and it therefore falls well short of a concise definition or plan of action. That is, therefore, integral to the result. Perhaps this is timely. As I write this, the world holds its breath to see where 2020’s Covid19 pandemic will lead us. We see a nascent exodus from urban centers and a few cracks emerging in popular theories of densification, but it is far too soon to know if this will fundamentally remake population distribution. Whatever it does do, it will be a mobility; it is distinctly possible that the impetus, role and spaces needed for NHT could be stimulated by this process. Such a convergence would severely tax the capability of the National Park Service, already badly defunded and light on in-house design services that can take imaginative risks in the spatialization of concept-driven projects. However, again, the ground appears to be shifting; after three and a half years of

discouraging news concerning spaces of conservation under the Trump administration, on August 4 2020 H.R.1957 – the Great American Outdoors Act surprised the nation by directing a large investment back into the NPS. Incidentally, the late Representative John Lewis of Georgia, who had passed away just weeks previously, sponsored the bill; in 1965, Lewis led the first of three famed civil rights marches from Selma to Montgomery, now forming the mobility basis of the Selma to Montgomery NHT. It is entirely possible that funding from this bill will find a way to this particular NHT park unit's budget, and that this will result in design decisions in Selma, Montgomery, and suburbs, exurbs, farmland, and wilderness in between – alike – as well. What discipline would rally to best provide this enhancement? Whichever, I feel that given time to mature, hodology would provide a useful tool for analysis, setting up the design process for a new frame on a new scale of territory with which to reimagine, and a clearer picture of the mobile user, so as to profoundly shape experience and environment.

The limit that this research project encounters is that it proposes and tests a new tool that has not yet found a user. It has never been clear, theoretically framed, who creates a pilgrimage, a retracement or a cultural route. The NPS is effectively only covering for this gap. The next step, really, is to hope that the discipline emerges or adapts to frame and serve the territorial. In the meantime we wait, hodology in hand, as if arriving just one day too early.