

Walking /in/between Worlds

A feminist autoethnography

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2021

Cover Page

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Submitted to Central European University
Department of Gender Studies

*In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Erasmus Mundus Master's
Degree in Women's and Gender Studies (GEMMA)*

Supervisor's Approval: _____

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Budapest, Hungary

2021

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With the support of the
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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research; it contains no material accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no material previously written and/or published by another person, except where an appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following word count for the thesis is accurate:

Body of thesis: **28.579** words - all chapters excluding footnotes, textboxes, references, appendix, etc.

Entire manuscript: 32.049 words.

Signed: Natalia Pais Fornari

Abstract

This autoethnographic research is based on my *herstory* as a female body in mobility for two and a half years (Sep-18 – Mar21). It uses walking as an autoethnographic tool for the telling of this multi-sited *herstory* and delves into the embodied and symbolic representations, practices and experiences of this act as a scholarly praxis and site for feminist knowledge production. It finds an echo in the overlapping fields of Postcolonial Studies and Feminist Postcolonial Studies, as well as the mobilities paradigm, in an interplay between its possibilities both as a method of inquiry per se and a way of feminist knowing. As a creative endeavour, its methodology blends lyric inquiry, self-reflexivity and the embodied practice of walking alongside its metaphorical possibilities for thinking and theorizing the lived experience; foregrounded by Ahmed’s idea of “sweaty” concept and my own version of the /in/between as such. The main framework of analysis derives from Tim Cresswell’s notion of “Politics of Mobilities” under the imagery of the Ouroboros, to break down six elements of mobility through this autoethnography, namely: motive force, speed, rhythm, route, experience and friction, providing an account that is vulnerable, affective, mobile and necessary to break the silence that comes with gender restrictions towards a female body on the move.

Acknowledgements

To my daughter Gloria, para Gloria, Glóriának.

To my mother Norma, my sister Thayna, my life-partner Fabio and my grandparents Gill and Gary, with love.

To my friends and loved ones in São Paulo (BR), York (UK) and Budapest (HU) who supported me and held my back on the most beautiful moments of this walk as well as in its darkest.

To my professors and departments at Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de São Paulo (BR) and Programa de Pós-Graduação em Turismo da Escola de Artes, Ciências e Humanidades da Universidade de São Paulo (BR); Centre for Women's Studies at the University of York (UK) and the Department of Gender Studies of Central European University (HU-AU), for being my academic mentors and lifetime friends; as well as for all the guidance, mentorship, friendship, shelter and care through this academic endeavour;

To my GEMMA supervisors Dr. Boriana Alexandrova and Dr. Nadia Jones-Gailani for their feminist ethics and love;

To the Erasmus Mundus GEMMA programme and the European Commission for selecting me, funding this research and making a dream come true.

Muito obrigada,

Thank You.

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Introduction

What happens when a woman moves? What happens when she moves on foot? What *movements, representations and practices* are involved when she leaves what is familiar to what is new, unknown, temporary, mobile? What sorts of *touches of a world* will this woman face, feel and process while in motion? What is the grey area /in/between being here and elsewhere, now and then, in a process that makes the self become elastic, divided, and multiple?¹ What tools or constellation of concepts, theories, threads and methods can help us to make sense of abrupt disruptions of routes and routines, rhythms, paces and beliefs when an avalanche of changes, massive information and inevitable shocks collides with us?

These questions seem pressing to be explored given that mobility have become a key element of contemporary life, and yet remains unequal and uneven to different bodies and people who carries different social markers – such as gender, race, class, place of origin and so on.² As such, and to unravel these questions from the perspective of gender and place of origin, this thesis engages the overlapping fields of Postcolonial Feminism and Postcolonial Latin American Studies with the mobilities paradigm, interested in the quest of the *praxis of walking* as a way of feminist knowing. It delves in *walking* as a lens for feminist scholarly research, navigating in its confluences of praxis, theories, methods, embodiments and symbolisms, departing from the subjective experience and my place/location in the academic environment as a Postcolonial subject, and a feminist

¹ Salazar, Noel B., and Kiran Jayaram, eds. *Keywords of mobility: Critical engagements*. Vol. 1. Berghahn Books, 2016.

² See more in: Sheller, Mimi. *Mobility justice: The politics of movement in an age of extremes*. Verso Books, 2018; and in: Sheller, Mimi. "Mobility justice." In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications for Mobilities*. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020.

from the Global South. It builds on walking in its mechanical form (*movement*) and metaphorical form (*representation*), constituting a scholarly praxis (theory+*practice*), functioning as a site of knowledge production in the transitions between six elements of mobility, namely: motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience and friction, as per Cresswell's understanding of each focal point in a wider spectrum of Politics of Mobility.³

Locating this thesis in the subjective process of a body marked by trauma, gender and place of origin, a white-passing queer Brazilian woman assigned to the mobility track of University of York (UK) and Central European University (Hungary) within the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degree in Women's and Gender Studies (GEMMA), I make use of this academic mobility period to reflect on the process of becoming a researcher, building myself through my embodied connection with inner and outer spaces, time and circumstances of living a mobile life and /in/between. I theorise my encounter with the embodiment and the symbolism of walking as a form of feminist knowledge production via an autoethnographic inquiry, and I analyse this subjective mobile process through my walking praxis, a process of mobility and the encounter with myself as I become a migrant, a body in the world in contact with different *touches of a world* throughout my walk.

Delving into the six elements of mobility, I analyse each one from the perspective of walking, entangling this praxis with its form of knowledge production based on the lived experience, later theorised from the subjective realm into the scope of mobilities, Feminist and Postcolonial Studies. The walk that informs this autoethnographic fieldwork is divided across three different cities that make up this multi-sited study: São Paulo

³ Cresswell, Tim. "Towards a politics of mobility." *Environment and planning D: society and space* 28, no. 1 (2010): 17-31.

(Brasil),⁴ York (UK) and Budapest (Hungary). The material was collected over two and a half years (Sep2018-Mar2021). As the walk goes to and from these three cities, I thread them together by the lines that has built pathways and connections between them: the emotional, affective ways in which this period of mobility connected my condition as a “*body in the world*” and in the feeling of /in/between in different spaces, times and symbolisms. I go through my walk in its multiply-located spectrum and in constant movement, making use of metaphors and touchstones alongside the foundational interdisciplinary approach of this critical-creative project.

By analysing the many walks of this woman from her subjective realm to her wider place in society, this thesis highlights walking as a type of mobility that slows down the pace and provides an understanding of everyday life, routine, the grounded experience of the ordinary – Certeau would call these “ordinary practitioners of the city”⁵ – or extraordinary puzzle of the self inhabiting different places and learning different from each of these places. It aims to unravel this ‘ordinary’ praxis as a way of feminist knowing & form of qualitative inquiry, by bringing to the light the process of conducting a feminist mobile research, an embodied practice informed by and through the lived experience and the symbolisms of being both the researcher and the subject.

Walking

“*Caminante, son tus huellas, el camino y nada más. Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar*” says Antonio Machado,⁶ in a poem of same name. “Walker, your footprints are the only road, nothing else. Walker, there is no road. You make your

⁴ The correct English spelling of “Brasil” is Brazil, with Z. Yet, in regards to epistemic disobedience as a Feminist from the South, I write it in its original spelling (with S) in this piece.

⁵ Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, Berkeley. 1984. P.93

⁶ Machado, Antonio. *Caminante, no hay camino*. Quimantú, 1973.

own path as you walk”.⁷ As a subject of interest in different areas of knowledge – arts, social sciences, sports and wellness, philosophy, literature, music and perhaps many others – I present this brief literature review on Walking to foreground its explorations both as an embodied practice and as a symbolic place for knowledge production, in a range of representations that goes from classical texts to walking as a scholarly subject, reflecting on it as a site of mobile knowledge production and what sorts of analysis and methodological approaches can be taken from this act, especially when turned into an embodied praxis.

Henry Thoreau, in his famous essay “Walking”, names the act of walking as an art, or the “art of walking”.⁸ “I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks – who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering*”.⁹ As Thoreau invokes the act as of a *saunterer*, that is, the one who wanders with either a material or symbolic intention to reach the *Saint Terre*, or the Holy Land, he presents the action on the premise of trust, joy, vagabondage (in a good sense, as he states), surrender and spirituality. “I am alarmed when it happens that I have walked a mile into the woods bodily without getting there in spirit”¹⁰ he says, in connection to the act of walking intertwined between body, mind, movement, meaning and spirit. I connect this passage with the exploring of both the mechanical as well as the metaphorical, symbolical realm of going for a walk, yet opposing the idea of taking such an action as a *saunterer* or a *flanerie*, but as an activity that is informed both in its embodied practice – “have walked a mile into the woods bodily” – and the presence of

⁷ English translation adapted from the The Favourite Poem project, available at <http://www.favoritepoem.org/poem_CaminanteNoHayCamino.html>. <Last access: 12Feb2021>.

⁸ Thoreau, H. D., ‘Walking’, in Waldo R. Browne (ed.), *Joys of the Road: A Little Anthology in Praise of Walking* (Chicago: Browne’s Bookstore, 1951), pp. 56–75; originally published in *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1862. P.56.

⁹ Thoreau, H.D., Ibidem. P.56.

¹⁰ Thoreau, H.D., Ibidem. P.75.

connection with its metaphorical level, or in “*getting mindfully in there*”. This is an important notion when thinking of walking as a praxis, later to reflect on the ways that walking can serve as a site for embodied knowledge production and recognition of one’s subjective understanding of the action aligned with the space around, as well as the inner considerations of the lived experience through this practice when performed mindfully.

In relation to the *flânerie*, that is, “the activity of strolling and looking”,¹¹ the term *flâneur* was brought to scholarly interest via Walter Benjamin, by focusing on the figure of the *flâneur* from Charles Baudelaire’s canonical texts such as *The Painter of Modern Life* and *The Ragpicker’s Wine*.¹² From this, Benjamin developed an analysis of the processes and conditions of modern life in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, and of urbanisation¹³ in an interweave of walking, sightseeing, writing, being the researcher and the *flâneur*; and its relation with the poetics of the city, among other spheres of modern life.¹⁴

The relevance of these texts and the figure that they promote is that the *flâneur* embodies the trope of the well-travelled *man*: it represents an image of the desired universal male, or the stroller; the man that deciphers the labyrinth of the city in an activity that happens in the streets, that is, in the public sphere.¹⁵ In my connection with the act performed as a woman, with its practice and meanings related to living life as a woman, I follow texts that deviate from this model and provide a challenge to the masculinist idea

¹¹ Tester, Keith, ed. *The flâneur*. Psychology Press, 1994. P.1

¹² See more in Baudelaire, Charles. “The painter of modern life.” *Modern art and modernism: A critical anthology* (1863): 23-7 & in Benjamin, Walter. *The writer of modern life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*. Harvard University Press, 2006.

¹³ Birkerts, Sven. “Walter Benjamin, flâneur: A flânerie.” *The Iowa Review* (1982): 164-179. p. 164.

For Walter Benjamin’s texts and analysis on the flâneur, see Benjamin, W. “Illuminations”; Benjamin, W. “The Arcades Project”; & Benjamin, W. “A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism”.

¹⁴ Frisby, David. “The flâneur in social theory.” *The flâneur* (1994): 81-110.

¹⁵ Birkerts, S. *ibidem*.

of the *flaneur*. Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, as noted by Ching-fang Tseng,¹⁶ domesticates this notion for the *flaneuse*, in the continuum between the division of the public and the private, the city and the house, within the scrutiny of Mrs. Dalloway's life threaded through the city and embedded in her own domestic life.¹⁷ As I also oppose the idea of the male stroller, I bring to the fore walking as a praxis performed by a woman that rather than simply strolling and looking, is grasping the very action as a way of formulating knowledge about herself and the world.—a knowledge that is constituted as rather an observant, a participant in the world; shedding light to her connections with the environment and the self, her own quests of agency while playfully travelling worlds, learning from her embodied, lived experience; as well as when building bridges, or withdrawing them.

In Elizabeth Gaskell's "*From North and South*", the author touches upon the relationship between women and the freedom of walking: "her out-of-doors life was perfect. Her indoors life had its drawbacks".¹⁸ The usage of the public sphere in the context of United Kingdom's modernity scene in mid-19th century was an elevation of embodiment and spirit for Margaret while experiencing modernity, invoking feelings and sensations that the enclosure of a life indoors hindered. "And walk Margaret did, in spite of the weather. She was so happy out of doors (...) she almost danced".¹⁹ In this vein, Thoreau recognised in a passage of his "Walking" essay the urge to be outdoors:

I, who cannot stay in my chamber for a single day without acquiring some rust,
and when sometimes I have stolen forth for a walk at the eleventh hour of four

¹⁶ Tseng, C. F. (2006). The Flaneur, the Flaneuse, and the Hostess: Virginia Woolf's (Un) Domesticating Flanerie in "Mrs. Dalloway". *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 32(1), 219-258.

¹⁷ Woolf, Virginia. "Mrs. dalloway." In *Collected novels of virginia woolf*, pp. 33-176. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1992.

¹⁸ Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn. *North and south*. Penguin, 1995. P.117

¹⁹ Gaskell, E. C. Ibidem. P.121.

o'clock in the afternoon (...) how womankind, who are confined to the house still more than men, **stand it I do not know**; but I have ground to suspect that most of them **don't stand it at all**.²⁰

The sensing and feeling of being outdoors, within the dichotomy of the female body enclosed to the private sphere and the male body allowed to stroll in the public sphere, getting “rusty” if it does not walk, expresses itself in the urge of equal access to movement; as a symbolic and an embodied means of discovering what is *outside*. The recent collection *The Joy of Walking* by Suzy Cripps²¹ brings about forty walking passages from literary and philosophical texts and, in a passage from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Cripps choses to put forward Elizabeth's muddy walk, evidencing both the embodied muddy aspect of her journey and the symbolism of a woman walking alone. The joy of this passage lies in the fact that walking can defy and deviate from social norms, as well as to be a fulfilling action for Elizabeth, though it is not always glamorous or pleasant. As an embodied practice, walking can be rough, slip, fall; be performed on sidewalks, through gardens, woods, muddy, sandy, snowy places; yet, is the ability that walking has to develop itself as a meaningful act both in pleasant circumstances – as Thoreau's accounts “(walking) as itself the enterprise and adventure of the day”²² – as well as in adverse circumstances – as Elizabeth's one – “(Elizabeth found) herself (...) with weary ankles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise”²³ – that brings about its nuanced and complex nature.

In Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust: A Story of Walking*, she presents a range of possibilities derived from the very act of “holding the body upright between the earth and

²⁰ Thoreau, H..D., Ibidem. p.72. My emphasis.

²¹ Cripps, Suzy. *The Joy of Walking*. Macmillan Collector's Library, 2020.

²² Thoreau, H..D., Ibidem. p.64.

²³ Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*. Broadview Press, 2001. P.184.

the sky”,²⁴ tracing a line that centers walking as an observant and practical action for the subject. She acknowledges that “the history of walking is an amateur history, just as walking is an amateur act”, embracing its very ordinary nature while flourishing a whole set of perspectives, lines, stories and ways of thinking in motion. Through this ‘very amateur act’ and in an array of possibilities as being both being an observant and participant, I make my own act of walking one that is present and aligned with contemplation and practice, later on informing my subjective place as a body in movement: one that is changing, learning and, most importantly, producing knowledge through an ‘ordinary act’ such as walking.

On the other hand, walking as a topic of scholarly inquiry is relatively new, although an interest in walking as method as well as a form of knowledge-production has begun seriously in the academy. Tim Ingold, a vocal Walking theorist, has been drawing attention to, rather than using walking solely for the achievement of other purposes e.g. ethnographic work – also to make use of the inputs that walking offers to social analysis, in turn transforming it into the method of inquiry itself in academic scholarship²⁵. Ingold remarks that walking as a mindful act²⁶ operates to elevate its mechanics to the level of abstraction, rendering meaning for the scholarly inquiry that is “stretched between imagination and perception”,²⁷ in an interplay between the embodied practice and the metaphorical sphere that draws its lines on walking as a multi-folded site of knowledge production.

²⁴ Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A history of walking*. Penguin, 2001. P.13.

²⁵ Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds., *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot* (Ashgate Publishing, 2008).

²⁶ See more in: Ingold, Tim. "Ways of mind-walking: Reading, writing, painting." *Visual Studies* 25, no. 1 (2010): 15-23.

²⁷ Ingold, Tim. "The maze and the labyrinth." *Psychology and the Conduct of Everyday Life* (2015): p. 99.

Maggie O'Neill and Phill Hubbard²⁸ recognise the use of walking as a method in social activity “along the ground”, especially as a creative embodied practice for the materialisation of processes such as identification, familiarisation and belonging. The authors have an extensive body of work consisting in artistic experimentations with walking, highlighting how the practice renders meaning, especially for the migrant subject, who bonds with the place and with the new community into which they step in, feeling communally connected or as part of that (new) reality.²⁹ However, the authors also state that as though as an elemental tool for on-the-ground research, walking should not be “privileged as a way of knowing”, yet acknowledging the “sensate, embodied, relational and collective attributes” of it.³⁰

In an opposite direction, Ingold and Vergunst presents walking *as a way of knowing* in their collection of multidisciplinary essays on *Ways of Walking*,³¹ by demonstrating different usages and meanings of walking in daily life, in and out of the urban space, with an emphasis on its social dimension. The authors acknowledge the “movement of walking in itself (as) **a way of knowing**”,³² and a useful praxis for scholarly inquiry.³³ With an idea based in walking as a movement entangled to the lived experience on both the subjective and intersubjective realm, the authors recognise walking as a powerful tool of shaping and embodying meaning – be it when performed individually or in community. The authors remark that:

We do not, however, travel alone. Our principal contention is that walking is a profoundly social activity: that in their timing, rhythms and inflections, the feet respond as much as

²⁸ Maggie O'Neill and Phil Hubbard, 'Walking, Sensing, Belonging: Ethno-Mimesis as Performative Praxis', *Visual Studies* 25, no. 1 (2010): 46–58. (p.46).

²⁹ O'Neill, M., & Hubbard, P. (2010). Ibidem, p.56.

³⁰ O'Neill, M., & Hubbard, P. (2010). Ibidem, p.56.

³¹ Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst (ed), ibidem.

³² Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst (ed), ibidem. p.5.

³³ Ingold, Tim. "The maze and the labyrinth." *Psychology and the Conduct of Everyday Life* (2015): 99.

it does the voice to the presence and activity of others. Social relations, we maintain, are not enacted in situ but are paced along the ground.³⁴

Walking both as a method and a praxis of inquiry is proving to grow and flourish, and as the current literature proves, it does so in terms of creative methodologies, participatory action research and arts-based research. In relation to such creative methodologies, a growing body of literature develops itself around walking as an embodied praxis. Pohanna Feinberg blends audio for guided-walks as a pedagogical tool for art education, arguing in favour of a “walking-based pedagogy” that makes use of creative practices, embodiment and audio-walks towards cultivating a mindful and curious learning process on the go.³⁵ Linda Knight³⁶ makes use of walking for wayfinding and mapping, weaving walking in its mechanical, physical sense and drawing on it as a creative methodology in research practice within post-colonial settings. Bill Psarras³⁷ argues in favour of walking both in its mechanical and metaphorical spheres, in a navigation of walking as a praxis to inform his art-practice as well as his theoretical reflections. What these authors have in common in their approach on walking is the ability of using this embodied practice as a way of knowing, tying the lived experience to the making of knowledge, crossing different fields and serving as a method on the ground to connect the “lines” or the “dots” between sensing, movement, symbolisms and creative forms of writing, drawing and mapping to the achievement of theoretical outcomes that does not skip the subjective and embodied realm of creative research.

³⁴ Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst (ed), *ibidem*. p.1.

³⁵ Feinberg, Pohanna Pyne. "Towards a walking-based pedagogy." *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies* 14, no. 1 (2016): 147-165.

³⁶ Knight, Linda. "Inefficient mapping: the ethical wayfinding potential of drawing while walking." *Journal of Public Pedagogies* 4 (2019).

³⁷ Psarras, Bill. "From Stones to GPS: Critical reflections on aesthetic walking and the need to draw a line." *Walking Art/Walking Aesthetics' Special Issue, InterArtive e-journal, ISSN* (2013): 1-6.

Hensler and Merçon³⁸ provides an insightful interplay on walking between its potentiality for scientific knowledge and other forms of knowledge production. The authors centres walking around *movement* and one-to-one human interaction, as well as how interactions mediated by walking provide a non-hierarchical basis for dialogue, exchange and a fair view on collective knowledge production when blending movement and human interaction. Their key-element is their approach on walking relating to Freire's notion on praxis, and this is of substantial importance for my intervention in this project, for it mediates walking with the subject who gets to experience the world: a process that is empirical, embodied and gets to uncover collective experience, thus serving as another form of knowledge production that not entirely within the academic format.

In the same vein, Kruger develops a framework of thinking and walking as a *decolonial praxis*.³⁹ He follows a line of inquiry that acknowledges knowledge production in various forms that not only the ones built in the classroom or in the academic sphere; rather, it is one that can be formed, transformed, shaped and reshaped through walking practices in the space occupied by the subjects, developing and contributing to group subjectivities that are non-conforming to practices of scholarly and academic colonial models of learning and producing knowledge.⁴⁰

The critical perspective that has been developed around walking, with various forms of applications in scholarly research and/or embodied practices foregrounds my understanding of Walking as a praxis and a form of knowledge production. In this echo I

³⁸ Hensler, Loni & Merçon, Juliana. "Walking through Time and Territory: A Proposal for Participatory Action Research based on Movement". *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik XXXVI*, (2020): 44-69.

³⁹ Kruger, Frans. "The movement of thought: Walking as decolonial praxis of knowledge-growing". *Forthcoming on Scholarly Engagement and Decolonisation: Views from South Africa, The Netherlands and the United States*, edited by Maurice Crul, Liezl Dick, Halleh Ghorashi & Abel Valenzuela Jr. : 323-342.

⁴⁰ Kruger, Frans. Ibidem.

build this *herstory* with a focal point that ties the physical and symbolic spheres of walking as a method in motion threaded within postcolonial, feminist ways of knowing.

Theories and Threads

In this section I aim to establish which authors and frameworks I am drawing upon to develop my own framework for this research. The foundations used in this thesis range from Latin American thought and postcolonial feminist threads of knowledge production to the Mobilities Paradigm and the notion of a politics of mobility. I borrow from a constellation of authors within those fields, beginning with the Argentinian scholar Maria Lugones and her characterization of gender under “colonial difference”, or the colonial mission and exploitation in Latin America as the marker of gender/race/class unravelling implications up to the present moment, as “‘gender’ does not travel away from colonial modernity”.⁴¹ I also borrow from her base-concepts of playfulness, “world”-travelling and loving perception, as the core foundation of the praxis I built around walking in this project. For her, “love reveals plurality”,⁴² and **love** is the big word of this inquiry – from Lugones to Freire, and Lorde, to me. For an activity as wide as walking, that can be planned or unplanned, to reach a certain destination or a simple act of wandering places, I built a praxis from this viable place of love, borrowing notions that are either connected or orbit around it, both physically – sense, touch – or symbolically – loving eye, loving perception, difference as strength, plurality, encounters, exchange; in a way of knowledge production based on feminist, mobile and postcolonial threads.

⁴¹ Lugones, Maria. Lugones, María. "Toward a decolonial feminism." *Hypatia* 25, no. 4 (2010): 742-759. P.746.

⁴² Lugones, Maria. "Playfulness, “world”-travelling, and loving perception." *Hypatia* 2, no. 2 (1987): 3-19.

Lugone's mastery and ethos as a Latin American woman, a racialised woman, a gaucho woman⁴³ -- with her locality being of deep relevance and resonance to my own positionality and understanding of postcolonial threads of knowledge production as a Latin American woman as well – a Postcolonial theorist and a “world”-traveller herself, interweaves her own standpoint as a subject-researcher in the plurality and complexity of the various roles and intersections a woman carries in being a feminist and in the doing of research and in travelling worlds. For her, the idea of playfulness is when “rather the attitude that carries us through the activity, a playful attitude turns the activity into play”,⁴⁴ in a state that sees uncertainty as an “openness to surprise”.⁴⁵ I align this curious, open approach to walk to my praxis of walking, especially when walking worlds, based on her concept of “world”-travelling under a loving perception in which one travels “worlds” lovingly, open to learning, knowing, exchanging, sharing and loving other *worlds* while travelling them.

The idea of “world”-travelling means we can “understand what it is to be them (*the Other*) and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes”,⁴⁶ or getting to *know* other worlds as we also get to *know* ours. It is a double-folded perspective of both being playful in a “world” – that can range from experiencing another place, the crossing of cultures and ideas in a playful, curious, non-arrogant manner – while exercising a loving eye on the “worlds” of the people we meet on these encounters. That is when *knowing* the different turns into *loving* the difference – and loving turns into plurality, acceptance, ease and the acknowledgement of difference as strength and connection – instead of a force that tears us apart. This is a particularly useful approach informing my praxis for it allows me to

⁴³ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.3.

⁴⁴ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.16.

⁴⁵ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.16.

⁴⁶ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.17.

turn my walk, or my lived experience, into one that is based upon a theory transformed into practice and vice versa, with an inherent reflexive character.

Akdoğan, in a contemporary reading of Lugone's playfulness and "world"-travelling concepts, relocates them into a transnational conversation in feminist studies, acknowledging that they "continues to offer valuable insights to women across the world, especially within the frame of contemporary transnational feminist practices" and that the "increasing (of) geographical mobility, enormous circulation of ideas across cultures, and intriguing encounters of local and global paradigms continue to generate complex and nuanced "worlds".⁴⁷

Indeed, even though I am in geographical mobility and caught up in this circulation of ideas across cultures, I am still a Latin-American woman in the process of becoming a migrant – if, on one hand, when I left Brasil I still had plans to return, thus considering myself as a student in mobility; on the other hand I now recognise myself as a migrant given I will not return. I became a migrant and a Latin American migrant – and as Lugones reckons "because I am Latin American I am an ambiguous being, a two-imaged self";⁴⁸ existing in this ambiguity of my own embodied and/or symbolic playfulness, for one can be playful or unplayful, either in one's own construction of the Self or in the construction of this same Self out of encounters while navigating "other worlds". In this matter, Lugones recognises that

To become playful would be for her (a woman) to become a contradictory being (when navigating worlds). (...) I am suggesting that I can understand my confusion about whether I am or not being playful by saying that I am both and that I am a different person

⁴⁷ Akdoğan, Şule. "'World'-Travelling and Transnational Feminist Praxis in Women Who Blow on Knots." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020): 101-119. P.101.

⁴⁸ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.13.

in different “worlds” and can remember myself in both as I am in the other. I am a plurality of selves.⁴⁹

I take this passage in a quest of *being* playful or *becoming* playful, wherein lies the matter of the /in/between, or the space between being and becoming, depending on the circumstances that either allow such an act or hinder it. This plurality of selves does not necessarily mean contradiction, but the recognition that, according to different settings, one can be more or less playful, yet not changing one’s own character. It is in this navigation and travelling of worlds that one’s own playfulness will encounter plurality, or difference. Lorde says that “too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and exploring difference into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers, or that they do not exist at all. This results in a voluntary isolation, or false and treacherous connections”.⁵⁰

As the idea of this praxis is to navigate worlds in its loving perception of *difference*, I suggest that bridges are made between encounters and exchanges while travelling *worlds* – of people, places, culture, etc – though this is not necessarily an easy task. Ingold asserts that “we cannot simply walk into other people’s worlds, and expect thereby to participate with them. To participate is not to walk *into* but to walk *with* -- where ‘with’ implies not a face-to-face confrontation but heading the same way”. Though the author mainly relates to the physical sphere in this case, the simple act of “heading the same way” suggests that a symbolic negotiation is also at stake: walking alongside or parallel to other people, thus navigating other worlds, requires some level of playfulness

⁴⁹ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P.14.

⁵⁰ Lorde, Audre. "Age, race, class, and sex: Women redefining difference." Women in Culture: An intersectional anthology for gender and women’s studies (1980): 16-22. P.17.

and bridge-building to avoid the ‘treacherous connections’ Lorde puts, and connect mindfully with that world.⁵¹

For the quest of praxis, I follow Paulo Freire’s notion informed and derived from the interweaving of his adaptation of praxis for the Latin American quest⁵² and Lugone’s concepts of playfulness, loving perception and “world”-travelling, for only the act of walking itself would lead to scarce directions towards the analysis I aim to make. Freire borrows from Hegel’s dialectics to build his concept of praxis for the Latin American context, which is centred on the relation between the oppressor and the oppressed,⁵³ given the continent’s colonial past of oppression and exploitation. Deeply rooted in a model of education that aims to transform the subject in their own vehicle of political intervention in the world, this praxis is informed with liberatory practices that come from "actions and reflections",⁵⁴ in a cycle of actions informed by theory and, later, reflections upon the action – or a praxis that comes with the search for freedom, allowing the subject to achieve freedom in a dialectical relation between knowledge and practice, often shared communally as a loving, disobedient way of knowing:

Freedom does not come out of the blue, but by the praxis of its search; for the knowledge and the recognition of the need to fight for freedom. A fight that, for the *goal* that the oppressed give to it, is an act of love, with what the oppressed barricade themselves from the violence of the oppressor.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Lee, Joe, and Tim Ingold. "Fieldwork on foot: Perceiving, routing, socializing." *Locating the field: Space, place and context in anthropology* 42 (2006): p. 67.

⁵² Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia do oprimido*. Editora Paz e Terra, 1968. Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia da libertação em Paulo Freire*. Editora Paz e Terra, 2018. Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia da esperança: um reencontro com a pedagogia do oprimido*. Editora Paz e Terra, 2014.

⁵³ Freire, Paulo. “Pedagogia do Oprimido”, p. 20-21.

⁵⁴ Freire, Paulo. Ibidem. P.24.

⁵⁵ Freire, Paulo. Ibidem. P.20. My translation.

For the practice of my walking was informed by a loving perception and playfulness in its “world”-travelling, the ‘goal’ of this act, or my *act of love*, was to travel worlds within/amongst differences, paving bridges, travelling rivers, and finding out the limitations and possibilities of walking a praxis suited for feminist ways of knowing. This brings up a point at which the embodied interweaves with the symbolic when walking-travelling worlds: a whole sphere of meaning, shared experiences, a **touch**, and **sensing** across borders are of vital importance if one wants to *access* worlds. And by “world/s” I mean a double-folded perspective: both the symbolic world of **oneself** and the geopolitical/geographical borders of worlds. Mignolo’s work on border thinking and border epistemologies is of great importance to understand the subjective consciousness I bring to this work. Being myself a body from a post/colonial background, I also recognise that postcoloniality and the geographical, political and embodied realm of sensing and knowing “goes hand in hand”,⁵⁶ as Mignolo acknowledges:

As is well-known, theo- and ego-politics of knowledge was grounded in the suppression of sensing and the body and of its geo-historical location. (...) Border epistemology goes hand in hand with decoloniality. Why? – because decoloniality focuses on changing the terms of the conversation and not only its content.⁵⁷

I play with the suppression of my body-politics in *worlds*. In this way, the quest I explore claims a postcolonial conversation around ways of knowing; to sense internal and external borders, to *touch*, or be *touched* by them. Indeed, I am thinking of a “*touch*” in a world, either from the subject’s perspective or the Other, or from the Other to oneself, that can be embodied or symbolic, sometimes both, sometimes deeper. I borrow from Ahmed’s idea of ***Touch of a World***. For Ahmed, the recognition of the ‘*touch of a world*’

⁵⁶ Mignolo, Walter D. "Geopolitics of sensing and knowing: on (de) coloniality, border thinking and epistemic disobedience." *Postcolonial studies* 14, no. 3 (2011): 273-283. P.275

⁵⁷ Mignolo, Walter D. *Ibidem*. P. 274-275.

starts in the moment when we, as girls/womxn, “begin to recognise how violence is directed: that being recognised as a girl means being subjected to this pressure, this relentless assault on the senses; a body that comes to fear the touch of a world”.⁵⁸

By acknowledging the violence directed to the female body on various levels of our embodied experience and consciousness, I adapt this notion in this piece for it becomes key to grasp the complexities and nuances of this process, that is not only travelling *to* and *from*, but touching and being touched by a “world” in this “world”-travelling. I suggest that there may be an opposite side, too; as for every darkness there is light, for every suffering there is relief, even if small: a possible touch of a world that rather than violent, can be loving; rather than exclusionary, can be plural; rather than arrogant, can be playful.

Therefore, I interweave the very notion of the *touch of a world* with playfulness and loving perception. I look at this contextually, rather than in a systemic, universal manner. In this context of the world I am mapping through the everyday experience – subjective, inter-subjective and defiant to systemic oppression; a smaller world that exists in the daily routine, the ordinary, the world explored on the ground: if, on one hand, the very start of this process on the female body is violent and aggressive, I look into the idea of a “touch” of a world for it to be reallocated as part of a daily-basis, continuous process in the use of playfulness and love perception, and how *touches* may differ from one place to another. I suggest that small, contextualised encounters and ordinary experiences lead to other *touches of a world*, leaving its marks on one’s journey through affect, the learning of plurality, and love itself. Therefore, in the interweave of these concepts and ideas, I

⁵⁸ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press, 2016. P.27.

bring about a praxis of walking that accommodates an affective, theoretical and mobile journey.

When thinking in a multi-sited manner, this touch becomes inherently multi-folded: it is not an in-situ touch, but one that keeps revealing itself along the way and in constant mobility. One place, one experience, one person in a different setting may bring a different touch than another, and as one navigates the world, it grasps this touch and packs it up in their own experience and affective connections, built from one world to another, on different levels, meanings and embodiments of such. To understand how this multi-sited experience develops itself, and what meanings and representations can be extracted from this long, mobile walk, I make use of the Mobilities Paradigm for it allows a theorisation of a world on the move, which I explore in more detail in the next section.

Framework: Mobilities

The thread of thought I presented in the previous section is followed by an inquiry framed within the Mobilities Paradigm,⁵⁹ with an emphasis on Tim Cresswell's notion of "Politics of Mobility", whose aim is the "development of a geographical understanding of mobility that can inform theorisations of gender, ethnicity or any other form of social relation"⁶⁰ by analysing six core constituent elements of mobility. These are: **Motive Force** – or why does a person or thing move?; **Velocity** – how fast does a person or thing

⁵⁹ See: Glick Schiller, N., & Salazar, N. B. (2013). Regimes of mobility across the globe. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, 39(2), 183-200; Salazar, N. B. (2011). The power of imagination in transnational mobilities. *Identities*, 18(6), 576-598; Sheller, M., & Urry, J. (2006). The new mobilities paradigm. *Environment and planning A*, 38(2), 207-226; Larsen, Jonas, and John Urry. *Mobilities, networks, geographies*. Routledge, 2016. Salazar, N. B., & Jayaram, K. (Eds.). (2016). *Keywords of mobility: Critical engagements* (Vol. 1). Berghahn Books.

⁶⁰ Cresswell, Tim. "Towards a politics of mobility." *Environment and planning D: society and space* 28, no. 1 (2010): 17-31. P.21.

move?; **Rhythm** – in what rhythm does a person or thing move?; **Route** – what route does it take?; **Experience** – how does it feel?; and **Friction** –when and how does it stop?⁶¹

I do so by making use of *walking as autoethnography* as the source of the mobile data that tells this *herstory* while navigating these six elements, to dissect critical knowledge production based on the embodied, lived experience of the female subject on foot, and *on the move*. The Mobilities Paradigm supports and expands theorisations of movement in a timely, social and spatial context, given its multidisciplinary approach to the idea of ‘mobility/ies’⁶² as more than moving from one place to another in the mechanical sense, but in the abstraction of the contemporary world that became mobile and connected; comprising the travelling of ideas, concepts, feelings, people and networks in the wake of the twenty-first century.⁶³

The Mobilities turn in Social Sciences appeared as a multidisciplinary response to the need of a social theory on the move and proposed a paradigm of concepts, theories and methods for the study of social life under the phenomena of massive movement (including mass migration) and mass information exchange in the contemporaneity.⁶⁴ This social theory was intended to accommodate the new challenges of interpreting, analysing and grasping the rapid changes happening in social life in this fast, connected world⁶⁵, enhanced by technologies of movement and communication: ⁶⁶

⁶¹ Cresswell, Tim. “Towards a Politics of Mobility”. Ibidem. P.18.

⁶² Freire-Medeiros, Bianca, Vera da Silva Telles, and Thiago Allis. "Apresentação: Por uma teoria social on the move." *Tempo Social* 30, no. 2 (2018): 1-16.

⁶³ Urry, John. *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. Routledge, 2012.

⁶⁴ Freire-Medeiros, Bianca, Vera da Silva Telles, and Thiago Allis. "Apresentação: Por uma teoria social on the move." *Tempo Social* 30, no. 2 (2018): 1-16.

⁶⁵ See more in the work of Monika Büscher, specially: Büscher, M., and Urry, J. "Mobile methods and the empirical." *European Journal of Social Theory* 12, no. 1 (2009): 99-116. & Büscher, M., John, U., and Witchger, K., eds. *Mobile methods*. Routledge, 2010.

⁶⁶ See more in the “*Mobilities Dossie of São Paulo Mobilities Research School*”, available at: https://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_issuetoc&pid=0103-207020180002&lng=en&nrm=iso -- See also: Salazar, Noel B. "Keywords of Mobility. What's in a Name?" (2016): 1-12.

a mobilities paradigm (...) is transformative of social science, authorizing an alternative theoretical and methodological landscape (...). It enables the 'social world' to be theorized as a wide array of economic, social and political practices, infrastructures and ideologies that all involve, entail or curtail various kinds of movement of people, or ideas, or information or objects. (...) I use the term mobilities to refer to the broader project of establishing a movement-driven social science.⁶⁷

Although having its starting point in Sociology, Urry's theorization of mobilities became a paradigm that reverberated across various other disciplines. His initial developments in Mobilities have asserted and developed "new mobile rules for sociological method",⁶⁸ later to be interpreted, reshaped, and analysed in disciplines such as Geography, Transport Studies, Cultural Studies, Migration Studies, Anthropology and others, with crossovers across disciplines,⁶⁹ covering different types of connections, spatial-temporalities and forms of movement departing from the smallest of the accounts of individuals to analysis of movement and mobility on a global scale:

There clearly is something "new" about the ways mobilities are being approached currently that distinguishes them from earlier accounts of movement, migration and transport (...). If nothing else, the "mobilities" approach brings together a diverse array of forms of movement across scales ranging from the body (...) to the globe.⁷⁰

In this wide array of forms of movement, walking is what interests me in this piece of research, for its ordinarily everyday nature and ability to evidence restrictions to certain bodies' movement. Urry acknowledges that investigations of mobilities include "various kinds and temporalities of physical movement, ranging from standing, lounging, **walking**, climbing, dancing, to those enhanced by technologies, of bikes, buses, cars, trains,

⁶⁷ Urry, John. *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity (2007). P.18.

⁶⁸ Urry, John. *Mobilities*. Ibidem. P. 9.

⁶⁹ Freire-Medeiros, Bianca, da Silva Telles, Vera, Allis, Thiago. Ibidem.

⁷⁰ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P. 18.

ships”.⁷¹ Building upon this, I use the Mobilities Paradigm as a guiding theoretical framework for it allows the discussion around Walking to flourish under the interconnection between mobile practices and one’s relation to the *touch* of a mobile world.

Walking is understood in this piece in multiple ways: a method in movement – or a mobile method; as a symbolic, embodied, creative praxis that provoke a self-reflexive slowdown in the rhythm of the experience – both in the practice of this research and in the analysis regarding the interplay between *movement*, *representation*, and *practice* of the subject in /in/mobility. Drawing upon this, I propose that walking serves to explore, at a slower pace, daily and ordinary experiences of living a life /in/between. To frame such an ordinary experience in a wider inquiry, I use Cresswell’s approach regarding mobilities as an “**entanglement of movement, meaning and practice**” to provide an interpretation of this type of mobility from the bottom up.

the fact of physical **movement** – getting from one place to another; the **meanings** that movement is given – discourses, narratives and stories about the fact of movement; and finally the experienced and embodied **practice** of movement.⁷²

According to Cresswell, “different forms of mobility research are likely to explore facets of any **one** of these”, yet “understanding mobility holistically means paying attention to all three of these aspects”⁷³ and that the intention behind entangling these three aspects together is to “develop an approach to human mobility that considers the fact of movement, the represented meanings attached to movement, and the experienced practice of movement”.⁷⁴ I look at these three aspects intertwined: *movement* – or

⁷¹ Urry, John. *Mobilities*. Ibidem. P.8 .

⁷² Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P. 19. My emphasis.

⁷³ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P. 19.

⁷⁴ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P. 22.

physical movement, in getting from one place to another and situating this multiply-located thesis from the South to the North and from city to city (São Paulo, York, Budapest); *representation*, evidenced through a heartfelt (auto)ethnographical account of material and symbolic encounters and the interpretations of such; the *practice* of walking, emphasized through its praxis, embodiment, the notion of the /in/between/ and the touch of a world in its interplay with the theoretical basis of “world”-travelling, playfulness and loving perception.

Methodology

In this section, I go in detail about the methodological pathway built in this project. I delve into the four key methods of this research: the (heartful) **autoethnography** methodological framework that allows me to narrate this simple and ordinary walk performed in a multi-sited setting in the period of two years and a half; the **mobile method** of Walking as a praxis in autoethnographic research; the **self-reflexive** part that evidences the various *touches of a world* on this body – this body that is the subject and the researcher (a woman, a sexual abuse survivor, a feminist, a feminist researcher); and, finally, the **lyrical inquiry** that permeates this work, blending theory, aesthetics and metaphors.

Mobile Methods: Walking as Autoethnography

There were several ways in which walking could be explored methodologically. For this mobile creative endeavour, I borrow from both theorists of Mobilities in regard to *mobile methods* and from ethnographers, stitching together the inherent movement of walking with an (heartful) autoethnographic approach, for the narration of this *herstory* both in its mechanical and metaphorical sense. Eric Laurier, in his foreword to a collection of essays on mobile methods, states that “there is for me a delight in seeing a body of methods that does not stitch together. It should not, because [...] mobility is not only one thing. It is a collection of social matters that have been left out of more sedentary studies”.⁷⁵ For a piece of research such as this one, which was made on the move over two years and a half, a non-sedentary methodology was a long process to build on, and

⁷⁵ Laurier, Eric. *Foreword*. In: Büscher, Monika, John Urry, and Katian Witchger, eds. *Mobile methods*. Routledge, 2010. P.XIV.

stitching methods together to voice its multiple and mobile quests has not at all been an easy task.

Büscher et al. state that “through investigations of movement, blocked movement, potential movement and immobility, dwelling and place-making, social scientists are showing how various kinds of ‘moves’ make social and material realities”.⁷⁶ To write about the social and material reality in this endeavour means that what I aim to write does not happen in the aftermath of my methodology, that is, after my walks and autoethnographic data collection, but in the meanwhile: here, there, in the middle of a moment, at the beginning of a walk or in the interruption of a serendipitous scene, embracing what comes up along the way.

To transform this walk into a useful site of knowledge production, I built a methodological approach upon experimentations and reflections on my walking as an autoethnographic tool, for autoethnography is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)”, while “a researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography”.⁷⁷ In this sense, the praxis of walking and taking notes, writing, sensing and analysing its ordinary act in a systemic way fitted the process of personal experience in a very first-hand, timewise and space-wise, on foot and in the researcher own’s rhythm, in alignment with the affective connection between the researcher and the praxis of walking.

As both a theoretical site for knowledge production and a methodology useful for grasping the nuanced experiences of the subject, walking had its turning point only

⁷⁶ Büscher, M., Urry, J., and Witchger, K. Introduction. In: *Mobile methods*. Routledge, 2010. P.2.

⁷⁷ Ellis, Carolyn, Tony E. Adams, and Arthur P. Bochner. "Autoethnography: an overview." *Historical social research/Historische sozialforschung* (2011): 273-290. P.273.

recently from a very ordinary act to a methodological place of attention for scholars. Hélio Silva proposes that through walking, seeing and writing, the ultimate outcome of ethnographic work is the “account of the *percurso*” of the ethnographer.⁷⁸ The translation of the word *percurso* from Brazilian-Portuguese to English varies between route, course, way, ride, drive; or simply put: movement. This movement interweaves the relation of the self with the places either observed or sensed, and the observation of the sensorial connection of this self functions in relation to these places, with the subjectivity of the researcher becoming amplified in the accounts of this *percurso*.

Chalfin⁷⁹ observes that ethnographic practices need a critical engagement and a “double-folded consciousness” when used as either a mobile practice or under a Mobilities lens, in regard to the researcher and the context under research:

making ethnographic sense of the current [mobile] world order involves more than flipping a paradigmatic switch from the study of boundaries to flows, enclosures to networks, localities to circuitries. Rather, it is about contending with a complex mix of emergent and residual forms, of which are intensely policed and territorialized to restrict mobility at the same time human survival in the current moment requires flexibility, dis- and relocation, and insertion in multiple registers of movement.⁸⁰

Chalfin’s engagement with the making of ethnography means that the work of the ethnographer in this mobile setting is a quest of working with a “double-folded consciousness” within its disciplinary approach, in an inquiry that is now mobile rather than sedentary, as Laurier observes. Indeed, Chalfin goes on to explain that “the challenge

⁷⁸ Silva, Hélio. "A situação etnográfica: andar e ver." *Horizontes antropológicos* 15, no. 32 (2009): 171-188. (“The ethnographic situation: walking and seeing”. *Anthropological horizons*, 2009, Brasil). P.171.

⁷⁹ Chalfin, B. Multiple mobilities and the ethnographic engagement of keywords. In: Salazar, Noel B., and Kiran Jayaram, eds. *Keywords of mobility: Critical engagements*. Vol. 1. Berghahn Books, 2016. (171-177). P.172.

⁸⁰ Chalfin, B. Ibidem. P. 172.

is to maintain an analytic immediacy despite the increasing scale and spatiotemporal fluidity of the very conditions and experiences of mobility we seek to study”.⁸¹

Yet only the (auto)ethnographic process alone, even within the intersections and reflections on mobile methodologies, could not cover the affective points of this research. I had to keep stitching the method together, and it was Carolyn Ellis and her concept of (Heartful) Autoethnography that accommodated the telling of the personal experience in a heartfelt manner, for this:

includes researchers’ vulnerable selves, emotions, bodies, and spirits; produces evocative stories that create the effect of reality; celebrates concrete experience and intimate detail; examines how human experience is endowed with meaning; is concerned with moral, ethical, and political consequences; encourages compassion and empathy; helps us know how to live and cope.⁸²

Indeed, to include my vulnerable self, body and evocative stories in a heartfelt manner is to open up my writing and analysis to the roughness, clues and corners, entanglements and knots, multiple directions and, most importantly, the vulnerability of this walking praxis and the encounters that happened out of it. As I was building this multiply located autoethnographic exercise, I was walking, seeing, sensing, writing. Walking, as the vehicle and site of knowledge production, helped me to navigate through different places that, in turn, imprinted their marks on/in me. Silva offers a view that connects three of the four elements I mention above, considering them to be inexorable aspects of ethnographic practice: “walking, seeing and writing, three fluxes that find themselves dynamically in relation, exercising reciprocal influences in interplay”.⁸³

⁸¹ Chalfin, Brenda. Ibidem. P. 177.

⁸² Ellis, Carolyn. "Heartful autoethnography." *Qualitative health research* 9, no. 5 (1999): 669-683. P.669.

⁸³ Silva, Hélio. Ibidem. Original sentence (in Brazilian-Portuguese): “Andar, ver e escrever, três fluxos que se encontram dinamicamente interrelacionados, a exercerem e sofrerem influências recíprocas.”. P. 185.

This interplay, entangled within six elements of mobility – motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience and friction – made possible the delineation of the scope of my walk in a line that, rather than being straight, was vulnerable and cyclical, nuanced and complex in its repetitions, parallels and /in/between/ feelings, in a movement operated within the embodiment of this experience and the symbolism of movement, representation, and practice. As I intersect walking both as praxis and a site of knowledge for the qualitative feminist inquiry and analyse walking and its mediation between the very act & the meaning-making process of living a mobile life inhabiting this body, I try to comprehend the relations and interactions that *movement* proposes on a subjective scale.

Walking was performed mindfully, as a praxis, in each place I stepped in. To observe, collect patterns, feel, see, touch the city/the Other and let the Other/city touch me, I had to be mindfully present in the praxis of walking. That is when the entanglement of movement, meaning and practice delineated the exercise of building a multiply located heartfelt autoethnography: the notions contained in each short story I wrote for Chapters 2 and 3 allowed me to write about the mechanical (Chapter 2) and metaphorical walking (Chapter 3), entangled with the encounters I had both with my external and internal world. The creative writing was a useful manner to express in the narrative style of this piece the nuanced and complex entanglements of the body and the mind, the praxis of the lived experience informed by and reflected upon a theoretical framework.

The selected stories I provide from this autoethnographic exercise are a confluence and combination of several pieces of text deriving from my fieldnotes, kept in three different types of archives which I label as “NPF502”.⁸⁴ The first diary is entitled

⁸⁴ NPF502 was the name assigned to me at the University of York’s e-mail, which I carry along for all artistic interventions I have been making since my passage through the Centre of Women’s Studies.

as “*Between Worlds*” and relates to the embodied fieldwork part. The second diary is entitled “*Water Under the Bridge*” and the third, “*Kerepesi*”, and both of them dive deep into my metaphorical and symbolic reflections on walking. While the latter is written under a more expressive and sentimental way; the first one relates to mapping, connections and parallels taken from my walks. The opening stories of each section on Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 have been curated from the reflections of both diaries, interwoven into patterns and themes representing each element of mobility that I delve into – motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience and friction.

Self-Reflexivity as Lyric Inquiry

Gayle Letherby states that “feminist methodological work continues to influence mainstream research practice”, acknowledging that “the need for methodological reflections about the methods we use as researchers (...) means that research reports need to include references to both the ‘doing of research’ and the philosophy of research practice”.⁸⁵ Here, both the responsibility for the knowledge we produce and the contributions we give to the epistemological thread of feminist research are key to the work we make.⁸⁶ As such, I reflect upon a formative journey based in its praxical approach, for a praxis results from the dialectical relation between the theory informing practice, and the results of such a practice to be later evaluated and reviewed/rearranged, in a constant exchange between inner reflexivity and action⁸⁷ – or, symbolically, the cyclic movement of the Ouroboros, which I detail later in this section. As an example, the last section of this piece, “Friction”, is self-reflexive in nature, since it examines the very

⁸⁵ Letherby, G. (2015). Gender-sensitive method/ologies. *Introducing Gender and Women's Studies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 76-94. P.76.

⁸⁶ Letherby, G. Ibidem. P.76.

⁸⁷ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia do oprimido*. Editora Paz e Terra, 1968.

end of the cycle of this story, reflecting upon the praxis of world-travelling and my own position at the end of my journey.

This project is inherently a self-reflexive piece, exercised through a lyrical inquiry. As a creative endeavour in the telling of a *herstory*, and to honour its heartfelt process, I navigate this self-reflexive part in the form of a *lyric inquiry*, that is, a method “informed by aesthetic and philosophical principles of writing; (...) based on the conviction that using expressive and poetic functions of language creates the possibility of a resonant, ethical and engaged relationship between the knower and the known”.⁸⁸

Lyrical inquiry draws upon nonrationalist and nondiscursive ways of knowing in order to engage in inquiry practices and to produce written forms that have, up to now, been undervalued or ignored in scholarly discourses. (...) Characteristics of lyric inquiry and its written works are features such as the following: (...) metaphorical thinking, embodied understanding, personal evocations, domestic and local understanding, and an embrace of the eros of language – the desire to honor and experience phenomena through words, ambiguous and inadequate as they might be, and to communicate this experience to others.⁸⁹

Therefore, I use a lyric form in the telling of a subjective, individual story to an individual, subjective reader; building a pathway of resonance between *us*, of metaphors and touchstones that permeates the intricacies and connections of everyday, ordinary experiences, presenting both the research process (inquiry) and the written form of such (lyrical part).⁹⁰ I chose this approach for the nature of this thesis, that is, a mobile one; a mobility that relates not only to its content, but its form and, most importantly, its *core*. Given it is a mobile idea, this project is an invitation to navigate *worlds* – or a world

⁸⁸ Neilsen, Lorri. "Lyric inquiry." *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues* (2008): 93-102. P.93.

⁸⁹ Neilsen, Lorri. "Lyric inquiry". Ibidem. P.94.

⁹⁰ Neilsen, Lorri. "Lyric inquiry". Ibidem. P. 94.

travelling exercise between the teller and the reader: it presents an idea that can travel from my world to *your* world, when each of the six facets and symbolic entries I put forward in this piece can be easily dislocated to one's personal story or trajectory, or *your own* touchstones and *your own* lens for knowledge production. In my case it was walking and a cup of tea here and there. What would be yours?

In the process of metaphorically conducting my subjective process of writing, I grasped small patterns and repetitions throughout my fieldnotes and turned them into touchstones for the lyrical part. The rich collection of notes, lyrics, prose/poetry, stimuli, sensations, narratives, clues, repetitions, lines, patterns of walking and memories written in the diaries revealed a line of repetition around flowers, a cup of tea, the Sun, rivers and bridges – helping me to tie together both the mechanical and the symbolic spheres of walking. These touchstones are an integral part of the telling of this *herstory*, connecting movement, meaning and practice and ascribing each of the six facets its own symbolic entry – to render connections between the abstract and the concrete in its mobile experience – contending at the same time the speedy nature of mobility with the facets of the objective world, revealing research that is composed through temporariness, impermanence, reflexivity, subjectivity, sensing, and a touch.

I exercise the translation of the “*touch of the world*” into words, departing from my researcher's role while theorising a subjective lived experience from different sources: the touch of a song lyric, or of living a life as a writer and a poet, to the estrangement of feelings that cannot be expressed only in academic language, but with resonance; the people who *touched* me along the way; the places I've affectively connected to, that I have walked and written by/in/through: the specific feelings – and thereby the knowledge that arises in this embodied engagement, from local to mobile, to

honour experience in the written form. Moreover, I chose three key ideas to shape this lyric inquiry, as follows:

First, the usage of slashed words, in order to communicate words that have a double-folded meaning as I write. *Immobility* and *mobility*, for example, can be expressed within slashes: /im/mobility. With this, I mean that both wor(l)ds are involved in the development of the idea or the circumstance. When the word is meant to have a single meaning, i.e. as when developing ideas around ‘immobility’ only, the full word is written without the slashes. Yet, the slashed word /in/between is a special case. It is the only slashed word to which I give the status of a “sweaty concept” – which I go in detail in Chapter 1.

Second, the *embodied-symbolic* concept/metaphor of the “*Touch of a World*” entangled with the lyrical approach of living as a woman on the move and /in/between worlds; to render the nuanced relation of both embodiment and subjectivity of the gendered subject, be it in local or multiply located explorations, or in comparisons between these two under ideas of sensing, feeling and being touched – both physically and symbolically.

Third, the imagery of the Ouroboros, an ancient symbol of a snake eating its own tail.⁹¹ “I know Earth is a coiled Serpent. Forty years it’s taken to me to enter into the Serpent, to acknowledge that I have a body, that I am a body and to assimilate the animal body, the animal soul” remarks Anzaldúa,⁹² and I acknowledge that *it’s taken me twelve years to acknowledge the same*: that I have a body, that I am a body – as well as to feel ready to enter into the movement of the coiled Serpent I name Ouroboros in this project⁹³.

⁹¹ Spellings: Ouroboros (Brazilian-Portuguese); Uroboros (English); Uroborosz (Hungarian).

⁹² Anzaldúa, Gloria. “Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza.” (1987). P.48.

⁹³ It has been twelve years since the first assault on my body, and only now I am ready to go through its Ouroboros.

Anzaldúa also states that “we are taught that the body is an ignorant animal; intelligence dwell only in the head. But the body is smart (...) it reacts equally viscerally to events from the imagination as it does to ‘real’ events”.⁹⁴

I find in this echo the connection for the use of the Ouroboros, aligning the intelligence of the body – or the embodied part I delve into Chapter 2 – and its cycle in the “equally visceral” metaphorical reflections on Chapter 3, as each chapter represents a half of the serpent until it eats its own tail – or in the metaphor of Aphelion I use in Chapter 3, be alike Earth making its elipse around the Sun. The symbol of the Ouroboros travelled from Egyptian History to Greek Mythology and the Italian Renaissance and have been perpetuated up to this day, having a variety of meanings attached to it that vary from creation to destruction, the recurrence of the solar year to infinity, cyclic endless time, skin change and eternity – or as recently suggests by Dana Reemes, a primary association symbol of “protective enclosure, conceived of as a divine force functioning on multiple levels: cosmic, solar, funereal and individual”.⁹⁵ I use the symbolic force of the Ouroboros as a visual threading line to delineate the full cycle interconnecting the six facets that entangles this herstory: as friction comes to the end of the tail of the snake, another motive force is ready to start the process again: ultimately showing that every ending is a new beginning.

⁹⁴ Anzaldúa, Gloria. “Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza.”. Ibidem. P.59-60.

⁹⁵ Reemes, Dana Michael. “The Egyptian Ouroboros: An iconological and theological study.” PhD diss., UCLA, 2015. P.01.

Chapter 1

/In/Between Worlds

To grasp the nuanced and complex relation of this mobile journey as a female body, I start the analytical part of this project with a foreground explanation of my condition as a body in the world, and later a body that finds itself /in/between worlds. As I foreground this chapter for the telling of this herstory from an in-situ lived experience that starts in São Paulo, to the multi-sited connections acquired while in constant movement between York-São Paulo-Budapest, I delve into the confluence of sensing a primary touch of a world on my body – that is, of violence, silence and fear –, moving on to the subjective pathways that led to me write this story. I use the motif of a “body in the world” to analyse the need for telling this story on the move from two key points: silence and movement, having its focal point in the female body that moves – through walking – and breaks silence – through narrative.

A body in the world

As a story *on the move*, it follows a *storyline*, or a journey that follows a certain chronology and line of thought, a line that has been drawn from seemingly unconnected dots on the map of my own journey.⁹⁶ Ingold reflects: “what do walking, weaving, observing, singing, storytelling, drawing and writing have in common? The answer is that they all proceed along lines of one kind or another”.⁹⁷ This story follows a line of six elements, namely: motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience and friction, and in this very first chapter I lay down the foundations of this storyline.

⁹⁶ Ingold, Tim. *The life of lines*. Routledge, 2015.

⁹⁷ Ingold, Tim. *Lines: a brief history*. Routledge, 2016. P.01.

Ingold & Vergunst recognise the power of narratives of walking. For them walking and talking, or narrating and writing “are quintessential features of what we take to be a human form of life (...) and life itself is as much a long walk and as it is a long conversation”.⁹⁸ Indeed, on this journey of connecting dots and drawing lines in a mobile circumstance, as Ingold states, “things of which the story tells (...) do not so much exist as occur; each is a moment of ongoing activity”;⁹⁹ and this ongoing activity of walking draws the line of this herstory as it occurs, from the lived, embodied experience to the world of *words* – both the ones that exist and the ones acquired through a vocabulary in motion.

To tell this story, I had to break my silence, and I recognise this very action of breaking silence as my resistant subjectivity. Lugones remarks that “resistant subjectivity often expresses itself infra-politically, rather than in a politics of the public (...). Legitimacy, authority, voice, sense and visibility are denied to resistant subjectivity”.¹⁰⁰ This means that my subjective resistance is not the “end or goal of political struggle, but rather as its beginning, its possibility”.¹⁰¹ As such, I wanted to explore this world of possibility as a subject voicing out what has been previously suppressed. “There are so many silences to be broken”, I echo Audre Lorde¹⁰² vigorously as I am on the battleground of trying to break my own, for keeping silent is what I have been taught as a girl, suppressed of means, words and a vocabulary to express myself and my story. Interestingly enough, when I chose to break my silence departing from a story of walking, I found out that walking was, too, silent; a *silent* mobility as observed by Massimo

⁹⁸ Ingold, Tim, and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds. *Ways of walking: Ethnography and practice on foot*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2008. P.01.

⁹⁹ Ingold, Tim. "Up, across and along." *Place and Location: Studies in Environmental Aesthetics and Semiotics* 5 (2006): 21-36. P.30.

¹⁰⁰ Lugones, María. "Toward a decolonial feminism." *Hypatia* 25, no. 4 (2010): 742-759. P.746.

¹⁰¹ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P. 746

¹⁰² Lorde, Audre. "The transformation of silence into language and action." *Identity politics in the women's movement* (1977): 81-84. P.83

Moraglio,¹⁰³ a form of mobility which is often silenced and made peripheral in studies of or related to mobilities in the light of other dominant technologies of movement. All in all, walking sounded like the perfect place to start and break my silence.

Moraglio also remarks that “silent mobilities are voiceless, but they (are) the everyday experience of millions of people. Silent mobilities are often very vibrant, efficient and effective”,¹⁰⁴ and that in the high speed that dominates how works on Mobilities are described, produced and analysed “the most diffuse and globally experienced form of mobility, namely walking, is silenced and it simply disappears”.¹⁰⁵ Cresswell also recognises the fact that walking as a site of knowledge for mobile research is often barely explored in either social or cultural dimensions.¹⁰⁶

In this double-folded silence – both mine and that of walking as a mobile site of knowledge production – this herstory echoes in an analysis of a silent mobility that has a loud say about the different touches of a world on my female body. In this story made on foot and on the ground; that ranges from the uncomfortable feeling that comes with the uninvited, unrequested and intolerable gaze of a man on my body, a silent gaze that is also a silent theft of my privacy, of my right to my body to my own right to make use of the space,¹⁰⁷ among other micro and macro everyday silences. Those poisoning, unbearable silences that kept me immobile and choking day after day, silently.

The feminist comedian Hannah Gadsby says repeatedly in her show *Nanette*¹⁰⁸ that she needs to “tell her story properly” (41:00) after years of a suppressed retelling of her story, acknowledging that “stories need three parts: a beginning, a middle and an end”

¹⁰³ Moraglio, Massimo. "Peripheral mobilities: Looking at dormant, delegitimized and forgotten transport regimes." *Tempo Social* 30, no. 2 (2018): 73-85.

¹⁰⁴ Moraglio, Massimo. Ibid. P.80

¹⁰⁵ Moraglio, Massimo. Ibid. p. 78.

¹⁰⁶ Cresswell, Tim. "Constellations of mobility." *Institute of English Studies* 15 (2008): P.8

¹⁰⁷ Ahmed, Sara. "Living a Feminist Life". Ibidem. P.22.

¹⁰⁸ Available on Netflix: Hannah Gadsby: *Nanette*. 2018, 01:49:06s. <Last accessed in 10th of Feb 2021>.

(39:50). Through the means by which she tells her story – that is, through comedy – she only speaks the beginning and the middle, deeming the ending an “incredibly formative experience at its trauma point” (40:10) one that shouldn’t be left to the mercy of a joke, since “you learn from the part of the story you focus on”. I did the same with my story when I focused on accepting the silence and the immobility imposed to my body; for I now exercise the need to re-tell and re-write my story in conversation with the embodied and symbolic realms of thinking feminist theory.

Sara Ahmed states that “we might at first assume that feminist theory is what feminists working within the academy generate. I want to suggest that feminist theory is something we do at home”. She explores the idea of feminist theory as our inherent ‘homework’, or ‘housework’ in feminist engagements of any kind – not to maintain the house but to “rebuild the master’s residence”.¹⁰⁹ I can clearly listen to the echo of Audre Lorde in this sentence as we, feminist subjects and theorists, forge and create tools of our own to build and maintain our own house, rather than living trapped in the master’s house.¹¹⁰ Ahmed goes on to sharply acknowledge that “in becoming feminists we are doing intellectual as well as emotional work”¹¹¹ and this is exactly what this piece is about: a feminist homework, heavily crossed by both intellectual and emotional spheres of thinking and living my life as a feminist subject /in/between worlds. The value of *feeling* in knowledge production is emboldened in this project via its lyrical approach, since I aim to reveal the vulnerable observant and participant I have become in this process, emphasising in the same balance the emotional and intellectual work of this piece.

¹⁰⁹ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P.7.

¹¹⁰ Lorde, Audre. "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." *Feminist postcolonial theory: A reader* 25 (2003): 27.

¹¹¹ Ahmed, Sara. Ibidem. p.7

I have always been a writer, but I have barely been a walker. The connection between writing and walking brought me to the place of breaking the silence of my fears as I began to put my body out into the world. There are indeed many silences to be broken, and I have learned from women various ways one can break this cycle and tell their stories. Hannah Gadsby told her story by twisting her world of comedy, but only about ten years after her adolescence, when she came to terms with the understanding that she “was allowed to take up space in the world”¹¹² (43:08). Maria Lugones did it via the theorisation of her consciousness of being a daughter and a woman of color, stereotyped, yet finding in her very Latin American existence a rich source of loving differences and travelling “worlds”;¹¹³ Lady Gaga did it through music with “Chromatica”, a herstory about – but not exclusively – the decades of living with the trauma of being a victim of sexual violence.¹¹⁴ This set of examples is bridged by **a)** the will to tell a story; **b)** the healing of traumas forged upon the female body; **c)** in the consciousness of growing up as a girl, of becoming a woman – be it at its intersections with sexuality, place of origin, class or race.

Yet I only started writing a herstory when I crossed borders and navigated my body through them, since the uneasy state I used to live in “my world”, that is, the first world I recognise myself as being part of a world: my homeland, my home city, disowned me from that world; and of being a body in that world, my place of origin. As I crossed borders and got in *touch* with other “worlds”, an evaluation process started – one that both owns and disowns worlds, as Lugones sharply acknowledges

To say of some “world” that it is “my world” is to make an evaluation. One may privilege one or more “worlds” (...) for example because one experiences oneself

¹¹² Available on Netflix: Hannah Gadsby: Nanette. 2018, 01:49:06s. <Last accessed in 10th of Feb 2021>.

¹¹³ Lugones, Maria. "Playfulness, "world"-travelling, and loving perception." *Hypatia* 2, no. 2 (1987): 3-19.

¹¹⁴ Lady Gaga, Chromatica: 2020. Available on all streaming platforms.

as an agent in a fuller sense than one experiences “oneself” in other “worlds”. One may disown a “world” because one has first person memories of a person who is so thoroughly dominated that she has no sense of exercising her own will or has a sense of having serious difficulties in performing actions that are willed by herself.¹¹⁵

That was the case of a simple and ordinary act as walking, which was a serious difficulty in *my world* and an easy, joyful one in *other worlds*. As a woman marked by gender-based violence and rape, my body, primarily located in my place of origin, became not only immobile but desensitised: a desensitisation that was both physical and mental; a tense state when it comes to positive feelings on the one hand, and a swamp of shame and fear when it comes to negative ones, recurrent, with the fear of performing a simple and ordinary act. As I felt the joy of walking again in other cities with no fear, the need to tell this story became as equal as my will to walk around, anywhere, at any time, although crossed by colonial and past reflections on why this joy is possible elsewhere, but not at home.

Moreover, as this fearless walk could only be performed when dislocated from the very place where I was born, in this dislocation I became both a *body in the world* and a *body in between worlds*, here and elsewhere, now and then. My body is my only home, my vehicle, my place of subjectivity. My body is my every day, and walking is one of the everyday practices I perform with it. My body and my walking are parallels and paradoxical to each other: as a woman, my body comes first and turns my walking into fear. When I walk, I make use of this body and I project it into the world: I say to the world that this body, too, should be walking with no fear.

¹¹⁵ Lugones, Maria. "Playfulness, "world"-travelling, and loving perception." *Hypatia* 2, no. 2 (1987): 3-19. P.12-13.

Though the praxis of walking has been informed by Lugone's "world"-travelling, loving perception and playfulness; being, living and feeling in-between became a complicating factor. I find an echo of this nuanced complication in the entanglements of mobile connections and disconnections, displacements and discomforts for an analysis of walking as an embodied site for knowledge production, and more specifically, as a feminist way of knowing and understanding movement through embodiment and metaphor – between the ground that supports my feet and the skies that exist in my mind, as a female body /in/ and /in/between worlds.

A body /in/between worlds

By being a body /in/ between worlds, I stumbled across feelings and circumstances of difficult explanations, even wording, and I needed a vocabulary for that. As I began to be crossed by many touches, how could I describe the feeling of being in between or between something(s)? How could I put into words that strange voice in the back of my head noticing that something was not quite right, yet also not being able to tell for sure what was not right? How could I decipher, turn into words something that is either felt, perceived, assumed or represented; yet hard to write down, even to voice out?

Milton Santos' defined his concept of "schizophrenia of the space"¹¹⁶ as a point of extreme confusion, of being nowhere but **in-between** feelings of inclusion/exclusion, fear/adrenaline; the collapse of certainties and the urge of being certain of (something) again, yet not in contradictory terms but coexisting. This led me to reflections upon the word I needed to describe in a journey that became multiply-located and multiply-shaped

¹¹⁶ Milton Santos, *Por Uma Outra Globalização: Do Pensamento Único à Consciência Universal* (São Paulo: Record, 2000), 55–56.

by the many “worlds” I travelled to, bringing about conflict and compromise, joy and grief, plurality and love.

Not a long time ago I was asked by a childhood friend “*how does it feel to be in constant mobility?*”. In response, I stated “*I feel I’m always between something. Or in between something. Here and elsewhere, now and then, hardly present but also not absent. It is hard to explain*” – and we went on to discuss the ups and downs of staying/leaving; as well as bringing about dozens of memories of our childhoods. That moment I also felt **in between**: happy to share memories in my own language with a long time friend, yet at the same I realised I was collecting other memories and making friends in another language, in other places, in other nuanced and complex encounters.

The nuances and complexity of expressing this *in between* feeling, and making use of this word/expression in English clashed with another term that has always been present in my Brazilian-Portuguese: the “*Meio-Fio*” – or in literal translation the “Mid-Line”. *Meio-Fio* is a slang term for the space between the pavement and the street, where the elevation of the concrete sidewalk concrete draws the line between pedestrians and the cars, and it is used to express situations of waste, dirt and aggression, i.e. beating up someone and leaving them in the “*meio-fio*”; or to designate someone’s condition of feeling lost between a situation that is suffocating: “*I am in the meio-fio*”, “*I feel like I am in the meio-fio*”, “*I am always in the meio-fio*”.

The **in between** and the **meio-fio** translates into each other, though *meio-fio* specifically signifies my constant feeling of displacement **at** home. In between is a need to express my feelings **out** of home: they became reciprocal, complex, detailed; a contradiction and compromise in dislocation, not of a local setting anymore but multiply-located, expanded, navigating worlds, crossing borders – both the physical ones between the South and the North, and the emotional ones within the daily dwelling between

healing wounds and getting new ones – from becoming a “body in the world” to a “body in between worlds, in the meio-fio (mid-line) of worlds”.

The definition and reciprocity of **in-between** became necessary, I turned to Sara Ahmed’s idea of the **sweaty concept**, that is, “one that comes out of a description of a body that is not at home in the world (...) or a description of the world from the point of view of not being at home in it”.¹¹⁷ With my uneasy feel with my body, as I was both a body in the world and “travelling worlds”, I found the relation of a sweaty concept with my in-between feeling “sensational” as Ahmed puts, and I started a process of unboxing sensations until I could define what that in-between feeling/sensation was.

/In/between is the closest I can get to this feeling that is hard to tell, for it slashes the in and the between together; both definite and indefinite, a feeling of displacement, of not being between nor in between: being here, elsewhere, nowhere, mindfully present until the next friction; or that feeling that my body does not have a place in the world; the space /in/between/ my silence and the search for language and definition, making sense of places I inhabit temporarily, allowing me to break the silence of unnamed feelings:

/In/Between/

A feeling of dis/placement and dis/comfort that it is neither good nor bad, yet revealing; both for physical borders, lines and crossings as well for emotional, internal ones; being here and elsewhere, now and then, in a matter of seconds in the mind, hours in a plane, or in the immobility when one is not able to move for borders, political circumstances or other reasons hinders it; the discovery of the possibilities that being both here and elsewhere presupposes, yet also mourning about something with no apparent reason, deeply rooted somewhere between what is being gained and what is being lost, something that cannot be named; living /in/ the middle, on the borders, on the verge and in the silence of loud questions popping up in the head; travelling-worlds and opening up an elastic heart to accommodate other worlds, at the same time it takes away the stability of old worlds, visions, beliefs; yet preserving a core, a condition with the Self who existed before and the one of the now, multiply-located and reallocated; as Anzaldúa says: a crossroad.

Brazilian-Portuguese: Meio-Fio.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Ahmed, Sara. Ibidem, P. 13.

¹¹⁸ NPF502. “Meio-Fio or /In/Between – what is this that I feel?”. *Between Worlds* diary, 2019. York, UK.

The quote above is my own reflection and definition of /in/between, the only slashed word I gave the status of a sweaty concept in this project. It was my need for vocabulary and definition in this Ouroboros, a quest of being multi-sited and feeling myself affectively connected to the different places I stepped in, as well as the changes and “world”-travel that made me a “crossroad”. Anzaldúa spells out that “to live in the Borderlands means you ‘must live *sin fronteras*, be a crossroad’”,¹¹⁹ and in the entanglement of living *sin fronteras* (without borders) I understand as relating to the geographical, affective, migratory, cultural, past, present and future complex and nuanced factors as *crossing roads* all at once, in order to survive the inner feeling of both belonging and not belonging, being an insider and an outsider, mixing languages and habits, -- either the ones inherited and/or learned from the places, peoples and environments that permeates our lives and make us who we are: bodies /in/between what’s lost and gained, felt and unfelt, built and unbuilt, in a motion machine that is mixed with the objective and subjective, the body and the psyche, the known and the yet to be known.

This idea permeates the whole body of analysis of this work, for it is an integral part of the living of a mobile life in its movement, practice and representations. To make sense of this mobile way of living, I needed to look at myself and understand my own conflicting desires. I began with my condition of growing up as a girl. As such, being both mobile and immobile as the circumstance of being a girl in a patriarchal country, being told what to do – and not to do – as well as how to behave, I grew up already disoriented and /in/between my own desires and the societal expectations upon the gender roles thrown over me. I could sense something was wrong, but I only found healing through theory, as the same as bell hooks sharply asserts¹²⁰. I recognised that as girls, the

¹¹⁹ Anzaldúa, Gloria. "Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza." (1987). P.217.

¹²⁰ Hooks, B. (1991). Theory as liberatory practice. *Yale JL & Feminism*, 4, 1. P.01.

restrictions are put us from a very early age and, when we move as an intentional act to feel *present* in own existence, our desires are ceased by this same movement, because our bodies are the first place in which the touch of a world impacts us and put us down.¹²¹

With an /in/between feeling already on the surface, the mobile circumstance reallocated my body to another place: a place away from the norms imposed on me since I was a child. The reallocation of my body to another space happened not long after my feminist consciousness took its shape.¹²² In the quest of a feminist consciousness, Ahmed states that “feminism helps you to make sense that something is wrong, to recognise a wrong is to realise that you are not in the wrong. Becoming feminist: how we redescribe the world we are in.”¹²³

Led by this feminist consciousness, and as the process of “schizophrenia of the space” took its toll, I had to adapt to other sets of norms whilst negotiating the previous ones – for example, hiding my expressiveness as a Brazilian raised in a way that the body language speaks louder than actual words; feeling uneasy with the length and loudness of my laughter when all eyes would scan me with a sense of *exotic disgust* while in some spaces in the UK, and trying to appear as “composed” as possible to adequate myself to that new set of social etiquette and to avoid the sensing that I was *wrong* in being in that place.¹²⁴ The schizophrenia of inhabiting a space, that is my body, a body ‘touched by the world’ and existing /in/between: in/between the assaults of the male-dominated territory and the self that senses something is out of place. This is a schizophrenia not only of the space but of the senses, in the invasion of my own space, and the realisation that moving

¹²¹ Ahmed, Sara. “Living a Feminist Life”. Ibidem. P.27.

¹²² Ahmed, Sara. “Living a Feminist Life”. Ibidem. P.27.

¹²³ Ahmed, Sara. “Living a Feminist Life”. Ibidem. P.27.

¹²⁴ At section 4 in Chapter 3, “Route”, I bring a poem named “Poetry from the South” that relates to this sensation of being wrong and /in/between, in a place where I do not feel at ease, invoking the idea of the schizophrenia of the space once more.

doesn't refer only to the material realm of packing up a suitcase and getting onboard a plane or a train; but moving one's own referencing according to the various spaces one step into and adaptation strategies to feel at "ease" in that world.

And because I tell this story as both the subject and the researcher, I present my most vulnerable self, the body that has been hurt and the Self that has been emptied, in this schizophrenic state and always /in/between the psyche of who I've become after leading a mobile life and who I've been all these years; the psyche of a survivor, and also a dreamer; of a woman that struggles, yet goes on; and finding in the echo of movement rather than immobility the very place of her body: a body in the world, a body in movement, a psyche that is both loud and silent, the borders of my own /in/betweenness/ while walking here and elsewhere, now and then.

Chapter 2
*O Caminhar se faz andando*¹²⁵

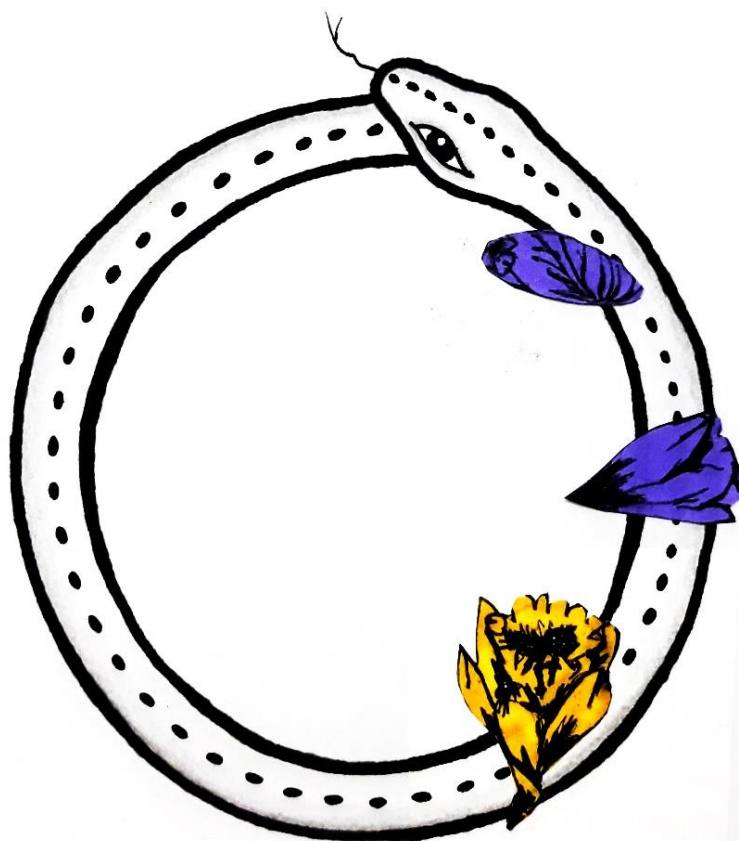


Image 1: Daffodils-Ouroboros – Motive Force, Velocity, Rhythm.¹²⁶

In this chapter I start the analysis of the mobility of this body in a world and /in/between worlds under three out of six elements of mobility: motive force, velocity and rhythm – or the first half of the Daffodils-Ouroboros drawn lovingly by my sister (see

¹²⁵ Brazilian-Portuguese “O Caminhar se Faz Andando”, from Paulo Freire, based on the opening poem of this work by Antonio Machado “Caminante”. English translation: “Walking can only exist if we do, indeed, walk”.

¹²⁶ Daffodils-phased Ouroboros depicting the first three elements of mobility: Motive Force, Velocity, Rhythm. Artist: Thayna Pais Pereira. São Paulo, Brazil. February, 2021.

footnote 126). I group them under the scope of Embodiment, for the “first” lap of this herstory has its beginning in recognising worlds around. Lee & Ingold acknowledge that “walking affords an experience of embodiment to the extent that it is grounded in an inherently sociable engagement between self and environment”.¹²⁷ As such, it focuses on the practice as well as some of its meanings and, most importantly, as Cresswell notes, in its politics, as “there is a politics of mobile practice. How is mobility embodied? How comfortable is it? Is it forced or free? A man and a woman, or a businessman and a domestic servant, or a tourist and a refugee may experience a line of a map linking *A* to *B* completely differently”.¹²⁸ In the nuanced and complex relation of this walk, I take the first lap in understanding the embodiment and its link to three elements of mobility, to give the grounds for the explorations in Chapter 3 about the symbolic depth of the embodied experiences of walking, moving, sensing and reflecting upon the praxical, lived experience of this journey.

Each section of this chapter follows a storyline, starting with an opening story of walking that serves to the analysis proposed in each element of mobility: motive force, velocity and rhythm. Throughout the analysis, other shorter stories are also given as secondary inputs, and each section paves the way to the next analytical element. My critical narrative does not follow a straight line from city to city; rather it brings specific stories that orbits around each facet of mobility, with some aspects more evidenced in a specific place than others. The analysis ranges from making use of the public space as a female body, the relation of velocity with slowness as well as the intermittent rhythms that connects the physical practice of walking with its symbolic sphere.

¹²⁷ Lee and Ingold, *Fieldwork on Foot: Perceiving, Routing, Socializing in: Locating the Field: Space, Place and Context in Anthropology*. P.68.

¹²⁸ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobilities*, Ibidem. P.21.

Motive Force: moving as a female body

Box 1. *That's enough of São Paulo*

"WHY WERE YOU walking alone at this time of the night?" was the first thing the officer in charge asked me when I went to the police station to press charges against the first rape I was a victim of. I was walking home late at night and was fifteen years old at the time; and the last thing I was expecting was that sentence, and it came as a shock. I got immediately silent: I realised that I was already considered guilty, while that man who has violated me was being given entitlement by an authority. That was my first confrontation with a gendered imbalance of power, and it did hurt in my body as if it was another punch of that night's rapist. I was not expecting to be blamed by my solitary walk home. That sentence hovered over my head for about eleven years alongside the fear, the shame and the trauma that event imprinted on me.

On another night, around eight years later, my partner and I were walking along a route always safe to us, near his workplace in a fairly safe neighbourhood in São Paulo. As we crossed the street to the next quarter, a group of drunk men hooligans were having a barbecue on the sidewalk, restricting the passage to everyone. My partner, a man, asked *"excuse me; can I pass?"* twice. No reply. They did not move. As they pretended not to hear, my partner opened some space himself to walk through and held my hand to take me with him. The hooligans started to curse and yell at us, as if we were the troublemakers. I turned to them and said: *"this space is public"*. The only reply I got from one of those men was a punch straight on my face that made me fall instantly.

"That's enough of São Paulo" I said to my partner, angry and numb at the same time. How could I stay? Those displays of violence were building up on my body and my mind, leaving me desensitised, fearful, numb. I was asking myself in tears: how could I stay in a place where even a sidewalk is not safe? *"I love this place"*, my heart was aching by recognising that; yet: how could I stay? In the battleground of loving my hometown and having had enough, staying was the scene of falling down in the street again and again, while moving out seemed like a better action to take. That night marked exactly one month prior of getting my UK visa and flying out of that place. *"That's the best thing you can do, to leave this hell"*, my partner said in tears, too, while icing my swollen face and shaking, in a mix of anger and hopelessness, after having beaten up, in return, that stupid man.

The stories above relate to the first facet of the journey I analyse in this project: the reasoning behind my motive force to leave Home and try a life abroad: violence and

fear. **Motive Force**, according to Cresswell, is moved by the quest of “why does a person or thing move? An object has to have a force applied to it before it can move. With humans this force is complicated by the fact that it can be internal as well external”. The author goes on to acknowledge that “the difference between choosing and not choosing (to move) is never straightforward and there are clearly degrees of necessity”.¹²⁹ The impossibility of freely navigating my in-situ world and the violence I used to expect from only taking one step after another was this necessity and, although moving abroad seemed a better option in the beginning, walking freely elsewhere has proven to become a complicating factor in itself, since it added unexpected layers to my sole primary intention – and I go in detail on these layers through each one of the six elements I analyse in this piece, as they are, inherently, entangled with one another.

The fear of violence ingrained in my body was hurting me as I was in motion, and fearing something might happen to me simply because I am a female body was wrong, I sensed; and *sensing wrongs*, says Ahmed, is this first step we take within our feminist consciousness – that is, the moment in which we start to “put the pieces together”¹³⁰ and make meaning of what we sense is wrong in the world. For Ahmed, becoming feminist starts with the body, as we notice this “relentless assault on the senses”¹³¹ that is violent, painful, wrong. Later we move on to the sense that something is wrong, tying the pieces and the blocks together¹³² and, little by little, it becomes clear that “as feminists (...) we begin to experience gender as a restriction of possibility, and we learn about worlds as we navigate these restrictions”.¹³³ For Ahmed, these restrictions become apparent as a result of the act of running in public spaces as a woman of colour.¹³⁴ For me, walking was

¹²⁹ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobilities*, Ibidem. P.22.

¹³⁰ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P. 07.

¹³¹ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P. 27.

¹³² Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P. 27-31.

¹³³ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a feminist life*. Ibidem. P.07.

¹³⁴ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P. 23.

this very act that evidenced gendered restrictions, emphasised when comparing my in-situ experience with the experience of walking other spaces, and navigating other worlds.

This reflection around public spaces dates back to the Victorian-era with the notion of confining women to the domestic sphere whilst imagining a public sphere where only men participated – as it was the case of the primary act of the male flaneur, “strolling and looking”, allowed to be an observant and a participant in public life. In reality, this was of course not the case, however this did severely impact the mobility of women and their engagement in public and political life.¹³⁵ Though this notion remounts to more than centuries ago, the freedom to walk or make use of the public domain is still a quest for women in various ways.¹³⁶ This realisation was the turning point from my walking as an ordinary, hindered act into a praxis: I aligned my feminist consciousness with this embodied practice, to confront my fear and take an action of defiance against the internalised mechanisms of patriarchy. Later, this act of defiant movement in public become for me a playful, loving, joyful one.

When examining the idea of using the public space and who gets to have the “right” to use it, Yasminah Beebeejaun is sharp to acknowledge how “rights” are, in themselves gendered,¹³⁷ as well as racialised, unequally distributed, marginalised and gentrified. She goes on to acknowledge that the economic, political underrepresentation of women and the prevalence of violence against women are three key factors evidencing persistent gendered inequalities, which in turn impacts on one’s “rights” to use the public

¹³⁵ See more in Anderson, Ellen; Willett, Cynthia; and Meyers, Diana, “Feminist Perspectives on the Self”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/feminism-self/>>.

¹³⁶ See more in Lamoureux, Diane. “Público/privado.” In: Hirata, Helena et al (org.) *Dicionário Crítico do Feminismo*; LABOIRE, Françoise (2009) – Editora Unesp (2009).

¹³⁷ Beebeejaun, Yasminah. “Gender, urban space, and the right to everyday life.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 39, no. 3 (2017): 323-334. P. 323-324.

space or to be allowed in the public domain. The idea of marginalised urban dwellers,¹³⁸ that is, gendered, racialised, and gentrified bodies, seems of crucial importance to the uses of space in the city, or to whom gets to dwell in the city.

For sure this is still a major quest for women. Let's start with being a woman and walking in the cities of my motherland, for example. The Brazilian documentary about street harassment *Enough with Catcalling*¹³⁹ follows the daily mobility of three women in the cities of Brasilia (Brasil's capital) and São Paulo (my home city), and the harassment they suffer while moving. They are all dealing with internalised traumas – rape, abuse, misogyny, transphobia and daily violence – while voicing out their personal political as female bodies robbed of their own right to navigate the cities they live in, evidencing the ingrained *sensing* of having our bodies as our main vehicle for fear. Here, it is crucial to understand that the violence of homeland comes from its colonial legacy, as the “colonial ‘civilizing mission’ was the euphemistic mask of brutal access to people’s bodies through imaginable exploitation, violent sexual violation, control of reproduction and systematic terror”, as Lugones sharply remarks.¹⁴⁰ The systematic terror of this colonial legacy on the female body still constitutes itself in the daily violence of harassment and rape, with the public sphere still a privileged space for the male dweller.

If I reallocate this fear-driven walk to other spaces, there are a couple of other examples that seem significant to look at. Let's see the example of a woman walking the streets of New York City, in the United States, a country that is also marked by violence and inequality derived from the imperialistic and exploitative past of Americas. In a

¹³⁸ Beebeejaun, Yasminah. "Gender, urban space, and the right to everyday life." Ibidem. P. 324

¹³⁹ Original title: “Chega de Fiu-Fiu”. Brazil, 2018. See more at: <http://www.bu.edu/ioc/chega-de-fiu-fiu-enough-with-catcalling/> <Last accessed: 15Jan2021>. Available at: <https://globoplay.globo.com/chega-de-fiu-fiu/t/2kKvfzVyR/>. <Last accessed: 15Jan2021>.

¹⁴⁰ Lugones, María. "Toward a decolonial feminism." *Hypatia* 25, no. 4 (2010): 742-759. P. 744.

project called *10 hours of walking in NYC as a woman*,¹⁴¹ a hidden camera follows the trajectory of a cis-woman walking alone in a “silent walk” in Manhattan, wearing jeans and a black t-shirt. This walking project also portrays other scenarios, as for example a woman walking in NYC wearing a hijab,¹⁴² a woman talking back whenever she is catcalled,¹⁴³ or walking in NYC as a lesbian couple,¹⁴⁴ among others. This set of examples helps to elucidate walking as one important way of examining gender restrictions, and how these restrictions starts with the body – a body walking on the streets, a body dressed a certain way, a body that carries different markers – and how this body becomes in itself a vehicle of restriction of movement in the public sphere for women.

I chose the first scenario, denominated as a “silent walk”, in which the woman would not reply to the catcalls or other forms of harassment: just the same as I would do to keep me safe back at home. At a certain point, one man walks silently alongside her, following her through the walk for five minutes straight. By the end of the ten-hour walk, the project has counted more than a *hundred* instances of verbal street harassment. Sentences such as “*How you doing today? Smile. I guess not good. Smile!*”, “*Goddamn, mama*” and “*Hey girl, how you doing? Somebody’s acknowledging you for being beautiful, you should say thank you more!*” represent some of the verbal violence from that walk, followed by an unbearable set of gazes over that woman’s body. These stances of verbal assault goes back to the police officer of the opening story, my story, as well as the silence we must perform: while the male-dominated space is entitled to talk, we are intimidated into silence.

¹⁴¹ Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1XGPvbWn0A>. Last accessed: <15Jan2021>.

¹⁴² Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgw6y3cH7tA&t=167s>. Last accessed: <15Jan2021>.

¹⁴³ Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35KqGNa1FGA&t=1s>. Last accessed: <15Jan2021>.

¹⁴⁴ Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TG1QzN9IQs>. Last accessed: <15Jan2021>.

I also do recall, in the spring of 2020 that I went out for a walk in Budapest with one of my girlfriends. We were enjoying the good weather and I counted that she was catcalled four times in less than a half an hour. She told me she was used to it and had learned how to navigate such circumstances, because the patriarchy installed in her homeland was a “thousand times harder than that”. That walk resonated to me as we, women, are always on the verge of having to **learn** how to navigate restrictions, ingrained in the feeling that this is *for our own safety* and making our bodies invisible and silent. No marks should be left where we step in, no sounds should be produced upon our arrival. The toughest part of this examination is that no man needs to tell us this; we simply learn it – swallowing the pain and keeping ourselves silent.

Although I was silent to the external world, I was not at all silent in my head. I was repeatedly asking myself: Why can't I go out for a walk without looking over my shoulder? Why do I always feel like I am a danger to myself every time I am out? Why can't I just feel good about going out? Why can't I enjoy the city I live in, get home late and not fear for my physical and mental integrity? As these questions were always revolving around me, I remember one day being interrupted in a classroom when Carla Cristina Garcia¹⁴⁵ raised her voice to say in a tone that was both playful and serious: “Yes, *that quote, that opening quote of that book, you know, Virginia Woolf: Ela foi comprar flores sozinha*”. That was the opening quote of Mrs. Dalloway:

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Carla Cristina Garcia is a professor of Feminist Studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, in Brazil, and my mentor into Feminist Studies since 2017.

¹⁴⁶ Woolf, Virginia. “Mrs. dalloway.” In *Collected Novels of Virginia Woolf*, pp. 33-176. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1992.

This book's opening sentence struck me with the same sensation when Ahmed remarks that one gets "aroused by what they come up against".¹⁴⁷ I was put *against myself* and my own question; in a sensation that made me stop for a while and /un/build the world and the city I was living in, standing still /in/between/ the divisions of public-private, male-female, allowed and not allowed to respond to my urge to walk, to buy flowers myself, rather than asking my male partner to do it for me. How many times have I bought flowers myself? How many times have I said: "I will buy flowers myself"? When did I gain and when did I lose my freedom to walk and buy flowers on the way? Could I do it, buy them, pick them, find them somehow, somewhere, not here, but elsewhere? *Why not here, only there?* How would I feel after choosing some, paying and thanking the florist, walking /home/, arriving /home/, feeling safe? What would that feeling be like, that type of non-violent *touch of a world* on me?

When I first left Brasil to live abroad I wanted another life, a life with no fear – a fear that I later realised was gendered, political and geographical. As Cresswell point out, "the development of a geographical understanding of mobility (...) can in turn inform theorisations of gender, ethnicity or any other form of social relation",¹⁴⁸ and I decided to leave for my fear was choking me, leaving me paralysed, and I recognised that my walk could become the very place to theorise movement and gender. I may conclude this section by stating plainly that my **motive force was violence and fear**; or in a playful symbolism: **the urge to buy flowers myself**. Fear and silence were connected as the main element in my walk, and I decided to retool these same drives – fear and silence – into a motive force for resistance. Ahmed points out that we, as feminists, can make use of retooling strategies to turn what is against us to "our own purposes", exemplified in her

¹⁴⁷ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P.22.

¹⁴⁸ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobilities*, Ibidem. P.21.

writing as retooling figures, or antifeminist figures.¹⁴⁹ I retooled my vulnerable observant and participant condition by turning a simple and ordinary act as walking into my everyday praxis, and walking became my own feminist killjoy *thing*.¹⁵⁰

Yet, this search for a place where fear would not be a daily companion brought other challenges and a whole systemic process into view: the process of living *on the move* and never quite settled, or /in/between; feeling other touches, processing many feelings and emotions on my sense of self made elastic when living here and elsewhere, now and then, disoriented and dislocated, all at once. And as I crossed borders, the second element of mobilities surfaced strongly: **velocity**, or when I started to adapt myself to different speeds as the walk went on.

¹⁴⁹ Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Ibidem. P. 02.

¹⁵⁰ See more in: Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. "Feminist Killjoy Survival Kit". P.241.

Velocity: I'm always late

Box 2. I'm always late

IN SÃO PAULO, one is always in a rush. I made my way to the British Embassy for my visa application and as I walked those streets, I was paying attention to anything but my busy mind, worrying about being late and missing the appointment. I left the train station, rushed towards the big avenue and cursed at the pedestrian red lights in front of me at the crossroad. “You’re always late, Natalia!”, I said repeatedly. The session in the Embassy was not at all pleasant: there was no British tea with a drop of milk and cake in there, just a very strict foreign policy to be felt right away; and all I wanted was to walk away from that place as soon as I could.

When I left their office, I slowed down my pace while making the same way back and passed by this lady selling juices and hot-dogs in *paulista* style.¹⁵¹ She gave me a smiley *Bom Dia!*¹⁵² and I replied with another silly, smiley *Bom Dia!* in this naive happiness of being greeted by someone. Now as I recall it, I wonder if I had passed by her on my way to the office in the morning and have not noticed; and whether that was the second time she was greeting me. It seems that only when I had slowed down the pace of my steps and of the worry of my mind could I have accepted and given her a “*bom dia*” back; and I still regret that I did not buy one of her Amazon fruit juices – that now I miss and cannot even dream of finding it abroad.

In York once, I had to rush and that was abnormal – York is not the type of place where one is in a rush. I had to pick up my residence permit, that one I had applied for in São Paulo, and I woke up late to catch my ride. “You’re still late, Natalia, even here!” I told to myself while rushing to the car. When I got there, I collected the residence permit, exchanged some currency for the first time, sat by a photobooth and took a photograph that marked the whole journey. I still have it.

As I was walking out of that building, I looked around and noticed how it was full of students, like me, collecting their permits and exchanging their money, sitting by the photobooth, laughing at their photographs. I did not laugh at mine, though. I was too displaced to feel anything. I walked from the corner of the building to the main avenue and crossed it in the wrong direction, on the opposite side of where I should be going. My pace changed from slow to still when I stared at the horizon in front of me. The place I was occupying struck me forcefully from head to toe: Lendal Bridge, above the Ouse river, in a blue-skied cold day in York.

¹⁵¹ The word *paulista* means “from São Paulo”.

¹⁵² Good morning in Brazilian-Portuguese.

Another day in Budapest I was late, again. I do not even have to mention that I looked at the ceiling of my room and said “Natalia, you never learn, for God’s sake!”. It was the middle of my first term, on a rainy day, and I did not have the strength to rush. all I wanted was to peacefully walk my way to class. But I rushed, and I recalled my mother telling me I should not run in the rain otherwise I would slip and fall, and I say the same to my daughter, but kids never listen, and grown-up kids never learn. If in São Paulo I was made late by the worry, and in York I was too displaced to feel anything, in Budapest I was crushed, walking here and there with no direction, uncomfortably slowly. I did not go to class that day. I decided to stop by the river, sit on the rocks and watch the rain from there. I would make up an excuse to my professors later. Later, later, later. As I am always late.

“*This is why I learned to walk, for these belated bitter steps. I bear the wounds of all the fights I avoided in the past*” sings Platon Karataev,¹⁵³ and as the journey was just starting elsewhere, walking mindfully was imperative, rather than fearing the bitter steps I have taken in the past. As the song puts it, I was bearing all the fights I had avoided previously, moving from one line to another, one city to another, and to my own estate as a body *in the world*. That pause-forward in the previous circumstances of my walk meant that the speed, or the velocity of my steps, have changed drastically. The stories above connects the quest of velocity with frames in time – rushing, lateness, stand still, a slow pace – and the repetitions that connects the three cities under the same scope of these very *learning* process of walking mindfully – and with no fear.

In this section, I bring the refrain of “*I’m always late*”, or a circumstance that kept repeating itself in different settings as my walk was /re/located to different places. The repetitions of a life that doesn’t end *elsewhere* simply as it starts from where it has just moved, but continues /in/between parallel notions of my integration within this new life, this renewed walking practice, of fully embodying and being mindfully present, and reflecting upon the praxis of loving perception in both my bodily and subjective relation

¹⁵³ Platon Karataev: “Bitter Steps”. In: Atoms, 2020. Budapest, Hungary.

with the local environment: in the inevitable shocks and the slowdown in the pace that moving from a metropol (São Paulo) to a small city (York) required, at first; and walking back into a larger city (Budapest) after moving once again, adapting the pace of my walk to its inevitable repetitions.

Velocity, or “how fast does a person or thing move?”¹⁵⁴ Fast, slow, observant, passing through, too fast, temporary, too slow. The velocity I analyse in this section is one that slows down and serves as a bridge to sense the space through walking in its praxical condition. Velocity here has a double-folded meaning: it is in the physical realm – in a rush, or always late, for example – but also in how the velocity of the subject marks its relation with the environment and let it unfold. If one is always in a rush, or if one is always late, what types of relations can be taken from very opposite forms of velocity, especially under terms of mobility? As the stories reveals, I was always late; and my relation with space was one of intermittent moments of hurry – most of the times – and appreciation of the environment around – when I was able to finally “make time” for the action as a mindful one. Velocity, as the second facet of this mobile journey, unfolds the linkage point between the previous fearful **motive force** and the next, stable, mindful **rhythmic** praxis I performed through this Ouroboros.

In this sense, I remember I delivered a lecture about walking to a group of undergraduates in Leisure and Tourism at the University of São Paulo¹⁵⁵ and one of my students remarked how it is easy to give preference to the use of transport instead of walking, because it *saves time* in a metropol that is always in a rush like São Paulo. He went into detail about one opposite experience, in which he has decided to escape the

¹⁵⁴ Cresswell, Tim. Politics of Mobilities, Ibidem. P.13.

¹⁵⁵ PPGTUR EACH-USP, on the course “Mobilities and Tourism”. Invitation from Prof. Thiago Allis. October, 2020. São Paulo – via Berlin, in an online format given the Coronavirus pandemic.

ultra-crowded metro stations between *Sé* and *São Bento* in São Paulo¹⁵⁶ and has gone to his destination on foot. When he left the station, he noticed for the first time the richness of detail on the buildings around that block, that street and the movement of people. “*I lived all my life in this city and never paid attention to that. It was a striking moment for me.*”. His remark goes in the direction of Solnit’s acknowledgement that “the multiplication of technologies in the name of efficiency is actually eradicating free time by making it possible to maximize the time and place for production and minimize the unstructured travel time in between”.¹⁵⁷ In my student’s process of “relearning” to walk in his own city, another type of connection was made – the use of transport had *un-known* him from his relation with the space, yet having the opportunity to get *known* once again as he slowed down the pace and connected with the city on foot. His example illustrates that, in the name of speed, a slower connection with the surroundings gets underrated, yet striking when claimed back through walking.

The embodiment walking provides on the ground both on the making of the journey and the reaching of a destination follow a thin *line* of inquiry. Ingold dives into the metaphor of “lines”, with especial emphasis in the “hurry” of our current times. He remarks that one wants to “get from one location to another, and then to another, but has little time to do so. (...) It goes from point to point, in sequence, as quickly as possible, and in principle in no time at all”.¹⁵⁸ With this *little* time, the conditions posed by a fast and mobile world inevitably collide with one’s own notion of spatio-temporalities, and walking comes into play to slow down this pace in time and to understand the space as present in *there*. Milton Santos refers to space as “the place that performs and reveals the

¹⁵⁶ São Paulo – Central-Blue metro urban line.

¹⁵⁷ Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A history of walking*. Ibidem. P. 20.

¹⁵⁸ Ingold, Tim. “Up, across and along.” *Place and Location: Studies in Environmental Aesthetics and Semiotics* 5 (2006): 21-36. P.22.

world (...), the world that this same space reproduces in a specific manner - individual, diverse. Spaces are singulars but also global, a manifestation of the entirety of which they are just particular forms".¹⁵⁹ This relation of space as both individual and diverse, but also a territory for frictions and reproductions, as acknowledged by Appadurai,¹⁶⁰ in this embodied practice informing both the subject in situ – as my student, for example, recognising his own city after two decades – and the multi-sited, mobile subject, recognising the space and the cities as it transits in it, almost as sensing it – on foot, looking, recognising, and able to draw new lines and connections with that space.

Here, the velocity of contemporaneity is contradicted by the slow movement of the lived experience on foot, as the walking goes on or is prevented. Cresswell states that “mobility is a resource that is differentially accessed”,¹⁶¹ that is, the pace of one may be slower or faster than another, the mobility of some may require the fixity of others, depending on a wide array of social, systemic conduits that both enable mobility for a part of the population and hinder it to another part.¹⁶² This unequal pace in /im/mobility has been an important site of analysis when looking at markers such as race, class, disability, sexuality and gender, as well as social and environmental relations between the North and the Global South.¹⁶³

“Who has the time and space to be slow by choice?” Cresswell inquiries,¹⁶⁴ and indeed, in the fast pace of the twenty-first century and as a body marked by gender and its place of origin in the Global South, choosing was only possible in a temporary

¹⁵⁹ Santos, M. (2002). *Por uma outra globalização: do pensamento único ao pensamento universal*. Rio de Janeiro, Record. P.55.

¹⁶⁰ Appadurai, A. (1991). Global ethnoscaples: Notes and queries for a transnational anthropology. *Recapturing anthropology: Working in the present*, 4, 191-210.

¹⁶¹ Cresswell, Tim. Politics of Mobilities, Ibidem. P.21.

¹⁶² Cresswell, Tim. Politics of Mobilities, Ibidem.

¹⁶³ See more in Sheller, Mimi. "Theorising mobility justice." *Tempo Social* 30, no. 2 (2018): 17-34. Sheller, Mimi. *Mobility justice: The politics of movement in an age of extremes*. Verso Books, 2018.

¹⁶⁴ Cresswell, Tim. Politics of Mobilities. Ibidem. P.23.

timeframe – that of being in academic mobility. Walking as an intentional practice functioned as if “buying time”, and slowing down became a process of intentionality, an embodied presence, and this in turn is what made it possible to turn walking as a praxis: first it is an action foregrounded in theory, until this action becomes the intention with upcoming reflections that range from one’s own connection with space and time to the impermanence of things. This cycle of reflection upon practice *and* the practice informed by theory is a dialectical relation that makes it possible to produce knowledge and epistemically conduct other ways of knowing, although this should be approached mindfully in regards to different contexts and the uneven accessibility of mobility.¹⁶⁵

Indeed, slowing down the pace helped me to do my *homework* in knowledge production and to transform my house¹⁶⁶, this mobile house I have now: a house with no location and no site except its constant movement, reflexive of actions performed in a temporary timeframe, marking differently paces and spaces. Although mobility relates to the flux of things, peoples and ideas within a borderless continuum, with a delineation of space getting less and less visible,¹⁶⁷ time is the crucial commodity of mobility. Velocity, or speed, becomes “immediacy”¹⁶⁸ and as Vannini recognises, it dives in the quest of “what might constitute speed is the sense of distance overcome”.¹⁶⁹ Rarely one would think on the top of its head about velocity as *slow* – fairly often speed and velocity are packed in the meaning of how fastest one can get, or a thing could be, in the frenzy of

¹⁶⁵ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia do oprimido*. Editora Paz e Terra, 1968. Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia da libertação em Paulo Freire*. Editora Paz e Terra, 2018. Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogia da esperança: um reencontro com a pedagogia do oprimido*. Editora Paz e Terra, 2014; and Mignolo, Walter D. "Geopolitics of sensing and knowing: on (de) coloniality, border thinking and epistemic disobedience." *Postcolonial studies* 14, no. 3 (2011): 273-283.

¹⁶⁶ Ahmed, Living a Feminist Life. Ibidem. P.07.

¹⁶⁷ Sheller, Mimi, and John Urry. "Mobilizing the new mobilities paradigm." *Applied Mobilities* 1, no. 1 (2016): 10-25; Sheller, Mimi, and John Urry. "The new mobilities paradigm." *Environment and planning A* 38, no. 2 (2006): 207-226.

¹⁶⁸ Cresswell, Tim. Politics of Mobility. Ibidem. P.23.

¹⁶⁹ Vannini, Phillip. Distance. In: Adey, Peter, David Bissell, Kevin Hannam, Peter Merriman, and Mimi Sheller, eds. *The Routledge handbook of mobilities*. Routledge, 2014: 103:124. P.104.

constant mobility. Yet, another relation with speed and overcoming distance is created when one's living becomes elastic, distant from its in-situ condition to a mobile, multiply-located new spectrum, and its opposite – the slow – comes into play. *Time is a mind's creation*,¹⁷⁰ says the last line of one of my favourite Downtempo songs playing on shuffle as I am walking along Budapest's Danube riverbank, and this led me to question what is time when one's notion of time gets dislocated, /in/between running late or standing still? The experience of walking is crossed by many layers, but ultimately, it is an experience of times, velocity and rhythms.

It is in this distortion of times and movements, in a world that has witnessed abrupt technological transformations and significant changes in the ways we travel, communicate, express feelings, ideas, connect with one another, learn, copy & create, /re/create and understand ourselves as individuals in the ultra-connected community we've become,¹⁷¹ in the pace of an external and mobile journey which configures itself *on the way*, sometimes in an unpredictable manner and, almost certainly, unequally depending on the intersections, bodies and social markers one carries,¹⁷² that I was slowly being led to the next element of mobility: rhythm, within its repetitions and distortions of time as I would pause for a simple, ordinary, cup of tea.

¹⁷⁰ Fresno & Tuyó, "Cada Accidente", track 8 on *Sua Alegria foi Cancelada*, BMG Brasil, 2019, compact disc.

¹⁷¹ Urry, John. *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. Routledge, 2012.

¹⁷² Freire-Medeiros, B., Telles, V. D. S., & Allis, T. (2018). Apresentação: Por uma teoria social on the move. *Tempo Social*, 30(2), 1-16.

Rhythm: Slowdown

Box 3. A cup of tea, please

YORK.

It was the spring of 2019 and I walked through the city center, from York Minster and the Shambles to Conney Street, crossing back and forth and sensing every street. I stopped by a Brazilian restaurant and made friends with the owner, a Brazilian man, and that place became a safe zone in the middle of that doll-house style city of York. I paid attention to all green and red lights, the flowers on the way; I climbed up to the Roman Walls and had a full-circle walk on the boundaries that the wall symbolically represents, and I finished the walk via the Ouse Riverside, taking my way home from there.

The walk /home/ from the city centre's riverside – just next to the Museum Gardens – used to take twenty-five minutes, sometimes an hour if I chose to stop by the park to check on their flowers too. When I arrived /home/, opened the door of the house and said “Hello!”, I heard the kettle on and Gary told me from the kitchen “*oh, you arrived just in time for tea!*”. I went straight to the kitchen, he grabbed another mug, I put the teabag in, he poured the water and I added a drop of milk to both our cups. We sat at the table near the big glass door to enjoy some more daylight and I started telling him about my walk, with my bare English at that time, and he was all ears.

BUDAPEST.

We are still mysteries to each other I said to him as we sat down to have tea in this fairy-tale type of tea place in Budapest. We were exhausted and sweaty after a long walk; it was a hot day of summer around August 2020. He agreed with his eyes and replied “*igen, we are*”, following an embarrassed laugh since he said *igen* instead of yes – Hunglish, as I have learned. He poured the tea in our cups and I added the ice cubes; we sometimes mixed our languages while talking and it always worked. I sat more loosely and said “*igen, igen*” back to him with playful eyes; we laughed in a low tone, comfortably, sipping the tea and looking at each other. Good manners in Hungary, you know – you do the same if you're having a *pálinka*, which I really appreciate – both a *nagy* shot of *pálinka* and travelling worlds through somebody's eyes.

SÃO PAULO.

I walked the whole of my Alma Mater's campus on that December day; it was summer back in Brasil. I'd rather walk under the Sun, though it was too hot for my skin now getting used to the lower temperatures in the North. I went to the Philosophy library to borrow *All Men Are Mortal* by Simone du Beauvoir in its Portuguese translation – there is an immense pleasure when I get to read in my language, and I decided to walk all the way from the nearest metro station to the library. It was a long walk through the sidewalks, and the trees were giving some

shade to that enormous heat; I passed by the Philosophy building, walked through every corner of its garden, went up the stairs to the library and searched for the book.

When I managed to borrow it, I took the same way back, though this time I stopped by the cafeteria in the Education building and was about to order a Brazilian coffee, but instead I ordered tea. “A cup of tea, please”, I said and that felt unusual – Brazilians and coffee are almost synonyms if I may say – and that gave me a strange rush that I sort of appreciated. I spent a couple of hours sitting by myself, accompanied only by Simone, and remembered a passage from Virginia Woolf:

“How much better is silence; the *coffee cup*, the table. How much better to sit by myself like the solitary sea-bird that opens its wings on the stake. Let me sit here forever with bare things, *this coffee cup*, this knife, this fork, things in themselves, **myself being myself.**” ¹⁷³

Though it was a cup of tea, not coffee, I was indeed *there*, sitting with my bare things, and that other version of me was **myself**, too.

In this third element of mobility, – rhythm – the praxis of walking starts to reveal itself in its comfortability and appreciation. Departing from this rhythmic encounter of my walking with intermittent pauses and spaces, I now started to blend places and circumstances – tea instead of coffee in Brasil, Hungarian in an English conversation, bare English to express my Brazilian-Portuguese driven emotional context of recognition of space and the presence of my body, flowers and heat on my way. Intertwined with my loving-perception and playfulness as I was on the move, my praxis of walking was allowing me to experience worlds – sharing tea, sharing language, sharing pauses – both with other people and with myself, which now unfolds differently as before. This rhythmic balance after Velocity was giving shape to my walking, and I was both learning and producing knowledge about the worlds I was travelling to playfully; at least until the next elements I analyse in Chapter 3, or walking in its symbolic spheres.

¹⁷³ Woolf, Virginia. *The Waves*. 1931. New York: Harcourt, 1959. P.295.

Cresswell's notion of rhythm departs from the question of "in what rhythm does a person or thing move?", with the acknowledgement that "rhythms are composed of repeated moments of movement and rest, or, alternatively, simply repeated movements with a particular measure".¹⁷⁴ In the rhythm of the stories that opens this section, the repeated moments of movement and rest are of taking a long walk and later stopping by to have tea, as a symbolic way of representing the embodied act of walking and the need of resting afterwards.

It is fair to say that the first thing one aims to do when in another place is to *walk around* as a means of recognition, exploration: as one sets foot in a new place, recognising it is the first quest. By walking, I started to map my senses of different spaces and to trace parallels between this relation of moving /in/between rhythms. As Noel Salazar acknowledges, a subject located in a mobile setting starts a process of "questioning earlier taken-for-granted (fixed) correspondences between peoples, places and cultures",¹⁷⁵ which in turn tends to provoke a dialectic relation between parallels and connections made, transitioning between movement and time, adapting and learning while world-travelling, like a rhythm learned in each place.

Rebecca Solnit remarks that "the rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it."¹⁷⁶ In this sense, rhythm /in/between a faster or a slower pace gives the necessary flow to make sense of thoughts as the body moves and begins a process of

¹⁷⁴ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P.23.

¹⁷⁵ Salazar, Noel B., "Introduction". In: Salazar, Noel B., and Kiran Jayaram, eds. *Keywords of mobility: Critical engagements*. Vol. 1. Berghahn Books, 2016. P. 154

¹⁷⁶ Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust a story of walking*. Ibidem. P. 14.

demarcation or blurring of lines between the objective landscape – the one around, to see, touch, feel – and the subjective – or the processing of that landscape aligned to the mind’s internal busy work, bathed in feelings through a rhythm that belongs solely to one’s own.

What is this rhythm when on the move? Is it the ability to make sense of time in a compressed timeframe, that is neither fast nor slow, but /in/between: depending on the situated place it happens, adapting rhythms accordingly? Cresswell notes that “frequently the exterior rhythm of rationalised space and time comes into contradiction with lived and embodied rhythm”,¹⁷⁷ and I suggest that the relation of rhythm and impermanence in mobility, as though repeating themselves in different settings, does not follow a tangible line, but one that is slowed down and framed through the temporariness of inhabiting places here and elsewhere, now and then. Rhythm also marked the beginning of an intense surge of feelings around the elasticity that comes alongside mobility. The pauses between rhythms, from York to Budapest and returning to São Paulo was marked by a touchstone: a cup of tea; a leaning pebble acquired from one place, taken to another, and that travelled with me to my in-situ location back at home. “Myself being myself”, as Virginia Woolf states, is a return to the senses that is “unmediated by the world”, which is also acknowledged by Harris;¹⁷⁸ and the silence of stillness paradoxically contains the impermanence of the moment, carrying only bare things: in my case, a book and a cup of tea. This sudden encounter between the physical rhythm of walking and pausing here and there paved the way to the next realm of this analysis: the symbolic. Rhythm became an inherent part of this process and it happened all in itself – so solidly that it became too, the quest of myself being myself in this journey.

¹⁷⁷ Cresswell, *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P.24.

¹⁷⁸ Harris, Andrea L. ““Bare things”;; Returning to the senses in Virginia Woolf’s *the waves*.” *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 7, no. 4 (1997): 339-350. P.339.

Chapter 3
Apo: Away, Off. Walking and the symbolic



Image 2: Daffodils-Ouroboros – Route, Experience, Friction¹⁷⁹

Aphelion – noun [C or U]. PHYSICS. specialized. plural: *aphelia*
the point in an object's orbit (=a curved path in space around a planet or star) around the sun at which the object is **furthest from the sun**.

¹⁷⁹ Daffodils-phased Ouroboros depicting the final three elements of mobility: Route, Experience, Friction. Artist: Thayna Pais Pereira. São Paulo, Brazil. February, 2021.

Box 4. Aphelion

“Aphelion: it’s been a long time since I’ve been me, aphelion”, sings Platon Karataev in Akvarium Budapest,¹⁸⁰ my eyes in Gergő,¹⁸¹ my heart in the painful resonance of those lyrics with my mobile condition. *I have waited one year* for a concert by them and, on my way to the venue that afternoon, a friend and I were walking alongside the Danube Embankment from Liberty Bridge to Deák Ferenc tér.

I was hoping Platon Karataev would play “Aphelion” in that concert, at the same time I was aware that it would hit me like a truck. In the wonders and recollections of my year, with that journey in Budapest set to end in three days from that concert with a one-way ticket flight to Berlin, I was lost in thought: I did not pay attention on the riverbank pathway. I was /in/between the water and the concrete, the expectation for the music and the connection, the fear of admitting that after that full circle of the Earth around the Sun, I did not know who I was anymore, or what it is to feel, and be, like me – just like Aphelion was me being the furthest from the Sun.

Just now as I write this passage I remember this talk I had yesterday with Darselam, a great friend of mine, who exclaimed full of air in her lungs: “I just cannot believe this is how we are going to live. I am missing who I was before, I want to remember who I was before”. And she is right. I felt her air crossing mine and no more words could explain the /in/between feeling we both shared last night.

When Gergő started singing Aphelion that night in Akvarium as the opening song – surprisingly! it hit me like a *thousand* trucks. My friend was still by my side. I cried a river during that solace-momentum.

In Chapter 3, the symbolic takes the lead. Urry acknowledges that “much of our understanding of society and social life is based upon, and reflected through, metaphors” and that “the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined. New meanings and realities are dependent upon diverse kinds of metaphorical thinking”¹⁸² and, in this chapter, I use a metaphorical approach to delve into the various meanings of a life on the move.

¹⁸⁰ Akvarium Klub. October the 10th, 2020. See more in: < <https://akvariumklub.hu/programok/platon-karataev-mayberian-sanskulotts/>>. <Last Access in 05th of February 2021>.

¹⁸¹ Platon Karataev is a Budapest based indie rock band formed in 2016. See more in: < <https://platonkarataev.bandcamp.com/music> >. <Last Access in 05th of February 2021>.

¹⁸² Urry, John. *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. Routledge, 2012. P.21-22.

As such, this last chapter entangles the practice and physical movement discussed in Chapter 2 to the realm of experience and representation. Cresswell points out that “there has been a plethora of representations of mobility. Mobility has been figured as adventure, as tedium, as education, as freedom, as modern, as threatening”,¹⁸³ and in this chapter, I analyse walking on a metaphorical and abstract level, to voice the representations of routes, experiences and friction, closing down the six facets of this exploration for its abrupt changes, estrangements and dislocations. On metaphors, Solnit reckons that:

To use a walking metaphor, it trespasses through everybody else’s field — through anatomy, anthropology, architecture, gardening, geography, political and cultural history, literature, sexuality, religious studies — and doesn’t stop in any of them on its long route. For if a field of expertise can be imagined as a real field — a nice rectangular confine carefully tilled and yielding a specific crop — then the subject of walking resembles walking itself in its lack of confines.”¹⁸⁴

Therefore, the main aspect of the following sections is of a metaphorical process of walking operating in a confluence of feelings, subjectivity and relations /in/between the I and the Other, in a very personal representation and in a navigation that does not confine itself only in theoretical models. It takes the word *apo* - away, off¹⁸⁵ to represent the “aphelion” distance of the self making its shape alongside riverbanks, music and language, as shown in the opening story of a walk towards a musical concert and the relations with the people surrounding me. Indeed, at this point, these three key points

¹⁸³ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P. 19.

¹⁸⁴ Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A history of walking*. Penguin, 2001. P.13-14.

¹⁸⁵ Apo is a word of Greek origin and when used as a prefix it can have three different applications; 1) away from: off – or the one I use in this piece given it is the match with the metaphor of “aphelion”; 2) detached: separate; or 3) formed from: related to. Definitions from Merriam-Webster dictionary, accessible at: <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apo>>. <Last accessed in: 16th Feb 2021.>

connect intensely, and rivers are imperative, from São Paulo to York and Budapest, with the flow of one another bathing this /in/between walk in intermittent steps over bridges, differences and connections.

Route: Rivers

Box 5. Poetry of the South

Poetry of the South¹⁸⁶

songs that are neither in English
nor Portuguese.
Flowers that blossom equally
different colours and shapes
beautiful in the same way
speaking to me in languages that are
neither English nor Portuguese.

The moon hiding within the cloudy sky
The stars alongside the Milky Way
The horses, squirrels, birds I met
That do not speak to me neither in
English nor Portuguese.

This pathologisation of my culture
Of myself as a Latina
This inferiorization of my being
Of my value, of what I'm bringing
This pathologisation of my South Emotions
My Southern expressive being, my body moving, my poetry
And the silence I have to keep
As I crossed the borders from the South
The silence that is hurting me
As I'm in a place where I'm not allowed
The silence I must keep
So I can breathe
As if I have ever belonged in here.

When I crossed the lines of the South
and left its colours, its music, its Sun
I'm expected to be grey. To be *balanced*
Emotionless

¹⁸⁶ NPF502. "Poetry of the South". This was my very first poem written in English in celebration to the 8th of March, 2019 poetry night at the University of York. Read by Boriana Alexandrova. York, England, UK.

In the silence of the riverside I deflate myself
From all unbreathable moments of compulsory silence
At the riverside I drown my colours
My music, my emotion
At the riverside I forget all these words,
Words of compulsory silence
That I don't want to hear
neither in English
nor Portuguese.

Routes, or the third element of mobility lies in the quest of “*what route does it take*”. Cresswell states that “mobility is channeled (...) it moves along routes and conduits often provided by conduits in space. It does not happen evenly over a continuous space like spilt water flowing over a tabletop.”¹⁸⁷ As an uneven conduit, and alongside the metaphor of water, I chose to reflect upon routing as rivers: on their curves, borders crossing and uneven lengths, depths, colours and sceneries around them. In my diary from Budapest, the very first line I wrote says: “I look through the library’s window and the river is wide and deep green”.¹⁸⁸

Rivers in this account are a silent route, a certainty in the landscape when I crossed borders, as opposed to the lived experience before crossing them. In São Paulo there was no river in reach; yet York’s Ouse and Budapest’s Danube riverbanks became a sacred, safe zone to low down the noise of disorientation and non-belonging; a river to lead the route instead of a need to control the pathway. Walking alongside embankments, from the Ouse in York to the Danube in Budapest were the threading point of routing and referencing to escape the upsurging feeling of /in/betweeness; in silence, watching the uncertain unfold, surrendered.

¹⁸⁷ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P.24.

¹⁸⁸ NPF502, *Between Worlds diary*; 5th of September, 2019. Central European University’s Library, 6^o Floor. Nádor utca 9. Budapest, Hungary. Original passage: “Olho pela janela e o rio é grande, largo, em um verde profundo”.

Joe and Ingold point out that "walking allows for an understanding of places being created by routes. "In walking we are on the move, seeing and feeling a route ahead of us and creating a path around and after us. We can often explore a new place fruitfully by walking through and around it".¹⁸⁹ Routing pathways in the making of this autoethnography were mostly Riverbanks, and the pattern of choosing embankments was as a pattern of routing "out" of the city, creating a very personal safe zone to deal with inner feelings of displacement.

Indeed, most of this autoethnography was written on riverbanks. Both the flow of water and the change of sceneries along the rivers and their embankments reminds me of the word and the pattern of *impermanence*, from the light green of the Danube in Budapest to the strong floods of the Ouse, the sights of the British small bricks and their houses assembling one another; the fog over the Buda Castle; the quietness and beauty of York – sitting near the river and watching the water follow its course became a safe route and safe zone for my existence /in/between.

Yet the rivers as routing were preceded by my way of getting to them. Before I could reach any of these rivers, there was a whole way I had to walk through, finding the best routes to get there. For this, I been checking digital maps and walking routes, as well as transport routes – metro line maps, bus routes; even asking people "how to get there". In other words, I have been trying to get some orientation in the different spaces and places that were in my way to the river; or, if you like, *making* my way to the river. All this exercise leads to three key aspects: feel, see, move. The sceneries change as I make the first move: I walk here and there, on the concrete of pavements or near the rocks on the embankment; yet my mind is over water – ironically, the only place I cannot step into.

¹⁸⁹ Lee, Joe, and Tim Ingold. "Fieldwork on foot: Perceiving, routing, socializing." *Locating the field: Space, place and context in anthropology* 42 (2006): P.68.

This movement from river to river, from city to city, and spaces that I occupy, the spaces I am about to know, that I am digging deep, finding the spots, creating and pinpointing my safe zones – delves into a meaning-making process of recognising spaces as safe, or feeling /in/between, in a schizophrenia of space with the need to be either *in* or *out* of zones.

To avoid this sensation of schizophrenia, another process slowly began: The process of /re/orienting and referencing. Some places-spaces, or places in time, became reference points, a mark in the memories, a way through, loaded with different meanings and feelings. Yet, this process is uneven and does not fit pre-labelled categories. Some paces-spaces may carry a feeling of avoidance and/or blankness – like the border control in Heathrow Airport and the British Immigration branch at Calais port; or the disorienting walk from Buda to Pest on the morning after meeting Sé.¹⁹⁰ Some others may be mixed, confusing, filled with both expectation and angst – like landing Home at São Paulo Guarulhos Airport, where I cannot hold back my overflowing emotion when the flight attendant announces: “*Bem-vindxs ao Aeroporto Internacional de São Paulo, Guarulhos, Governador André Franco Montoro*”,¹⁹¹ whilst, contradictory enough, in the back of my head resides a silent but excruciating fear of forcefully having to return Home sooner than the expected. All of these routes – both geographical ones as well as symbolic ones used to take me to only one place afterwards: the riverbank, where I could deflate myself from the giant mass of information and destinations I was carrying alongside the road. From routes, the next element goes in the direction of experience – a focus point in the living /in/between worlds.

¹⁹⁰ Which I go in detail as the key element of “Experience”, the next face of this Chapter 3.

¹⁹¹ Followed by its English translation: Welcome to Governador André Franco Montoro, Guarulhos International Airport of São Paulo.

Box 6. Sé

I SAW HIM first at Normafa Park with the sun illuminating his skin while he was singing, and we made plans to have a walk on the Buda side and sit by the Danube Riverbank to talk about a song we both like in the week to come. He is a musician, and I am a chronist, so we found that encounter both frightening and unique, and I remember he was hesitant to meet me again due to his “English skills”. As the days passed by, out of serendipity we decided to meet at Deák Ferenc tér, in the water mirrors of Akvarium at 4:18am. I waved to him from the opposite side where he was waiting; he walked in my direction, gave me a handshake and introduced himself pronouncing his name in English rather than in Hungarian, perhaps to make it easier for me to understand it. I did the same when introducing mine, and his English did not sound at all difficult for me. We walked the whole way from Akvarium, in Pest, to Buda side, passing through well-known streets of my mind map around the area of the Basilika until the square of the Parliament, and he explained to me that “*after a certain hour of the night the lights of the monuments are turned off*”. We kept walking from there to Margaret Bridge, talking bits and pieces about what we do, our interests, family relations, class structures, languages – a Hungarian native speaker with a Brazilian native speaker, navigating our worlds through English and sharing a common second language, Spanish, as both of us can speak and understand it clearly; football, mainly about Brasils’ national team, Real Madrid and Barcelona; and some bits about living in Budapest – he as a native and I as an exchange third-party student. In the middle of Margaret Bridge he pointed to a sign on top of a building afar and said “*we are gonna walk until that area, that’s where I live*”. I nodded and almost said “*beleza*” – a common Brazilian word to agree on something – but managed to make up a “cool” instead.

As we were crossing the bridge, I stopped to check on the colour of the clouds – it was almost sunrise and that was the first time I was catching that moment in the city centre. I was stunned. He wanted to keep on walking, showing a certain surprise with the fact that I was so captivated by those morning lights. Perhaps that was not any news to him, given he was born and raised in that city. To me, it was a heavenly scene. When we reached Buda, we walked through streets I hadn’t been before; all I had as a touch-point was the sign on the top of that building he had shown me previously. At that point, he was leading the walk and I was simply surrendered to it. I did not know any of those buildings, *utcas*, corners or stops, and I was splitting my attention between our talk and my curious eyes on those streets. We turned around a corner and he opened the gate of his place. We arrived there before full sunrise. He kissed me in the morning, coming from above with playful eyes; and I collided worlds within that touch, almost as if the lines of Dandelion Dress were playing in the background:

“In God’s orchard we danced, barefoot between the flowers”

Experience, or the fifth sphere of this cycle, regards to “*how does it feel*”. In Cresswell’s words, “human mobility, like place, surely has the notion of experience at its centre”¹⁹² and, as such, it becomes a focal point in this piece. Analyse of *experience* vary in a wide array of subjective, personal meanings and representations, and relate to the pathways ridden from point A to B – or what is felt when moving /in/between these points. *There were several ways* I could approach experience, and I will focus on three key points of my personal meanings and representations emerged in this process: **language**, **music** and **distance**.

To start with, the pathway ridden from A to B related to its geographical standpoint and to its metaphorical ride, interweaving experience in both its materiality and symbolism.¹⁹³ I walked geographically side by side with Sé from Pest to Buda and experienced, symbolically, surrender; or the fact that I was not in control of that walk, nor of what I could see and feel from it. I knew my way all around Pest, but not Buda. I knew all around my own subjective experience from that side of the bridge but knew nothing of that world-travelling to the other side of the bridge – or to the other side of that world of his. We exchanged language in the walk, and as the walk stopped, we exchanged music – followed with a cup of tea in the morning – or the intermittent rhythm I analysed in element three, Chapter 2.

Music and language perform themselves in one but distinct manner – the first requires sound, whereas the latter requires speech.¹⁹⁴ Yet, both convey a singular comfortable zone when performed by their native speakers – a whole sense of wording and worlding derives from sound and lyrics, meaning and representations from the blend

¹⁹² Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobility*. Ibidem. P.25.

¹⁹³ Cresswell, Tim, and Peter Merriman, eds. *Geographies of mobilities: Practices, spaces, subjects*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011.

¹⁹⁴ Ingold, Tim. *Lines: a brief history*. Routledge, 2016. P.06.

of these two. Sensing, or feeling both music and language requires an understanding that goes beyond reason – it comes with sensorial awareness, or one experiencing that *solace-momentum*. Ingold remarks that "if we were to ask after the meaning of (...) sound, the answer could only be in terms of the feeling it evokes in us. As musical sound permeates the awareness of listeners, it gives shape of form to their very perception of the world."¹⁹⁵ It is in this confluence of feelings and perceptions that I foreground the element of *experience* in its main quest of "how does it feel".

Let's start with language. If in York and São Paulo the languages were keen to my ears, in Budapest the world around me was silent, or a city that *does not speak to me*. At first, that circumstance generated a great sense of discomfort, as Lugones acknowledges that "the first way of being at ease in a particular 'world' is by being a fluent speaker in that 'world'. I know all the norms there are to be followed, I know all the words that there are to be spoken. I know all the moves. I am confident."¹⁹⁶ And as I had one sense shut off, that is, listening, comprehending and interpreting – or in sum, not *feeling* I was part of that place – I had to find other ways to be part of it, or be *in touch* with that place. That way was *music*, or experiencing the city without relying in its language.

Indeed, in Budapest that language and that *world*, once silent to me, slowly made sounds through music, creating a double-folded relation with myself and that city: it was silent in language yet loud in music, in a continuous relation between the two. Although I had no possibility of speech, I could feel it in an evocative manner, learning how to navigate a world through other pathways. Music was a fundamental point of experience in Budapest, whereas speech was the fundamental point of experience in homeland and

¹⁹⁵ Ingold, Tim. *Lines: a brief history*. Routledge, 2016. P.06.

¹⁹⁶ Lugones, Maria. "Playfulness, "world"-travelling, and loving perception". Ibidem. P.12.

York. Music was the line that tied Sé and me that night for a walk from A to B – or from Pest to Buda; or from fear to trust; or from controlling the pathway to surrender.

On the following day of my walk with Sé, I crossed Liberty Bridge from Buda to Pest¹⁹⁷ and was caught by a line of a song called “The Silence”: “*You can go anywhere but you are where you came from*”.¹⁹⁸ The sensory embodiment of this line hit me from head to toe, as I was still processing the world collision of the previous night. Music is where one can communicate in various ways even through different languages, rhythms, feelings, meanings and experiences attached to it. Ann Cvetkovich affirms that “music helps return the listener to the pleasures of sensory embodiment that trauma destroys”¹⁹⁹ and, as a subject marked by trauma myself, I find this connection very useful: music led me from the symbolic sphere back to the physical one: *feeling*, in my desensitised body, not only in metaphors and clues, but in touches on the surface of my skin, that longs, feels and is present in this new body-mind relation I was experiencing. This transition as a female body marked by a violent trauma marked a deep entanglement between letting go, trust and openness, or playfulness in its core – rather than the theory once read, now it was felt – in a storyline that rather than written, was sung.

Take three examples of my main walking-connections with music – and in turn, language. City and Colour, a Canadian folk project with English songs; Platon Karataev, a Hungarian folk band singing both in English and Hungarian; and Fresno, an emo-indie Brazilian band, singing mainly in Brazilian-Portuguese. The connections between the three groups lie in the experience and representation of the lyrics, each one in their own native language, and the sensations that pop up in my body alongside the symbolisms as

¹⁹⁷ NPF502. *Water Under the Bridge* fieldwork diary. July, 15th 2020.

¹⁹⁸ Interestingly, this is a passage of a song called “The Silence” by Manchester Orchestra another of the many serendipities of this piece that falls into silence.

¹⁹⁹ Cvetkovich, Ann, et al. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. P. 01. Duke University Press, 2003.

I listen to them while I am walking. In Platon Karataev's "Wide Eyes"²⁰⁰ song, for example, a line says, "*no more fear from the walk through the dark forests of my mind*" – and its videoclip imagery brings a metaphor of living in the present with eyes wide open, fearless of the walk. It remounts to a person walking in the streets of a quartier in Budapest, in circles, with an Ouroboros from the giant Tree of Life to a small pine, thrown by themselves to the wind and, when stepping in the pavement, finding the very same pine on the ground. One day, I was walking in circles in a quartier in Budapest and felt just that: as if the motive force of my beginning was spiralling my pathway through the dark forests of my mind, and I was trying hard to get out of that spiral.

In City and Colour's song "Runaway", it goes: "the road away from here is long and steep, my dear",²⁰¹ reminding me that the ups and downs of a walk, or of the pathway built while on the move, will surface the journey between what is away, steep and still, unknown. Lastly, Fresno's videoclip of the song "I am true" (*Eu sou de Verdade*)²⁰² has its location in Sumaré Bridge, the bridge I used to walk along every day to go home after work. The sensorial and symbolic meanings of watching those frames from the place I walked so many times, back and forth and every day and that no longer make up part of my route or my rhythm – yet strongly attached to my experience – hit me jointly with its lyrics "I am sick and tired of trying to be perfect (...) and still, imperfect the way I am, I keep all these marks inside my chest, because they make me real, they make me true." This brings about the balance of crossing other bridges far from home yet being reminded, in a matter of seconds as I listen to these lyrics, that Sumaré Bridge is still there, and I am still true to myself, even though my current walk has been undertaken on other bridges.

²⁰⁰ Platon Karataev, "Wide Eyes", track 3 on *Atoms*, 2020. Independent. Budapest, Hungary. Compact disc.

²⁰¹ City and Colour, "Runaway", track 7 on *If I Should Go Before You*, Dine Alone Records, 2015, compact disc.

²⁰² Fresno, "Eu Sou de Verdade", track 7 on *Sua Alegria foi Cancelada*, BMG Brasil, 2019, compact disc.

As music and language informed a walk of experience, especially under the metaphor of bridges – or connections through my loving-eye – it has placed me in the realm of experience and understanding my existence as linked to that new mobile form of living. Yet, I was caught by the /in/between of its very opposite: as though bridges connect, I was feeling distant and experiencing distance both in the physical and metaphorical spheres. Vannini acknowledges that the “notion of distance has far more emotional freight than that of a cold and rational idea of geographic location”.²⁰³ Distance struck me with the /in/between, or of the sense of losing what was distant from me as I was choosing over what is near; that paradoxically I was connecting my life on a deeper level with what is near, forgetting at times what was distant.

Distance also marked the brief encounter of the musician and the chronist. In that Aphelion night of Platon Karataev’s concert in Akvarium, Sé was there. I said goodbye to him not in the water mirrors, but on the stairs; I *touched* his shoulder and said “I am leaving. Goodbye”. He did not bother to say much. I held my heart and found it very unearthing that the same place where we have shaken hands and walked together was the place we said goodbye: and as though the stairs were supporting my emotional weight, I was not feeling the physical ground under me. That was my ending with experience and beginning with friction - I flew out of Budapest three days later, and I never saw him again.

How does it feel? After being at ease in that world and adapting my senses, the experience was of loss, and grief, and the strangeness of living /in/between. Language, music and distance were both experience and the ending of that frenetic movement of mine – or a shortcut to the next element: friction.

²⁰³ Vannini, Phillip. Distance. In: Adey, Peter, David Bissell, Kevin Hannam, Peter Merriman, and Mimi Sheller, eds. *The Routledge handbook of mobilities*. Routledge, 2014: 103-124. P.103

Box 7. Everything

IT WAS MY last day in Budapest and I went out to see the city once more with this friend. I was holding the sense of loss and that uneasy grief within me, with a heavy heart and bitter steps. After we walked some extension of the Danube Riverbank, we sat down to see the sunset on the opposite side of the Parliament.

"I know this is a rhetorical question now that we are both about to leave, but how do you like Budapest by now?" he asked me. He was leaving to do his PhD in the UK and I was moving to Germany. *"I like the city. I actually love it. I am not sure yet I wanna leave"*, I replied, with a soft focus on the water near us. *"Yeah I get that. But we gotta move on. People like us don't chose the place to be. And we are well trained in knowing that good things do end"*. I nodded with a heavy, deep breath.

"Would you have done something differently?" – he turned to look at me when asking me this. *"Yes, I would, that's for sure"* I said, soury in my words. *"I wouldn't have said 'hi' to three people"*.²⁰⁴ I stopped for a while to ponder it. *"Yeah. I would have changed direction, pretended I'm mad, deaf, blind; that I didn't see them, that nothing could connect us. Anything that could have stopped me from saying hi to them."* I returned to my thoughts and remained silent. *"Anything but having walked alongside them"*, I whispered to myself.

He looked at me with some empathy, yet he had no words either. I guess he was expecting another answer. He finally broke the silence and asked me this question, unfolding the very moment the Ouroboros of my journey was having its final lap, while looking to the Chain Bridge in the distance, entirely lit by now. *"What would have changed if you haven't said 'hi' to these three people?"* I did not have a single doubt of my answer.

"Everything."

In this last section, **Friction**, I exercise a self-reflexivity moment to tie the six elements into its final lap, or the Ouroboros making its final move. I reflect on my process of *becoming* a migrant – from its very start as an academic in mobility to the recognition of my new condition, that of a migrant, and a Latin American migrant; and the new shape

²⁰⁴ On a worthy note, Sé was not one of them.

that my journey was revealing through this praxical walk. I look into the changes occurred in this process, emphasising the self rather than of a fixed entity, one that is in formation, from the very point of friction – or when the movement “stopped”.

Cresswell recognises friction as "a force which works to slow or stop mobilities on the one hand and make the very fact of mobility possible on the other".²⁰⁵ “Friction suggests an ambiguous, two-sided form of relative stillness that is both impeding mobility *and* enabling it”.²⁰⁶ It is the end of the cycle and the beginning of a new one, or as I call it, the Ouroboros of mobility. “There is no perpetual motion machine, and, despite the wilder prophecies of Virilio and others, things do stop”, Cresswell points out.²⁰⁷ Friction relates to the unavoidable stops undergone on the way and is the last facet of this relocation from the material, physical space of Chapter 2 to the symbolic space of this chapter 3; or of those notions held in the metaphors within the “hi” I directed at those people – or those worlds –; as well as the other “hi” directed at me on my world-travels, in estrangements, encounters and the limitations of travelling worlds under a loving perception. Friction: where things indeed do stop. Here, I propose an overall reflection on the moment that led me to stop walking, and how this frictional moment enabled reflexivity to inform both the theory behind the praxis and the action itself, making a full circle on the proposed walking praxis as a body /in/between worlds.

By the final element of this walk, I was carrying the sense of being a *stranger*. **Strangeness was my friction.** Yet, this sense of strangeness had started previously and unconsciously, when I had first bought flowers in York – even though I bought the flowers myself there, it did not fulfil me in the way I had been eagerly expecting. I was

²⁰⁵ Cresswell, Tim. *Politics of Mobilities*. Ibidem. P.109.

²⁰⁶ Cresswell, Tim. “Friction”. In: Adey, Peter, David Bissell, Kevin Hannam, Peter Merriman, and Mimi Sheller, eds. *The Routledge handbook of mobilities*. Routledge, 2014: 107-115. P. 108.

²⁰⁷ Cresswell, Tim. “Politics of Mobility”. Ibidem. P. 26

sensing wrong, or *why don't I feel like these are the flowers I aimed to bring /home/*? Only by the final element of this walk was I able to answer this quest: because those flowers are not the ones I know, and I am not taking them Home. The praxis from which I learned how to navigate worlds as a body /in/between became a mirror: instead of exercising that loving perception only towards circumstances, environments and other worlds, this time I had to look to myself with the same playful, “world”-travelling eye: loving the woman I was before as well as the woman I have become.

The experience of becoming a stranger – ambivalent, two-fold, – of being out of place, reminded me of my strangeness not only by the signs and embodiment of each city I lived in, but from the eyes of the Other, the words of the Other, and my own correspondence when mirroring those feelings of disorientation, conflict, confusion – or even embracing it sometimes, being embraced, creating bonds, connections – in a long paradox between /dis/placement, love, curiosity, power of will, fear.²⁰⁸ Here it comes the friction of travelling-worlds as well: how many worlds can one travel to without getting lost in its own? When is it necessary – either by own force or external force – to stop?

Following Ahmed's argument, the strange is felt as the danger of the unknown.²⁰⁹ This posed a confrontation with the “openness to surprise” of my loving-eye with the danger of the unknown, being also the frictional moment I reached my aphelion. **Friction** was my Aphelion, or the point at which *I was the furthest from the Sun* – and by being the furthest from *my* Sun I became myself, a stranger. The playfulness I carried through this walk enlarged my mobile condition and gave me access to worlds, but the world of

²⁰⁸ A useful connection to the “eyes of the Other” is in the existential reading of Jean Paul Sartre's “No Exit” play, emphasised through the motif of “Hell are the Other”. See more in: Sartre, Jean-Paul, and Albert Camus. *No exit and three other plays*. Vintage, 2015. Also, see Ahmed, Sara in the impressions created by others on our surface and subjectivity. In: Ahmed, Sara. “Collective feelings: Or, the impressions left by others.” *Theory, culture & society* 21, no. 2 (2004): 25-42.

²⁰⁹ Ahmed, Sara. *Strange encounters: Embodied others in post-coloniality*. Psychology Press, 2000.

before was distant. This distance within myself, of becoming something else, was enlarging and shadowing. I did not know on which point my Sun was shining anymore. As I became a stranger myself – and to myself, recognising me as the other in that environment, filled with ambivalent feelings of being both here and elsewhere at the same time and in an ocean of distance between all I knew before **made me stop**, put me in friction: Walking was a playful activity to me, yet I had to acknowledge how it was also leading me to paradoxical and ambivalent feelings about who I am and who I was becoming.

The differences I carried within were inevitably leading me to that moment of friction, or inevitable shocks – from my in-situ walk based in the embodied fear of the male-dominated space of a patriarchal and racist country as homeland to the stormy waves of confusing feelings of a safe walk elsewhere. Still, sometimes, I would feel that walking was an unnatural and strange act; and this friction remained in the psyche of my walking as an *unnatural process*, ready to fail at any moment.

The estrangement caused by the various roles implied and expected from my female, /in/between body labelled as both *Latina* and the strange type of *latina* – “no way, are you really Brazilian? I would never guess that!” – or even the fetishized Latina – “I love the fact you are *Latina*, this is my exotic bit of the world for today”²¹⁰ – carries more than my own desire to walk the world: whether I am welcomed or not, part of something – or not; just a fetish, something to be discovered, mysterious, intriguing. This recalls the (post)colonial burden of this praxis added to the migrant experience of such: when the skin colour, the hair type, curious accent or way of putting words together speaks louder than a loving perception from the other. Adhering to Fanon, the lived experience for

²¹⁰ Recorded at NPF502 “Water under the Bridge” diary. Budapest, November, 2019.

certain bodies come before anything – it might not only be a matter of being a “professor” or a “doctor”, but to be “the black professor, the black doctor”.²¹¹

This embodied sense of not belonging to a space and time were eventually crossed by the limitations and differentiations of ‘me/I’ and ‘the other’ – questioning my own existence as if, one day, I was ever called as “one of us” or always have belonged to some type of other: the strange other. However, Audre Lorde²¹² reminds us that difference is a source of strength, and I write from the place of a loving perception towards the strange as difference, and difference as the bridge over rivers, connecting us. As I walked bridges in São Paulo, York and Budapest, I could stand in various angles and see the river below, flowing; the water, impermanent. I could look on and look from the right side and see Pest, the left side and see Buda; I could walk through bridges called “Chain” or “Liberty”, I would make my way Home via “Sumaré” bridge: bridges as a means of connecting spaces, of making possible the crossing of a pathway otherwise impossible. The playful-eye, loving perception of this praxis was my very action of building bridges and walking through them.

As the previous element – Experience – brought me to the idea of **building** bridges, and of the core usage of my playful eye, friction is where I had to set the boundaries to it, where I needed to **withdraw** bridges. “*There is only so much one can do*” a dear friend of mine said a couple of weeks ago while we were walking through the woods, and I thought with myself that “**there are only so many bridges one can keep**”. This goes in the direction of Lugone’s recognition of the limitations of world-travelling, as “there are ‘worlds’ we enter at our own risk, ‘worlds’ that have agon, conquest, and arrogance as the main ingredients in their ethos. These are ‘worlds’ that we enter out of

²¹¹ Fanon, Frantz. *Black skin, white masks*. Grove press, 2008.

²¹² Lorde, Audre, ‘Our Difference Is Our Strength’, *Identity Politics in the Women’s Movement*, 2001, 315–19.

necessity and which would be foolish to enter playfully”.²¹³ Tackling the limitations of world-travelling and bridges-building is also a homework, one that can only be learnt from the lived experience, later to be reviewed in the reflections upon a praxis.

Therefore, when reflecting upon the practice in this /in/between process of both feeling and adapting, of learning and re-learning, I had to acknowledge that, however beautiful, this walk was also disorienting, leading me to a number of places as well as nowhere recognisable by the ending of its cycle. To feel oriented “through different sites, spaces and temporalities”,²¹⁴ Ahmed says, relates to a range of ambivalences on the embodied and abstract level of experience. Feelings of alienation, as a body produced, fetishized and labelled by the other, brings forward a process of self-absence and over-representations as part of the same ambiguous relation.²¹⁵ In this frictional moment of my constant movement /in/between, I recognised that the “Hi”, or the bridges I built to some of the worlds I lovingly travelled to, were worlds of fetishism towards my existence, producing me as a temporary, alien body in that space, and that I’d rather withdraw from – or again the line of that song I listened to on, ironically, a bridge called Liberty: “you can go anywhere but you are where you come from”.²¹⁶

In this /in/between of /re/orientating and referencing, there was no formula for the pace: either walking too slow or running, either standing still or standing my ground, the ending and the beginning of another cycle. In this movement that never happened from A to B but in different, entangled and complex directions, the knock-out of the feeling of living /in/between/ and realising the conditions in which my body /in/between worlds was being led, started deeply in experience, which is not so far from Friction. I may suggest

²¹³ Lugones, Maria. Ibidem. P. 17.

²¹⁴ Ahmed, Sara. *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*. Duke University Press, 2006.

²¹⁵ Ahmed, Sara. *Strange encounters: Embodied others in post-coloniality*. Psychology Press, 2000.

²¹⁶ Manchester Orchestra, “The Silence”, track 11 on *A Black Mile to the Surface*, Loma Vista, 2017, compact disc.

at this point that Friction and Experience are deeply entangled in the realm of feelings, within a large catalogue of possibilities of experiencing frictions along the way.

As I stopped at that moment, I learned that the flowers I was looking for existed in other shapes, feelings, symbolisms: a cup of tea, a smell, a smile, translating words and keeping meanings – like the Brazilian-Portuguese word *docinho*²¹⁷ to *baklava*, whilst trying at least three: the Azeri, Turkish and Iranian versions in the same week. Friction hit me in the symbolic and geographical realm: my strangeness forced me to stop and re-evaluate **everything**. I left the Riverbank after saying goodbye to my friend after that talk and walked straight to an Iranian baklava shop, which I locate and refer to as a safe zone as I enter its cosy site, get welcomed by the sweet smell of baklavas, nuts and syrup; and the warm smile of Said, with his automatic offer of a soothing cardamom tea. At that geographic and symbolic friction, I had my last point of travel in Budapest: to Said's world and his travel to mine, condensing that timeframe in the relation created between my Brazilian-English and his Farsi-English, and our joy of communicating, sharing our stories of /im/mobilities over the table of *docinhos* or *baklavas* in Budapest – this city that serves as a beautiful site of our impermanence, sharing bits and pieces of our Homes, though neither of us were actually at Home.

“Why did you go all this way? What were you looking in the first place?” I asked myself before leaving Budapest the next day. Is it in a moment of friction, or when things stop, that the connection with the first facet surfaces back? In the very questioning of one's own intention, or in the research terms of “motive force”, I connected all the spheres back after having them all broken down and analysed. Why was I paving this road? Why

²¹⁷ Brazilian-portuguese word “doce” means *treat, sweet*. “Docinho” is its diminutive (-inho/a/x). It represents sweetness and kindness, appreciation for the word that is being shortened; a way to make words sound more comforting in such a tough daily routine. An interesting article about this baby-talk can be found on BBC: “Why Brazilians love baby talk”, available at: <http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20190114-why-brazilians-love-baby-talk>. <15 July, 2020>.

had I walked until this very moment and felt more lost than found? What is this feeling of loss, perpetuating inside? When one stands in the very middle of a bridge, one can see both sides of land connected, and the horizon ahead; but to see what is behind, one has to turn to its back, and suddenly the previous horizon is back, not forth. It is impossible to see it all at once. Under my two feet, there moves the water; or the lesson of impermanence. We build bridges to help us cross over to places we previously could not reach, yet we cannot stand over a bridge without deciding to move either to one side or the other, or from one side to another. The perpetual motion machine stops, making room for another movement to take form.

In a certain, clarifying way, I replied to myself: What I was searching for in the first place was **a place to call home**. Isn't this the thing that we, migrants, are in search for, regardless of the motive force that put us in motion in the first place? Home, away. Home, returning. Home, settling. Home, learning. This home I wanted was one without the violence of the beginning, and perhaps I was there already. Walking away from Budapest brought the sense of loss – or the Ouroboros of Friction taking the final lap to eat its own tail.

To conclude, perhaps every friction is indeed a new beginning; with walking as the lens I put forward as my site of feminist knowledge production, I was able to recognise a ritual of beginning and end and a new beginning, of being myself a body in a world, a body /in/between worlds and, most importantly, my own process of becoming a migrant – or another Ouroboros to tackle on the journey yet to come.

“Snakes, *víboras*: since that day I've sought and shunned them.
Always when they cross my path, fear and elation flood my body. I know things older than
Freud, older than gender.” ²¹⁸

²¹⁸ Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza*. Aunt Lute Books. (1987). P.48.

For I overcome fear and silence in this Ouroboros
I am myself a serpent of force, not just motive
Adorned with flowers – yellow for the Sun, violet for I’m a Woman
To remind me what I am seeking as I walk /in/between worlds



Image 3: Ouroboros, all six elements.²¹⁹

²¹⁹ Daffodils-phased Ouroboros “all six elements”: Motive Force, Velocity, Rhythm, Route, Experience, Friction. Artist: Thayna Pais Pereira. São Paulo, Brazil. February, 2021.

Conclusion: no one walks alone

This autoethnographic project delved into six spheres of mobilities to pin down aspects of a life in movement, entangled with the personal experience of becoming a migrant on the way. It reflected on the cycle of the Ouroboros as a metaphor, with a beginning and an end, making the end into a new beginning – or the realisation of how in a mobile life no one walks alone, and no one stays the same. With the support of the Mobilities Paradigm and the overlapping fields of Decolonial Studies and Decolonial Feminism, it shed light on aspects that put walking forward as a possible site for knowledge production to correspond to the everyday embodied and symbolic life experience of being here and elsewhere, now and then, and the feeling of /in/betweenness that took place on this journey, with its correspondent gender lens for a way of feminist knowing.

Rather than an universalistic approach on movement and mobility, it offered a slowdown in pace and an insight on the level of a body in the world – and most importantly, a body /in/between worlds – this body that belongs to a woman, finding its place in a world while navigating worlds; as well as the many touches of the world felt, processed and packed up in the baggage of identity-making and a Self in transition. This has been a transition that did not happen from A to B, but instead has proven to be more complex, entangled in different factors and leaning on touchstones and symbolic representations for the movement and the practice of being on the move. I aimed to show that the embodiment of a methodology is not detached from theorising and dissecting the experience of walking, which I made through a storyline following a motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience and friction – the latter as a self-reflexive contribution

– as constituent elements that compose an affective politics of mobility, with a walking praxis that ties together this body that is *in* and */in/between* worlds.

As other possible approaches to this research, in the deciphering of a labyrinth of its both theoretical and method/ological challenges and endeavours, deeper feminist approaches on embodiment can be drawn in future research from the existential and phenomenological lenses of Feminist Theory and/or Feminist Philosophy; Mobilities Theorists on the quest of women in mobility; Walking Theory with further discussions on Walking as a way of feminist knowing – its possibilities and limitations and for researchers on Arts-Based, Creative Methods and Storytellers from the hints and touchstones I paved in this herstory attempt.

All in all, this is my herstory, and this is where I ended up with this Ouroboros of my formative journey. As I did so, I returned to that habitual silence, though one to help me through the */re/discovery* of the lines I traced within my body after a period of constant mobility: or a pause within my own rhythm for a cup of tea and a bare book. This time, this silence is not painful; it is one of recognition that silence is, too, a choice a woman can make, rather than an imposition. Lastly, I truly believe that when we, women, are allowed to share our own personal stories with each other, we are able to untangle many common hurtful, pain points on our journeys. This is to dismantle the many ways we are silenced, to dismantle silence itself – with the tools we have: our lives and our stories, because they matter. That is the best way I found to dismantle the master’s house without using the master’s tools; answering out loud, eleven years later to that police officer’s question: why were you walking alone at night?

Because I should.

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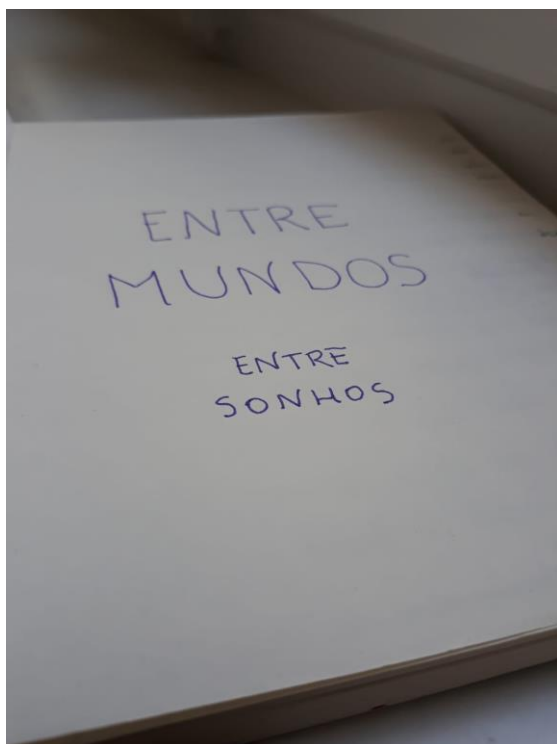
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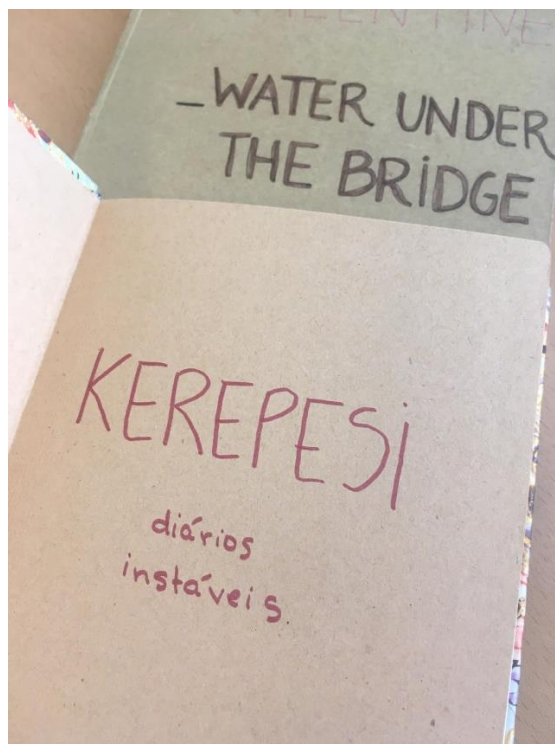
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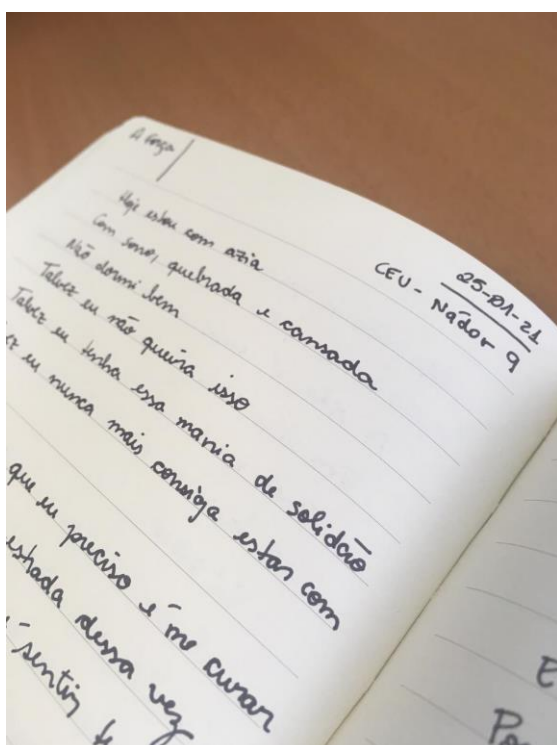
Appendix²²⁰



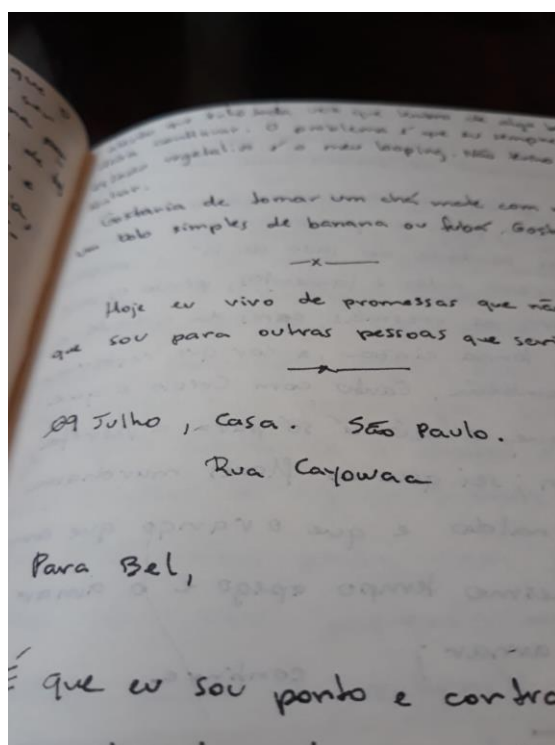
I - Cover Page “Entre Mundos” diary (Between Worlds).



II - Cover Page “Water Under the Bridge” and “Kerepesi” diaries.



III – Note, CEU-Budapest, Nádor 9 (25Jan21).



IV – Note, São Paulo, entitled “Home”, Cayowaa. (09Jul19).

²²⁰ Diaries, fieldwork note samples, poems, thesis process.

and then because there were a lot of you
 13 September - tomorrow - I'm sure
 would meet the game (??)

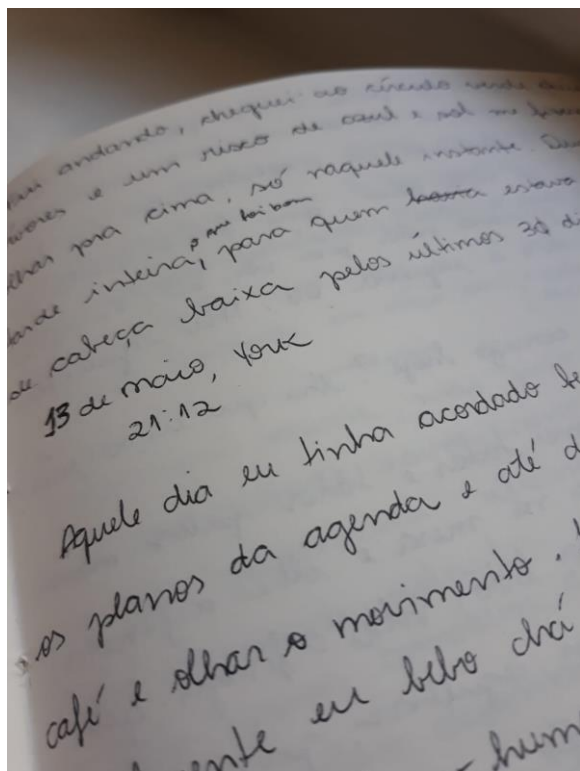
The small gap of the past week the
 and changed me dramatically.

- (1) charactering
- (2) embracing who I am
- (3) growing out loud
- (4) the melancholia my soul is built of
- (5) There is so much inside
- (6) I am a dream of love
- (7) Because I'm true.

Today I'm melancholic & packing up.
 Will go for a walk tonight.
 Time is running out.

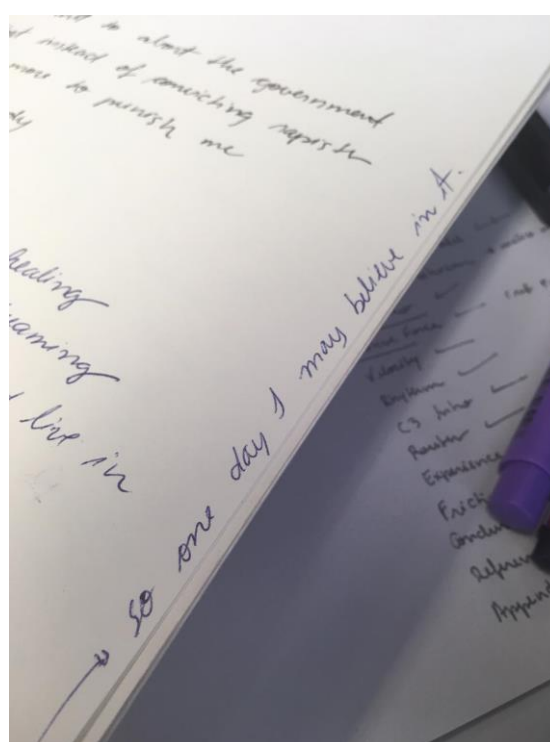
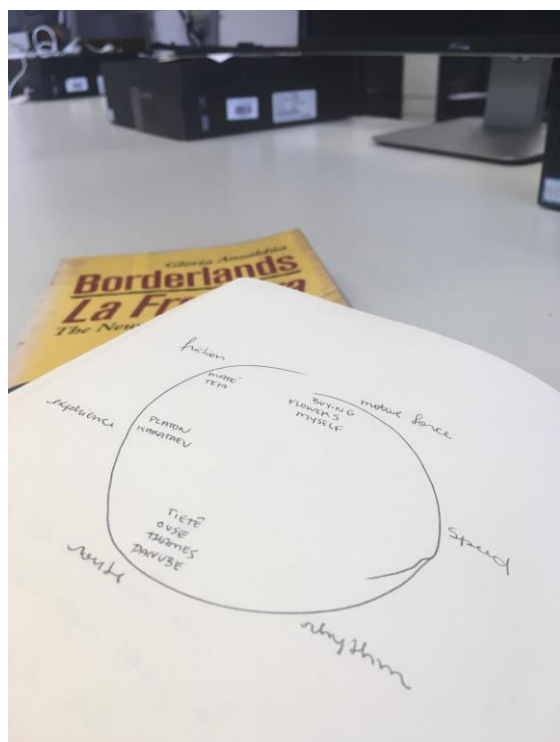
13 September 2020
 2/2

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VII – Note, York. “I woke up happy, went out to have breakfast and see people moving around”.

VIII – Gift, York. A dry leave of Autumn, 2019, by Alaa Abu-Naji.



IX – First Draft, Ouroboros of Mobilities.

X – Final Line of a poem, “My Body”, “Today I’m gonna say: this body deserves to be loved, so one day I may believe in it”.