

UNIVERSITÉ DE QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL – UQAM

UNCOVERING ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN BODY AND EARTH:
PILGRIMAGE, WAYFARING AND RELATIONAL EPISTEMOLOGIES

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PRESENTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR A MASTERS IN RELIGIOUS SCIENCES

BY
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UNIVERSITÉ DE QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL – UQAM

A LA RECHERCHE DE LA RENCONTRE ENTRE LE PELLERIN ET LE TERRAIN:
LE PÈLERINAGE, ET L'ÉPISTÉMOLOGIE RELATIONNEL

MÉMOIRE
PRÉSENTÉ
COMME EXIGENCE PARTIELLE
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PAR
LANA KIM MCGEARY

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PROLOGUE

This prologue serves as a form of acknowledgement for the many relations who have helped me walk this challenging, bridging journey. Through the use of the narrative voice and by sharing some of my story, I hope to bring you the reader into the process of my knowledge formation. This narrative technique provides me with a way to bring you into the weave of stories which form, the self-in-relation process emphasised throughout. It serves as a vehicle to “highlight essential information for the reader to make sense of the story to follow” (Kovach, 2009, p. 3).

My name is Lana Kim McGeary. I come from a lineage of women that tended gardens for both sustenance and as an art form and, from a lineage of men who understood the currents of wind and water. I am forever marked by the stories of round dinghies, walked to the edge of the ice and perched upon winter swells, to reach the Cape Breton mainland. I intuit that my ancestors were shaped as much by the songs they sang while berry picking, as the berries themselves. Their cultural practices, marked as much by the salt spray of the North Atlantic Ocean, as by the salt Cod which anchored the community in every way.

My first remembered source of ‘home’, as an infant, is the embrace and whispers of welcome by the plants in and around our house. That dialogue still informs much of my journey through life. It is by situating that first initial dialogue, that I understand my almost 30 year apprenticeship as an herbalist. My first land base was the rich Appalachian terrain at the foot of Mont St-Hilaire and the flowing waters of the Richelieu River. I grew up at a time when it was considered safe for children to play outside. From dawn to dusk, I wandered, dug, dove, crawled, listened, spoke, sang, tasted and immersed myself, alone, or with the pack of kids from neighbouring houses, through the many terrains that surrounded our home.

In fall, the red of the Maples, the yellow of the Birches, the crunch of apples and the busy, gathering rhythm of autumn, marked my days walking to and from school. In winter, we dried one terrain-imbued snow suit by the fireplace, quickly donned a second one and dashed back outside to play in the company of bare trees - till hunger or twilight drew us into the house. In spring, mud puddles and apple blossoms beckoned for closer examination and Goose called out a return. Summers, we either spent in the Adirondacks and/or going 'home' with my maternal grandparents to Cape Breton Island. Here I learned the voice of the ocean and, of ancestry. Still, when I drive into Main A Dieu, pronounced 'Mann a diew', some old timer stands in the middle of the road beseeching me to stop the car, roll down the window and receive his question - 'who you belong to'. Mention of my grandmother Carrie or grandfather Henny inevitably brings stories of past times and, I am welcomed into the fold.

I grew up in Québec, from an amalgam of ancestry: Irish; Scottish; Mi'kmaq; Acadian; French; English; Québécoise; Canadian; and Maritimer, to name but a few of those known. My human ancestry and the human 'culture' it has imprinted in me no doubt shapes and informs my perspective in an abundance of ways, yet somehow for me, my mother tongue, the undercurrent which informs much of my life, is a culture of the earth, of the green. It is something of the sort that Abbess and herbalist Hildegard Von Bingen (1098-1179) refers to as *viriditas*. A greening force which imbues, informs and fecund's life. It is also something I find echoes of in descriptions of Indigenous relational paradigms. It is my relationships, some of them new, some long standing, with a multitude of 'persons' (human and other-than-human persons), which forms a central part of my tribe and to whom I am accountable here.

The process of creation within this master's thesis has been similar to that of building ceremony. It has included the setting of intention, the calling in of help and resources, the creation of sacred 'space' and much preparation, both internally and externally.

The whole process is founded on thanksgiving. Thanks for the giving of the challenges, the growth, the abundance of help, the inspiration and, the ever present Source of love. Although many a moment has come and gone when I would have gladly chucked the whole thing in the trash and simply sat listening to the wind, I am grateful for the growth. I also recognize my accountability for the medicines I gather and I honor my responsibility to speak of the inherent value of water and soil, and of the other-than-human nations. Nova Scotia Sweet grass and Utah dessert Artemisia, I could not have stayed clear and focused without you. Field flowing Yarrow, I willingly open the door and descend. My hope is that I have succeeded in both being present and in getting out of the way.

This work has been a solitary journey and a collaborative. Some allies and supporters have come and gone, but both my gratitude for their help and the traces of their imprint remains. Poet, scholar and dear friend, Shauna Beharry with her eagle eye and spiritual guidance, has helped me believe in my voice and find the courage to speak. Yes, I wholeheartedly agree, we should collaborate on a chapter about grappling with writing Grendels for the next version of the DSM. My loving partner, Faraz Mahmoud Golmohamadi, Nettle gatherer and Rose from a world away has confirmed for me that while the outer trappings of human culture may vary beautifully, the plants speak the same language from one continent to another. My gratitude for the support you provided is immense. My learning curve is beautifully and skillfully reflected in yours. I will be forever grateful to you for giving me the pleasure of not knowing what is held in the refrigerator.

From the beginning, the background impetus for this master's thesis was laid within my role as a mother. Love for my daughter Ariel, respect for her own mother tongue as a storyteller and a deep felt desire for her to continue to know the gifting of relationship with the earth, cannot be underestimated or overlooked as a motivator.

May the trees continue to help you sing your stories into being Bella, and may you continue to sing theirs; especially, may humour, engagement and kindness continue to show you a way through.

I could not have found the academic container within which to write this thesis without the auspicious arrival during my first year at l'UQAM of Laurent Jérôme. Laurent, your knowledge and understanding of the new threads in the academic weave (specific to Indigenous methodologies), have been critical in building this scaffolding. Thank you for always receiving my passionate ramblings. I also extend thanks to the department, perhaps especially to Mathieu Boisvert for his gracious understanding of my changing process, to Eve Paquette for making me seriously ponder what exactly it was I felt was missing in Durkheim's equation of individual and society and, to Marie-André Roy for her intuition in initiating both my introduction to Laurent and to, hermeneutics as a potential lens to address my thesis question.

Finally, although I did not know who they were through much of this process, I wish to extend my thanks to the committee members who took the time to read and respond to my proposal¹. Although some of the process in receiving this feedback was challenging, I have worked hard to integrate it and several of the recommendations went on to become critical sources of data. One last wave of gratitude goes out to Shawn Wilson. Two seasons and several continents away, I am blessed for the time you took to receive my inquiries, read my proposal and provide critical, supportive and inclusive feedback. This feedback has served to ground me through many a stormy passage.

¹ I further extend thanks to my committee for reading and marking the final master thesis. I have done my best to integrate all recommended adjustments. The questions raised will nourish further reflection and a continued process of relationing with this topic.

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ABSTRACT

Is there a relationship between the wayfarer and the physical geography traversed during pilgrimage along the Camino? Does relationship with the landscape inform the process of transformation, often alluded to in pilgrimage theory? Using Victor and Edith Turner's theory of liminality and *communitas* as a starting point, this research explores potential ways in which the landscape exists as a relational entity, as 'personhood', within various wayfarer narratives. It examines the hypothesis that the terrain traversed imprints itself upon the wayfarer, critically alters perspective and contributes to the oft referred to transformational aspect in pilgrimage. It is proposed that the liminal quality of a shift in time proffered through pilgrimage, alongside the rhythmic movement of walking the Camino, allows for a shift in perspective, which brings the landscape into view. It is suggested, that where the physical geography is invested with significance, the relationship becomes one of interdependence, where the outer landscape becomes part of the wayfarers' inner landscape and by extension the inner part of the outer. This co-constitutive exchange or self-in-relation epistemology is examined within the lens of place and personhood. This master thesis articulates an interpretive reading of nine narratives taken from three ethnographic studies. The narratives and ethnographies are read through the lens of recent debates around emplacement and personhood, specifically some recent theory pertaining to animism. It examines what it means in our exchanges of care (or absence of), in our stewardship of the earth to hold the perspective of a relational epistemology. What questions are raised if the landscape simply does not exist within much of the treatment pertaining to pilgrimage and religious studies? What does it lay as groundwork for the relationing (or absence of relationing) with the landscape and the elements of which it is comprised? This thesis proposes that the habitual treatment of landscape as a painterly surface has often obstructed any examination of a relational exchange. This relational exchange is shown to be a characteristic of emplacement in a sentient world. It is also a complex skill set (or literacy) which can be cultivated or lost over generations.

Key words: pilgrimage, wayfaring, landscape, animism, personhood, Indigenist, relational epistemology

RÉSUMÉ

Existe-t-il une relation entre le pèlerin et le territoire parcouru lors du pèlerinage de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle? Est-ce que cette relation avec le territoire participe au processus de transformation souvent mentionné dans la littérature sur le pèlerinage? Partant des concepts de liminalité et de 'communitas' de Victor et Edith Turner, ce mémoire examine les manières dont le territoire existe en tant qu'entité relationnelle ('personhood') dans différents récits de pèlerins. À partir d'une analyse de ces différents récits, je discute de l'hypothèse selon laquelle le territoire parcouru empreigne le pèlerin en changeant ses perspectives, contribuant au discours transformationnel du pèlerinage. La qualité de perspective caractéristique d'une altérité dans le temps, propice à la phase liminal des rites de passage, ainsi que le mouvement rythmique de la marche le long du Camino, permettent un changement de perspective qui illumine la présence du territoire. De plus, lorsque le territoire est investi de sens, la relation devient marquée d'une qualité de réciprocité co-constitutionnelle, où le chemin devient partie intégrante de la géographie interne du pèlerin à la même mesure que le pèlerin devient l'architecte du terrain. Nous faisons allusion ici à une relation épistémologique, soulevée dans de récents débats sur l'emplacement, la classification de 'personhood', et l'animisme. Ce mémoire se veut une réflexion interprétative de trois ethnographies et neuf récits, spécifique au pèlerinage contemporain de Santiago de Compostela. Les récits et ethnographies sont 'lus' à travers une théorie contemporaine sur l'animisme et la performance du territoire. Ce mémoire examine comment notre préoccupation (ou l'absence de préoccupation) dans notre gestion du territoire permet de le réfléchir selon une épistémologie relationnelle. Quelles questions sont soulevées si le territoire est absent de la majorité des études en lien avec le pèlerinage et les sciences des religions? Qu'est-ce que ça sous-entend de ne pas considérer le territoire comme élément formatif dans le processus? Qu'est-ce que ça soulève dans notre réciprocité envers nos environnements, et les 'personhood' ou entités qui les composent? Ce mémoire propose que le traitement du territoire comme simple notion picturale entrave tout examen du territoire comme source d'échange relationnel. Cet échange relationnel est présenté comme caractéristique d'emplacement dans un monde sensible. Il s'agit aussi, toutefois, d'un ensemble de compétences complexes (un langage), qui peut être cultivé ou perdu au fil des générations.

Mots clefs: pèlerinage, territoire, animisme, épistémologie relationnel

INTRODUCTION

This morning, as the writing process unfolds, outside, wayfaring, walking the earth,
-where, truth be told, much of this process has happened-
I hear the call of geese as they gather into formation above me.

They assemble, to leave their northern home, and journey southward,
towards their winter one. With this distinctive, well-known sound,
this deeply imprinted sound, I can feel my body respond to this marker of cycles,
quickly followed by a firing of synapses,
a holding of knowledge that my mind has learned
through repeated sensorial exposure.

Years of wayfaring through this terrain, accompanied by this call,
has engrained a response which resembles that of a call to action.
Time to pick up the pace and gather the medicines needed,
by me and my community, to make it through winter.
Time to be vigilant, in order to make it into the window, between that other call,
to the plants, of frost, and of the closing of the window, of frozen ground.

Root gathering is a precise science.

This master's thesis examines the contemporary practice of pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. It is structured around an interpretive reading of nine pilgrimage narratives, sourced from three ethnographic studies. The aim is to further open understanding of the interplay between body and earth, during the pilgrim's journey and, to gift insight into another way of relating nature and culture. The goal is to uncover the threads of stories, which tell of the myriad ways the living world contextualizes the human experience.

This epistemological reflection enters into the weave of several current debates in contemporary social sciences. Some of the threads of these debates are centered on: the human body and its movements; perception and the senses; the constitution of space and place; and the relations between humans and other-than humans (Ingold

and Vergunst, 2008, p. 1). Interest for this research is grounded in personal experience, some of which I have found reflected in current debates. The impetus is neatly summarized in the following statement, by Scottish anthropologist Tim Ingold: “Human beings everywhere perceive their environment in the responsive mode, not because of innate cognitive predisposition but because to perceive at all they must already be situated in a world and committed to the relationships this entails” (as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S89).

The methodological posture used herein is grounded in, what Opaskwakak Cree psychologist and researcher Shawn Wilson (2008) names, an Indigenist research paradigm². This methodology provides both the relational, experiential and interpretive framework needed to look at the following thesis questions:

- Is there a relationship between the pilgrim and the terrain traversed during the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela?
- Does this relationship contribute to the oft mentioned transformational aspect of the pilgrimage experience?
- More precisely, does interaction with the terrain contribute to knowledge formation (meaning making) or, put another way, are pilgrims along the Camino imprinted by the landscape?

Within this master thesis, I have garnered particular conceptual, experiential, theoretical and methodological tools³. To understand the proposed lens, the introduction outlines: a) the impetus and posture of the research format, b) the relevance and scope of the methodology, c) the research question and hypothesis and d) the framework.

² Defined briefly further into the introduction and in detail in the methodology section.

³ My conceptual and methodological framework has been supplemented and enriched by the rigorous input of my supervisor Laurent Jérôme and from the gracious reading and commentary of my committee members. I have sought to integrate and grow from the feedback. Commentary specific to my proposal, provided concrete theoretical data and the impetus to clearly unpack and articulate the ideas and arguments presented. I am grateful for their time and for the process.

Impetus and posture

The labor of this thesis is a labor of love. It is a labor of the philosophical⁴ kind, in which wisdom is sought, not through a desire for individual knowledge or truth, but from a love for life and a quest to deepening understanding of its wisdom. This love is one which I have both cultivated and responded to. It is situated since early childhood within my relationship to the living world and is most frequently expressed in my 30 year practice as a wildcrafting herbalist. The thesis question arose from my own experiential, relational epistemology, and, as a witness to the expression of relational meaning making in others. This master thesis seeks to contextualize The research question within a rising trend in some current social science debates. These discussions posture an ontological discussion and hypothesizes a breakdown of the nature/culture binary (Rival, 2012).

Some of the emergent dialogues within which I situate my reflection have been labeled: relational epistemology (Bird-David, 1999); self-in-relation epistemology (Kovach, 2009); the paradigm of embodiment (Ingold, 2000, 2011); perspectivism (Viveiros de Castro, 1992); animism (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004; Descola, 2013; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011); or the ontological turn (Clammer *et al.*, 2004a; Descola, 2013; Harvey, 2006; Viveiros de Castro, 1992). The hope is to contribute to the current dialogue and to construct, as Ingold states, “a sustained and disciplined inquiry into the conditions and potentials of human life” (2011, p. 4).

Much of the current ontological dialogue is centered on ethnographic research which has taken place amongst Indigenous peoples. Within the present reflective reading, I step away from this focus by seeking out a similar quality of relationing and of

⁴ The word Philosophy comes from the ancient Greek words of *philia* (love, a bond) and *Sophia* (wisdom). It literally means ‘love of wisdom’ or as philosopher Luce Irigaray writes “The wisdom of love is perhaps the first meaning of the word *philosophy*” (Irigaray, 2002, p. 1).

epistemological formation within a 'modernist'⁵ worldview. I attempt to draw out this reflection through an interpretive reading of three ethnographic studies which examine the Compostela pilgrimage experience.

To this end, I undertake a reflective reading of three contemporary ethnographic studies from the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage. I interpret these ethnographies, in part, with the help of nine narratives extracted from them. I supplement the interpretation within the ethnographies, through the lens of personal experience; experience situated within contemporary interdisciplinary debates. The debates selected are centered on the performance of pilgrimage, place and personhood. Specifically, the ethnographies and narratives are read and the thesis question addressed, using these three points as an interpretive lens.

The process of knowledge formation, presented within this thesis, was approached through several in-depth readings of the theory, ethnographies and narratives. The following three theoretical notions present the interpretive framework:

1. The performance of liminality and 'communitas' within pilgrimage. What are the specific characteristics of this ritual phase, as defined by anthropologists Victor and Edith Turner (1978), Sean Slavin (2003), and Nancy Louise Frey (1998), and how does it influence the potential for a marked examination of self-in-relation?
2. Place as an event, as performed. How do recent debates point to the performance of place as a critical element, which is both constituted by, and equally constitutes the pilgrim? (Casey, 1996; Clammer *et al.*, 2004a; Feld and Basso, 1996; Ingold, 2000, 2011)

⁵ I use the term as outlined by Bird-David, "'modernist' signals neither the dichotomous opposite of 'primitive' nor the equivalent of 'scientific' but ideas and practices that dominated the Euro-American cultural landscape from the 17th to the 20th century" (1999, p. S68). I privilege this use over Kovach's 'western', "a descriptive term for a particular ontological, epistemological, sociological, and ideological way of thinking and being as differentiated from Eastern thought, an Indigenous worldview, and so forth" (2009, p. 20).

3. Personhood, whereas place is performed with 'other'. How do recent debates and new definitions pertaining to animism (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004, Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011), and personhood permit a new reading of relationship between pilgrim and terrain? How is performance shown to exist within the inclusive elements of, self-representation, cultural storying, as well as with (the added element here) other-than-human⁶ 'persons'?

This interpretive lens emerged as process, as per the productive hermeneutic analysis model articulated by forestry researchers Michael E. Patterson and Daniel R. Williams (2002). This model, they demonstrate, is easily adaptable to environmental and travel research. It is a research framework most commonly linked to the philosophies of Hans-George Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur, and Martin Heidegger. Within this framework, the selection of a 'method' of analysis evolves as an emergent process of interpretation. This process is commonly referred to as the hermeneutic circle; and makes reference to a form of dialectic that emerges through the inter-relationship between the parts and the whole (Patterson and Williams, 2002, p. 43).

From a methodological standpoint, "developing the organizing system is the analysis, while the final organizing system is the product of analysis" (*Ibid*, p. 55). Within this thesis, the interpretive lens emerged, in response to several rigorous readings of recent social science debates, contemplation of the potential meaning held within the ethnographies, and narratives examined, alongside an in-depth look at both the openings and biases, my experiential knowledge with a relational epistemology⁷ brought forth.

I begin this thesis with an experiential quote and name both the impetus for research

⁶ This term is initially coined, by anthropologist and ethnographer, Irving A. Hallowell, see Irving A. Hallowell, Ojibway ontology, behavior and worldview, in *Culture in history: essays in honor of Paul Radin* (ed.) Stanley Diamond (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 19-52.

⁷ Defined in chapter 1.

alongside the qualitative elements of the process up front. I do this in part, because the foundational paradigm or methodological framework used in this thesis is what Shawn Wilson (2008) and University of Saskatchewan professor Margaret Kovach (2009) of the Plains Cree and Saulteaux people, name an Indigenous methodology. Wilson defines the term Indigenous to mean:

people and peoples who identify their ancestry with the original inhabitants of Australia, Canada and other countries worldwide. (...) While I recognize that Indigenous is a general term that does not truly represent the diversity of the Nations involved, as this book is looking at some of the things we hold in common I have retained its use (2008, p. 34).

An Indigenous methodology is considered by both Wilson and Kovach to contain common elements (specifically that of the relational), within many (but by no means all) Canadian First Nations', New Zealander and Australian Indigenous people⁸.

This methodology, both authors note, is also more and more resonant with many non-Indigenous peoples (Kovach, 2009, p. 11). They write about an increasing number of non-Indigenous peoples finding parallels and relevance in this methodological framework. Early on in the research process, I sent an email enquiry to Dr. Wilson, asking about the relevance of a non-Indigenous person using this methodology. Wilson responded and said that, following an abundance of similar enquiries and as the methodology is an inclusive one, he has adjusted the current term to that of an Indigenist research methodology, or research paradigm. He explained that:

instead of calling it an Indigenous research paradigm, I now call it an Indigenist research paradigm. Indigenist is what I call the philosophy underlying how we do things, and can be claimed by anyone who wants to follow/live by this philosophy regardless of their heritage - just like someone

⁸ While they both suggest that it may also find parallels in other Indigenous peoples' world views and practices, they narrow their current theory to that of Canada and Australia. It is important to consider, as Kovach says, that Indigenous peoples "are not culturally or intellectually homogeneous" (2009, p.166)

doesn't have to be female to be a feminist (email from Feb 17, 2014).

Herein, the term Indigenist will be used to describe the methodological posture specific to this thesis.

As per the particularities of an Indigenist methodology and of a hermeneutic, circular unfolding of knowledge, the nuances of this analysis, as well as its method are revealed and constructed 'throughout' the thesis - as process. The desired outcome is to construct a more reflective, rather than proof driven form of inquiry. In the hopes of contributing to understanding and uncovering (within my reading of the narratives) traces of, what Kovach (2009) describes as, epistemology which ensues from a self-in-relation. This form of inquiry requires me to bring you the reader into this circle, this story.

While I cannot assume you will make the same connections I have, I can address the three evaluative criteria of hermeneutics as outlined by Patterson and Williams (2002). These criteria are: persuasiveness, insightfulness, and practical utility. "Persuasiveness refers to the notions of providing the reader with enough access to the data to make an independent assessment of the warrants of a particular set of conclusions", persuasiveness, the authors continue, takes the form of a dialogue, in which "rather than simply defending a position" one helps develop understanding of the issue. Insightfulness, for its part, refers to the creation of a body of work, which helps elucidate the Gestalt or pattern of seemingly unrelated data. The final category, practical utility, reflects a shift from a concern to establish the 'truth' of knowledge to a concern for the usefulness of knowledge in enhancing understanding, promoting communication, or resolving conflict (*Ibid*, p. 33-35).

To reiterate, this interpretive master thesis seeks to create a dialogue around the

question of how knowledge is formed and what elements contribute to its development. It does this by using nine narratives sourced from the Santiago de Compostela ethnographies of philosopher Mercedes C. Quesada-Embid (2008), anthropologist Nancy Louise Frey (1998) and anthropologist Sean Slavin (2003). While it is acknowledged that these narratives may not be generalizable, they still say something about the formation of experience and knowledge, and the types of relationships that may exist between the pilgrim and the terrain.

Relevance and scope of methodology

As previously noted, the personal experience, openly articulated throughout, constitutes the spark which led to this epistemological reflection. While personal experience will not form the basis of the data examined (this will be the Compostela narratives), it is the impetus for the reflection. Familiarity with the 'language' of self-in-relation makes interpretation and an informed 'reading' of the narratives possible. Personal experience is used as a critical element of knowledge formation which contributes to rigorous engagement with both the theory and the narratives. This experiential lens is in part, what is espoused by anthropologist Edward M. Bruner and Victor Turner (1986)⁹. It is also part of the added value of an insider or experiential posture as presented by philosopher and anthropologist Jean-Guy Goulet (2011)¹⁰. Finally, this experiential and relational stance¹¹ is a core element when using an Indigenous research methodology.

⁹ See Edward M. Bruner and Victor Turner, *Anthropology of experience* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

¹⁰ See Jean-Guy A. Goulet, *Trois manière d'être sur le terrain: une brève histoire des conceptions de l'intersubjectivité*, *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, 35, 3 (2011).

¹¹ This does not mean that the insider or relational posture is without pitfalls; bias and the privileging of certain elements over others remains as much of a challenge within an experiential posture, as it does for someone in an 'outsider' position.

What is suggested is an examination of the relational knowledge formation between the wayfarer and the terrain. It becomes doubly interesting and relevant to build this reflection upon a methodology, which in and of itself, is founded upon this very concept of knowledge formation as a product of relationing. The aim is to open up dialogue around an aspect of being in the world which, according to Wilson has (in large part), until recently, gone unexamined: “research is all about unanswered questions, but it also reveals our unquestioned answers” (2008, p. 6). In order to ‘get at’ our unquestioned answers it becomes important to develop alternate ways of formulating, encountering and answering questions.

The relevance in using an Indigenist Methodology in a reading of pilgrimage lies, in its particular ability to contribute to current dialogue around relationing, but also specifically, to open up reflection around the relationing between the human and other-than-human worlds. How does a ‘new’ reading of the nine narratives of the pilgrims walking the Camino, allow for both the formulating of questions, and the questioning of previous answers? Some of these questions are currently coming through in contemporary debates pertaining to the ontological turn, personhood and dwelling. As noted earlier, they point to a re-examination of the long held ‘modernist’ binary between human culture and nature.

One of the challenges, in using this methodology, lies in its relative newness within the academy. However, the ‘newness’ of this lens also offers advantages. The past 20-30 years have seen many emergent approaches in qualitative research. This has introduced a broader variety of viewpoints into the academic arena. Wilson (2008) and Kovach (2009) situate Indigenous research within this broadening field. Patterson and Williams state that a continuous repeat, of traditional research methods, runs the risk of becoming: “a weak repetition of types of understanding” (2002, p. 1). Alternate approaches to research they argue are invaluable to offer new and different

types of insight. Some additional hurdles in using this methodology are covered in the conclusion to this section, and later in the methodology section.

Questions and hypothesis

Early on, the term uncovering was added to the title of this thesis because, as I researched the field of pilgrimage I found very little examination of the relationship, or connection, to the landscape or terrain traversed in pilgrimage. I found data which suggested that transformation was an outcome of pilgrimage (Clift and Clift, 1996; Coleman and Eade, 2004; Coleman and Elsner, 1995; Eade and Sallnow, 1991; Morinis, 1992; Turner, 1969, 2004; Turner and Turner, 1978). Some of the theory referenced the emotional or historic terrain (Reader, 2006), and some looked at the symbolic or cultural 'storying' of the terrain, by and upon pilgrims (Frey, 1998; Weiss Ozorak, 2006; Slavin, 2003). My specific focus was to ask what contributions the 'landscape' may, or may not, provide to the pilgrims oft purported 'transformation'. Few studies seemed to look at the actual relationship between the pilgrim and the elements of the landscape within which she travels. Philosopher Edward Casey concludes that one reason for this problem pertains to a history within much of the social sciences, where place appears abstracted through the concepts of space and time (1996, p. 14). This complex construct, grounds much of our current reflection and will unfold throughout the pages of this master thesis.

Specifically, my question pertains to what goes on in the so called 'liminal' part of the journey and is the terrain traversed really so incidental that it deserves little, to no mention? I wanted to look more closely at the 'body' of the journey, not the separation or return but rather what happens during what French ethnographer and folklorist Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) and later anthropologist Victor Turner

(1969) coined the liminal phase. The underlying three hypotheses herein are that, firstly, the terrain traversed imprints itself upon the physical body¹², by extension, critically alters perspective and contributes to the oft referred to transformational aspect in pilgrimage. Secondly, it is proposed, that where the physical geography is invested with significance, the relationship becomes one of interdependence, where the outer landscape becomes part of the wayfarers' inner landscape and by extension the inner part of the outer. Finally, by imprinting itself upon the body, the pilgrims' journey becomes a means to reference new ideas, and knowledge and helps provide a new awareness.

Using the word imprint highlights that somehow, the pilgrimage is marked upon the body, mind and heart and that this marking leads to, a critical altering of perspective. Lastly, this 'imprinting' suggests that the outer geography a pilgrim moves through becomes part of their inner geography, a reference point with which they can inform their existence. By exploring and moving through varied landscapes, a pilgrim transposes these landscapes onto their inner geography and thus changes the very way of seeing and interacting with the outer geography. The journey imprints itself onto the pilgrim's physical, spiritual and social self and by extension they are changed. Noted scholar and professor of divinity emeritus, Richard R. Niebuhr speaks of pilgrims as 'persons in motion':

physical passings through apertures can print themselves deeply into us, not in our physical senses alone but in our spiritual senses as well, so that what we apprehend outwardly becomes part of the geography of our souls. The pilgrim in us begins to awaken. Once such awakenings begin, pilgrims grow ever more watchful, watchful not only for apertures but for moments offering entry into a larger world than the world of routine. In the day-to-day run of our lives we are half-mindless of what is happening to us and in us. But then there arrives an undeniable alteration (Niebuhr, 1984, p. 10).

¹² While I name that I am looking at this 'relationship' from a body perspective, the term body is proposed as an inclusive, holistic one, which includes the physical, psychological, cultural and spirituality 'bodies'.

Niebuhr continues on to demonstrate that this immersion sends us both outwards into the landscape and inward “to a new sense of ourselves as belonging to the enduring tides and hills of the earth”. In these moments he concludes, “we catch intimations of the depths of our kinship with other beings, both animate and inanimate” (Niebuhr, 1984, p. 10). The varying depth of this kinship within the narratives is what we seek to situate. Can traces of a relationship be ‘sussed’ out of the narratives? Can a reading of recent dialogues around place, personhood and knowledge (or meaning making) help uncover the existence of these relationships?

Framework

This thesis is divided into three sections. These sections reflect the three stages of ritual theory first articulated by Arnold van Gennep (1909, 1960): separation, liminality and re-integration. These three stages, initially applied specifically to rites of passage, were later expanded upon by Victor and Edith Turner (1978) to include the ritual practice of pilgrimage. The first section begins the journey and sets the container. It lays out the underpinnings of the theories, and methodology, necessary for our current reflection. The second contains the body of work and presents the analysis. Within this section, I introduce and ‘read’ the ethnographies and narratives, through the lens of performance (liminality and movement), place and personhood (animism). In the final section, we undertake a return on the reflective process, address some of the limitations faced, propose potential areas for future study and ‘conclude’ our journey.

Section one contains two chapters. Chapter one defines many of the key terms used throughout. It situates the current interpretative analysis, within some of the theoretical (ontological) debates relevant to the thesis question (Clammer *et al.*,

2004a; Descola, 2013; Halbmayer, 2012; Ingold, 2000, 2011; Karadimas, 2012). Some of this theory questions the nature-culture binary and, through this, redefines long held understanding around concepts of place, space, time, personhood and animism (Bird-David, 1999; Casey, 1996; Clammer, 2004; Feld & Basso, 1996; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011). This theoretical chapter will thus require, and provide, a brief examination of the historical application of these terms.

Chapter two defines the characteristics of Indigenist methodologies and illustrates why this methodology is specific to the task at hand. I clarify what relevance firsthand experience holds, to help read the ethnographies and narratives. Similarly, how does the firsthand experience of the three ethnographers, help them grasp nuances in the experience of their subjects? How does openly articulating my experience as an herbalist, pilgrimage and vision quest facilitator, impact, enrich and alter my research posture; how does it subsequently help and hinder my analysis?

Section two is also composed of two chapters which present the body of the analysis and reflection. This section introduces the ethnographies and narratives (data), interpreted through our theoretical and conceptual lens. Three studies have emerged from the research as relevant to the examination of the thesis question. All three are ethnographic studies and have been undertaken in the participant observation format. They are outlined here in the order of relevance to our current examination. First, is a dissertation by Quesada Embid (2008) in which she looks at the relationship of reciprocity, between the pilgrim and the terrain. The second is a book which ensued following a dissertation, by Nancy Louise Frey (1998). Within her book, Frey examines the 'process' of the Santiago pilgrimage, alongside the commonly referred transformational aspect. She outlines the qualitative mechanisms of liminality, and transformation, and points to how the elements of the landscape contribute to this. The final study is an article by Sean Slavin (2003) which looks at liminality, walking

and spirituality. His study demonstrates elements of movement and liminality, which may contribute to a relational epistemology.

From within these three ethnographies, I have extracted nine narratives. These narratives are read for traces of a relational epistemology between the wayfarer and the terrain. The goal is to take the ethnographic studies one step further. Within a hermeneutic context, these narratives serve as the individual pieces which help us examine the whole. They form the building blocks of our hermeneutic circle.

Chapter three presents the first four narratives and examines the performance aspect of pilgrimage. It outlines four relevant places to highlight what is happening during the experience. These places are:

1. Movement, the mechanism of walking, and the body as site of experience
2. Transformation thematic in narratives as a measure of experience
3. Liminality and existence outside of day to day time, as a contributing element of perspective, and awareness
4. Hermeneutics transposed onto landscape proper, and defined as an imprinting, and 'communication' between wayfarer and other-than-human 'persons'

Chapter four then introduces our last five narratives, continues the analysis, alongside recent debates pertaining to place and personhood (animism). These debates help provide insight, continue to interpret the narratives, and address the thesis question.

The final section contains one chapter. Chapter five concludes the journey with a reflective exercise, meant to encourage further dialogue. This chapter steps out of a concluding argument style and dictates a continued process oriented format. I provide a synopsis of the analysis proposed; look at how the current analysis helps unfold insight into the pilgrimage experience; I draw out some of the limitations of the

current work; and propose some areas for future reflection. Within this chapter, I reflect on the results which emerged, though the reading of the ethnographic studies and the narratives, in relation to each other. I then tie the three ethnographic studies, and the narratives highlighted within them, to both, our initial thesis question and to the results the interpretative hermeneutic process has brought to light.

The three themes of performance, place and personhood, seen together, as a whole, close the hermeneutic circle. The pieces (data) which have been laid out in the analysis, have created a dialogue with each other, and now serve, not only to address the initial thesis question, but also, to open up previously unthought-of directions; namely, around potential implications to expanding the category of personhood, and secondly around, qualifying (and quantifying) the level of relationality which can potentially exist. By reading the narratives through the proposed theoretical and conceptual lens, I formulate both an answer to the thesis question, reveal nuances which have ensued as a consequence of this reflection, and advance several lines of thought for additional consideration. Finally, I situate this reflection within current social events, and propose it as a relevant, even critical dialogue to be had.

Throughout this master's thesis, an interdisciplinary format (religiologique)¹³ is used, with a selection of debates from religious scholars (Harvey, 2006); anthropologists (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer *et al.*, 2004a; Feld & Basso, 1996; Ingold, 2000, 2011); philosophers (Casey, 1996; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999); and Indigenous academics (Battiste, 2000; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). The conceptual framework is grounded within an Indigenist research methodology and is especially structured by the research approach articulated by Shawn Wilson (2008) and Margaret Kovach

¹³ This approach reflects a long standing (foundational) practice within UQAM's science of religion department. See Louis Rousseau, *La religiologie: une connaissance interdisciplinaire du religieux, Histoire, Monde et Cultures Religieuses* 2, 26 (2013).

(2009). The use of this methodology presents us with both advantages and problems. Some of these include recognition of both, the source of knowledge, as well as, the means of transmission.

Within an Indigenist research framework, knowledge is sourced as an emergent, relational process, where 'inward knowledges' (Kovach, 2009, p. 126-127) are considered as important sources of data. In order to access these knowledges, this research paradigm requires that the reader and writer enter into a relational dialogue. Storying then becomes a key element in transmitting 'knowledge'. As Wilson predicts, "an idea cannot be taken out of this relational context and still maintain its shape" (2008, p. 8). This highlights a dilemma, how do I create context, so that a dialogue between reader and writer can ensue and the reader can become aware of my inner knowledge process? How does one contextualize process, and apply a storying approach, within a 'scientific' academic framework. In the use of an Indigenist research paradigm, this is done through the use of the narrative voice.

For this reason, the more personal approach serves to contextualize the knowledge process, which (as previously noted) is not solely individual in nature. Your awareness of my process works as a bridge, to create 'relationship', and facilitate understanding between the ideas, as well as between myself and you, the reader. From an Indigenist research paradigm this not a superfluous, but necessary step to create understanding (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). The articulation of an Indigenist research paradigm, alongside the bridging of what could be viewed as a somewhat opposite mode of communication has not been easy. Although it may appear to be the opposite, I have had to work hard to preserve some semblance of a storying voice (my conceptual framework) and also meet the requirements of a more 'academic' voice. While it may be evident that I am grappling with its mastery, my hope is that this more personal approach be recognized as a methodological necessity within an

Indigenist research framework, and that it does not come across “as indulgent” (Kovach, 2009, p. 84). In order to facilitate and contextualize the process herein, I begin and end this master thesis with a prologue and epilogue. Kovach names this is as a methodological tool which allows for uninterrupted story (*Ibid*, p. 16).

PART ONE
FOOTINGS, FOUNDATIONS AND UNDERPINNINGS

CHAPTER I
THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I want to tell the mosses' story, since their voices are little heard and we have so much to learn from them. They have messages of consequence that need to be heard, the perspective of species other than our own. The scientist in me wants to know about the life of mosses and science offers one powerful way to tell their story. But it is not enough. The story is also about relationship.
Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer¹⁴

The introductory quote by professor of environmental and forest biology, Robin Wall Kimmerer, reflects some critical elements within both the conceptual and theoretical framework used herein. The next two chapters unpack this framework for understanding to ensue.

Within this master's thesis, an interpretive approach is used to further the analysis of three contemporary ethnographic studies from the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage. Based upon the aforementioned Indigenist framework, personal experience with a relational epistemology is openly articulated throughout, and serves to position the analysis. This experiential lens is presented in part, through the use of the narrative voice. This lens works alongside current theoretical debates in an interpretive reading of the nine narratives, which are sourced from the three ethnographic studies.

¹⁴ See Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Gathering moss: a natural and cultural history of mosses* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003, p.vii).

The interpretation of the narratives (and ethnographies) selected is not meant to be generalizable or evidentiary; nonetheless, it does serve to illustrate something important about the types, times and locations, specific to the relational epistemology I seek to highlight. The aim is not to speak 'for' the other-than-human persons pointed to throughout, but rather, to speak 'of' the relationship between the pilgrim and the terrain; traces of relationship, which I will show, ensue as a consequence of the 'animate' qualities (personhood) of the terrain (Bird-David, 1999; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011). This distinction will serve as the cornerstone to the current argument, and will unfold throughout.

Chapter one presents some recent debates in the social sciences, and situates the present epistemological reflection within them. Several of the dialogues examined, articulate 'new' understandings around, pilgrimage, place and personhood, as they pertain to the formation of knowledge. I outline some of these debates, and situate the reader within the line of dialogue most relevant to our current exercise. These rapidly unfolding, (yet relatively recent), fields of research are, (at times), deconstructing well know academic terms. Much of this chapter will, therefore, focus on the definitional elements of some key terms, as they apply to this thesis. This chapter will also briefly situate these terms in their historical use.

Some of the areas specific to the current thesis question relate to the treatment of landscape in the social science. I will consider the difference between 1) a reading of landscape as a multilocal or multivocal cultural process (Rodman, 1992), and 2) Tim Ingold's suggestion, that landscapes are 'known' through a process of wayfaring; a process he contends, continually unfolds within the weave of a sentient¹⁵ world. I will

¹⁵ The use of this word signifies a quality of sensuous existence (and varying degrees of perception) found in all forms of matter. It is in line with what Merleau-Ponty (1968) describes as 'the flesh of the world'. He advances that - it is not possible to be sentient in an insentient world. Our perception of the world is the world's perception of itself. Abram (1998, 1996, 2007) and Ingold (2000, 2010,

show that this distinction becomes critical in any consideration of a co-constitutional exchange between the wayfarer and the terrain. In order to speak of the traces of knowledge formation which may occur along the Compostela route, I adopt anthropologist and senior lecturer at the University of Haifa, Nurit Bird-David's (1999) term of relational epistemology. I return to this shortly, but first I situate some of the theory specific to our current examination of pilgrimage.

1.1 Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is practiced by millions of people around the world (Coleman, 2002). Some recent studies theorize that the phenomenon is going through a marked surge in popularity (Davidsson-Bremborg, 2008; Frey, 1998; Weiss Ozorak, 2006; Quesada-Embid, 2008). The *Camino de Santiago de Compostela* pilgrimage alone is estimated to have gone from a few thousand to that of 100,000 people a year¹⁶. Yet surprisingly, this surge in traffic is only recently matched by in depth anthropological examination of the phenomenon (Coleman, 2002; Turnbull, 1992). Two gaps are frequently identified in the pilgrimage literature. The first relates to the anthropological treatment of the mechanisms of pilgrimage, the second to the place of the body within the performance of the experience.

2011) argue that humans do not simply exist 'on' the earth, nor do they experience it solely through representational interpretation of bodily sensations. Rather, humans are immersed in "practical bodily engagement" (Ingold, 2000, p. 99) within the world. Abrams suggests that "to the experiencing animal, it would seem, there is no aspect of the sensuous surroundings – no earth-born entity or substance, or human-made object – that presents itself as utterly inert or inanimate. Matter itself, matters." (2007, p. 173) For Ingold, the world itself is in a continuous state of becoming which involves a state of awareness; to be alive to the world requires total sensory involvement in an environment (2000, p. 99). This central argument is developed throughout.

¹⁶ Statistics from The American Association of Friends of the Road to Santiago. See, Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak, The view from the edge: pilgrimage and transformation, in *On the road to being there: studies in pilgrimage and tourism in late modernity*, from the series religion and the social order, (ed.) William H. Swatos, Jr. (Leiden, NL: Koninklijke Brill Publishing, 2006).

At the 1981 Pittsburgh conference on pilgrimage, Victor Turner¹⁷ and Alan Morinis issued a challenge to anthropologists. They called on them to rectify a history of study which was, neither “deep”, nor “comprehensive” (Morinis, 1992, p. 7). Social anthropologist Alan Morinis especially bemoaned the lack of attention paid to the personal and experiential, and to the mechanisms contributing to these elements of pilgrimage. He concludes that the experiential and mutable nature of the phenomenon, may very well make it difficult to approach, and be one of the contributing factors for the lack of investigation (*ibid*, p. 17).

Morinis demonstrates that “we are yet to investigate the broad range of psychosomatic sensations that accompany sacred journeys and are often the most significant aspects of pilgrimage in the view of the participants themselves” (1992, p. 17). No less than a decade later, professor of anthropology at Massey University in New Zealand, Kathryn Rountree argues that, in spite of feminisms contribution to understandings around the body, gaps within its treatment in pilgrimage studies still exist. She states that, “the body as a site for analysis has recently received a great deal of attention (...), however a discourse centered on the body has yet to develop within the literature on pilgrimage” (2002, p. 476). Within this thesis, the referent of ‘body’ points to the physiological, physical ‘container’ which is neither, an object, nor an instrument, but rather, the *subject* of perception. (Ingold, 2000, p. 169; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 206). The cultured, social and gendered ‘body’ are but one aspect to be considered when giving voice to a ‘paradigm of embodiment’ (Ingold, 2000, 2011). My use of the term ‘body’ is inclusive of the physical, emotional, reflective, spiritual and cultural characteristics of the pilgrim¹⁸ (subject). These elements are

¹⁷ According to Badone and Roseman, the work of Victor and Edith Turner “represents the first broad-ranging theoretical model” in the study of pilgrimage (2004, p. 3).

¹⁸ Nancy Frey explains that the term *pilgrim* comes from the French term *pelerin* and prior from the Latin *peregrines*, which is rooted in the verb *per agrare*, ‘to travel’ or ‘to visit’. This usage suggests a wanderer, or someone who travel in foreign lands or a religious traveler to a holy place (Frey, 1998, p. 257).

considered, as an inter-relational whole.

In the postscript to the seminal book on pilgrimage, edited by Allan Morinis (1992), *Sacred journeys*, anthropologist Colin Turnbull predicts (and calls for), a shift in both pilgrimage studies and anthropology as a whole. What is required to successfully interpret and make sense of the meaning making process, and personal mechanisms of pilgrimage he writes, is familiarity with the language, and experience of it. Turnbull differentiates between the objective tourist lens and the insider pilgrim lens. He calls for the field of anthropology to make a sincere effort to allow for the contribution of participant observation. Only through 'controlled subjectivity', he argues, can any in depth understanding of the process be read (1992, p. 257-274). Just over a decade later, ethnographic and theoretical examination of, the mechanisms of pilgrimage have risen significantly. In part perhaps, thanks to new approaches to ethnographic research.

Interestingly, the scope of many recent ethnographic studies from within the rapidly growing field of pilgrimage research (Frey, 1998; Weiss Ozorak, 2006; Quesada-Embid, 2008; Reader, 2006; Slavin, 2003), not only analyse the mechanisms specific to the phenomenon of pilgrimage, but do so from an experiential (or insider) perspective. The emergence of an insider perspective (by no means restricted to pilgrimage) points to the shift Turnbull (1992) alluded to, and suggests, that to achieve in depth understanding of the mechanisms of a phenomenon, one must have some experience of it (Bruner, 1986; Goulet, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Turnbull, 1992; Wilson, 2008).

Understanding social phenomenon from the outside may prove as difficult as comprehending a foreign language; a difficult to impossible task, without a thorough immersion into, the sounds, shapes, rhythms, and 'tastes' of it. This thesis builds

upon the theory that an insider view may enrich perspective. It does not present an insider ethnographic view, rather, personal experience, serves to offer familiarity with the language of a relational epistemology. This familiarity is then used, along with current theory, to interpret and 'read' three contemporary ethnographic studies which examine the phenomenon of pilgrimage along The Camino.

1.1.1 Context of dialogue

From a theoretical standpoint, this thesis does not bring forth any overarching pilgrimage theory or typology, nor does it look at specific historical expressions. Clearly, the phenomenon of pilgrimage, along with the motivations, manifestations, definitions and qualities pertaining to them are not static in time or place. Christian pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela undertaken during the medieval era, as perhaps a mercenary endeavor or as an external form of the monastic life (Turner and Turner, 1978), and those undertaken today will undoubtedly have difference qualities of being. They may even, if placed on a taxonomy table, qualify as different species. I would surmise that this is the case even today between pilgrims travelling the 'same' pilgrimage route. Nancy Frey relates that:

when faced with the complexity of the contemporary Camino, the categories 'pilgrimage' and 'pilgrim' seem to lose meaning (...). The Camino can be (among many other things) a union with nature, a vacation, an escape from the drudgery of the everyday, a spiritual path to the self and humankind, a social reunion, or a personal testing ground (1998, p. 4-5).

Within this context, pilgrimage is viewed as a ritual container which invariably holds a variety of purposes.

The Niebuhr (1984) quote, presented on page 11 of the introduction, alludes to the

transformation examined herein, and serves as a sign post within the current reflection. The quote suggests that the outer geography a pilgrim moves through becomes part of their inner geography; the landscape traversed, becomes a reference, a context, a contributing, formative element, which critically informs the experience.

Regardless of whether a pilgrimage is undertaken for devotional, instrumental, normative, obligatory, wandering or initiatory purposes (Morinis, 1992), transformation, or a shift in the pilgrims outlook, appears to be a commonly referenced outcome. The following quote alludes to the shift we speak of. "The witness of countless millions of pilgrims testifies that going on the pilgrimage makes one into a different person (...) we come back to the place where we began and know it for the first time because the person who comes back is, in truth, different from the person who left" (Clift and Clift, 1996, p. 168). I situate this possibility for transformation within the theory on liminality and *communitas* articulated by Turner and Turner (1978).

1.1.2 Liminality and *communitas*

Much of the current theory relevant to elements of liminality and transformation is informed by the French folklorist and ethnographer Arnold van Gennep's (1909, 1960) work on rites of passage. His research "gave us the first clues about how ancient and tribal societies conceptualized and symbolized the transitions men have to make between well-defined states and statuses" (Turner and Turner, 1978, p. 2). Within van Gennep's theory, he surmises that three phases exist within the rites of passage that mark life's transitional moments (e.g. initiation rites, marriages, funerals): the preliminal (separation phase); the liminal (transition phase); and the postliminal (incorporation phase) (van Gennep, 1960, p. 11).

Within a prescribed ritual container, a person is separated from their previous social life and persona, undergoes some kind of initiatory act and symbolic change, and is then reincorporated into the social group in a new social capacity. Rooted in the Latin word *limen* (meaning threshold), the term liminal (state) is used to describe the second stage, that of the intermediate or transitional period. During this transitional phase, the individual (or group of individuals) is considered ambiguous, they have shed one social status, but have not yet fully entered into the next. The Turners, expanded on van Gennep's work, and applied it to pilgrimage. They named this the 'liminoid' or betwixt and between phase (Turner and Turner, 1978).

According to Turner and Turner, this stage is surmised as a time which is neither here nor there, a time which exists 'outside' of social constraints. The qualities of this ritual stage give rise to what Turner labels a form of 'anti-structure' (Turner, 1969). He hypothesized this to be a time that allows for increased levels of communion and 'communitas' between pilgrims of different social status: "*Communitas* described the individual pilgrim's transition away from mundane structures and social interdependence into a looser commonality of feeling with fellow visitors" (Coleman, 2002, p. 356).

Anthropologist and historian, Eade and Sallnow (1991)¹⁹ have raised some valid criticism around the universal application of the Turner theories pertaining to pilgrimage (perhaps especially around the theory of *communitas*). The authors point out that social structure dynamics can still be found amongst pilgrims. They outline a theory of competing and contesting discourse as the central characteristic of pilgrimage. Within the Eade and Sallnow theory, competing and contesting discourse is shown to exist, between the religious and secular world views, between 'locals'

¹⁹ See John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, Introduction, in *Contesting the sacred: the anthropology of Christian pilgrimage*, (eds.) John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow (London, New York: Routledge, 1991).

and pilgrims, and even, amongst pilgrims themselves with their varying needs and interpretation of the site. The category of pilgrimage, they state, cannot be seen as a homogeneous phenomenon, but as a culturally and historically specific one (Eade and Sallnow, 1991, p. 2).

Both Coleman (2002) and Slavin deduce that if one “sidestep this dualistic argument” (Slavin, 2003, p. 6), then valid points can be found in both theories. On the one hand “the weight of social scientific opinion has concluded that everyday political, economic, and social concerns clearly do impinge upon and even constitute pilgrimage” (Coleman, 2002, p. 356); on the other, as Coleman concludes, each theory fits into the era in which it is presented:

just as *communitas* was a theoretical construct of its time, so it is possible to see why discrepant discourses and interpretations have appealed to scholars during the 1990s and since, in an era when postmodern fragmentation seems rather more plausible than the search for unmediated experiences of unity” (*Ibid*, p. 357).

Two points are retained from this discourse: first, neither *communitas*, nor contestation, can be used as a self contained anthropological theory in which to neatly package pilgrimage, “why should we assume that pilgrimage must be ‘about’ any one thing, whether it be heightened conflict or the heightened absence of it?” (Coleman, 2002, p. 363); secondly, if each of the following theories can be seen as situated within the social arguments and realities of the time, then a look at the ‘relationship’ between the human and other-than-human (or the bridge between nature-culture), would seem to be situated in the current (frequently mentioned), ‘environmental crisis’ of our time²⁰. The relevance of this second point will be addressed as the reflection unfolds.

²⁰ Frequently noted in: contemporary news media, social media, film and literary industries.

Victor and Edith Turner hypothesized that the 'out of time' element of the liminal stage²¹ (and pilgrimage) allowed for "a relational quality of full unmediated communication, even communion" (1978, p. 250). This shift, they argued, was followed by a sense of communion amongst pilgrims. The three ethnographic studies and nine narratives presented, do show a shift from the everyday measure of time, however a measure of time still exists. The suggestion, expanded upon here, is that being out of 'everyday' time the wayfarer experiences a shift in perspective and becomes more aware of the present moment, which then contributes to a more body centered time. Within this framing, sensorial perception becomes more focused on direct experience, and perhaps especially, more situated in 'place'. I build on the Turner theory and suggest that this more 'liminal time' is also a time which allows for greater relationing, with self, other pilgrims and for some, the landscape.

I seek to highlight places in which this sense of 'communion' is shown to exist between the wayfarer and the landscape. The mechanism of walking (Ingold and Vergunst, 2008; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999; Slavin, 2003) along with a change in the habitual organization of time and space (Frey, 1998; Weiss Ozorak, 2006) may bring the relational qualities between the wayfarer and terrain into focus and critically inform (and imprint) the experience.

The posture I hold throughout neither denies, the continuity of the social and cultural imprints which inform the pilgrim and the journey, nor does it overlook, the traces of 'communion' pointed to within the ethnographies and narratives. I hold that, while the pilgrim is never completely free of cultural imprints, neither are their inscription

²¹ The Turners differentiate between the terms liminal and liminoid. "Liminoid" defines what they categorize as the "quasi-liminal" state specific to pilgrimage and, liminal is more specific to what Gennep names 'tribal' rites of passage. The distinction is used to support their theory of *communitas* and, perhaps especially to highlight differences in the applied use of social space. (Turner and Turner. 1978, p. 35) The distinction is both relevant and interesting, however, for the sake of simplicity and because this thesis addresses the notion of liminality as a potential 'out of time' quality, rather than as a transcendence of social space, the term liminal is used throughout.

static for all time. As Slavin notes, “while the body is socially and culturally inscribed and produced these things do not determine it” (2003, p. 2). I will show ways in which, the narratives speak of an existence outside of regular time and of a relational exchange with the landscape. While the Turner concept may not have been as all encompassing as supposed (none ever are), they may have been on to something which can be of use to us here.

1.1.3 Current ethnographic research

Several studies have contributed to the ideas present in this thesis. Some of these include: Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak’s (2006) focused look at the qualities of the liminal phase as a critical element to transformation; Ian Reader’s (2006) examination of the Shikoku pilgrimage performance, and, the emotional meaning making components tied to the landscape - as sourced through the legends, stories and symbols; Anna Davidson-Bremborg’s (2008) look at Swedish pilgrimage, in which she concludes that, being out in nature and walking are the central motivating factors identified for undertaking pilgrimage; Sylvie Guichard-Anguis (2011) for her part shows how relations between the ‘sacred’ forests and pilgrims in Japan helps the pilgrims create contact to the past; and lastly, Kathryn Roundtree (2002) who characterizes the ways in which pilgrimage to sacred Goddess sites helps women inscribe their bodies with alternate representations of the feminine.

Each of these ethnographies takes a step to open up dialogue around the body mechanisms of pilgrimage, and several also, examine the significance of the landscape. The landscape pointed to throughout is however, often read as a backdrop, as a human centered, culturally informed canvas. The significance it may or may not hold for the pilgrim is not directly addressed. Ian Reader, for example writes, it is

“the legends, miracle tales, and symbolic messages –that suffuse and give meaning to the physical landscape of pilgrimage” (2006, p. 39). This is no doubt true, however, I also ask: does the landscape have any imbued meaning of its own, and does it also constitute the performance of the wayfarer?

Interestingly, Reader outlines that walking pilgrims, in contrast to bus pilgrims, do not participate much in the temple performances; they get their books stamped and quickly return to the forest. The perspective of foot pilgrims, he writes, “is shaped by the physical conditions of their journeys. Unlike bus pilgrims who exist in a communal atmosphere” (2006, p. 189). One foot pilgrim’s journal, he continues, is a typical representation of a walking pilgrims focus. The journal provides “plentiful descriptions of the paths, roads, vegetation, and flowers seen as he walks but tends to make only perfunctory comments about the temples themselves” (as cited in Reader, 2006, p. 189). What motivates them to hasten their return to the forest, rather than extend their stay in the temple environment? Does this phenomenon demonstrate an alternate point of focus? Are the pilgrims experiencing a sense of the communal with the ‘personhood’ of the terrain? Reader does not specifically address this.

Another example of this abstraction of landscape can perhaps, surprisingly be found in Keith Basso's (1996) seminal book. Basso's book is perhaps one of the first to take an in depth look at place (within Apache cultures) as an active holder of story, knowledge and meaning making. According to Martin W. Ball (2002), Basso provides sound ethnography, but problematic analysis. Ball suggests that reading Indigenous experiences of landscape through a constructivist lens leads to the language of the landscape becoming opaque to Western analysis. He provides Basso's analysis as an example:

Even in total stillness, places may seem to speak. But as Sartre makes clear, such voices as places possess should not be mistaken for their own. Animated

by the thoughts and feelings of persons who attend to them, places express only what their animators enable them to say (...) Human constructions par excellence, places consist in what gets made of them - in anything and everything they are taken to be - and their disembodied voices, immanent though inaudible, are merely those of people speaking silently to themselves (as cited in Ball, 2002, p. 460).

According to Ball, the problem with Basso's analysis lies in his use of a philosophical framing (and ontology) of subject and object. This framing is problematic he concludes, because it is not necessarily shared by the culture examined²². Within my current analysis, I ask if this framing problem could stem from a language dilemma, or more precisely one of translation. This line of thought will bring in the hermeneutic theory of French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) and will unfold throughout.

This current analysis situates itself within Morinis' call to broaden examination of the mechanisms of pilgrimage. It seeks to do this by examining the relational exchange between body and landscape along the Camino. In order to access understanding of this, the Turners' (1978) theory of liminality and *communitas*, alongside Sheets-Johnstone and Ingold's theory of movement, serve to guide our reading of the narratives. These two theories, appear to advance, the 'out of time' quality of liminality, alongside the rhythmic quality of movement (proffered through walking), as mechanisms which afford the wayfarer a shift in perspective. The Sheets-Johnstone (1999) and Ingold (2000, 2011; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008) theory seems to suggest that this shift in perspective brings the self-in-relation process into focus.

²² For further discussion see Martin W. Ball, People speaking silently to themselves: an examination of Keith Basso's philosophical speculations on "Sense of Place" in Apache cultures, *The American Indian Quarterly* 26, 3 (2002); Vanessa Watts, Indigenous place-thought and agency amongst human and non-humans: First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!, *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society* 2, 1 (2013); and John Clammer, Sylvie Poirier and Eric Schwimmer, *Figured worlds: ontological obstacles in intercultural relations* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

Further unpacking theory around place and personhood will help build understanding around what exactly the wayfarer is in relationship with. This understanding will unfold throughout, but first, to illustrate the overlooked, static or background quality, associated to the treatment of landscape (within the social sciences), I propose a look at the historical application of some term and concepts.

1.2 Key terms and core concepts

Any nosing around, into the field of language or etymology reveals that languages (and words) exist on a continuum. As per social systems, individual life paths and plant growth; word meanings are not static, they are organic. Their meanings, intonation and use change over time, even varying from place to place, person to person. Ingold (2000, 2011) defines the life process (in which he situates all knowledge formation, be it human or other-than-human) in much the same way. Life he asserts is a continuous process of becoming. This process is a continuously emergent series of pathways, or lines; these pathways become the meshwork of life, with no beginning point and no end point. Life, as he sees it, is a 'messy' meshwork of interconnecting lines, or knots. It is a weaving of emergent relations. Attempting to elucidate such a process, to self, and 'other', and arrive at any semblance of understanding (a meeting place within the meshwork), requires explanation and context, especially of core terms. For the moment, the application of the terms, landscape, terrain, imprint and culture may prove helpful in situating the current research.

1.2.1 Landscape and terrain

Twenty years ago the concept of landscape and place, like pilgrimage, was apparently

a “black box” (Hirsch, 1995, p.1) which had received little anthropological attention (Rodman, 1992, p. 640). According to Hirsch, it shared a similar status to the body, that is: “despite its ubiquity it has remained largely unproblematized” (1995, p. 1). Edward S. Casey situates this problem within a context of framing. The current framework, he writes, sees space and time as universal in scope and place as merely particular²³ (1996, p. 14).

Casey demonstrates that by following the Newtonian and Kantian assumption “that space is absolute and infinite as well as empty and a priori in status, places become the mere apportioning of space, its compartmentalization” (1996, p. 14). Place, he goes on to state, becomes relegated to a position which is posterior to space, or more precisely, place is now made from space. “By ‘space’ is meant a neutral, pre-given medium, a *tabula rasa* onto which the particularities of culture and history come to be inscribed, with place as the presumed result” (*Ibid*). Place in this context, and hence the terms contained within it (which are, for our use - terrain and/or landscape), then become nothing more than the product, or background, of a cultural maneuver.

Linguistically, the term landscape can be traced back to the Danish term *landskab*, the German *landschaft*, the Dutch *landschap*, and the Old English *landscipe*. ‘Land’ designates the place, the people and the creatures living there. Whereas, *skabe* and *schaffen* mean ‘to shape’, “suffixes *-skab* and *-schaft* as in the old English ‘-ship’ also mean, association, partnership” (Whiston Spirm, 1998, p. 17). This usage has seemingly disappeared in the English language. The Oxford English dictionary erroneously traces the word landscape to a 16th century Dutch painterly term,

²³ Casey writes that “it is characteristic of the Western mind to conceive of space in terms of its formal essence – hence the insistent search for mathematical expressions of pure spatial reason” (1999, p. 19). He sites Newton, More, Gassendi, Descartes, Galileo and later Kant as the proponents of this approach to space, and hence place. For a full discussion of the historical progression of this debate see Edward S. Casey, How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time: phenomenological and prolegomena, in *Senses of place*, (eds.) Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996).

landskip (Ingold, 2011, p. 126; Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 11; Whiston Spirm, 1998, p.17). Whereas the first sense suggests a quality of relationship, of immersion and mutual engagement, the painterly term implies a posture of separation and observation (Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 10). This designation, along with the maneuver Casey (1996) outlines, has unfortunately marked the term with, a static, visually informed, external quality, reflected in much of its treatment.

For anthropologists, the landscape often simply serves as the background canvas which helps bring the “study into ‘view’ (i.e. form an ‘objective’ standpoint – the landscape of a particular people)” (Hirsch, 1995, p. 1). According to Frey, the concept of landscape is commonly used either as a framing convention or as a canvas upon which to map cultural symbols. Landscape, she differentiates, is not solely a backdrop but a central part of the pilgrimage experience (1998, p. 265). Anthropologist Sylvie Poirier articulates a similar view, and points to a shift in the treatment of landscape from that of a static representational canvas, to one which reflects cultural process (2004, p. 79).

Reading landscape as a cultural process, can serve to draw out and illustrate, the multiple meanings and power dynamics place may hold for people. However, it does not always succeed in drawing out the relational qualities specific to the ‘personhood’ of place. Anthropologist Margaret C. Rodman’s (1992) look at multilocality and multivocality provides an example of this. In this study, she examines the ways ‘place’ can hold different meaning, for various individuals and groups of people; these variants show the ways in which place can be politicized, and culturally constructed, or de-constructed. Rodman’s goal is to “empower place conceptually and encourage understanding of the complex social construction of spatial meaning” (1992, p. 642).

In Rodman's framing, landscape is still portrayed in a painterly, external, and separate sense, albeit one now enriched through cultural layering and process. Rodman's analysis is an important step towards paying attention to the value particular places hold for individuals (and groups), and in understanding the 'reading' or 'cultured' significance it has for them. It does little however, to help us understanding the relational exchange and qualities imparted to the wayfarer from within the landscape. It also potentially complicates the ontological meaning place may hold for people.

The Rodman study serves as one example of the ways in which the approach to both place and landscape are shifting. It also illustrates a current conundrum within the social sciences. For both Ingold (2011) and Casey (1996) while place and landscape are finding their way onto the page, they are still commonly abstracted within space and time, and when they aren't, they contend, the focus is still often human centered. Landscape, is still commonly referenced as a surface (painterly sense) upon which people inscribe, layer upon layer, of cultural meaning. While some of this reading of cultural imprints from landscape is inevitable, and even at times beneficial, the question becomes, is it possible to read the landscape as existing outside of a solely human framework?

This conundrum is illustrated, as we saw, in Keith Basso's book. Ball (2002) argues, that even when the relational qualities of place do come through, the meaning is often interpreted using a philosophical framing which speaks from a human centered perspective. A similar reflection is made by Casey (1996) concerning Fred R. Myers' ethnography of the Pintupi people of Central Australia. In this study, Casey shows that in spite of sound ethnography, Myers overlooks the significance of place. For Myers, space comes first, whereas for the Pintupi, place is paramount (as cited in Casey, 1996, p. 15). Given this distinction, Myers fails to recognize the significance

of place, as prior to the symbolic associations tied to it, even after the people tell him it is so. For Myers, Casey states “even when treating a culture for which place is manifestedly paramount, the anthropologist leans on a concept that obscures what is peculiar to place and that (by an implicit cultural fiat) even implies its secondariness” (*Ibid*, p. 15).

This dilemma notwithstanding, several contemporary writings in archeology and anthropology are beginning to treat ‘place’ as a significant element to meaning making. Inevitably, problems of translation still ensue. Keith Basso (1996) as we saw, even with what Ball names errors of interpretation, nonetheless, brings the storying of landscape, along with the relational significance of that story, into the anthropological field. From an archeological perspective, Robert Layton and Peter Ucko (1999) highlight important considerations for the inclusion of landscape in any understanding specific to the mechanics of meaning making. Eric Hirsch (1995) for his part, situates landscape between place and space and defines a ‘foreground’ and ‘background’ or, cultural and material ‘space’ which can now at least enter into relation with each other. His theory brings space and place closer together and moves landscape from that of a representational, static state, into something more akin to process. However, through his separation of the inner and outer, he still seems to uphold a binary between human culture and the material world.

I situate my current approach to the landscape debate, within Tim Ingold’s examination of a ‘dwelling’ (2000) and (later) ‘wayfaring’ perspective (2011). The term dwelling, first coined by German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) advocates that humans do not simply inhabit (and build) space, they are constructed from within it: “we do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is because we are dwellers (...) To build is in itself already to dwell (...) *Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build*” (as cited in

Ingold, 2000, p. 186). What Ingold infers in this is that whatever humans build, be it of the imaginary, culture of physical kind, evolves as a consequence of practical engagement with ones surroundings. "Building, then, cannot be understood as a simple process of transcription, of a pre-existing design of the final product onto a raw material substrate" (2000, p. 186).

In his latest book, Ingold develops his thinking behind the theory he initially names, the 'poetics of dwelling'. Building (and dwelling) "signifies the immersion of beings in the currents of the lifeworld" (2011, p. 10). With this immersion into currents, Ingold shifts his thinking from that of a dwelling perspective, to that of a wayfaring one. Wayfaring, Ingold states, is the mode through which human beings inhabit the world. Life, he says, unfolds along paths, as a process of becoming (*Ibid*, p. 148). In his most recent book, he notes that he shifts from the thinking of Heidegger, in part because of the division between the human and other-than-human mode of being Heidegger espouses (*Ibid*, p. 11). This inclusion of the other-than-human is especially relevant within the current context. Therefore, while the term dwelling will not be dropped altogether, the descriptive and sense inferred of a wayfaring perspective will be privileged.

The term landscape, in the sense we are using here will also serve for now, but as a descriptive, it is still lacking in many ways. If we are speaking of a world, which is in a continual co-constitutional state of becoming; a world in which we 'dwell', then does the term landscape allow us to include the sky, the sun, the moon the stars? Does the shadow of the stone, or the crevice of the meeting place between the rocks matter? To the shade loving plants, mosses and creatures, dessert walking pilgrim or crevice inhabiting beings, then surely it does. What of water or liquids of all kinds, what of fire and smoke, molten lava and volcanic ash; what of air. "When you breathe, or feel the wind on your face, are you engaging with the material world?"

(Ingold, 2011, p. 21) Are we 'in' the landscape or simply moving 'through' or over it? More to the point, does the term landscape allow for a treatment of personhood which can be inclusive of the other-than-human? Does it allow for the consideration of a landscape situated in a sentient life world?

This is the context within which we situate the wayfaring activity of pilgrimage along the Camino. The pilgrim is not simply reading and transposing symbolic, historical and cultural information, but engaging in a co-constitutive process of becoming, with both visible and 'invisible' elements of the landscape.

In the hopes of facilitating the readers' immersion, into the landscape of this written body of work, I have also added the descriptive term *terrain*²⁴. *Terrain* for its part comes from the 12th century French term *terrain* and speaks of a piece of land, or ground, commonly used for training horses. Its use stems from the Latin form of *terrenus* or *terra*, meaning of the earth, or earthly, material plane. The sense that landscape also needs the inference of the term *terrain* may come from my French background. My personal acquaintance with the word is one of an immersive emplacement, of an amalgam of elements which make up the lay of the land. This points us towards the characteristically informed 'place' we are looking at, as opposed to the *tabula rasa* of space, "onto which the particularities of culture and history come to be inscribed" (Casey, 1996, p. 14).

Terrain also suggests the field upon which the anthropologist gathers data. This again presents us with both benefits and problems. In ethnographic studies, the 'terrain' can become the 'background' upon which local knowledge, 'foreground' is contrasted. According to Casey, it may be named as the local, within which anthropological ethnography takes place, yet escape direct reference. Rarely, he argues, are any

²⁴ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrains>

elements of the terrain's contribution to the experience of the anthropologist noted (1996, p. 15). The present aim is to broaden the reading of our three ethnographic interpretations of the Compostela research terrain, therefore, the conjoining of the two terms, landscape and terrain, with the sense of their linguistic origins, may provide us with the best descriptive with which to do this. Terrain places the wayfarer firmly within the lay of the land, embodied, and on the earth, and landscape (which includes all of its elements) orients and shapes her within it (Ingold, 2011, p. 21).

1.2.2 Limits of current context

One last clarification is provided, as to why the terms land, nature or environment, are not chosen. Ingold illustrates, that in using the terms nature (and environment), the tendency is towards an ontological framing that sees nature as what lies 'out there'. The only way to engage with nature in this framework, he argues, is through separation. The perceiver must separate herself from nature in order to reconstruct the world in consciousness; a world of 'in here' reconstructed in an intersubjective space of mental representations (Ingold, 2000, p. 191). Ingold demonstrates that:

In a world construed as nature, every object is a self-contained entity, interacting with others through some kind of external contact. But in a landscape, each component enfolds within its essence the totality of its relations with each and every other. In short, whereas the order of nature is explicate, the order of the landscape is implicate (Bohm as cited in Ingold, 2000, p. 191).

This is a complex line of thought which continues to unfold throughout. For now, let it suffice to say, that from a relational perspective, the suggestion of a closed self-contained unit which exists outside of the self, seems difficult to bridge. I will show that while bringing landscape into a relational focus, does not eliminate the possibility of it still being 'other', it does open up understanding for the ways it becomes a co-constitutive 'other'.

Words, and language, as we saw are inevitably organic and complex; they are also often a reflection of power structures in a culture. It is not surprising, that within a culture that often privileges division between body and spirit, nature and culture²⁵, it is difficult to find a qualifying word to define the complexities of landscape. Jeannette Armstrong of the Okanagan people states that “in our language, the word for our bodies contains the word for land” (2008, p. 67). Within an Indigenist methodology, the proper term to use would perhaps be land, however without the prefix of ‘my’ or ‘our’ before it, and as I am speaking less of a continuously habituated place, and more, of one within which the pilgrim moves ‘temporarily’, the English language use of land suggests a quantitative and homogeneous meaning, whereas landscape (in its original sense) a qualitative and heterogeneous one (Ingold, 2000, p. 190). What we are searching for is a trace of relationship, this trace is undoubtedly situated in the qualitative (an at times ambiguous exercise), and what emerges in the analysis, is that even when a relational epistemology can be shown to exist, it will undoubtedly be of the heterogeneous sort.

For the purposes of this master’s thesis, the term landscape and terrain are used somewhat interchangeable. Landscape and terrain, are considered to include the animal, mineral, vegetable and elemental nations. Further, within my current use of the terms, I emphasize not only visible ‘matter’, but also that which is not seen; the relationships which shape, that are held in, the place of, meeting. It is a holistic whole greater than the sum of its parts, which may include (variable from region to region) the trees and plants, stones and hills, wind, water and weather, invertebrates and vertebrates of multiple kinds (including human). The following quote, which speaks

²⁵ See Marshall Sahlins, *The sadness of sweetness: the native anthropology of Western cosmology*, *Current Anthropology* 37, 3 (1996). Within this text, Sahlins examines what he categorises as, a ‘Western’ tendency towards, a binary of body and soul, nature and culture. This binary he argues is derived (in part) from the Judeo-Christian demarcation of pleasure and pain, which he states, has led to a ‘perpetual civil war’ between the concepts of body and soul, nature and culture, as well as to the “bedevilment of our understanding of other peoples” (1996, p. 395)

of the language of landscape, reflects this. Landscape then, “is not a mere visible surface, static composition, or passive backdrop to human theatre (...) Landscape connotes a sense of the purposefully shaped, the sensual and aesthetic, the embeddedness in culture” (Whiston Spirn, 1998, p. 17). Using the metaphor of language, the landscape is a composition of a multitude of voices speaking a variety of dialects, all stemming from a common language. I situate both the language and the sentience of the landscape in which it is derived, within the prescient theory of French phenomenological philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), alongside new understandings of the term animism (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011).

1.2.3 Imprint

The etymology of the word communicates, *communicare*, signifies ‘to share’. It suggests an exchange, a marking upon of perception that can include verbal, non verbal, even sensorial cues. It can even be used in reference to machines. However, in common parlance, the term holds an underlying suggestion of a predominantly human to human ‘conversation’. Take Merriam-Webster’s definition as an example “to give information about (something) to someone by speaking, writing, moving your hands, etc.”²⁶ While the secondary definition is “to convey knowledge of, or information about: make known *communicate* a story”. The underlying implication is of an intellectual exercise and the human to human inference remains..

Indubitably, communication must occur between the wayfarer and the terrain (also between the physical body and cognitive brain). Where it not occurring, climbing a steep slope, ‘reading’ the terrain and knowing where to place ones feet (often, for one

²⁶ See, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communicate>.

familiar with the landscape, in a seamless, 'interpretive' flow of movement) would prove perilous. The exchange I am alluding to, is more in line with the French terms *empreigner*, a printing term used to suggest being marked by something, and, *imprégner*, which points to that of being filled by something. I therefore propose the term, imprinting.

The imprinting of the experience, upon the body emphasizes an immersion into the elements of the terrain, and into, their communicative, storying properties. These elements contribute to a bi-directional exchange, in which a 'marking', an informing, an 'impregnating' occurs between the pilgrim and the terrain. In other words, this imprinting leaves a trace. In the French sense, both these words can be used to speak of informing experience and enriching the person, "*la music ma imprégné d'un sentiment de paix*" or "*la culture féconde l'intelligence*"²⁷. I distinguish ways in which the pilgrimage experience, more to the point, the exchange between the pilgrim and the terrain consists of a critical imprinting experience - the culture of which brings knowledge.

1.2.4 Culture

This research is attempting two things. The first, is to expand the treatment of 'culture' out of the strictly human social sphere and inform it with 'place'. The suggestion is, that human culture is but one component which informs meaning making within an unfolding life world. The second, is to 'read' various wayfarers' narratives from the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela and see if any imprinting of the landscape (and relationing) can be found. Our interpretive analysis of three

²⁷ See, <http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/f%C3%A9conder/33130>. *Imprégner* comes from the latin *impraegnare* which in French means *féconder*, to impregnate, but in the sense of enriching something, of making fertile of filling a vessel with experience; impregnating with experience, exchange, the story of the cosmos.

ethnographic studies is undertaken in order to “make points about human behavior *through* using ‘pilgrimage’ as a case-study (or herein, a case-study of a case-study) rather than focusing *on* the institution itself as a firmly bounded category of action” (Coleman, 2002, p. 363).

Philosopher Edward Casey argues that we must, “put culture back in place” and recognize, that the abiding emplacement of cultural practices has often gone unnoticed (1996, p. 33). Ingold puts it thus, “perhaps the founding contradiction of the entire edifice of western thought – (is) namely that it has no way of comprehending human beings’ creative involvement in the material world, save by taking them out of it” (Ingold, 2011, p. 8). The hope is, to take materiality out of the cognitive and symbolic constraints that have banished it to inexistence, within much of twentieth century scholarship, and anchor it, in an active ‘lived’ world. For Quesada-Embid, the world of the pilgrim and of The Camino landscape, are not separate, but reciprocal:

having lived, walked, explored, and experienced the Camino on many occasions, its enduring outer landscape has become engrained in the personal journey of my own inner landscape. Over the years, it has become a place very dear to me and where I see a fusion of culture and nature evolving over time in an organic way (2008, p. 1).

The word ‘culture’, which stems from middle English, means ‘place-tilled’. “The Latin *cultura* and *culturare* both come from the root word *colere* which means ‘to tend to, to inhabit, to care for, till and worship’ (Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 12-13). Thus a cultural landscape becomes one that involves reciprocity and relationship, between human and other-than-human players. As we will see in the section on Indigenous epistemology, a cultural landscape becomes a vector of process in which both the human and other-than-human are not only held in relationship but are needed by each other:

Animate form is out there in the world for anyone to see; it is neither reducible to social constructivist thought nor nullified by relativistic theses. It is the generative source not only of our fundamental practices and beliefs, but of our individual and species-specific 'I cans,' those possibilities of being and doing that Husserl called upon us to recognize and which we have yet to comprehend" (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 357).

By exploring and moving through varied landscapes, a pilgrim interacts with (and enters into 'relationship' with) the elements of the landscapes. They transpose them onto their inner geography, which then, changes the very way of seeing and interacting with the outer geography. This change occurs because, to be human, is to be situated in the world and to both change, and be changed, by it. Ingold relates that "anthropology then, is the study of human becomings as they unfold within the weave of the world" (Ingold, 2011, p. 9). For Casey "there is a crucial interaction between body, place and motion that needs to be recognized. (...) Part of the power of place is its very dynamism" (as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 64). There is a quality of "interanimation" that ensues from the relationship of body and landscape (*Ibid*, p.64).

With our look at the treatment of place, we examine the commonly created 'modernist' rift between the human and other-than-human world. Throughout the history of anthropology, Ingold asserts:

the assumption has persisted that people construct the world, or what for them is 'reality' by organizing the data of sensory perception in terms of received and culturally specific conceptual schemata. But in recent anthropology, this assumption has been challenged by advocates of 'practice theory', who argue that cultural knowledge, rather than being imported into the settings of practical activity, is constituted within these settings through the development of specific dispositions and sensibilities that lead people to orient themselves in relation to their environment and to attend to its features in the particular ways that they do" (Ingold, 2000, p. 153).

Human beings, he continues, are not simply blank slates, informed and molded by cultural expressions, but rather beings whose very tools of life come into existence as life unfolds, through a process of development (2000, p. 379). To be fair, this theory at its roots speaks of a 'process of development' which transpires over many years, even generations, and results in certain 'biological endowments' specific to various peoples. That is not to say that as 'dwellers', within the world, or as wayfarers, temporarily moving within, and performing, landscapes, people are immune and 'unmarked' by their immersion in it (even but for the brief period of a pilgrimage).

It is, on a political and economic level however, critical to recognize the difference of knowledge formation which ensues through long standing (generational), relational expertise, and brief immersions in previously unknown landscapes. Indigenous peoples, who 'belong' to a landscape and are informed by it over generations, will have very different sensibilities and dispositions, (biological endowments) to the terrain, than say, a fourth generation urban dweller, or a settler, arriving from a different continent. That is not to say, that while a person's 'culture' may be primarily socially (and environmentally) constructed, a multitude of cultural variants can be shown to exist. As anthropologist Adrian Tanner writes: "just as people can acquire competence in several languages, can they not also learn to accommodate several incompatible modes of thought" (2004, p. 213). This consideration of authoritative cultural imprinting is examined more thoroughly in our review of animism.

Therefore, while I recognize the specific qualities, and endowments, which emerge through sustained 'belonging' to place, we can nonetheless, search out the meeting places that point to the ways in which the relationship carved between the wayfarer and the landscape has 'imprinted' and informed the experience. I seek out, the ways in which the elements of the landscape have served as guides, signposts, 'elders', transferring knowledge and wisdom along the way. Mercedes C. Quesada-Embid

reports that throughout her research upon the Camino pilgrimage route, the landscape emerged “as an active participant in an ongoing natural and cultural dialogue that has become sedimented there for thousands of years” (2008, p. 11). Ironically, as I attempt to bring landscape and the material world out of the symbolic realm, I propose that pilgrimage be used as a symbolic canvas to pose dwelling and wayfaring, to enrich the dialogue of relational epistemology.

1.3 The personhood of place

We arrive at what is perhaps the crux of the issue, if landscape shapes, by what means does this happen? Merleau-Ponty’s theory serves to bridge us into the theoretical debates around animism; specifically his theories around the embodied qualities of perception (1962) and, his late (unfinished) thinking around the ‘flesh of the world’ (1968).²⁸ According to Ingold’s interpretation of this, landscape and knowledge (and therefore culture), emerge as an unfolding process of perspective. This process ensues not as an isolated event of mind and body, but as a holistic unfolding, in which the whole organism is immersed in the environment (Ingold, 2011, p. 11). It follows that:

since the living body is primordially and irrevocably stitched into the fabric of the world, our perception of the world is no more, and no less, than the world’s perception of itself – in and through us. This is just another way of saying the inhabited world is *sentient*. It is not possible Merleau-Ponty implied to be sentient in an insentient world (as cited in Ingold, 2011, p. 12).

Perception and sentience, in the current context, are not restricted to the sensory and insulated qualities of, vision, taste, touch, hearing and smell. Rather, as discussed by

²⁸ I reference two works here, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s 1962, *The phenomenology of perception*, and his unfinished 1968 manuscript, *The visible and the invisible*. Although his career was brief, and his writings few, in depth understanding of his theories could fill a lifetime. For this reason, while both works were consulted, I turn to the in-depth analysis of his work by Ingold (2000, 2011) and Abram (1988, 1996).

Ingold (2011) and Abram (1988, 1996), they are the very defining characteristic of emplacement in the world. Abram uses the example of his perception of a wildflower, which he says, is not 'caused' entirely by the flower; nor, solely by my cognitive 'perception' or any singular sensory encounter, sight, smell, or touch of it. Rather it is caused by the relational encounter of it (1996, p. 53). Ingold helps us situate this approach to perception and the sensorial:

The sight, hearing and touch of things are grounded in the experience, respectively, of light, sound and feeling. (...) Rather than thinking of ourselves only as observers, picking our way around the objects lying about on the ground of a ready-formed world, we must imagine ourselves in the first place as participants, each immersed with the whole of our being in the currents of a world-in-formation: in the sunlight we see in, the rain we hear in and the wind we feel in. Participation is not opposed to observation but is a condition for it, just as light is a condition for seeing things, sound for hearing them, and feeling for touching them (2011, p. 129).

Within the current context, I move away from an anthropology of the senses approach, and privilege an approach in which perception is seen to arise, in relation to emplacement²⁹. This leads to our final theoretical dialogue of personhood and animism. How can one come into relation with something so distinctly 'other', as a tree, or the wind; are we not simply transposing human qualities of being onto matter?

1.3.1 A brief look at agency

Environmental and cultural historian Linda Nash illustrates how the concept of

²⁹ This distinction is in part what led me away from a sensorial epistemology. Ingold argues that much of what is written in the anthropology of the senses is a predominantly human centered arena where the senses appear to operate in isolation from the world, and from each other. See Tim Ingold, *Worlds of sense and sensing the world: a response to Sarah Pink and David Howes*, *Social Anthropology* (18[3]: 331–340, 2010). This heated and at times, acrimonious debate, demonstrates some of the issues which led to my reconsideration of a sensory approach.

human agency has been a long time focus in the field of history. Nash outlines how this understanding of agency is defined as, the ability to ‘intentionally’ shape the world. Originally, she writes, the term arose to characterize the ability of nineteenth century elite European males to shape political and intellectual arrangements. Only after World War II, did historians begin to recognize agency in all humans (Nash, 2005, p. 67). In some current usage of the term, agency may be applied to the human realm, states and corporations and, more and more of late, with the natural realm.

Agency has gone from being the sole ability of elite males to shape their worlds, to that of, a processual social understanding of identity (Holland *et al.*, 1998). Further, agency while still seen as processual, is now also situated in place (Clammer *et al.*, 2004a). In our current analysis, the concept of agency is (at least momentarily) set aside. In its stead, rather than consider an individual’s ability to act or be acted upon, we examine the concept that “things are in life rather than life in things” (Ingold, 2011, p. 29). This quote by Ingold proposes a shift in paradigm around the concept of agency and of human emplacement in the world.

This hopefully opens up an examination of animism, not as a form of anthropomorphism, which is the projection of human attributes onto ‘non-humans’ nor, as the transmission of spirit onto inert matter. Rather, towards an animism characterized as recognition of the “dynamic transformative potential of the entire field of relations within which beings of all kinds, more or less person-like or thing-like, continually and reciprocally bring one another into existence” (Ingold, 2011, p. 68). This thesis does not purport to be a thorough examination of agency (or animism for that matter). This section situates some present use of the terms. It also shows a progression of thought, and, illustrates how each debates contribution, has been invaluable to the current dialogue. Holland *et al.* (1998) situate a state of becoming, Clammer *et al.* (2004a) situate this process state within indigenous world views and

Ingold (2000, 2011) situates it as a common quality of being, a poetics of dwelling³⁰.

Within the innovative work of Holland, Lachicotte jr., Skinner and Cain, the focus is on, agency (identities) as a participative process in “socially produced, culturally constructed activities” (1998, p. 41). Identities, or what they name figured worlds are not so much determined things as situated processes; these processes depend upon the interactive and intersubjective for perpetuation. Humans not only have the ability to act as agents, they can also be ‘instruments’ of other agents; as well as, recipients of the acts of others (Holland *et al.*, 1998, p. 41-42). Within this formulation, we find parallels to Ingold’s (2000, 2011) view of life, as process. However, figured worlds (and agency), in the sense used by Holland *et al.*, seem solely “characteristic of humans and societies” (1998, p. 41).

Next, the comprehensive work of Clammer *et al.* (2004a) examines some of the difficulties of translation which arise amongst different ‘figured worlds’. They extend this processual state of ‘becoming’ to include, the ‘situated’ environment within which ones lives and, within which, cultures (societies) arise and occur. Their work is informed through extensive ethnographic research with Indigenous Peoples. Within their analysis, the relational component of agency (identity) is the focus. Figured worlds, “are discourses built up by relational logic, linking people, cultural forms, and social positions by facts of experience in specific historical worlds” (2004, p. 9). Within this framing, knowledge (and identity) is recognized as a relational aspect of environmental situatedness.

This invaluable work brings to light, the relational correlation of knowledge (identity) and culture as a process, which can transpires between human and non-human

³⁰ This is the term Ingold coins, my use of it here is tied to the previous sections examination of his concept of dwelling. Initially this term is inspired by the thinking of Heidegger, currently Ingold (2011) privileges the term wayfaring.

persons. The focus, is mostly upon that which is specific to Indigenous Peoples, and towards, knowledges which are environment (or place) specific. The political implications of which are significant. Within this work, Clammer momentarily steps away from this focus. He convincingly argues that, if tendencies towards animism can be found in non-Indigenous societies, and if, traces of animism have survived in contemporary Japan (as well as in many other highly modern societies), then it is time “to call into question what has long been thought about humanity’s relation to land, animals, plants, and the cosmos in general” (Clammer *et al.*, 2004b, p. 8).

This brings us back to Tim Ingold (2000, 2011) and Linda Nash (2005). Nash counters the commonly held belief that human distinction lies in the singular “ability to convert ideas into purposeful actions.” She asserts that “it is through practical engagement with the world, not disembodied contemplation, that human beings develop their plans” (2005, p. 67-68). This ability, she argues, this knowledge formation, cannot exist outside of the emplacement within the environment in which it evolves. In many ways, she states, the notions of agency (and environmental determinism for that matter), do not adequately encompass the complexities within recent debates around relational epistemology (2005). Ingold for his part, also argues that our humanity does not come fully formed but is continuously constituted and re-constituted, within the world, along the way. He describes it as an ongoing process of becoming or wayfaring. Animacy, he states, “is not the result of an infusion of spirit onto substance, or of agency into materiality, but is rather ontologically prior to their differentiation” (Ingold, 2011, p. 68).

Parallels to the process-like knowledge formation proposed by Nash (2005) and Ingold (2000, 2011), as well as, Holland *et al.* (1998) and Clammer *et al.* (2004a), can be found in definitions of Indigenous Knowledge (IK). While the definitions surrounding Indigenous Knowledge will vary, the Canadian International

Development Agency defines it as follows: “Indigenous Knowledge represents the accumulated experience, wisdom and know-how unique to cultures, society, and/or communities of people, living in an intimate relationship of balance and harmony with their local environment” (Settee, 2008, p. 45). Priscilla Settee of the northern Canadian Cree nation, notes that IK is interwoven into all aspects of life and “reflects many layers of being, knowing, and methods of expression (...) expressions of Indigenous knowledge are interconnected; hence Indigenous science is not separate from our art” (*Ibid*, p. 47). Marie Battiste explains that, “most Indigenous spiritual teachings and practices flow from ecological understandings rather than from cosmology (...) Indigenous thought does not view ecology as a mass noun, but rather as a synthesis or vector of processes” (2000, p. 99). This brief outline of an Indigenous knowledge framework, serves to introduce the posture with which animism is approached.

1.3.2 Animism

The term relational epistemology has emerged from the work of Nurit Bird-David (1999). She coined the term, based on time spent amongst the Nayaka people of South India. Relational epistemology, she writes, “is about knowing the world by focusing primarily on relatedness (1999, p. S69). She defines it as, knowledge which emerges and grows in skill, through the cultivation, sustained focus, and maintenance of said relationships. This epistemology, she continues, “is regarded by Nayaka (and probably other indigenous peoples we call hunter-gatherers) as authoritative against other ways of knowing the world. It functions in other contexts (including Western) with, against, and sometimes despite other local authoritative epistemologies” (*Ibid*, p. S69). Ingold, in response to Bird-David’s examination of animism, iterates that, while these relational epistemologies may have lost much of their authority in Western nation states, they “continue to operate nonetheless and remain deeply

embedded in the experience of everyday life” (as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S81).

There are many branches to recent debates around ‘animism’. The overarching category within which they are placed is, at times, called the ontological turn. Most of these debates stem from ethnographic studies with Indigenous Peoples. Variants, and similarities, can be found between many of them. Some of the current debates are those of: perspectivism and ontological animism (which arose from the Amazonian ethnographies)³¹, these stem from the work of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1992) and Philippe Descola (2013) respectively; the aforementioned Bird-David (1999) study of animism, as a functional aspect of relationing amongst the Nayaka; Graham Harvey’s (2006) religious studies examination of past and present views around animism, which he situates within Indigenous and ‘modernist’ (pagan and/or environmentalist) world views; political theorist, Jane Bennett’s³² examination of the animism of ‘things’ and micro-organisms, in which she asserts, “culture is not of our own making infused as it is by biology” (Bennett, 2010, p. 115); and finally, Ingold’s meshwork, which situates the animistic qualities of the world, firmly within the “unfolding of a continuous and ever-evolving field of relations within which beings of all kinds are generated and held in place” (2011, p. 237).

Not surprisingly, criticisms (at times heated), have been raised around this exponentially growing field of study. Some of these include accusations of a tendency towards a ‘naturalism’, or anthropomorphism, which risks subsequent dismissal of scientific methodology. Arguments are also raised, relating that science

³¹ See Bruno Latour, (2005), *Perspectivism: ‘type or bomb?’*; Ernst Halbmayer, (2012), *Debating animism*; Dimitri Karadimas, (2012), *Animism and Perspectivism: still anthropomorphism? On the problem of perception in the construction of Amerindian ontologies*; Laura Rival (2012), *The materiality of life: revisiting the anthropology of nature in Amazonia*; or Eduardo Koch, (2013), *How forests think: towards an anthropology beyond the human*.

³² See Jane Bennett, *Vibrant matter: a political ecology of things* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2010).

has been solely responsible for, a hypothetical, all encompassing, nature/culture divide in the West (Karadimas, 2012; Rival, 2012). I do not hold to either of these views and do not argue for or against either. As with most things, I consider that a subtle interplay of truths can be drawn from each; it may therefore, be more beneficial, to keep the baby, even if we do decide to throw out the bath water.

For the purpose outlined here, I stick to a theory of animism, similarly articulated, within the work of Bird-David (1999), Harvey (2006), and Ingold (2000, 2011), and pointed to throughout the writing within Clammer *et al.* (2004a). This brief overview, ends with Clammer *et al.*'s assertion that a relational epistemology is 'perhaps an ineradicable part of humankind'³³ (2004b, p. 19). This theory takes animism out of the confines of the past one hundred and forty years, which define it as a childlike reflex towards "the imputation of life to inert objects" (Ingold, 2011, p. 63). The definition of animism used here does not reject the relevant or formative elements of human 'culture' in the world, it is not an attempt to argue for naturalism over science, nor does it seek to anthropomorphize the living world. The theory emphasized, foregrounds ways in which, knowledge ensues as a direct consequence of emplacement within a sentient world. This then begins to highlight the lens through which I seek to draw out a self-in-relation occurrence between the wayfarer and the landscape, from the ethnographic studies and narratives examined.

1.4 Conclusion

Within the current chapter, I have shown 1) that pilgrimage research may benefit

³³ Clammer speaks of a growing tendency towards animism in pockets of the modern Western world (2004, p. 103). I am not sure if this is a 'new' tendency, or simply one coming into view. Take for example, the age old practice of female herbalists, often practicing 'unseen' as mothers or grandmothers within their communities and/or families. This practice requires a continuous, deep relationing, constituted and re-constituted by, and with, the environment.

from a more body centered approach; 2) that this examination can be enriched by first person experience and further, that first person experience may be necessary for interpretation to occur; 3) I have illustrated that Victor and Edith Turners theory of liminality and '*communitas*' may provide a useful lens through which to read the narratives; 4) lastly, I have shown that the treatment of landscape within the social sciences could benefit from a less human centered approach.

Recent debates, pertaining to Indigenous ethnographies, articulate concepts of 'personhood', animism and relational epistemologies, and provide, the core concepts with which to address the current reflection. Dialogues, specific to animism, relational epistemology and place are used to supplement the reading of the three ethnographic studies presented. It may be helpful to consider place as more than an abstract surface, upon which to inscribe layer upon layer of human culture. Ironically, throughout the current analysis, pilgrimage is used as a back drop, as a canvas, to look at what is going on between the wayfarer and the landscape.

This research asks: are human beings, as inhabitants of a living world, impacted by their environments and by the other-than-human 'persons' which make up the landscapes we inhabit? As such, are pilgrims along The Camino imprinted by the landscape? The container of pilgrimage becomes a useful tool with which to do this for three reasons: first, because it contains the largest body of data on structured wayfaring; secondly, it presents us with a privileged glimpse at a relationship which, at least momentarily, and to various degrees, exists out of ordinary time; lastly, pilgrimage, as a phenomenon is purported to be growing more and more, and may offer anthropologists a window through which to look at current social currents³⁴

³⁴ For the reasons stated above, and because I myself have not been to Compostela, outside of the descriptive elements provided through the narratives, very little specifics of the terrain are examined. I chose to focus on a theoretical and interpretive exploration of relational epistemologies. It is not my intent to ignore the specificity of the Compostela landscape, nor to

(Coleman and Elsner, 1995; Morinis, 1992; Quesada-Embid, 2008; Turner, 2004).

I have shown, that within the three ethnographies, each takes a step to address the contribution the landscape makes within the experience. Quesada-Embid (2008) looks at the inter-relational aspect of a reciprocal exchange between the pilgrim and the landscape, Frey (1998) considers the ways the landscape contributes to transformation, and Slavin (2003), examines walking as a spiritual exercise which accentuates the liminal state and helps bring the landscape into focus. I take their interpretation one step further by looking at the landscape from a lens of 'personhood'. If one views the terrain from a 'subject' rather than 'object' perspective, then imprints of a bi-directional relationship may be uncovered. This subject may, in all probability, remain inherently 'other' (as in all relationing), nonetheless, it becomes an 'other' which is both marked by and marks the wayfarers 'culture'.

In conclusion, I use Slavin's example of an embodied mapping experience to illustrate 1) an imprinting experience and 2) an example of modernist tendency to characterise the landscape as a static surface which highlights the human experience. Slavin speaks of an embodied mapping experienced, in which he is navigating his way, from stone to stone, along a river bed. He infers that he could return to this exact location 'several years later' and retrace his steps, *exactly* (2003, p. 15-16). While he does acknowledge the imprinting he garners from the landscape, he does not take into

overlook, the ways in which its performance may vary from that of other pilgrimage experiences. However, in the optic, that this self-in-relation state is not restricted to pilgrimage, I present Compostela as a backdrop. It would no doubt benefit understanding of pilgrimage to examine what is specific to the Compostela experience and more specifically, to the Compostela landscape? Quesada-Embid's (2008) dissertation, grounded in a lifelong exploration of the terrain, is a valuable contribution to this. Hers is the most descriptive and 'relational' ethnography I came across. It illustrates how relational epistemologies, while perhaps an a priori skill, are grounded in place. They are a skill set, or literacy, which take generations to master - the likes of knowledges, and medicines, held in an old growth forest. This point is examined throughout and especially highlighted in chapter 5.

consideration that the river is also in a continuous state of 'becoming' (Ingold, 2000, 2011). From a purely physical perspective, it is highly unlikely that the stones will still be in the same position 'several years later'. I know this, from years spent walking the same river bed; sometimes the stones move, and the landscape shifts in the blink of an eye. For Slavin, the landscape appears static and other, and markedly, an 'other', he states, can never be known (2006, p. 16). However, it is not because it is 'other' that personhood does not exist. Perhaps it is 'other', in a similar way that even my own daughter, is to remain forever 'other' to me; an 'other' I have a deep relationing with, and love dearly nonetheless. In order to continue the current dialogue, the next section presents the methodology specific this examination

CHAPTER II

PARADIGM, METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGY OF INQUIRY

This argument and book will only succeed if they generate more debate in the arena into which they enter. Real dialogues have no end but only open up further possibilities in the ever unfolding evolution of life and knowledge.
Graham Harvey³⁵

Stories go in circles. They don't go in straight lines.
It helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside
and between stories, and finding your way through them
is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. Part of finding is getting lost, and
when you are lost you start to open up and listen.
Terry Tafoya³⁶

In the previous chapter, we saw that current dialogues which address the inter-relating between the human and other-than-human world, take on a variety of labels. Within this master's thesis, I privilege the term 'relational epistemology' and accent the reflection on seeking out imprints of 'self-in-relation' from within the narratives and ethnographies examined. Margaret Kovach (2009) demonstrates that (within an Indigenous framework) knowledge is acquired, in relation to others. Knowledge she concludes, emerges as a process of 'self-in-relation'. This posture is more commonly recognized within Indigenous cultures, however, as illustrated, the simple absence of its identification within 'modernist' cultures, does not preclude (nor assure) its presence.

Chapter two situates both my methodological posture and my strategy of analysis. Within this chapter, the Indigenist research paradigm and the hermeneutic strategy of

³⁵ See Harvey, 2006, p. xiii.

³⁶ Terry Tafoya as cited in Wilson, 2008, p. 6.

inquiry which contextualize the analysis are more broadly outlined. These approaches are shown to be the most relevant means to get at the knowledge sought. Fundamentally, this thesis is a reflection around relationship, and advances that the very act of being situated in the world entails relationship, and a self-in-relation state. It is also an epistemological reflection, in that it asks, in light of this relationship, how is knowledge sourced? Throughout, the reflection is informed by the Ingold quote presented on page two of the introduction. This quote (and the dialogue around it), serves as a critical cornerstone to the thesis question. Is there a relationship between the wayfarer and the terrain and does this relationship contribute to the wayfarers' transformation (knowledge as meaning making)?

The two opening quotes to this chapter reflect the scope of the research methodology, as well as the destination sought. The thesis question is examined through the lens of an Indigenist research paradigm and a hermeneutic strategy of inquiry. The hope is to produce more of a reflective and less of an argument driven body of work. This chapter outlines the characteristics of the methodology. It then, draws parallels to other relevant qualitative methodologies and delineates why these are not as specific to the task at hand. Finally, once the overarching methodology is situated, the strategy of inquiry (method) is summarized.

2.1 Indigenous methodologies

Kovach (2009) and Wilson (2008) conclude that Indigenous methodologies are based on a relational epistemology. Within this paradigm, knowledge is defined as a vector of process, situated in and informed by multiple sources. As the chapter's opening quote by Terry Tafoya advances, knowledge, unfolds in a circular rather than linear fashion, is situated in relationship, and sourced through various tools. These tools

include (but are not restricted to): dreams, the senses, stories, silence, nature, ceremony, cognitive understanding, experience, the body, as well as 'data' from the human and other-than-human realms (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008).

With their use of the term Indigenous methodologies, both Wilson (2008) and Kovach (2009) write that they are not articulating a Pan-Indian theory applicable to all First Nations' people. They are rather attempting to uncover parallels in research frameworks, world views and epistemology, which resonate with different groups of Indigenous peoples. Wilson also advances that the political ramification of holding a united front, as Indigenous people, cannot be underestimated (2008, p. 34).

Finally, both authors use the term Indigenous methodologies in the plural, which they name as an important distinction. Since this is an inclusive system of knowledge, no one source of data, no one theory, holds the key to understanding. As an inclusive philosophy, a ceremony, or vector of process, this system of knowledge seeks to allow for a variety of viewpoints, rather than one universal truth. Knowledge is not seen as being 'individual' in nature but rather as something that 'belongs' to the cosmos, of which the researcher is but a part of. Wilson states that research undertaken in this context closely espouses that of a ceremony and "the purpose of ceremony is to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves" (2008, p. 11).

This inclusiveness and sense of knowledge as other than individual, or proprietary, is at the fore of the methodology being applicable by anyone who follows and applies its philosophy. It is in this inclusive stance, as noted in the introduction, that following an email inquiry professor Wilson responded and wrote back stating that in response to an abundance of similar inquiries, he has adjusted his wording to that of

an Indigenist research paradigm³⁷. From herein, I differentiate between the overarching frame of an Indigenous methodology, which is that carried out by and for First Peoples, and the sub-category of an Indigenist methodology, which is the adherence, by a non Indigenous person, to the framework for research put forth by Kovach (2009) and Wilson (2008). Within this thesis, when speaking of the general qualities of the research methodology, I apply the descriptive Indigenous and, when speaking of my specific application of it, I use the term Indigenist.

According to Kovach and Wilson, in an Indigenous framework, knowledge emerges through an inter-weaving of relations, and of connections. Knowledge can be approached through the senses, the intuition, as well as through other-than-human persons. They characterize it as a holistic and/or circular, process-driven approach.

These points are relevant to this thesis on three levels. First, we are looking for knowledge which is not solely informed by the wayfarers' personal and/or 'cultural' reading of terrain, but also by her interaction (her relationship), with the elements of the terrain. Thus knowledge, does not wholly 'belong' to the pilgrim, but also to the landscape, and the 'persons' within it. Knowledge is seen as emerging from a co-constitutional exchange. Secondly, as trees and such do not speak human language, imprints are sourced through traces of the sensorial, emotional, poetic-like, 'encounters' interpreted from the ethnographies and narratives. Lastly, knowledge formation is considered as an unfolding process of interconnected relations. This unfolding process is how my knowledge around the thesis question has been formed, it is also the organizational level of the written work. Understanding this helps situate my strategy of inquiry, and hopefully provides a map to facilitate the reading.

³⁷ For further clarification on this, see, Shawn Wilson, Guest Editorial: What is an Indigenist Research Paradigm? *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 30, 2; ProQuest (2007).

Within her book, Margaret Kovach outlines how the term epistemology, rather than ontology, reflects an Indigenous world view more accurately. She explains how “within research, *epistemology* means a system of knowledge that references within it the social relations of knowledge production. It is different from ontology, in that ontology is concerned with the nature of being and reality (...) the term *epistemology* most closely approximates the ‘self-in-relation’” (2009, p. 21). Within an Indigenous (and in this case Indigenist) framework, this ‘self’ is formed within an animistic epistemology which: “assumes relationships between all life forms that exist within the natural world” (Deloria as cited in Kovach, 2009, p. 34). Since it is traces of the relationing (and the unfolding of knowledge) between the human and other-than-human that is sought, the term relational epistemology most closely reflects the process I seek to highlight.

It follows that because Indigenous methodologies hold to a central relational component, “the shared aspect of an Indigenous axiology and methodology is accountability to relationships” (Wilson, 2008, p. 7). Since knowledge flows from relationships, being accountable to those relationships, to ones ‘tribe’, is critical. Kovach (2009) concludes that the central distinguishing feature between qualitative and Indigenous methodologies is tribal accountability. One of the ‘tribes’ to which I am accountable, stems from the ‘personhood’ of the terrain itself. I do not however, formulate a hypothesis as to what the ethical motivations of the pilgrims might be.

Extensive fieldwork permits uncovering the qualities of a potential relationship. However, to situate the mechanics of the wayfarers’ performance and to interpret fieldwork requires some theoretical understanding of current ontological debates. Within the current theoretical, interpretive model, the initial thesis question, “*what* is the relationship between the wayfarer and the terrain” led to an impasse. In light of this, the thesis question necessarily becomes *-is* there a relationship between the

wayfarer and the terrain?

To articulate the many levels of dialogue present in a relational framework, it is critical to not only present a thesis question, an analysis of data, and a final argument, but also, to create a relationing between myself and the reader. In order to contribute to and allow a process of knowledge, a dialogue must unfold. This requires me to provide the reader with at least cursory 'data' of both who I am, and what my process around the unfolding of knowledge has been. This posture is not so different from the reflexive approach found in feminist methods, or insider ethnographic studies, where the "juxtaposition of self and subject matter is used to enrich the ethnographic report" (Gergen and Gergen, as cited in Kovach, 2009, p. 33). One critical difference already alluded to is that qualitative approaches are based on a non-animistic premise and privilege human-centric knowledge. They are therefore not as relevant to the current thesis question.

2.2 Points of contact and difference

Similarities can be found between Indigenous methodologies and some forms of qualitative inquiry, it is however, important to understand Indigenous methodology as a substantive theory in its own right and not simply a sub-set of other generic 'western' methodologies/theories (email correspondence with Wilson, August 12, 2014). The political, environmental, cultural and psychosocial ramifications of this are of critical importance. The illustration below (Illustration 2.1) from Kovach's book situates the two distinct research approaches. While firmly standing upon an Indigenist research paradigm, some aspects of phenomenology and hermeneutics also serve to guide my approach. This section outlines some of the similarities and differences.

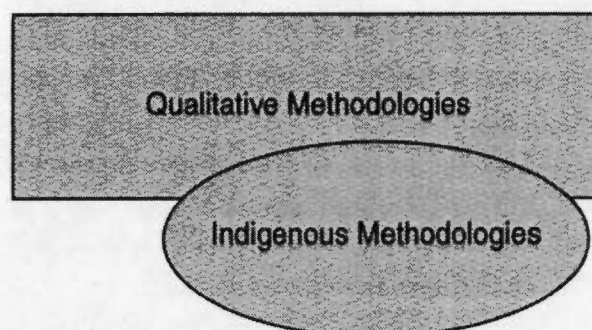


Illustration 2.1 Locating Indigenous methodologies in qualitative research
(Taken from Kovach, 2009, p. 31)

This thesis is phenomenological in that it is the study of lived experience or the life world (Heidegger, 1962; Lavery, 2003). It is hermeneutic in that it seeks to find meaning, to interpret, and to create a hermeneutic circle within which to create space for listening. According to Susann M. Lavery, “phenomenological research is descriptive and focused on the structure of the experience, the organizing principles that give form and meaning to the life world. It seeks to elucidate the essences of these structures as they appear in consciousness –to make the invisible visible” (2003, p. 15). I am trying to get at experience which has, in large part been overlooked and may appear invisible³⁸ (Sahlins, 1996, p. 396). To do this, the descriptive element of phenomenology is useful. This thesis veers off the path of phenomenology, in that it does not seek to bracket out personal experience. Instead, it is purposefully sought out and articulated in order to inform listening, reasoning, knowing, and understanding.

Within a more ‘modernist’ framework, speaking from a stance of personal experience

³⁸ This references Sahlins’ argument that Judeo-Christian (and Western) mythology (and biblical stories) has been foundational in creating a context in which, a veil was drawn between “humanity and the world” (p. 396) and in which nature became ‘hidden’ from us.

is at times classified as subjective, the emic, or insider view. These terms may, at times, be loaded with derogatory subtext which suggests that rigorous academic work can only ensue from an objective, etic, or outsider perspective³⁹. However, within an Indigenous research framework, firsthand experience is seen as a critical contributing element to rigorous academic reflection. Without it, the interpretation remains abstract, and central relational knowledges opaque, this increases the risk of critical information being missed, by both the researcher and the reader. From a relational perspective, the idea of impartial objectivity, or of the anthropologist being able to extricate themselves from the 'object' under reflection, and their own 'relationship' to it, is one of artificial construct that ultimately does not do justice to understanding or knowledge. Naming my first hand experience and knowledge process is not simply an identification of biases; it is a relational exercise to bring the reader into dialogue, into my lens of understanding. It is considered a required component for knowledge to unfold.

Within the context outlined above and since knowledge is relational, rather than individual, objectivity is considered redundant: "Humans – feeling, living, breathing, thinking humans – do research. When we try to cut ourselves off at the neck and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to the people around us" (Hampton as cited in Wilson, 2008, p.56). Knowledge is not mine alone but 'belongs' to each contributing element, to all of creation if you will, to the plants, the animals, people and of course to the terrain traversed. This does not eliminate the possibility for reflective, rigorous

³⁹ The past 20 years of academic research have contributed greatly to shifting this paradigm; nonetheless, some traces of bias remain. This bias is raised not to deny the shift that is occurring, but to welcome recognition and growth. I provide one example which pertains to a discussion in a master level multidisciplinary course. Within this discussion, the term 'going native' was used, by a student, to describe an experiential perspective in ethnographic research. While this may be an isolated case and may not have been intended in the derogatory vein in which I heard it, it is also reflected in Kovach's example of acceptable shifts away from normative modes of coding. Coding which she perceives still holds traces of a lean towards a more objective, detached examination of data over the experiential, immersed process of knowledges (2009, p.33).

thought. Subjective knowledge is used to enter into dialogue, biases are named and identified, and attention is directed to the places in which they help me to 'see', and the places where they hinder my ability to listen.

2.2.1 The anthropology of experience

One of the earlier fields of study that openly articulated the value of subjective input is 'the anthropology of experience'. This branch of theory is part of the life work of cultural anthropologist Victor Turner. I outline the main points of the theory here because it serves to identify the places where my conceptual framework veers off from other qualitative approaches, and alternately to identify parallels which help open up reflection, namely, within the concept of performance studies.

The term anthropology of experience was coined by Victor Turner and Edward Bruner, following a symposium for the American Anthropological Association's annual meeting in 1980. The theory arose from their background as cultural anthropologists, and as scholars of theatre and ritual performance. Cultural anthropology, already partially supported a participative stance, and performance theory an experiential one. With the articulation of this theory, Turner was attempting to present a model within which to open up the static view of social systems promoted within the structural-functional school of thought (Bruner, 1986, p 2).

Much of his stance within the anthropology of experience was inspired by the German thinker Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) and his concept of an experience, *Erlebnis*, or what has been 'lived through' (Bruner, 1986, p. 3). Within Turner's formulation, we shift, from the cultural read as symbols and systems, to the pragmatic, practice, and 'performance', the experience of the thing. Experience is not

simply sense data, or that arrived at through reason, but also the feelings and expectations which accompany it. This begins to offer scholars an alternate framework from that of phenomenology, which, while it examines the 'lived' world, it looks more at the thing (object) itself. Phenomenology looks at that which is outside of the subject, and attempts to bracket out the experience of it whereas the anthropology of experience (and performance studies) attempts to examine the subjects 'situated' experience and process (Bruner, 1986, p. 4).

According to Bruner, the problem with the phenomenological posture lies first, in the fact that we can only ever truly experience our own life; secondly, in the gap between what is lived through and ones willingness and ability to grasp it (and express it to another); lastly, in the interplay between the way expressions structure experience and experience structures expression (1986, p.7). Many of the dominant academic theories and even the English language, with its focus on efficiency and a production mentality, do not provide the means to "capture the richness or the complexity of our lived experience" (*Ibid*, p. 7). As much of the 'experience' I am attempting to uncover (even my own) is performative, emotional, and sensorial, inadequacies with both the container and its materials are inevitable. I am attempting to 'interpret' the expressions of other wayfarers from a place of my own experience. Expressions which, on one hand, I can more easily 'recognize', simply because of my own experience and, on the other, my own experience may blind me in 'seeing' the other.

The anthropology of experience provides an entrance, the place where I step away from this approach, and more broadly, away from cultural anthropology as it were, is that I seek to uncover the shared stories between the human and the other-than-human world. The self and its experience is very much present in cultural anthropology, but till recently, very little space is held for the 'self-in-relation' to anything other than human selves, and their cultural expressions.

Within the ethnographic studies I have chosen, only Quesada-Embid (2008) specifically looks at the relationship between the wayfarer and the terrain. She does this by looking at the meeting place between landscape and pilgrim as an influence in landscape preservation. She names this nexus of pilgrim, landscape and preservation as a relationship of reciprocity. The studies by Slavin (2003), and Frey (1998), while they do look at the contribution the terrain makes upon the pilgrim, they do so from a more human constituted perspective. They do not appear to consider the co-constituting quality of a self-in-relation knowledge process, and therefore, with the exception of Quesada-Embid do not examine any potential bi-directional occurrence between the wayfarer and the terrain. I show that this quality exists and can be found in the narratives.

Tim Ingold offers us an example of what we are looking at. In chapter two of his latest book⁴⁰, he invites the reader to step outside, retrieve a stone, immerse it in water and become aware of the interplay between the stone and the water, “between medium and substance” (2011, p. 32). His suggestion is that materiality is not solely a symbolic, mental concept, but a reality of immersion in the world. This interplay, this examination of some of the materials ‘encountered’ in pilgrimage, of the encounter between the human and the other-than-human is what is on the table.

This example introduces both the context of what we are looking at as well as some of the hurdles. Some hurdles specific to an Indigenist framework have already been named. We have seen that knowledge is approached in a circular, storied fashion, rather than a linear, proof oriented way. This requires an adjustment, and at times, a difficult bridging of two different approaches to knowledge. For example, the common form of transmission within an Indigenist research framework is a relational

⁴⁰ See Tim Ingold, *Being alive: essays on movement, knowledge and description* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011).

one, where storying and narrative serve as the primary transmission method for data.

Another difficulty lies in the type of data considered. We have already seen that the interplay, or relational exchange sought, is not solely of a symbolic order, but neither is it necessarily linguistically based. Trees and such do not speak human language, so what other ways do they use to communicate, to 'imprint' themselves upon the world and humans? How do we find traces of this 'imprinting' in peoples' stories, bodies, narratives and performance? This presents us with a dilemma, perhaps the one I have grappled with the most. The strategy of inquiry used to get at this knowledge is an interpretive analysis of the ethnographies and narratives. It is an attempt to 'read' the 'texts' of the landscape traversed in a pilgrimage, as they appear in the narratives.

2.3 Strategy of inquiry

The interpretive hermeneutic method of analysis has been selected as most relevant to the thesis question, research paradigm and conceptual framework herein. As outlined in the introduction, I have specifically chosen the productive hermeneutic method outlined by Micheal E. Patterson and Daniel R. Williams (2002). Perhaps most relevant to the current exercise is that this method is characterized by process. It maintains that meaning "is not simply *there* waiting to be discovered, (but) is constructed in the process of reading" (Connolly and Keutner as cited in Patterson and Williams, 2002, p. 12). This distinction may explain the difficulty I encountered in defining a concise method of analysis prior to the analysis. My method has emerged as part of the interpretive process.

The interpretive model described by Patterson and Williams considers the nature of reality to be a co-constitutive consciousness. They describe it as "comprised of

activity from two sources, the individual orienting itself to the world and the world revealing itself to the individual” (Moss and Keen, as cited in Patterson and Williams, 2002, p. 14). My interpretive model of analysis reflects the process of meaning making and co-constituted, or inter-relational, exchange I hypothesise within the Compostela pilgrimage. It also reflects the process oriented, co-constitutive knowledge formation I myself have undergone. Lastly, this interpretive approach facilitates a posture of relational epistemology and, therefore, the reading of thesis itself.

The examination of how meaning is exchanged and created, between the wayfarers and, the trees, soil, stones, mountains, and winds, which make up the landscape, cannot only be sourced through what is said (or ‘written’ about) in the narratives. Traces must also be interpreted through what is not said, the silences contained in the narratives, as well as in the imprints pointed at through the experiences of the body, the senses (sensory epistemology), dreams, emotions, and a variety of unnamed actions: “we can’t assume that humans can only interpret or carry meaning forward linguistically” (Beharry, unpublished paper, 2003). We cannot even assume that humans will formulate meaning linguistically, or that narrative models of self are representational (Geertz, 1993)⁴¹.

One way around this paradox, has been to situate my current research into its relational context. The following five points may help situate the present exercise. The first, this is a master’s thesis, whose aim is to take one small step forward in uncovering encounters between body and earth. Secondly, I do this in order to advance my own understanding of current theoretical debates and by building on ethnographic studies which are not my own. Third, I am presenting within an

⁴¹ For further discussion of this, see Clifford Geertz, Religion as a cultural system, in *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1993). p. 87-125.

interpretive, reflective framework, using an Indigenist research paradigm. This paradigm is a relatively new approach within academic study and may present challenges to interpretation. Fourth, I do not seek to qualify the relational knowledge formation between the wayfarer and the terrain, but simply uncover the potential existence of said relationship. Lastly, the ethnographic studies and narratives I examine are informed by sounds, smells, dreams, intuition and knowledges which are not my own and which I can never fully know. Therefore, although it passes through me, the 'data' contained in this master thesis remains interpretive.

The thesis question, as currently formulated, has evolved and, hopefully, allows for a more reflective, and less proof directed thesis. My aim is to create enough of a framework, for understanding and exchange to transpire, but to do so in a way that facilitates the readers own process of knowledge formation; a process which may undoubtedly, differ from mine. Is there a relationship between the wayfarer and the terrain, and does this relationship contribute to knowledge formation (meaning making)? Perhaps more to the point, do the ethnographic studies selected speak of a relational exchange between the wayfarer and the terrain, and can traces of this relationship be read in the narratives?

I define three levels of interpretation. These levels have emerged from a reflective process which is not solely informed by the ethnographies and narratives.⁴² I anchor this process within current social science theory specific to pilgrimage, and to the 'paradox of embodiment' articulated throughout Ingold's (2011) latest work. To resume, the three levels of analysis are: performance, place and personhood.

1. Performance of the liminal by a moving (walking) body;
2. place as constitutive in wayfarers' experience, also constituted by wayfarer;

⁴² This process has been informed (formed) by song, ceremony, my elders, community, tears, the eggs of chickens, theory, serendipity, purpose and listening.

3. personhood of the terrain traversed, or the 'new' animism, outlined by, Bird-David (1999), Clammer (2004), Harvey (2006) and Ingold (2011).

This 'new' animism is less anthropomorphic, or agency driven and more grounded in a participatory, observational and skilled, knowledge formation process; acquired through interaction within a 'sentient' life world. The interpretive 'grid' presented here, evolved throughout the research process. Some previous categories included more of a sensory epistemology, psychological and/or environmental ethics focused set of groupings. As my thesis question changed, from what is the relationship, to 'is' there a relationship, it became more pertinent to look at what the wayfarer could be in relationship with. This led to a shift from, a search for qualitative markers specific to 'how' the relationship was interpreted by the wayfarer, to an examination of the animate/personhood and performance of place.

The next section presents the nine narratives selected from the ethnographic studies. I have 'coded', and present them into the three thematic labels identified above. This is done to facilitate the written exercise; however, these units are not mutually exclusive, but relational, and many of the narratives could have been classified under several themes. Some of this overlap will be discussed in the conclusion.

One final clarification, specific to my strategy of inquiry, pertains to the selection of data. Initially I sought to use various pilgrimage route narratives, alongside published⁴³ vision quest narratives. I was oriented towards these narratives following a brief experience as vision quest facilitator. Within this context, I witnessed testimonials from various participants that appeared to point towards a relational epistemology, I was, therefore curious to contextualize the experience. I imagined

⁴³ See Paule Lebrun avec Gordon Robertson, *Quête de vision, quête de sens: un grand rite de passage amérindien*, (Montréal, QC: Vega, 2013).

that I would approach my theorizing of a relational exchange from a more general level, using narratives from various contemporary pilgrimages and vision quest experiences. I initially collected data from several sources.

Upon submission of my research proposal, I realized this approach would not be specific enough. I therefore decided to focus solely on three contemporary ethnographic studies from the Compostela pilgrimage. Two of the studies were gifted from the input of the reviewers, which I chose to integrate as a relational exchange. From a large pool of literature, I slowly whittled it down to three ethnographic studies, and nine narratives specific to the contemporary Compostela pilgrimage. These appeared to provide the best vantage point through which to approach the social science debates I was considering.

Following the final selection, I resumed an in depth reading of the data, structured my conceptual framework, and formulated a strategy through which to approach the phenomenon. I extracted the nine narratives from the three ethnographies, created an organizing system (numbering by sentence), to facilitate retrieval of data, and began to formulate meaning units within which to group the narratives. These meaning units (my raw data) evolved into the current thematic labels of performance, place personhood. These themes evolved with time, as I read, re-read and analyzed the narratives and ethnographies, alongside current theory pertaining to relational epistemologies, pilgrimage, ritual, and place.

The whole process was akin to an expansion-contraction process, in which my theoretical framework went from that of a broad net, to a line of thought specifically focused on the performance of place and personhood, and back out again into the applicable context of the current research. Some of the initial areas of enquiry have included theory from the fields of archeology, geography, anthropology, architecture,

ritual, materialism, tourism, sensory epistemology, philosophy, phenomenology, eco-phenomenology, feminism, colonialism, religion, Indigenous studies, ethics and more.

Parallel to this more theoretical knowledge process, I sought to cultivate an embodied, intuitive, process-driven relationship to the 'data'. I posted the narratives above my altar, read them prior to bed, and walked them into my daily excursions to find a tree to converse with⁴⁴. I also created a multitude of visual organizing systems, each one evolving slightly as I processed the data. Slowly, connections began to emerge between the parts and the whole. The whole being my thesis question and my initial intuition, the parts the ways in which the ethnographies and narratives came together to form a picture/dialogue I had not necessarily seen at the beginning.

2.4 Conclusion

Within this chapter, I have situated my research within both an Indigenist research paradigm and a productive hermeneutic method of inquiry. I have characterized specific points which make this paradigm relevant. Identified places within other qualitative approaches which both overlap and diverge from my goal of identifying a co-constitutive quality between the wayfarer and the terrain. Throughout, I have outlined my approach to knowledge formation as a relational one, delineated by my axiological commitments and my ethical motivations. The point that I attempt to highlight throughout, the element of understanding critical for continued dialogue, is that knowledge is not approached as something which is individual in nature, "knowledge is seen as belonging to the cosmos of which we are a part, and where

⁴⁴ This facilitated a contemplative element to supplement my Indigenist strategy of inquiry and approach to knowledge -a posture which is inclusive of the intuitive, the poetic, the non-visible and the other-than-human realms. Knowledge, an Indigenist research paradigm suggests, does not arise solely through my personal intellectual grappling with ideas on a cognitive level but in remaining open to a relational languaging going on at multiple levels.

researchers are only the interpreters of this knowledge” (Wilson, 2008, p. 56). This reflection is “an inquiry into the conditions and possibilities of human life in the world” (Ingold, 2011, p. 242). I have learned as much by listening to Crow, or Yarrow, watching the trees grow, or the river bank change throughout the seasons, as I have from reading the narratives and the theory.

PART TWO
THE BODY AND ITS RELATIONS

CHAPTER III
THE PERFORMANCE OF PILGRIMAGE

To undertake a pilgrimage is to put yourself at risk.
Not just some of the physical risks, but a deeper risk.
The risk that you might not return as the same person who set out.
The risk that all you had thought you knew, understood,
perhaps carefully constructed in your mind,
might be blown apart.
Martin Palmer⁴⁵

Anthropology then,
is the study of human becomings
as they unfold within the weave of the world
Tim Ingold⁴⁶

As the opening quotes suggests, this second section pursues a quest towards understanding the process of human life 'within' the weave of the world. Traces of 'human becomings' are sought in the performance of wayfarers along The Camino. What elements initiate the radical change alluded to in the opening quote? What contributes to this 'blowing apart' of the one that sets out upon the journey? The following analysis traces a sampling of contributing factors of change and knowledge formation, from within the contemporary pilgrimage experience to Compostela. It draws out examples of self-in-relation, from the wayfarers' narratives, through the

⁴⁵ See Martin Palmer, Foreword, in *Sacred journeys*, (ed) Jennifer Westwood (New York: Henry Holt. 1997), p. 8-9.

⁴⁶ See Tim Ingold, 2011, P 9.

lens of performance, place and personhood.

Section two is divided into two chapters. Chapter three looks at the liminal qualities of pilgrimage, as outlined in the three ethnographies. I seek to show how the liminal has served to contextualize the experience. Specifically, I focus upon the nexus between, the qualities of the liminal phase, articulated by the Turners (1978), alongside the dynamics of walking. These two components are considered, as key contributing factors to the shift in perspective identified in the wayfarers. Chapter four examines the qualities of the landscape, as read through the narratives. It draws out the hermeneutic qualities of place, in which the languaging of landscape is understood through the lens of animism.

Chapter three advances two arguments. The first, concerns performance within the liminal stage, the second, advances movement, specifically walking, as a contributing element to the performance of perspective. Both these arguments situate the wayfarers' performance as grounded in place. The ethnographies of Quesada-Embid (2008), Frey (1998) and Slavin (2003) all appear to propose that the liminal stage fosters particular qualities which amplify awareness of a self-in-relation process. The inherent intricacies of a body in movement are shown to help constitute the possibility for knowledge formation. This quality of both constituting and of being constituted is then shown to arise, as a consequence of being situated in place.

Throughout, I highlight, from within the ethnographies and narratives, examples of the wayfarers performance of the landscape. I wish to show, through the use of the narratives, that the wayfarer is not simply passing over the landscape unaware. I emphasize places in the narratives which illustrates the ways in which the wayfarer appears to moves 'in', even 'with', and not simply 'through', the terrain. The goal is to both draw out the experiential elements of the journey from within the

ethnographies and narratives, and to highlight a sampling of cases, where (within the lens of the wayfarers' experience) nature and culture function as an inter-relation process rather than as distinct binaries.

According to Casey, "we must put culture back in place" (1996, p. 33). Place, he demonstrates, must be considered as a formative element of bodies, knowledge and culture. If there is no 'pre-cultural', he states, then there can be no 'pre-emplacement' (*Ibid*, p. 34). Throughout our treatment of the ethnographies and narratives, I consider this emplacement to be a significant element to the performance of the journey. To reiterate, this next section as a whole, slowly unfolds the ethnographies and narratives, so we may read them through the performance lens of liminality, place and personhood, and thus through the perspective of a self-in-relation.

3.1 General considerations of pilgrimage and transformation

Alan Morinis has contributed numerous articles on pilgrimage and was "instrumental in convening the seminal conference on the study of pilgrimage held at the University of Pittsburg in 1981" (1992, p. 276). Within his examination of what he names 'sacred journeys', Morinis outlines six principle types of pilgrimages. His theory relates that a wide variation of individual motivations and aspirations can be identified as applicable to the pilgrimage journey.

In the first typology outlined by Morinis (1992), the devotional type, a pilgrim undertakes the journey in order to venerate a person, alive or dead, mythical or real. In the second type, instrumental, a specific purpose is sought, such as healing, fertility, wealth. Within the third, the normative type, the pilgrimage follows calendrical or life cycle rites. In the fourth, the obligatory pilgrimage, one finds that

pilgrimage is expected and may offer a form of penance. An example of this would be the well-known Islamic hajj. In the fifth type, the wandering pilgrimage, one may undertake a journey without a set destination specifically seeking enlightenment, or the metaphorical 'home'. Odysseus's journey in Homer's myth *The Odyssey* is a wandering pilgrimage. In the final type, the initiatory journey, we find an acknowledged transformation of the status of the individual.

These six typologies, Morinis (1992) continues, do not exist in isolation. As with most typologies (and thus motivations) they may and often do overlap. Regardless of the acknowledged purpose or type of pilgrimage undertaken, pilgrimage, as noted in the introductory quote to this chapter, 'runs the risk' of resulting in some form of transformation. Pilgrimage (and ritual), it is hypothesized, offers a useful means to transform the inner states of individuals⁴⁷ and "takes the pilgrim beyond the customary world of every day and into new possibilities, beyond the limitations of the worldview which had become static or empty" (Clift and Clift, 1996, p. 152). Inevitably the degree (and efficacy) will vary greatly from individual to individual.

This view of a potential shift in worldview, facilitated within ritual containers, is echoed in Frederick J. Streng's (1985) work, on ritual as a vehicle for transformation⁴⁸, as well as in Frederic Bird's (1995) view of ritual as communicative action⁴⁹. For Streng, myths, rituals and sacred language, serve as a means to

⁴⁷ The scope of this work does not permit a thorough look at the veracity, or level which, 'transformation' may, or may not, take place. I propose that transformation (to whatever degree it may or may not occur) be read as a continuum, as a process, rather than as something which is fixed, and 'occurs', when one reaches the 'sacred' destination. What transpires in the liminal phase and how this informs the process, both during and after, is the focus here.

⁴⁸ See, Frederick J. Streng, Creation of community through sacred symbols, in *Understanding religious life*, (ed.) Frederick J. Streng (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company), p. 43-60.

⁴⁹ See Frederic Bird, Ritual as communicative action, in *Ritual and ethnic identity a comparative study of the social meaning of liturgical ritual in synagogues*, (ed.) Jack N. Livingstone (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press), p. 23-38.

transform what he calls the human problematic. Life, he demonstrates, inevitably becomes “troubled with boredom, waste and disorder (...) the experience of many people is full of pain, tedium, and disappointment” (1985, p. 45). Rites and rituals, serve to reconnect individuals with what is of ultimate importance to them and “crystallize a person’s deepest sensitivities for living” (*Ibid*, p. 44). Bird, for his part, suggests that through various performative actions, ritual helps bring certain realities into play.

Within a ritual context, Bird describes, transformation as a bi-directional occurrence, rituals, he explains, are both constituted by and constitute individuals (and groups). The suggestion throughout his theory is that ritual ‘scripts’ (the words, gestures, symbols, and actions which compose them) provide participants with outlines for new realities, as new realities come into play, the script (ritual elements) also shifts. Ritual containers, he illustrates, and the individuals performing them are continuously in dialogue, and thus writing and rewriting each other. The ritual container he concludes, facilitates a co-constitutional dialogue (1995, p. 28-29).

Within the ritual of pilgrimage, a sampling of ethnographic studies (Coleman and Elsner, 1995; Morinis, 1992; Weiss Ozorak, 2006; Reader, 2006), highlight the ways in which the myths, stories and sacred texts of pilgrimage routes, are both constituted by and, constitute the individual. The suggestion is that the myths, stories, symbols, sacred texts, and histories, of various pilgrimage routes, are both performed by and perform meaning upon the pilgrim. Simultaneously, their meaning and performance, is interpreted by the wayfarer, and then further transcribed upon the route, through the performance of the pilgrim. I uphold, that we should look beyond the human scripted, myths, stories and sacred texts, and consider the elements along the Camino landscape as part of the ritual container. In this way we may potentially uncover traces of a constitutional occurrence between the wayfarer and the terrain and begin

to read some of the ways in which the pilgrim is also constituted by and thus transformed (or informed) by the landscape.

3.1.1 Transformation along the Camino

Pilgrimage along the Camino, according to Nancy Frey (1998), is motivated more so than other pilgrimage experiences by the journey rather than the destination. The journey itself often serves as the greatest motivator, and this journey, this process becomes a map, a reference point and a means to help transform the difficulties of day to day life. Pilgrims on this journey are rarely “motivated by explicit Roman Catholic or other religious concerns (...) Many of these pilgrims hoped that the physical act of traveling to Santiago would help them achieve a parallel inner journey of self-discovery and self-transformation” (Frey, 1998, p. 31).

Frey explains that it is for many of the pilgrims traveling there described as a spiritual rather than a religious experience. She reports that while many pilgrims along the Camino speak of a difference between religious and spiritual motives, this is generally understood to be the difference between orthodoxy and personal devotion (1998, p. 31). Frey describes the spiritual as an inward process and the religious as the external container -composed of ‘acts’ of worship. Frey illustrates this distinction with a debate she witnessed one afternoon in a refuge. The debate took place between a young Spanish woman from Barcelona and a retired man in his sixties from San Sebastian. The man argued that “one cannot separate spirituality from religion, that the church and its rituals are necessary for a fulfilling spirituality” whereas the woman countered “by saying that she believed in Jesus and his teachings but that she related to him on a personal level through prayer and contact with nature” (*Ibid*, p. 31). This difference, Frey contends, was argued from within a Catholic perspective

however, for many Camino pilgrims the difference also exists outside of any specific religious orientation.

While pilgrims may speak of a spiritual journey along the Camino, no uniform definition of the experience can be drawn between them. It is common, however, to hear descriptions which reference an inward change, facilitated by the outward activity and movement. Some note that this access is more readily available during the journey, than upon arrival in Santiago (Frey, p. 31). Within our second ethnography, by Sean Slavin, a similar point is raised. When setting out upon the Camino he writes, the focus for pilgrims is more commonly on process, rather than outcome. Walking the Camino, involves “an awareness of the embodied self in relation to the journey” (2003, p. 6).

Slavin proposes that spirituality is a shared aspect of both an inner and outer journey. It is neither, he states, solely one or the other, but a co-constitutive reality, brought into play by self and journey. Spirituality, he says, is not something that lays about on the Camino waiting to be found, but rather arises from the pilgrimage itself (2003, p. 6). Spirituality arises through performance of the Camino, as process.

Ingold, articulates the same argument, when speaking of the way the modern media portrays the prospect of discovering ‘life’ on Mars. What exactly does life look like, he critiques, and how would we recognize it, if we found it? Life he says is not the kind of thing that is simply left lying around waiting to be discovered. This line of thought, which Ingold names a logic of inversion, abstracts the fact that life (and for Slavin spirituality) emerges as process, neither completely internal, nor completely external. Life, in a similar process to the spiritual ‘found’ along the Camino, “does not emanate from a world that already exists, populated by objects-as such, but is rather immanent in the very process of that world’s continual generation or coming-

into-being" (2011, p. 67).

Based on Slavin and Frey's ethnographies, the path to change along the Camino occurs step by step, as process. Frey contends that it does not end once the pilgrimage destination is reached. She illustrates how "the motives and meanings of the journey emerge along the way, and for many participants these continue to evolve over time after the return home (...) Pilgrimage can continue working its way into people's lives unexpectedly" (Frey, 1998, p. 27). Pilgrims speak of being changed by the experience, and of returning home "to amaze the old neighbors and friends with the transformation of their lives" (Clift and Clift, 1996, p. 149). This supposes that the journey's imprints become a means to access new ideas, and knowledge. For some pilgrims, the narratives will show, this inner journey (pointed to in Slavin, Frey and Quesada-Embid) occurs within the performance of the Camino. Knowledge and transformation arise as a consequence of a process which is critically informed by the landscape.

Frey references the experience of Susan, a twenty-six year old, nominally protestant Swiss kindergarten teacher as an example of a desire for inner change motivating the journey:

Pilgrimage changed me as a person, made me more confident, made me accept and love myself more and open me up to new ideas and patterns. It was an inner and outer way. Other travels are mostly outer ways, (...) to educate yourself, see new things, culture, people, environment. But I've never heard of anybody saying, 'I'm going on a three weeks holiday to search for something more, to answer some questions' —as you do as a pilgrim (1998, p. 27).

The reference to an inner journey, found in this testimony, reflects Victor and Edith Turner's (1978) suggestion that pilgrimage offers a rare occasion for contemplation and inner growth. According to them, the practice of pilgrimage arose in Christendom

as a way to access a liminal state regularly available to contemplatives:

While monastic contemplatives and mystics could daily make interior salvific journeys, those in the world had to exteriorize theirs in the infrequent adventure of pilgrimage. For the majority, pilgrimage was the great liminal experience of the religious life. If mysticism is an interior pilgrimage, pilgrimage is exteriorized mysticism" (1978, p. 7).

In the modern world where people rarely travel to monasteries to experience liminality, or undertake a six month pilgrimage, 'travel' pilgrimage to places like Compostela, vision quest retreats and other forms of tourism⁵⁰ becomes the preferred means to access this potential transformation. Modern pilgrimage can be classified as exploratory behavior whose principle function is to change the stimulus field and introduce elements that were previously inaccessible (Berlyne as cited in Graburn, 1989, p. 28). While surely not all wayfarers (or travelers) experience a marked change in their perspective, I would imagine that neither did all medieval pilgrims, nor monastics for that matter. The underlying suggestion remains that pilgrimage serves as a container within which a change of place, of rhythm and the traversing of terrain, leads to imprints of various sources, which (in some), elicits new states not previously available.

The common thread drawn between the theory and the ethnographies is a proposal that transformation along the Camino unfolds as a continuum, as a process, rather than as something fixed, which only 'occurs', when one reaches the 'sacred' destination. It follows, that the worldview (or culture), mentioned in the first Clift and Clift quote, is also prone to this very process and change. I suggest that as per stories, an individual's 'culture' is in a continuous process of becoming. In which,

⁵⁰ For a more in depth look at the crossover between pilgrimage and travel, see, Ellen Badone and Sharon R. Roseman, *Intersecting journeys: the anthropology of pilgrimage and tourism*, (ed.) Ellen Badone and Sharon R. Roseman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

worldviews arise through a self-in-relation process⁵¹, as a consequence of emplacement, and are thus always a vector of process. Culture (and thus knowledge) ensues, or unfolds, as a direct consequence of perception and action, within one's environment (Ingold, 2000, 2011). Therefore, if 'transformation' or knowledge can be traced in the pilgrimage experience of the Camino, the suggestion is that it arises in part, in relation to the terrain traversed: for Quesada-Embid (2008) this process of change, along the Camino, ensues as a direct consequence of, what she calls reciprocity (very similar to a self-in-relation) between the wayfarer, the resident and the terrain; for Slavin (2003), it ensues as a mechanism of movement, in which a shift in perspective, an awareness of place is facilitated through the rhythm of walking; and for Frey (1998) experiencing life and nature in their cycles affords an awareness rarely accessed in the modern world.

3.2 The liminal body

Similar to Fred Streng's view of ritual as a vehicle to transform problematic states, Victor and Edith Turner show that pilgrimage offers a liminal (or liminoid) experience, which can be used to transform the accumulated weight, of small grievances which have accumulate over the years. Pilgrimage, serves as "a way to wipe the slate clean and transform accumulated strain, it serve as a means to change the way one sees life and cleans "the doors of perception" (1978, p. 11). They propose that within pilgrimage, the social structure of day to day life is loosened and provides a special occasion for social bonding (*communitas*), between groups of individuals normally separated by cultural norms. According to their theory, the individual becomes marked by detachment from "either an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from a relatively stable set of cultural conditions" (*Ibid*, p. 2).

⁵¹ This self-in-relation state is considered to ensue in relation to 'other' where 'other' can hold many forms, whether: social institutions, families, human individuals, environments of all kinds, laws, as well as with the other-than-human.

As noted in chapter one, this theory, which hypothesizes a liminal state that exists outside of all social structure, has been vigorously contested. Eade and Sallnow (1991) especially contest the view that pilgrimage exists outside of established social patterns. They argue that social dynamics can still be found and that pilgrimages sites abound with competing and contesting levels of discourse. Multiple levels of competing and contesting discourse exist between the religious and secular world views, between 'locals' and pilgrims and even amongst pilgrims themselves, with their varying needs and interpretation of the site. Pilgrimage, they state, provides a multiplicity of uses.

The present suggestion is to move past the limits of an either/or perspective; both theories can be shown to have merits and blind spots. If we put aside the suggestion of a pre-cultural state, the Turner intuition may point us in a direction which is helpful to our current reading of the narratives. If we focus on the liminal, not as a space outside of all time, but rather, as a space outside of ordinary time, still liminal, still in-between, but not pre-cultural, then we neither deny the continuity of social and cultural imprints, which inform the pilgrim (and the terrain), nor do we overlook the narratives of pilgrims, which speak of an existence outside of regular time.

3.2.1 Ritual transformation and the space of liminality

For Frey, the experiential elements of movement (walking) along with immersion in nature, inverts the pilgrims' sense of time. This inversion, she explains, provides an 'out of time' quality which exists in 'sharp contrast' to the timed programming and social norms of normal life (1998, p. 73). Within all three of the ethnographies, the suggestion is that the liminal qualities of existence out of the day to day, afford a shift in perspective. For Slavin, this slowing of time emerges out of the rhythmic and careful sequencing of both the body's movements and of the wayfarers' days. These

two elements bring the landscape into focus and cultivate a new “sensitivity to the rhythm in the world” (2003, p. 10). This shift in time and perspective is also alluded to in Quesada-Embid’s analysis, which predicts that walking along the pathways of the Camino, brings the landscape into greater focus (2008, p. 28-29).

In speaking of a shift in perspective, Quesada-Embid’s dissertation presents us with our first narrative. This narrative (and her analysis) direct us back to two previous points: first, spirituality along the Camino emerges in response to what is both an internal and external ‘process’; second, performance of the liminal emerges from a shift in the perception of time and space, and brings the landscape into greater focus. Quesada-Embid writes that the “landscape that one perceives is both movement in time and movement in physicality, a route encompassing history and knowledge” (2008, p. 27). She articulates this point with an example from the book by Conrad Rudolph⁵², himself a Camino pilgrim. With the following narrative from Rudolph, Quesada-Embid illustrates and example of what she names a shift in speed and time.

The shadows of the clouds moving slowly across the land, pass gradually over the hill, and silently over the stream, the cows the low stone wall, and finally you...soon you stop humming and whistling to yourself, and eventually there is a certain ‘white noise’ and you begin to notice everything: the course of the sun, the phase of the moon, which way the water flows, where the wind is from, how the clouds are forming, and how deep the Milky Way looks from the balcony of your 15th century *refugio* (pilgrim refuge).

(Rudolph as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 28)

Narrative 3.1 Narrative one

Quesada-Embid, does not specify which refuge Rudolph speaks of, she does

⁵² Conrad Rudolph, *Pilgrimage to the end of the world: the road to Santiago de Compostella*. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), p. 36.

however, name the small town of Roncesvalles in the province of Navarra, as the beginning of the route, and then situates his narrative within her description of this landscape (*Ibid*, p. 30). Using the only other quote by Rudolph in her dissertation, she begins to describe the Camino. The mountainous valleys, she explains, follow “seemingly directionless footpaths that often become little more than animal trails” (as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 30). Quesada-Embid, outlines how the town of Roncesvalles (we can only guess if this is where Rudolph writes from) “is housed in the western Pyrenees, secluded by forests, high mountains, and long, narrow valleys of green. The valleys open into flatlands, spotted with pastures and forests of beech trees” (*Ibid*, p. 30). Quesada-Embid explains that within the written narrative of his experience, Rudolph portrays traces of a shift, in both the speed at which life moves, and in his perspective of place. This shift, she continues, situates the pilgrim into the pathway he is on and brings the relationships with the landscape to the fore. Place becomes a constitutive element of past, present and future (2008, p. 28).

The shift, Rudolph articulates, depicts a certain expansiveness, an ‘openness’ of perspective, receptive to the rhythms of life unfolding around him. This ‘openness’ is interpreted through his articulation of the qualitative aspect of the things he names; such as, the ‘slow’ moving clouds, the ‘silence’ of the stream and the height of the wall (‘low’). His words, highlight the ways in which he is situated in the landscape, they articulate a measure of time which is read through the ‘shadows of the clouds’. Each of these things, read as a whole, define (or contributes to), a sense of perspective which situates him in the landscape, but also situates the landscape within him. His situatedness seems to bring the sentience of the landscape into focus. This situatedness then gives rise to knowledge, or a new ‘quieter’ awareness of the things he names: the sun, the moon, the water, the direction of the wind. This focus is perhaps especially, alluded to in his awareness of the direction of the wind, his sense of the formation of the clouds, and in his realization of the depth, he is a witness to.

In my own experience, this sort of awareness usually arises from (and brings) sensorial, intuitive and observational knowledge. Thus to read Rudolph's words, one must 'set aside' the symbolic reading⁵³ which is undoubtedly contained in them and, at least for a moment, bring to the fore the embodied quality of the experience within them. For example the wind will have a different feel to it depending on the direction out of which it emerges. Some of the ways it can be known are through smell, sound, temperature and its interaction with other elements in the landscape.

This new sense of time, which brings a new 'sense' of place into focus, appears shared in our second narrative. This narrative is by Lee Hoinacki, a 65 year old, political science professor, subsistence farmer and former Dominican priest.⁵⁴ This excerpt is sourced from within the Frey ethnography. She herself references it from his 1996 book on pilgrimage and details how the following narrative is from his second day of walking.

After several hours, I begin to feel something new, something never before experienced. I strongly sense, with my whole self, that I am moving from one place to another...I am not simply passing *through* space, as one does in a car or airplane. I feel I am in a place; actually, in an infinite number of places. I am not in undifferentiated space –what one feels in many modern places that, really, are non-places; they are simply repetitions of concepts –the concepts of hospital space, shopping mall space, airport space...Here, with each step, I am always in place, in some place, going to the next place, one centimeter or half a meter farther on...And all my senses seem to be more open...It's as if I'm plowing through infinitely different perceptions, for with every step I *am* in a different place, and each place has its own unique character.

(Hoinacki as cited in Frey, 1998, p. 75)

Narrative 3.2 Narrative two

⁵³ This is the proposed method for each of the narratives.

⁵⁴ See Lee Hoinacki, *El Camino: walking to Santiago de Compostela* (Univ. Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

Within this narrative, Hoinacki speaks of his immersion in place, Frey deduces that the 'out of time' quality of pilgrimage brings place into focus in a significant way (1998, p. 73). According to Frey, this shift in Hoinacki's perspective is simultaneously brought on by the place he is in, and alternately, serves to bring into 'focus' the place he is in. The suggestion is that he is no longer simply moving through external, abstract places, he is 'in' place, 'each place with its own character'. Frey demonstrates that it is through this shift in perspective, this heightened awareness, that he is more aware of how he affects and is affected by the place he is in, with this shift, his immersion in place makes him aware of the specific qualities of each place. In the sense that this is a bi-directional, relational occurrence, one could say that he is not just noticing the space but he is being marked by the characteristics of each place. We get a sense of this in his awareness that each place has "its own unique character". Read through the lens of his observation and perception, of each place as unique, he appears to enter into relationship with each place. How does he know this, is it just a guess on his part, an abstract classification based on externals, or does each place 'communicate' a different character?

Frey provides us with a second quote by Hoinacki which also illustrates his sensitivity to place, "there is no destination to which I am rushing. There is only this earth that I touch in so many ways" (as cited in Frey, 1998, p. 73). One does not just move over bumpy or flat roads, see green hills or hear birds singing. Walking along the Camino brings a radically new awareness of immersion in the terrain. "Landscape, then, is not just a neutral backdrop but a multidimensional concept related to the understanding of space and movement and the creation of stories meaningful to the pilgrim (1998, p. 75). The suggestion becomes therefore that landscape is not only something external one moves over, but it is something touched in a multitude of ways, something which holds its own qualitative character.

In keeping with the suggestions from our ethnographies, it appears, not that

pilgrimage exists out of 'all time' but nonetheless, in a different one. As Slavin states, to those undertaking the journey, the Camino is not so much 'no-place' or a marginal place, but still a radically, ontologically, different one (2003, p. 7). From this standpoint, we build on the Turners' hypothesis of an 'out of time' quality afforded by the liminal stage, but also that pilgrimage allows for a "relational quality of full unmediated communication, even communion" (1978, p. 250)⁵⁵. Can this quality of communion then accentuate awareness of a self, in relation with the landscape? Further, does this awareness of a self-in-relation facilitate access to a sense of communion with the landscape?

3.2.2 Liminality and perspective, existence outside of the day to day

As previously demonstrated, pilgrimage provides wayfarers an experience which affords a shift in perspective, it "provides a way to get outside the normal routine of life so something new can happen, it becomes a means to reclaim lost, abandoned or forgotten parts of oneself" (Dalby Clift and Clift, 1996, p. 44). If perspective is shifted and parts found, what are these parts? Within our current examination of pilgrimage along the Camino, the lost or forgotten parts (potentially accessed), are those of a self-in-relation to the landscape. Within an urban, modernist framework, individuals are in large part cut off from the cycles and 'language' of nature. The previous quote infers that these forgotten parts may 'emerge' or come into view through the performance of pilgrimage, potentially, immersion in the landscape, and hence in the cycles and 'language of the landscape may bring it into view.

⁵⁵ Simon Coleman writes that at times postmodern scholars are too quick to dismiss the Turner theory. The theory of *communitas* he argues "is more complex, and in my view richer than it is sometimes given credit for. (...) *communitas* is actually a multi-faceted paradigm" The Turners he continues, do not see "the aspiration of escaping political and economic structures as necessarily more than an aspiration". (2002, p. 361)

This thinking is echoed within each of the three ethnographies. Throughout her book, Frey demonstrates example of the ways, the journey brings the cycles of nature into focus. Based on her own experiential ethnography, she points to a new awareness of the presence of the landscape within her journey. Within pilgrimage, specifically within the liminal phase, the removal of everyday stimulus may make the pilgrim more sensorial aware of her environment, and thus more open to relationing with it. Life and nature, Frey asserts, “are experienced and lived in their cycles, in a way that other means of travel simply do not afford. This same sense of the cycle and rhythm of life can be found in the ubiquitous play of the storks, whose bell-tower nests and impressive steps into flight accompany the pilgrim through much of the summer’s journey” (1998, p. 36). Within this reflection, Frey draws a parallel between her awareness of the cycles and rhythms of life, and the storks’ performance of it. I would infer that she herself is a performer of these cycles and that she is not simply noticing them but ‘experiencing’ them, which is necessarily a relational occurrence. In other words, one cannot simply register hearing Beethoven’s *Sonata Pathétique*, without actually hearing it⁵⁶.

For Slavin, the very act of walking, the ‘rhythm’ of it, increases perception and reduces the distance between self and other (2003, p. 11). For Quesada-Embid, the process of moving and dwelling with the Camino creates reciprocity. She illustrates with a quote by pilgrim Lee Hoinacki, who writes, “I can enter the Camino world because I can walk into it”. This quote, may illustrates many levels of interpretation, symbolic, historical, even perhaps, emotional. The one I retain here is Quesada-Embid’s inference of a physical interplay between the wayfarer and the terrain. He is able to perceive the Camino, she predicts, because of his direct bodily, sensory interaction with it” (2008, p. 62-63). The last example of a body centered time is from Frey, who predicts that the act of walking, changes perception. Walking she shows,

⁵⁶ I would further suggest that one does not simply ‘hear’ a piece of music, but experiences it as a sensorial whole.

“reveals a world of natural beauty existing out of ordinary time” (1998, p. 72).

Psychologist Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak (2006) examines transformation in the context of Christian pilgrimage and concludes that increased physicality, material simplicity, the slower pace of information, the absence of familiar cues, alongside the loss of usual social roles, results in less competition for habitual cognitive resources. One man (anonymous) shares, how the very qualities of being out of everyday life, contributes to an ‘uncluttered’ sensory experience and results in an increased awareness of the environment, of the landscape. “I am much more aware of the character and movement of the sky, the shades of blue (...) the texture of the earth, not just if it is harder or easier for walking but its *quality*” (2006, p. 70).

Each of these ethnographies holds to a similar view to that of Tim Ingold and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone. For Ingold, the world and its inhabitants exist in a continuous interplay of ‘becoming’, for Sheets-Johnstone the human life world is continuously ‘in-process’, a process she argues, is brought into being, as a consequence, of ‘bodily immersion in the world’. This reference serves to highlight the first argument of this chapter. The very ambiguousness of liminality can make the outlines of boundaries, horizons, (landscapes) more defined and thus emphasise moments of ‘clear’ vision. As Niebuhr asserts, “in the day-to-day run of our lives we are half-mindless of what is happening to us and in us” (1984, p. 10).

The three ethnographies examined here highlight a shift in perception which ensues as a consequence of the process of the pilgrimage journey. This shift appears to occur, in relation to a change in the ways of marking time; and as a direct consequence of immersion in nature. During pilgrimage, Frey predicts, linear time is accented by circular time, where time is marked as much by, changes in the sun, as hunger, or the “position of one’s shadow” (1998, p. 72). Within this ‘time’ wayfarers

have more room to become aware of their bodies, and thus of the landscape within which they are situated, or perhaps it is the other way around. Is it that through their moving bodies, that they become more aware? Both Ingold and Sheets-Johnstone argue the later, it is through a moving body which is situated 'in' the world that knowledge is formed.

So far, I have proposed that within the Compostela pilgrimage experience, shifts in perception create a more body centered time (the inverse is also true, i.e., the more body centered time shifts perspective). This shift is a bi-directional occurrence, in which perception occurs through immersion in the cycles of nature, and, immersion in the cycles of nature facilitate perception of these self same cycles. This bi-directional occurrence, accentuates awareness of one's surroundings, and may thus bring the landscape into greater focus. Next I address my second argument, and seek out the ways in which the narratives, alongside theory specific to the body and movement, body and knowledge, help us bridge the perceived 'modernists' gap between nature and culture. Slavin references the work of Brian Turner to illustrate that while the pilgrim's body is constituted by innumerable social and religious elements, it also serves as the nexus between environment and self. It is, he states "simultaneously an environment (part of nature) and a medium of the self (part of culture)" (as cited in Slavin, 2003, p. 5).

3.3 Movement and the body as site of experience

French sociologist Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) was "perhaps the first to put walking on the agenda as a serious topic for comparative ethnological inquiry" (Ingold and Vergunst, 2008, p. 1)⁵⁷. Whereas, French Jesuit and scholar Michel de Certeau (1925-

⁵⁷ See Marcel Mauss, *Techniques of the body*, *Economy and Society* 2, 70-88, (1934/1973).

1986) examined the act of walking in the city as a form of rhetoric, in which the walker, outlines a personal itinerary, distinctive of the map laid out (and intended) by urban planners⁵⁸. Within Ingold's treatise, walking becomes an activity which binds us to the place in which we are walking:

Walking is an activity in which one is not cut off, as one is in an aeroplane or when too busy or going too fast or not paying attention to one's surroundings. To walk is to pay close attention to one's surroundings while thinking with the multitude of stories one has heard (Ingold and Vergunst, 2008, p. 47).

Within the current context, neither do I analyse the mechanical 'techniques' of the body, nor do I look at potential human power dynamics (cultural storytelling), being relayed through various techniques. Although both areas could prove interesting, the focus is on the stories which ensue as an extension of movement with the landscape, specifically, along the path of Compostela. It is understood, however, that these stories invariably stand upon both techniques and power dynamics.

This reflection neither proposes an in depth sensory epistemology, nor a thorough analysis of the phenomenology of perception. It does not examine the pilgrim's body, as a vehicle for the performance of cultural (and historical) imprinting⁵⁹. Although each of these elements are interconnected (intertwined even), to the mechanism of movement (and are thus inevitably occasionally pointed to), I have chosen to focus on the characteristics of walking and movement, as contributing aspects of a self-in-relation state. We look herein at the body, in relation to the landscape, along

⁵⁸ See Michel de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

⁵⁹ The need to imprint the body with experience is perhaps the reason there is so much physical touch within the pilgrimage experience. Some form of marking the body with the experience seems to exist within all religious traditions. Pilgrimage "is not an intellectual exercise but a concrete experience in which body, mind, and heart participate" (Eaton, 1984, p.18). Pilgrims will "kiss the toe of the statue of St. Peter, touch the grave of Eva Peron, on the Islamic hajj they touch, and kiss (or long to), the Black Stone in the Kabba, and in Chimayo they rub the blessed earth on their faces or ailing parts of their body, they may even eat or drink it" (Clift and Clift, 1996, p.154).

Compostela. Through walking, and the specific perspective afforded by it, I focus on wayfaring within (and with) the terrain of pilgrimage, as an important access point to a host of significant relationing (and knowledge formation).

Specific to our examination, within the Camino experience, walking is doubly relevant in defining that which we are looking at, in part, because Cathedral authorities in Santiago, as well as pilgrims themselves, do not consider bus or car travelers to be pilgrims. One must travel The Way by foot, bike, horse, or pack animal to receive pilgrimage status⁶⁰ (Frey, 1998, p. 19; Slavin, 2003, p. 3).

To be in movement, one must already be situated in place and this entails 'relationship' with the terrain. One quickly comes to realize the extent of this if attempting to climb a steep hill or cross a river. Successful navigation of both requires an immersive awareness and multi-factorial interaction between body and terrain. Through walking the pilgrim not only enters into the landscape but creates an embodied map of terrain (Slavin, 2003).

3.3.1 Sheets-Johnstone and Ingold

Philosopher and dancer, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999) as well as anthropologist and wayfarer, Tim Ingold (2000, 2011; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008) view the experiences of the body (specifically the moving body), as key contributing factors to cognition. Sheets-Johnstone, as well as Ingold, counters the 'modernist' view that the mechanism of perception can be isolated in one part of the brain or that it exists as a consequence of the visual or auditory senses alone. Ingold argues that "we perceive not with the eyes, the ears or the surface of the skin, but with the whole body" (2011,

⁶⁰ While this distinction is not the case in all pilgrimages, it is specific to Compostela.

p. 45). Perception, they contend, arises as a direct interplay of each of the senses, as they engage 'within' the web of the world; the self and the world are held in a relationship of process, of becoming. Gibson's quote in Ingold illustrates this point, "perception is the achievement not of a mind in a body, but of the whole organism as it moves about in its environment" (as cited in Ingold, 2011, p. 11).

For Ingold, human cognition and locomotion are intertwined. Knowledge does not arise as the achievement "of a stationary mind encased within a body in motion", knowledge, he argues is "forged" along the paths of life. Consciousness is not confined within the head "but reaches out into the environment along multiple pathways of sensory perception" (2011, p. 17-18). Sheets-Johnstone argues that knowledge of both self and the world emerges through this intertwined movement. Self-movement, she demonstrates, "structures knowledge of the world" movement, she states, is a way of knowing the world and thinking in movement is "foundational to the lives of animate forms" (1999, p. xv). Lastly, she explains, "walking is not just what a body does; it is what a body is. And if the body is foundational to culture, then walking - or thinking in movement - is 'foundational to being a body'" (as cited in Ingold and Vergunst, 2008, p. 3).

Within their debate, both Ingold and Sheets-Johnstone conclude that to think and to feel and by extension to be social (or cultural), does not arise within a set field of objective and subjective interplay, but through the relational process of a storied world. Movement, the body, and knowledge are situated 'in' the world; humans are inherently developmental beings continually in-process; a process based on a bodily immersion in the world.⁶¹

⁶¹ Parallels to this line of thought can be found in Heidegger's view of dwelling, or in Merleau Ponty's vision of human's as bodily-generated beings immersed in 'the flesh of the world'.

From a pilgrimage perspective, parallels to this line of thought can be read in Niebuhr remarks, “our skin and other organs of sense register the impressions the elements of place make upon us (...) we transform physical sensations into mental ideas”(1984, p. 8). In Frey’s words, pilgrims on the Camino “believe that through movement on foot or by bicycle along the road one can have encounters or experiences that lead to change. Such experiences and the ensuing personal growth are believed to be impossible for those who travel by car or bus. Human-powered movement and discovery are positively linked” (Frey, 2004, p. 93).

3.3.2 The experiential elements of movement and immersion in nature

Walking and movement are frequent motifs in the literature around pilgrimage. According to Niebuhr pilgrims are moving, through landscapes, towards destinations and also within themselves. “Our bodies are vehicles of passage and to make pilgrimage is to exercise our inborn motility. It is in this natural propensity to motion that our future as pilgrims is formed” (1984, p. 8). Niebuhr suggests that by moving within the landscape, the journey is imprinted upon the body, and becomes a means to reference new ideas, and knowledge. The experience of pilgrimage he argues helps provide a new awareness.

Slavin (2003) articulates a similar line of thought to that of Ingold and Sheets-Johnstone, in his suggestion that walking and thinking go hand in hand. He contends that the rhythmic process of walking alters perception. Slavin advances, that movement bridges the gap between self and other. Through the mechanism and rhythm of walking, he writes, the distance between perceiving subject and external object is bridged.

Narrative 3.3 (see below), illustrates the way walking within the landscape provides the wayfarer with a reference that continues to inform perspective, even after the journey along the Camino has come to a close. This is from a letter written to Frey (1998) by Marina, a thirty-three-year-old physical therapist from Madrid, three months after she completed her pilgrimage in the summer of 1994. Marina and Frey met on a hot August afternoon, two weeks into Marina's journey. Frey, in her role as *hospitalera*⁶², stamped her pilgrim's credentials, and signed her in to the refuge.

Marina describes herself as "Catholic by birth but nonpracticing" (Frey, 1998, p. 72). Marina initially makes the journey to escape the dreary rhythm of daily urban life and to experience a vacation that does "not entail the beach and hangovers". Frey relays that "she wanted leisure with meaning and believed she could find it on the Camino" (1998, p. 72). Frey writes that walking simultaneously brings Marina into herself and out into the world, it is a process she notes, which develops "over time and place through contact, private rumination, and movement" (*Ibid*). The contact, which apparently leads to both external and internal discovery, is what we focus on here. In what ways does this contact inform her journey, and with 'what' is she in contact with?

⁶² Volunteer hospice worker, a role Frey carried out several times throughout her research, and journey.

I began to *walk*. From this moment, when my heart leapt with joy, my discoveries began. *Landscapes* and marvelous skies, plants, flowers, trees with an incredible combination of *colors*, majestic flights of *birds*, enchanting *people* with a word of encouragement, (...) I also learned *to love a healthy life* and how good I felt in *nature*, as part of it. I found myself living exclusively *in the present*, in the moment, living without news or daily life and even in another stage of the century or *another world* where the well-being, the enjoyment, the *energy*, the *freedom*, and the walking are all that matter, still, as the days pass, when I think or speak about the Camino, new discoveries arise.

(as cited in Frey, 1998, p. 71, emphasis hers)

Narrative 3.3 Narrative three

What is significant within our current context is that, both the walking, and the landscape (nature), are credited as important elements in her new discoveries. Frey does not make any pointed reference to this save to note Marina's awareness of the beauty of it, but Marina clearly writes that she feels 'in' nature, 'as part of it'. In her reference to what she has 'learned', Marina seems to indicate, that the walking and the discoveries are what contributed to this learning. She then outlines the 'discoveries' which inform this learning; "*landscapes* and marvelous skies, plants, flowers, trees with an incredible combination of *colors*, majestic flights of *birds*," and then finally, the "enchanting people with a word of encouragement". The italics throughout are Frey's, she does not mention why these words are italicized, but I have kept them nonetheless, as they may reference a pattern I have yet to pick up on. These words then are: *walk*, *landscapes*, *colors*, *birds*, *people*, *to love a healthy life*, *nature*, *in the present*, *another world*, *energy*, and *freedom*.

Within an interpretive approach, where landscape is treated as a canvas, one could easily suppose that the 'enchanting' people informed, and imprinted, her experience. One may be less inclined to consider the contribution of the landscape on the same

footing. Analysis within such a reading would potentially infer that the people she met, where instrumental to her experience in some ways, perhaps even contributing to the constitution of it. Being as we are inherently social beings, this is potentially an easy inference to make.

As we saw in our introductory examination of landscape, the terrain is commonly treated as a painterly surface upon which to highlight the human experience. In this vein, the other elements would simply be set aside, while the experiences with other people, perhaps even those with 'sacred' places, might be situated, as more relevant. However, I do not think it irrelevant that she lists the characteristics of the landscape first, and in such detail. Setting them aside, as (ironically) Frey appears to do, bypasses the potential constitutive elements they provide and fails to highlight the quality of the relationship Marina experiences with the terrain. A constitutional relationship I suggest operates alongside the relationships with the people she meets. Further, in her statement, "still, as the days pass, when I think or speak about the Camino, new discoveries arise" Marina makes reference to our earlier point that the Camino transformation is carried over into her life after the return.

The final narrative of the chapter, taken from the Quesada-Embid dissertation, is sourced from a book by nursing theorist Jean Watson. Quesada-Embid also (similar to the earlier Rudolph one) situates this quote within her treatment of the terrain, between the provinces of Roncesvalles and Burgos, but I have no way of knowing, from her ethnography if Watson also situates it here. Quesada-Embid writes that "walking to, from, between, and within embraces this sensing of the land under one's feet and allows for a physical experience of it. She states that "in the process of movement, the landscape unfolds and its elements come into the consciousness of the people who are engaging with it."

The inner and outer merged as I kept walking; I pondered how and where to place my footsteps and my conscious intentions of love and life into the earth.

(as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008. P. 29)

Narrative 3.4 Narrative four

Watson's writing evokes a relational quality between herself and the terrain. It suggests that she is 'aware' of both being constituted by, and constituting the terrain she walks upon. It also transfers a sense of ethics, in her treatment of the landscape. She appears to not only wish to hold an intention of love from within herself, but also that this may be what she reciprocates to the landscape she is on. Her placing of this ethics into the earth indicates that she is aware of how she impacts the path she is on. A suggestion that not only is she function from within a paradigm of self-in-relation, but potentially she is aware of it.

3.4 Conclusion

Within this chapter, I have shown moments of the wayfaring experience which exist out of day to day time, moments spoken of within the literature and the narratives, which suggest an immersion in the terrain, and within the cycles of nature. For wayfarers along 'The Way' this immersive or relational, journey is experienced as process, it is informed by movement; rather, it is constituted through movement within a world also in movement. Pilgrimage along the Santiago, we have seen, is as much (if not more) about the movement along the path as it is the destination. Walking, serves to weave the wayfarer into the landscape, and the landscape into the wayfarer; a co-constitutional occurrence (Ingold, 2011, p. 47). Awareness of this inter-weaving is facilitated by, the out of time quality of liminality, and the movement of a body situated in place.

Edward Casey (1996) demonstrates, that place is not so much pre-culture, as the ground upon which culture is built, thus always there regardless of whether one is aware of it or not. This veers off from a 'modernist' world view which upholds a divide between nature and culture, and reads place as abstract space only situated through time. Within this chapter, I have sought to show, how the Turners' (1978) concept of liminality, helps draw out some the subtleties of the wayfarers' performance within the landscape. While the Turners may have initially advanced the liminal as a place where the pilgrim stepped out of the cultural, if we sidestep the binary of nature and culture, and view the wayfarers' performance from a relational standpoint, their theory of liminality points us in a useful direction.

From our current vantage point, I now identify some characteristics needed for a relational exchange between the wayfarer and terrain to ensue. Can we begin to read within the wayfarer narratives, an encountered 'other' that is neither solely symbolic, nor solely sourced in the human realm? This is in line, with the suggestion that landscape is imbued of a receptive quality of being, and that self-in-relation ensues, as a consequence of emplacement in an invariantly 'animated' or sentient world (Bird-David, 1999; Ingold, 2011). The next chapter shows, this to be very different, from a view of animism, as a transposed quality of being, or as an anthropomorphic displacement of human characteristics upon unaware objects. It demands that we sidestep existing frameworks, which preclude any examination of place, outside of the social sphere and begin to read place not so much as a signifier of something, but rather as something in and of itself (Casey as cited in Slavin, 2003, p. 2). This newly emerging line of thought (in the social sciences) will unfold more in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE LANGUAGE OF LANDSCAPE

There is no knowing or sensing a place except by being in that place,
and to be in that place is to be in a position to perceive it.
Steven Feld and Keith Basso⁶³

We are the walking breath
We are the spirit of the earth
We are alive and walking
Where we are is beautiful.
I am an acorn, the shell, the seed
God is within me, and God is the tree
I am unfolding the way I should be
Sown in the soil of God's hand
Sown in the soil of God's land
If the past and the future are real
Where are they?
Attributed to Saint Augustine⁶⁴

That which the trees exhale, I inhale. That which I exhale, the tree inhales.
Fyre Jean Graveline⁶⁵

This next chapter seeks to further read traces of relationship between the wayfarer and terrain. We continue to interpret the three ethnographies, through the lens of performance, place and personhood. We now seek traces of the language of landscape from a hermeneutic perspective; in part, understanding is sought from within the narratives, but also through theory which speaks to the dialogue of place.

The three quotes which open the chapter reflect the themes treated within. First, I

⁶³ See Feld and Basso, 1996, p. 18.

⁶⁴ Posting in refuge in Roncesvalles, attributed to Saint Augustine, see Frey, 2008, p. 79.

⁶⁵ Fyre Jean Graveline (1998), as cited in Wilson, 2008, p. 57.

examine the concepts of place and emplacement and continue to build upon the theoretical considerations introduced in chapter one and three. I now tie some of the recent debates, which seek to 'free' place from the symbolic realm of space/time (Casey, 1996; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008), to the performance of wayfarers along the Camino. Secondly, I now reinforce this line of thought with debates that speak to the language of landscape. These debates suggest ways in which the wayfarer may be 'reading' this language. Finally, I extend an invitation, to contextualize the performative language between wayfarer and terrain, by revisiting the decade old concept of animism.

In the previous chapter, we ascertained some of the significance in the ways the wayfarer moves within the Santiago de Compostela landscape. Specifically, as regards to the potential perceptive qualities informing the journey, I suggested that a shift in perspective was facilitated by the qualities of the liminal phase, alongside those of movement. With the continued aid of recent social science debates and the interpretive reading of the ethnographies and narratives, I now highlight some of the animate qualities of place, and personhood, as potential elements in the process of meaning making. The suggestion pointed to throughout, is that wayfarers are not simply passing over an inert external surface, but they are entering into 'dialogue' with an animate, sentient one (Ingold, 2000, 2011; Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

4.1 Performance of place

The category of place used within this thesis (as noted in chapter one), is not that of an ethnographic framing convention, nor that of an abstract 'painterly' backdrop, neither is place approached solely as a surface upon which people imprint cultural meaning. The landscape considered, is not seen as 'space' solely filled with human

centered, political, economic, religious, or gender laden meaning⁶⁶. The current analysis considers place as more than just a “passive recipient of human agency” (Harkin as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 245). The landscape, seen as *landskab*, while surely shaped by humans, also potentially, significantly, shapes, confines and defines the wayfarer (Quesada-Embid, 2008); it is constitutive in both directions.

According to Edward Casey, Arnold van Gennep (1909, 1960), within his articulation of liminality, began to intuit that ritual provided access to a whole new awareness of place, and that within a ritual container “to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with a new world” (as cited in Casey, 1996, p. 40). The problem Casey asserts lies in van Gennep’s use of the symbolic language of the time, the ‘theoretical space’ he relies on to describe the process he infers. Casey demonstrates that by speaking of a theoretical transition, van Gennep privileges an abstract spatial area over the qualitative realities of place-boundedness, which fails to bring forth the significance of place within his treatment of liminality (1996, p. 40).

Casey for his part, living in a different time and place, privileges the qualitative realities of place, and thus provides us with a different reading. Place for him is not made from space, it is not “a neutral pre-given medium, a tabula rasa onto which the particularities of culture and history come to be inscribed, with place as the presumed result” (Casey, 1996, p. 14). For Casey, the equation is rather inversed; place defines space, and time⁶⁷, thus emplacement and knowledge of place, become key components to perception.

⁶⁶ Not to suggest that the cultural component to place does not exist. It surely does in a multitude of ways. See, Margaret C. Rodman, Empowering place: multilocality and multivocality, *American Anthropology, New Series*, 94 (3).

⁶⁷ For Casey, although place is seen as ‘prior to all things’, it is not ‘pre-cultural’ (1996, p 33-36). This differentiation exists outside of a binary logic, as an intricate inter-relational state. This complex topic will only be briefly touched upon here. Of note to us here, is Cayce’s suggestion that, current understandings (and treatment) of place, are based on a modernist tendency to privilege space and time, over place, such that, even when emplacement is named as an important contributing factor, he argues, it is often overlooked in academic analysis (*ibid*).

Within his own treatise on place, Ingold takes Casey's (1996) theory one step further. He asserts that place is not solely made up of formed material substance but is a process, in which place (and the 'persons' held in it) is in a state of continuous becoming. Humans and places, Ingold writes, exist in an interwoven nature of medium and substance. "It is in the nature of living beings themselves that, by way of their own process of respiration, of breathing in and out, they bind the medium with substances in forging their own growth and movement through the world" (2011, p. 120). Ingold situates his theory of process and substance, in part, within Heidegger's theory of dwelling.

The Heidegger quote which references his line of thought is pertinent to the current debate. Heidegger, Ingold states:

insists that the earth, 'that on which and in which man bases his dwelling', is not a material mass, and absolutely not a planet. It is rather the ground on which – or better, *in* which – we dwell. For the earth – ground does not just support its inhabitants. In an important sense it nourishes and shelters them. It is the very matrix of their dwelling. People are *of* the earth, they do not just live *on* it (as cited in Ingold, 2011, p. 112).

Heidegger, he continues, recognizes, as Augustine did: "that human bodies are as earthly as is the earth of the ground they tread, being of the same substance" (Ingold, 2011, p. 112). Therefore, knowing place, Ingold advances, means not only knowing the land upon which stories of becoming are woven, but learning to read the stories of the elements which inform that place.

Illustration 4.2 demonstrates Ingold's argument that creatures live *in* the land, rather than simply *on* it (2011, p. 120). The common interpretation of human emplacement, he states, situates people *on* the surface of the earth, with sky above us. Standing on the shoreline, completely immersed in the wind and waves lapping upon the shore, this becomes imposble. Humans he says are thoroughly immersed in the weather world within which they move about (*Ibid*, p. 115).

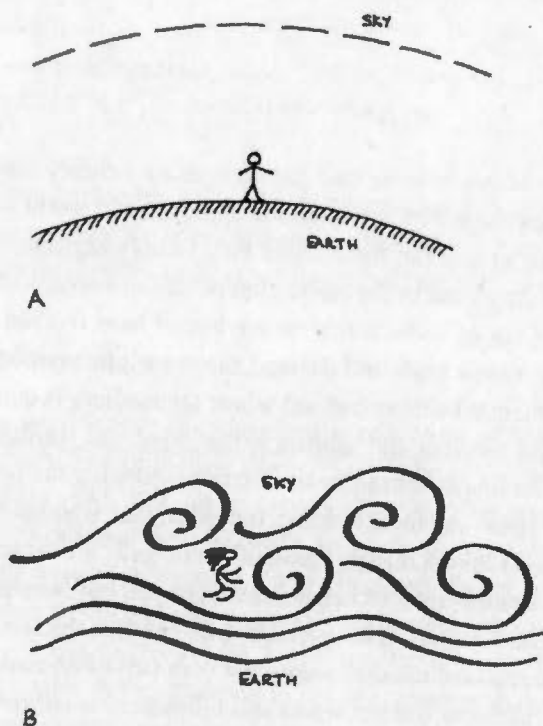


Illustration 4.2 The exhabitant of the earth and the inhabitant of the weather-world (Taken from Ingold 2011, p. 120)

The quote opening the current chapter, from Métis (Cree) scholar Fyre Jean Graveline (1998) typifies the depth of this exchange between self and place. For Graveline, this relational exchange between self and place (Rountree) is the ground upon which

knowledge is built. Graveline (1998) illustrates this relational transmission of knowledge as a process of 'self-in-relation' (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). For Graveline, this reflection of an exchange of breath between the tree and herself, does not represent an anecdotal inference, but is rather grounded in skillful observation, which arises as a consequence of emplacement. Graveline, Kovach and Wilson consider this self-in-relation way of knowing the world (and self) as central to many Indigenous Peoples. The suggestion expanded upon throughout this thesis is that while it may be a central, or authoritative, way to know the world for Indigenous peoples, does mean it is absent altogether in 'non-Indigenous' peoples. This line of thought will continue to unfold throughout the current chapter.

4.1.1 The performance of soil

Our next narrative illustrates some of this binding of substance, place and wayfarer. This is the first narrative sourced from Slavin's ethnography. Within his discussion of it, he states that is provided by Espé, a woman from Madrid in her mid 30's. Slavin identifies two themes in Espé words which are relevant to his analysis. Both themes are also relevant to our examination of liminality and emplacement. In the first, Espé "reiterates the placement of self outside conventional space. The self in the Camino rather than in any particular place or event oriented to a particular place such as Santiago. She also (second) stresses the temporal aspect of placing oneself outside linear time" (2003, p. 8).

The point is not to go to Santiago,
 the point is to be in the Camino.
 The Camino is ... abstract.
 You shouldn't be too literal.
 Yes you walk across the earth
 but the earth
 walks itself across you. (laughs)
 Don't I know it after a day like today.
 (Slavin, 2006, p. 8)

Narrative 4.5 Narrative five

Slavin concludes that by “asserting that the earth works on the self”, Espé “rejects the notions that the Camino is a metaphorical lens” (*Ibid*, p. 8). He predicts, that her performance does not solely reflect an insulated inner journey of the self. The landscape, within which she traces her journey, is bound to her process, and this, results in awareness of place as an informative element to the process. Her awareness of being ‘in’ the Camino appears to translate into knowledge of the trace it leaves upon her. This suggestion is garnered from within the affirmation of what she knows at the end of the day. In this statement, lies a hint of awareness, that a bi-direction exchange between herself and the landscape, is occurring. Her statement ‘don’t I know it after a day like today’ suggests that the learning acquired that day, is a learning, which involves traces of the earth walked across her body; knowledge which arises as a consequence of self-in-relation.

Quesada-Embid’s interpretation of reciprocity along the Camino seems to support the notion that a self-in-relation state ensues along the journey. Throughout her writing she points to this merging of substance and relationship between the “human and nonhuman” (2008, p. 251). Quesada-Embid also presents the above quote by Slavin and supposes that “there is a synthesis of land, time, and person where the walkers experience a rhythmic reflexivity through their moving encounter” (*Ibid*, p. 252). She also introduces the following quote; in it we find a reflection of Espé’s sense that the

earth walks itself across her.

This quote Quesada-Embid says, is from Roberto Diaz Toro, a dweller along the Camino route, he relay these words to all the pilgrims he meets: “you may walk the Camino, but the Camino also walks you. I know because I live here. I see the way the land walks on people” ⁶⁸(as cited in Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 247). Quesada-Embid explains her use of this quote with the following: “the associations that people have with the landscape are more than an inscription of human events on a natural surface; there is a sense that the landscape itself participates in historical possibilities” (2008, p. 247). Within both these quotes, we read traces which suggest, that being situated in place ensues as a self-in-relation process.

Ingold highlights this concept of self-in-relation:

the forms of the landscape – like the identities and capacities of its human inhabitants – are not imposed upon a material substrate but rather emerge as condensations or crystallizations of activity within a relational field (...). Through walking, in short, landscapes are woven into life, and lives are woven into the landscape, in a process that is continuous and never-ending” (Tilley as cited in Ingold, 2011, p. 47).

Landscapes, he predicts, are interpreted and read, and form human becomings. I see this as similar, to a consideration that fairy tales can become formative tools in a child’s view of the world. The imprinting of which will vary, depending on the frequency of the reading, material sources, and even the intonation and/or intricacies used to relay the story.

⁶⁸ Personal interview with Roberto Diaz Toro (a Camino dweller) by Quesada-Embid, Belorado Spain, July 2, 2007.

4.2 Hermeneutics and pilgrimage, reading myths and histories

Within their examination of pilgrimage in world religions, anthropologist and professor of religious studies at the university of Toronto Simon Coleman and, John Elsner art historian and classicist, assert that “the ‘landscape’ of any pilgrimage site consists *not only* of a physical terrain and architecture but also, of all the myths, traditions and narratives associated with natural and man-made features” (1995, p. 212, emphasis mine). In this vein, they explain, pilgrimage to Palestine may serve to map out the life of Jesus and the teachings of the religious texts themselves (*Ibid*, p. 83-85). They suggest that pilgrimage in the Buddhist traditions may imprint the body, mind and spirit of the adept and “reconstructs the Buddha’s life by retracing and remembering his career from birth to death” this reconstruction of the Buddha’s life, they propose, serves as a map for practitioners to follow (1995, p. 173). In a similar vein, Eaton suggests that within Islam, the hajj pilgrimage is full of references to the texts of the Quran, alongside symbols which reflect the belief that Islam is not a new religion, but the final religion. The association of Abraham and Adam to the Ka’bah, Eaton writes, ties the tradition to the origins of Judaism and Christianity and serves as “a ‘reminder’ of the primordial faith” (Eaton, as cited in Dalby Clift and Clift, 1996, p. 25)⁶⁹.

Coleman and Elsner (1995) suppose, that the textual references and myths associated to pilgrimage sites, serve to reinforce the beliefs and values of the religious systems which maintain the sites. They propose a reading of pilgrimage elements, similar to the communicative and constitutional quality of rituals demonstrated by Fred Bird (1995). Ritual elements, Bird asserts, and by this he means, myths, texts, symbols,

⁶⁹ This is not meant to be an extensive study of phenomenon in other traditions, but is simply illustrative of some potential within the performance of pilgrimage. For further reading, see Simon Colman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: past and present in the world religions* (London: Routledge, 1995); Jean Dalby Clift and Wallace B. Clift, *The archetype of pilgrimage: outer action with inner meaning* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996).

and words, when applied within a ritual context, serve to constitute the individual (and groups) and are also continuously re-constituted by them. The suggestion, within Coleman and Elsner's reflection, is that beliefs and values communicated through pilgrimage are available to be read and then 'imprinted' onto the pilgrimage experience.

The view of pilgrimage (and ritual) as a vehicle which avails for the communication of beliefs and values (Bird, 1995; Streng, 1985), is supported within this thesis, however, the focus herein, is upon reading the 'not only' part, highlighted in the Coleman and Elsner quote. I propose that the qualities of the 'physical' landscape are part of the language of pilgrimage, part of the reading performed by the pilgrim. The three ethnographies looked at seem to support the view of a multilayered reading of the landscape. Within this reading, the performance of pilgrimage transpires within both the myth-historical landscape, but also within the landscape 'proper'. In reality, the two are not mutually exclusive; existing as they do as interdependent vectors of process, where one may readily serve to bring out the qualities of the other.

In her description of the qualities of the landscape proper as impetus for different ritual practices, Quesada-Embid provides several examples of a multi-layered reading. On the Camino, she states, "stories and rituals abound, and convey how elements of the landscape provide messages and meanings that give people a sense of what it is to be present on the path" (2008, p. 65).

Trees, stones, rivers and mountains are just some of the elements which inform the dialogue between wayfarer and terrain. Trees, she concludes "are a part of the dialogue between people and landscape. Whether the interaction is direct or indirect, dwellers and pilgrims experience a sensory relationship with the landscape by way of the trees" (Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 193). Stories exist around particular trees, fallen

branches become carved walking sticks, trees mark distances, and serve as holders of historical stories. Stones she contends, also serve as markers for the meeting place of both landscapes. Stones, also anchor stories to the land (Feld and Basso, 1996; Quesada-Embid, 2008). Both naturally occurring markers and human made markers may indicate a significant leg of the journey, or serve to highlight a ritualized aspect for the shedding of one's burdens.

Along such a well worn path, the interweaving of the landscape proper with the myth historical one may, at times, become indistinguishable. The focus herein is not to privilege one 'over' the other, but to highlight the constitutive quality of the landscape in the formation of knowledge along the journey. As Quesada-Embid, writes, in speaking of the sentience of mountains, "whether as gifts, offerings, burdens, whether shared, carried, or stacked, the stones become a part of the people and the people a part of the stones" (*Ibid*, p. 203).

4.3 Hermeneutics and pilgrimage, reading landscapes

Traditionally, the study of hermeneutics is tied to the interpretation of texts, specifically biblical texts. Hermeneutics as a discipline, evolved from this singular focus, into a broader view of interpretation to include, written, verbal and non verbal modes of communication, albeit still of the human realm. Initially, through the work of psychologist and philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, and later that of Heidegger, and Gadamer, hermeneutics as a branch of philosophy, shifted from a focus on the interpretation of texts, into a theory of knowledge, an interpretive process for 'reading' human cultural activities (Lavery, 2003)⁷⁰. More recently, in the hands of

⁷⁰ See Susann M. Lavery, Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2, 3 (2003).

Paul Ricœur (and Richard Kearney), it has become a tool of 'translation' to mediate understanding between self and an invariable plurality of human 'others', what Ricœur named "the ontological paradigm"⁷¹ (as cited in Kearney, 2007, p. 148).

Ricoeur and Kearney's hermeneutics of 'other', raises two questions pertinent to this thesis: where does the inclusion into the category of 'other' begin and end? And can the world of human-nature relations exist in their interpretive 'translation'? While it is perhaps easy to consider that myth-historical (and cultural) texts can be transposed onto landscapes and 'read' by pilgrims, the suggestion that there is a reading of the terrain proper, an actual relationship and exchange of knowledge, forged between the terrain and wayfarer, may seem a hap hazardous leap of faith to some. This reading of place emerges naturally for dancer and philosopher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, simply through being in the bodies we are in. She argues convincingly that, to understand how knowledge is formed and to conceive of this relational exchange between the wayfarer and the landscape. We must free ourselves from the stone grasp of cultural constructivism, as well as from the ephemeral field of essentialism (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 357).

Ingold refers to this 'difficulty of translation' as the human, or rather the philosopher's dilemma. This dilemma, he shows, lies in an idea that understanding of self and the world (of which the self is a part) can only be achieved by removing ourselves from it (2011, p. 11). Sheets-Johnstone considers this stance to be at the heart of the 'modernist' tendency to privilege a human-nature divide. She demonstrates that the body⁷² and movement function as integral components which

⁷¹ See, Richard Kearney, Paul Ricoeur and the hermeneutics of translation, *Research in phenomenology*, 37 (2007), Paul Ricoeur, *Sur la traduction* (Paris: Bayard, 2004), Eileen Brennan (trans.), *On translation* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁷² Sheets-Johnstone speaks of the body as a biological organism, a view she argues circumvents a tendency to see it as, a 'solely' performative, wholly cultural construct: "If the body is performative, as Judith Butler has established so convincingly in her works, that does not mean that

bind use into the weave of the world. Sheets-Johnstone argues that within some of the cultural constructivist debates (and social science), the living world, outside that which falls in the realm of human culture, is semantically disposed of (Fraleigh, 2002, p. 122). This contortion, for both her and Ingold, becomes an impossible feat, since the living body is part of the fabric of the world, in as much as the fabric of the world is also stitched into us (Ingold, 2011). Stitched, imprinted, translated, or informed, the suggestion is one of meaning making, and thus I propose, one of hermeneutics.

Martin Drenthen's (2011) environmental hermeneutical ethics provides a potential resolution to address both, the question of Ricoeur's 'other', as well as Sheets-Johnstone and Ingold's dilemma. Environmental hermeneutics, also builds upon two of the theories presented so far; the first concerns place as a precursor for space (Casey, 1996) and the second, concerns life lived as process, within the weave of a sentient life world (Ingold, 2000, 2011; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1968).

To briefly summarize, Drenthen proposes that environmental hermeneutics differs from environmental ethics, in that it is not concerned with guidelines on how best to manage resources. "Rather, it starts out from the assumption that the world we live in has significance because it is always already infused with meanings. Moreover, hermeneuticists also stress that in order to grasp the full meaning of a particular place, one has to get involved in a process of interpretation. In that sense, landscapes can be compared with texts" (2011, p. 2). Drenthen demonstrates that this idea is not original, but has a long history, which goes back to early Christian theology. Augustine, he relates, "already said that God wrote two books: the Holy Bible and the Book of Nature. Reading the 'Book of Nature' was not that different from reading the

it has no home in nature. If human identities are socially constructed and thus gender identity as well, it does not necessarily follow that the body is socially constructed through the same process or that biology and gender are unrelated" (as cited in Fraleigh, 2002, p. 122).

Bible: it enabled humans to feel part of God's creation and reflect on God's intentions with the world" (*Ibid*, p. 3). Therefore, if we consider Ingold and Casey's suggestion that wayfarers cannot exist in isolation from the terrain traversed, alongside Drenthen's theory of environmental hermeneutics, then wayfaring along Compostela readily becomes a performance, which unfolds within the very weave of the landscape. This performance then avails itself to an interpretive reading; the 'otherness' of the terrain, perhaps simply one 'otherness' amongst many.

4.3.1 Reading the performance of place

Quesada-Embid, considers the path along the Camino, to be an interplay, of presence and history. In the process of walking, she writes, "the landscape unfolds and its elements come into the consciousness of the people who are engaged with it" (2008, p. 29). Frey illustrates a similar point, she suggests that meaning along the Camino emerges through "a sense of being one with the land, or part of creation" (Frey, 1998, p. 79). For Frey, the outer journey of pilgrimage is a "symbolic acting out of an inner journey" (Merton as cited in Frey, 1998, p. 78). This inner journey, she explains, is constructed through the reading of the elements along the path (*Ibid*, p. 79).

Each of the narratives presented thus far, emphasize a sense of journeying within the weave of the Camino landscape, but the sixth narrative best elucidates a sense of being held within the terrain, and of the 'communion' and relational exchange I infer. According to Nancy Frey, this quote by a Spanish priest (anonymous) reflects a connection to the earth, a feeling of becoming one and joining with all (1998, p. 79).

I was part of the earth. She was my mother. I'm from the country, and I know that the rural can inspire fear, but for me it was the opposite; it was converted into a large house.

I couldn't distinguish between what was me and what was the nature around me. I was one with all parts of creation, not knowing in moments if I was God or only part of God. Was I the tree or the tree me? I couldn't distinguish between the sound of the church bell and the ringing within myself.

(Spanish priest, Camino pilgrim in Frey, 1996, p. 79)

Narrative 4.6 Narrative six

This narrative presents us with several references, which highlight a perspective situated in place, and which is suggestive of a co-constitutional exchange between pilgrim and landscape. This merging of self and landscape is interpreted through two passages. The first, is his reference to a merging between himself and the nature around him, which culminates in his question: "was I the tree or the tree me". The second, revolves around his difficulty in distinguish between the external ringing of the church bell and the ringing within himself. These two points illustrate a deep felt sense of communion between himself and the landscape, which can be interpreted as a sense of being held within the weave of the landscape. However, the main point I wish to draw out here, is around the sense I read, in his use of the terms mother, and of being situated in "a large house". The author's reference to these concepts, I surmise, is not inconsequential.

Although potentially many levels of reading could be highlighted. Some could even be read specifically through his perspective as a priest (Mother Mary), or as a country dweller, potentially a homesteader, with some agricultural experience, where fertile land is often alluded to in the feminine. From my interpretive perspective, I do not read the term mother, through either of the aforementioned approached, nor from that of a female Goddess figure, neither that of Mary, nor what is at times called Gaia. I interpret the term mother to reference an early formative influence in one's life,

through which much knowledge is sourced. By mother, I interpret the author to be suggesting a relational experience, one of the earliest, potentially formative experiences most people know. In my reading, this reference of 'my mother', infers that the landscape holds a similar formative component for the wayfarer.

The relational exchange between mother and child relays a large part of the 'cultural' data, sourced throughout one's life. This does not, as the mention of fear exemplifies, mean that it is a relational exchange exempt of difficulties or ambiguities. It does however point to something which is highly formative, and informative, something which is read by the pilgrim as rife with meaning.

The use of the descriptive of 'a large house' also potentially highlights place as a significant and similar formative source of knowledge and growth. The reference of a large house is suggestive of home; a familiar place which provides some form of sanctuary, but also a gathering place for traces, or stories, of one's life. Home is where many of our stories are formed, and where much of our situatedness in the world takes place. His referencing these terms is not only points towards something relational and significant for him, but also, potentially, to something which is critically formative, and informative.

4.3.2 Interpreting the language of landscape

Within the previous narrative, one gets a sense that: the sound of the church bell and the presence of the tree, critically imprint themselves, 'within' the wayfarer. On a practical level, recognition of this interplay typically need involve bodily immersion in place. This immersion is neither solely sensorial, nor solely representational, it is rather as noted previously, a condition in which humans and places exist as an

interwoven dance of medium and substance. The sound of the bell traveling through the 'air', and the tree, are identified through any number of bodily senses, working holistically, but also through different levels of awareness and observation. Awareness occurs by taking note of the wind in the leaves, the scurry of creatures along branches, the squeak and crunch of those nestled into the cambium layer between bark and trunk, registering the sound of the fibers expanding or contracting, and by any other multitude of expressions of presence. Imprinting ensues, in part, through the interplay of the elements upon the surface, and any knowledge of 'tree' is the result of an intricate interplay of actions. Knowledge, or more precisely self-in-relation, ensues, in part, as a correlation between the meeting of medium and substance, alongside one's ability to 'read' and interpret this interplay.

Becoming aware of place, Niebuhr suggests, is the result of reading the landscape. For Niebuhr, the experience of pilgrimage facilitates the perception of details in the landscape. Through sensory, mental and emotional immersion in the terrain, he relates, landscapes emerge in new and fresh ways and reading unfolds:

Our skin and other organs of sense register the impressions the elements of place make upon us (...) These sense impressions and many others – the smell of the house and of the grass and trees surrounding it, the coolness of the bare floor, the rise of the stairs – combine into a strong web of attachment to the place where we live and draw us in, making that place our home (...). Our imaginal affinity for matter incorporates us into the world's weather and mass, and – by the law of reciprocal motion – incites us to absorb them into our own being (1984, p. 8).

Niebuhr calls this 'reading' of the terrain and of the elements, 'the ground tenor of attachment to place' he infers that it is a fundamental trait of human beings. The impressions left by the places we immerse ourselves in, he writes, the sights, smells, tastes and feel of the terrains we cross, becomes part of us, part of our very history. According to landscape architect, Anne Whiston Spirn (1998), this registering of

place (and of the events which arise in place) exists as a dialogue which emerges, from what she names, the language of landscape. For Whiston Spirn (and Quesada-Embid), it is not simply human 'texts' that are transposed onto the landscape, but rather it is a dynamic weaving of human and landscape stories that create a textual narrative (Basso, 1996; Quesada-Embid, 2008; Whiston Spirn, 1998).

Whiston Spirn asserts that the language of landscape is the native language of the human species. In her eloquent treatise, she relates to landscape as our original dwelling place, and illustrates examples of the myriad ways, that humans have evolved amongst plants, animals, and other elements which make up the life world. Accordingly, she concludes, all inventions of sign and symbol, whether they are verbal, mathematical or graphical, derive their origins in the language of landscape. Landscapes, she outlines, are rich with complex language, spoken and written in land, air and water, and the human language, is firmly rooted in the language of the landscape. Further, as storytelling animals, humans think in metaphors steeped in landscape; we put down roots, when we speak of commitment, and when referencing traumatic events, we speak of events which may uproot us (Whiston Spirn, 1998, p. 17).

Humans, Whiston Spirn states, are neither the singular source of dialogue nor the sole authors of landscape. The stories held within the weave of the world, she describes, are not always about the human world. Tree rings thick and thin tell the stories of the water and food of specific growing seasons. The size, shape and structure, density or scarcity of branches, in open field or dense forest reflect a flow of continuous dialogues between a tree, a group of trees, or even other species. Whereas, "volcanoes spew lava, remaking land; rain falls, carving valleys (...) Beavers cut trees and dam streams to make ponds: a dwelling place" (Whiston Spirn, 1998, p. 17). The very context of life is made up of a woven fabric of dialogues, an inter-connection of both

enduring and ephemeral relationships, some of which include the stories between humans and the landscape they dwell in.

As an herbalist, understanding this relational dialogue, this binding of substance (Ingold, 2011), and learning to read its interplay (Whiston Spirn, 1998), serves as a core skill set, through which my practice is formed. I have predominantly trained in an apprenticeship style, with one primary teacher (besides the plants) with whom I have studied for 20 odd years. The herbalism I have been taught is a mode of relational knowledge formation, based on observation, practice and reflection, which has required a commensurate amount of time, patience and dedication.

In order to know a plant, I have been instructed, one must spend a year and day seated with it (in all weather), and simply, breathe it in, and myself out. This exchange, it has been taught to me as an exchange which occurs on a cellular level, creates a relationship, through which knowledge can ensue. Only once this relational exchange is forged, should one reference written data on the plant.

While I have no way of knowing if any imprinting occurs on a cellular level, I did become aware several years ago that I had the ability to recognize the green allies I had done this with (sometimes getting to know them for many years), from a mile away. Once the connection, imprint, had been made, they became recognizable to me, differentiated within their environment. I equate this to a similar experience of spontaneously, effortlessly, recognizing a loved one from afar, within a crowd of thousands, at the Montreal jazz festival. Somehow their appearance takes on a different hue, almost, for lack of better terminology, a different sound wave, one which in me is 'heard', seen, 'recognized'.

This experiential example is tied to three points highlighted within the current

dialogue. The first proposes an example of Ingold's binding of substance, the second, lies in the recognition that the observational skill I have been taught is grounded in a relational mode of knowledge growth which is anchored in understanding the language of the landscape. I highly doubt that this reading of the terrain (or plants), is specific to me. The theory presented so far demonstrates, that it is rather a language (and knowledge), I have learned. This then brings us to our last point, since I myself exist within a 'modernist' cultural context, this same 'linguaging' ability can therefore, potentially be identified within those performing the Camino.

To conclude our current line of thought around the language of landscape and bridge us into our reflection around animism, I refer to Ingold's theory specific to the formation of human language. Language, (and knowledge) he predicts, is not tossed like a ball from generation to generation, it is learned and carried on as a process, rather, "it is through wayfaring, not transmission that knowledge is carried on" (Ingold, 2011, p. 146). The relevance of Ingold's argument, ties into the suggestion that any knowledge (and transformation) achieved, along the Camino, is not accessed as a ready-made product. Knowledge (and transformation), our three ethnographies suggest, unfold as process. This process, I have argued, is woven into place. The performance of pilgrimage along the Camino, is read, and touched, the transformation unfolds, from within the landscape, as a bi-directional process, specifically, as a dialogue between the wayfarer and the landscape. It does not arise solely upon arrival at the 'sacred' destination (Frey, 1998; Slavin, 2003). Neither is it read solely in the symbolic.

I have illustrated, that while the wayfarers' ability to read the terrain may be manifest in various degrees, it nonetheless, unfolds from within the landscape. I situate the wayfarers' performance, within an interpretation of place, which richly textures the experience. I suggest this as a form of hermeneutics which illustrates an interpretive

reading of the landscape. I now examine some current debates around the concept of the 'personhood' of the terrain. These arguments consider the performance of place, as a process which transpires from within a potentially animistic landscape.

The 'new' definition of the term advanced by Bird-David (1995), Harvey (2006) and Ingold (2000, 2011) advocates for a reading of this process, from within a landscape, that is inherently animistic.

4.3 The relational understanding of a skillful animism

The concept of animism within social sciences is most commonly traced back to E.B. Tylor's anthropological treatise, *Primitive Culture*, first published in 1871. This treatise was written in an age where "a positivist spiritual/material dichotomy" (Tylor cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S68) was the norm, and therefore, at the time, it was believed that 'true' knowledge could only be accessed through science. Animism in this context was commonly defined as a mistaken world view, within which people "believe in souls or spirits" (Tylor as cited in Harvey, 2006, p. 6). Within his lens, Tylor did not so much define a term, as outline an evolutionary theory for the origins of religion. The theory of animism was categorized as the earliest religious expression, and defined as a childish and primitive understanding of the world (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004 ; Harvey, 2006). This understanding, according to Bird-David, has remained surprisingly pervasive within the social sciences, still applied and revised little to not at all (1995, p. 68).

According to Bird-David (1995), Clammer (2004), Harvey (2006) and Ingold's (2000, 2011), current application of the term, animism, is not so much a childlike reflex but a honed skill set, which emerges through relational understanding of the

world. It is, they conclude, more commonly found in elders than in children. It is also, they discriminate, a universal potential, which exists in varying degrees, depending on the import given. Further, as with all skill sets, it is one which can be lost, or forgotten. Animism, as they see it, is not “the imputation of life to inert objects” (Ingold, 2011), but a relational skill set which issues forth through the sentience of a world-in-formation (Bird-David, 1999; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2011; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1968).

This animistic tendency becomes relevant to our reading of the narratives because as Bird-David explains, it may be “conspicuous among indigenous peoples but by no means limited to them” (Bird-David, 1999, p. S89). For Ingold, an animistic worldview is simply the recognition that things are in life rather than life in things, a view which he argues, is diametrically opposed to the one advanced by Tyler. For him, this is not a world of inert matter waiting to be infused with spirit, it is rather a world without objects; a sentient world of animate materials held within, or rather generative of, a continuous vector of process (2011, p. 29).

Throughout this final debate, several core concepts, specific to current theory around animism, advance our reading of the ethnographies and narratives. However, while I initially use it to establish understanding, I set aside the specific category of animism, and focus on that of a relational epistemology. The definition of animism proper, along with the descriptive animist, is reserved, as a potential sub-category. Within this category, animism (as a label) represents persons who hold to a state of responsiveness, and relational exchange with the world, founded upon an ethics of respectful action (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004; Harvey, 2006). This is similar to what Wilson (2008) writes is the axiological result of accountability to relationships within an Indigenous world view.

The suggestion herein, is that these two terms are not mutually exclusive. One does not have to be an animist in order to partake in knowledge formed through interaction with the landscape. In other worlds one does not have to label oneself as an animist, to partake in a relational epistemology. That said, the presence of one without the other may not be inconsequential.

To reiterate, this thesis, does not seek to identify, whether or not the wayfarer's hold to an animistic world view, rather, it seeks to situate their performance within a world that is alive and animate. I do not infer, or hypothesis about whether or not the pilgrims consider themselves animists. The suggestion is as the aforementioned authors propose, to show that wayfaring unfolds within a relational, animate life world. Specifically, as Ingold predicts: "the animacy of the lifeworld, in short, is not the result of an infusion of spirit into substance, or of agency into materiality, but is rather ontologically prior to their differentiation" (Ingold, 2011, p. 67-68).

4.4.1 Relational epistemologies

According to Bird-David, (as well as Ingold, Clammer and Harvey) relational epistemologies "function in diverse contexts where other epistemologies enjoy authority, including Western contexts" (1999, p. S78). The Nayaka people of southern India, amongst whom she carries out her ethnographic research, primarily frame their worldview relationally; however, it is not their sole way of understanding the world. Epistemologies and ontologies Bird-David, seems to suggest, exist in varying degrees, and in an infinite array of potential combinations. In this sense the tendency towards animation may exist everywhere, alongside other epistemologies, in a complex array of variances and in a diversity of animisms (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011).

Ingold outlines a similar line of thought with his metaphor of life (and cultural understanding) as a meshwork. All organisms, he states, are a leaky, interweaving, series of lines, in a state of becoming. What we know, what we are, is not limited by the skin, nor is our identity contained as one set cultural container. All peoples are an amalgam of variance and continuous becomings (2011, p. 86-88). This does not mean that dominant ontological themes will not be found or transmitted, but rather that variances within these can be found.

As noted earlier, both Bird-David (1999) and Ingold (2000, 2011) speak of these ontological variances, in terms of authority. They explain that while relational ways of knowing the world, may not be authoritative within a 'modernist' context, this does not preclude its existence. For Ingold, it is not so much that relational epistemologies exist in Indigenous cultures and are absent within 'modernist' ones, rather, that relational ways of knowing have lost much of their authority in the later (as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S81). This then is the lens with which the ethnographies and narratives are approached throughout this thesis.

The question of authority becomes highly relevant when reading the narratives. One must consider and give authority, at least momentarily, to a reading which situates the wayfarers experience within the lens of a relational epistemology. Without this, any reading of the narratives, and the wayfarers' performance, runs the risk of being read as solely symbolic. In this latter framing, references to the elements in the landscape may point to a metaphorical rather than relational context. This, I propose, would be an ontological error, which assumes that the world is divided into categories of the inanimate and the animate, between the natural and the cultural; a division, I illustrate is not inherently identified, in either the ethnographies, or the narratives.

If read through a relational framework, the transformative process highlighted within

the testimonies along the Camino, counters this posture. The latter, is especially to rest on, what Ingold posits as: “the mistake of assuming that life and mind, are interior properties of individuals that are given, independently and in advance of their involvement in the world” (as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S82). To fully enter into the dialogue adopted by Bird-David and Ingold, we must first situate one last category (specific to personhood), in order to consider what exactly it is, the wayfarer could be in relationship with. The definition of personhood may ground the current arguments and provide easier access to an understanding of self-in-relation.

4.4.2 Personhood

Mentioned in all of the studies (consulted) around current understanding of animism, is the seminal and prescient work by anthropologist Irving J. Hallowell (Bird-David, 1999; Clammer, 2004; Feld and Basso, 1996; Harvey, 2006; Ingold, 2000, 2011). Hallowell’s ethnographic research, from the 1930’s, is based upon dialogue with his Ojibwe hosts, in the Lake Winnipeg area of northern Canada. His research often serves as a starting point for current understanding of animism.

According to his interpretation, the Ojibwe define ‘personhood’ as an overarching category within which ‘human person’, ‘rock person’, ‘bear person’, or ‘wind person’ are subcategories. Hallowell coins the term other-than-human⁷³ person to translate this notion. For the Ojibwe he concludes, “the world is full of people, only some of whom are human (...) to be a person does not require human-likeness, but rather humans are like other persons” (as cited in Harvey, 2006, p. 15). Throughout, Hallowell counters both, the idea of animism, as an innate or instinctual childlike

⁷³ There is much debate, and as yet no definitive, around the correct descriptive term to use. Bird-David (1999) argues that Hallowell’s term still privileges a human centered focus and she suggests the term ‘superpersons’, which Ingold (2011) states still misses the point. For the moment, I stick to Hallowell’s term.

response⁷⁴, and/or as a mistaken epistemology⁷⁵. He argues that “the definitive priority given to humanity in modernist notions of personhood, like that too frequently given to male humans, ought to be the subject of dialogue with those whose discourses arises from different experiences and understandings” (as cited in Harvey, 2006, p. 18).

Within this broad understanding of personhood, animism becomes, not so much an innate or instinctual reflex found amongst children, but a finely honed skill of observation and awareness towards the ‘persons’ which make up the world. If, relational epistemology is a potentially condition to being situated in place, then surely, the wayfarers would pick up on this; whether they classified it as such or not? By this I mean that if the world is inherently ‘animate’, then surely one does not have to adhere to the label of ‘animist’ to be informed by its sentience. This does not preclude an earlier suggestion, which considers animistic understanding as a skill set honed over time. The suggestion is, more precisely, that while multiple levels of proficiency (and awareness) can surely be shown, the existence or absence of proficiency does little to alter the sentience of the landscape (Ingold, 2000, 2011; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1968).

4.4.3 ‘Talking with’ the landscape

Within the discussion around the language of landscape, I noted that within Quesada-Embid’s ethnography, she concludes that reciprocity is a central characteristic of the Camino pilgrimage experience. Throughout her dissertation, she speaks of the ways the terrain is woven into the lives of wayfarers and inhabitants. The landscape, she

⁷⁴ See, Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1913/1871).

⁷⁵ Stewart Guthrie seems to apply Turner’s animism from a contemporary lens. In his interpretation, animism and anthropomorphism are a natural occurrence, but still a mistaken epistemology (Harvey, 2006, p. 15).

writes, reflects a dialogue between many players, not the least of which includes the animals, plants and elemental ‘persons’. One of the examples she uses is of mountains and stones: through “tactile interaction (...) the pilgrims and dwellers sense and animate the power of the stones (...) the stones becomes part of the people and the people become part of the stones” (2008, p. 203). Her language encourages a reading suggestive of more than a simple transmission of agency onto inert objects.

Quesada-Embid’s use of the term reciprocity, along with a reflection situated in Heidegger’s theory of dwelling, and Ingold’s theory of wayfaring, points to similar consideration in relating the wayfarer and the landscape, to the one proposed herein. She sees the route of Compostela as an exchange, between pilgrim, dweller and landscape. It becomes a reciprocal exchange, in which each player is equally instrumental to the other. Within her framing, both the wayfarer and the landscape become critical players in the formation of knowledge. She outlines a mode of storying with (and through) the landscape, which I argue, is an important element in any relational exchange, and also a critical component (present in varying degrees), within each of our narratives and ethnographies.

Bird-David defines a similar responsive relatedness which she qualifies as a form of ‘talking with’ various elements within the landscape. Talking with, she writes, “stands for attentiveness to variances and invariances in behaviour” (1999, p. 77), both in oneself and in the landscape and is differentiated from ‘speaking to’, which she qualifies as a one way action. This way of knowing the world is a core component within a relational epistemology. It is a skill set honed through practice. Therefore while perhaps more central to those that give it authority, it is a ‘potential’ in all people (Ingold as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S82).

Quesada-Embid’s own quote serves as our next narrative (2008, p. 34), it illustrates a

responsive relatedness, and provides a significant example of Bird-David's 'talking with' descriptive. It is perhaps as long as it is relevant, therefore, cited in its entirety.

Quesada-Embid's narrative presents an interesting inter-weaving of her intention to study the preservation of the 'naturescape' and her own performance along the Camino. This intention is what I highlight here; it is what she names the reciprocal exchange between the landscape and people.

One of my first lessons in service came unexpectedly on my way to the town of Zubiri.

On this particular day I started to notice that in the early morning hours small creatures would appear traveling across the walking path. Many of these animals were slow-moving and were being crushed by the feet of pilgrims by the ends of their walking sticks and by the wheels of pilgrim bicycles. Without really thinking about it, I began to lift the creatures off of the path and place them out of the way of the people. Once I started, I could not stop, and this action became my morning routine. It was only during the few hours before the sun's rays became too strong, while the path was still damp with dew, that the snails, slugs, and earthworms were present, and so it was only during these hours that I did this.

Looking back, the process of stopping, bending over, and moving these little animals took a lot of time and it was at times tiring to move so slowly with a heavy backpack. Even though it was time consuming, once I became aware of these creatures, I began to feel as if it was my duty to move them out of the way of the passing people. People would pass me during the morning hours but no one ever asked me what I was doing. Sometimes I imagined someone asking me and I thought about what I would say. I suppose I would have tried to explain that part of my morning walk was to scan the ground for these tiny, slow-moving animals and that modifying my walking rhythm to help them was something that made sense to me.

I can honestly say that once I became aware of the creatures, it did not feel appropriate to me to start my days off any other way. Starting my days in this way seemed to provide a kind of constancy to my days on the path. It served as a reminder that it was all right to take it slow, that I need not rush the pilgrimage nor my experience of it, and that this path does not belong solely to pilgrims, but rather to all the elements of the landscape.

It is a place of many beings, sharing, coexisting, and co-creating both space and time. This small piece of service helped me to become aware of all of this and to pay close attention to the many real opportunities for service that people are constantly presented with and the choices made about whether or not to engage with them.

I realize now even more so than I did on the path how easy it would have been to just have kept on walking and let those many opportunities pass me by.

Within my interpretation of this narrative, Quesada-Embid's recognition of the precariousness of the state of the 'small creatures', is both constituted by her ritual container (which she identifies as preservation and service), and further serves to constitute it. Quesada-Embid notes that this, her first lesson in service, arose unexpectedly, she qualifies the work as hard, an un-gratifying (no one stopped and acknowledge her action) and ends, by noting that it was not till after, that she realised the extent to which this act helped inform her more global understanding of service. To me, this suggests that her act of depositing the creatures out of harm's way, was not premeditated, but arose as responsive relatedness to the landscape. This responsive interaction with the landscape, serves to inform her process; one gets a sense that this is so, even after the journey. While I cannot be sure, her narrative points to this learning, as a significant impetus in her final articulation and understanding of reciprocity; which she presents as a key element within the preservation of landscapes.

Within the context of our current analysis, this response to the landscape may be shown to arise within, her movement and performance of the liminal. I infer this in her mention of both a focused attention and shift in her awareness, the reference to slowing her pace to perform this as part of her 'morning routine' and in the 'constancy' this action provided. These references, interpreted alongside the reading of liminality, shared by Frey and Slavin, highlight a shift in perspective. While I cannot know if she experienced a liminal state, she does point to both a quality of communion, which arises as a consequence of her performance along the Camino, and to a shift in her way of keeping time. In fact, the absence of any mention of liminality in her treatment of the Camino pilgrimage is probably the greatest point of theoretical divergence between our respective treatments of pilgrimage along the Camino.

Our next narrative, taken from Frey's ethnography, illustrates an example of a responsive relatedness, or self-in-relation state. Barbara Haab is a Swiss pilgrim and researcher. Frey sources the next narrative from within one of Haab's books.⁷⁶ Haab, she writes, understands pilgrimage as a journey of initiation (1998, p. 76). She notes that Haab, and others may experience a sense of disorientation or estrangement when contact is made with urban life (*Ibid*, p. 81).

You feel despair and anger, and sorrow for all that our civilization
'runs over'. All the dead creatures on the roadside, from
butterflies, lizards and snakes, to birds, dogs and cats!

(Barbara Haab, Camino pilgrim, as cited in Frey p. 81)

Narrative 4.8 Narrative eight

One can read Barbara Haab's narrative in a metaphorical sense and suggest she is projecting emotion, a personal sense, or a symbolic meaning onto the creatures she makes mention of. Frey herself takes this approach, she distinguishes how "the sense of union with nature found in the Camino, in contrast to the estrangement of daily urban life, coupled with the experience of time as distinct also lead some to reflect on one's mortality". One can also draw out relational qualities of empathy and compassion from within Haab's text, as suggestive of a different quality of relationing with the terrain. I argue that it is not an either/or question, the two states are not mutually exclusive but a complementary process of being situated in the world.

⁷⁶ See Barbara Haab, The way as an inward journey: an anthropological enquiry into the spirituality of present-day pilgrims to Santiago, pts. 1 and 2, H. Nelson (trans.), *Confraternity of St. James Bulletin* 55: 16-32; 56: 17-36.

Frey herself illustrates this when she writes of pilgrimage affording a union with nature of a “loss of self, or creation of a greater self in the environment, the feeling of becoming one and joining with all and not knowing where your body ends and the other begins” (1998, p. 81). Frey relates that this quality of immersion affects many and cites Paul Post’s study that looked at Dutch and Belgian pilgrimage and found a common theme of union with nature (*Ibid*). This same union with nature is named as a primary motivation, in Anna Davidson-Bremborg’s (2008) study of Swedish pilgrimage⁷⁷. The ‘loss of self’, that Frey references, I propose, is both a requisite element for compassion or empathy, and simultaneously, makes one vulnerable to the suffering of others (as Haab notes); be they of the human or other-than-human realm.

We arrive then at our final narrative, the ninth one. This narrative is taken towards the end of Slavin’s essay and is a reference to his own journey (2003, p. 15-16). Within his description of it, he speaks of walking as a means to create an embodied map of the landscape.

⁷⁷ See Anna Davidson-Bremborg, Spirituality in silence and nature: motivations, experiences and impressions among Swedish pilgrims, *Journal of Empirical Theology*, 21, 2 (2008).

I remember a difficult descent down a dry riverbed on the way into the village of Samos. I had to leap from rock to rock and many of the footholds were unstable. I was acutely aware of the danger of falling.

The care needed for each step allowed me to concentrate entirely on the task at hand, to become completely absorbed in it and leave no other residue, physical or mental. I was one with the task and thus entirely present in both the thing I was doing and the moment in which I was doing it.

Paradoxically, only in such complete absorption in the present does a trace of history and thought remain. I could now return to that place several years later and most certainly retrace my steps on the very same rocks I used before. Every meter of the way would be familiar.

Narrative 4.9 Narrative nine

In the above narrative, Slavin speaks of a body memory which ensues through familiarity with the Camino landscape. With this story, he provides us with an example of what he names the nexus between, body, self and the world. I consider this to be an example of self-in-relation. The imprinting Slavin refers to, appears to both inform his current journey, and any future ones he may make. I infer this from his ending, in which he states he could return and every meter would be familiar. This familiarity may well result in a more skilled awareness of the landscape, and by extension could inform any future excursions with a more confident reading, which would then entail less danger, or fear, of falling.

Where I differ in my reading of Slavin's narrative, is in his suggestion that he could return to the same place and most certainly retrace his steps on the very same rocks. While his narrative provides a sense of the care, and observational skill needed to navigate such a 'crossing', and also points to an inner embodied mapping of the landscape, I interpret his suggestion, that he could retrace his steps several years later 'on the very same rocks', to stem from a potential lack of familiarity with river

landscapes. While the 'personhood' of the river may remain similar, as per the nature of rivers as continuous vectors of process, and movement, it is not highly likely that the rocks would remain in the self same position. If there is one landscape which could serve as a living symbol for the state of becoming in the world, rivers may very well be it.

However, some rocks would potentially remain similarly oriented. As we have seen, it is not the static state of a landscape that brings about self-in-relation, but ones orientation towards it. Within Slavin's orientation, the landscape emerges as "something entirely for itself" (2003, p. 16). Here too my reading differs slightly. Slavin reports that: "what is not occurring is the projection of self onto landscape; the self is not identified with the environment and is not commensurate with it" (*Ibid*, p. 16). In this, I agree, an alternate view would constitute the definition of an anthropomorphic understanding of place and personhood; not the approach sought here. Slavin continues to state, that "the radical otherness of the world is what impresses itself. Even though I may dissolve myself in the act of walking, the landscape will always remain other" (*Ibid*). While I agree with his suggestion that the landscape, and all personhoods, contained within it will always remain other. Where I sense a divergence, from my reading (and experience), is within his inference that this 'other' is so completely different than the human 'others' I frequent daily; that somehow, it is an 'other' I can never now intimately. Here, I suppose Slavin to be situated in a definition of animism suggestive of the one Tyler articulates.⁷⁸

This then bring us to examine some of the openings in understanding, specific to relational epistemologies, which have arisen through our present interpretation of the narratives. Haab's narrative alongside our final one, by Slavin, points to critical

⁷⁸ Or again, of the one more recently articulated by Stewart Guthrie. See Harvey (2006) for a description of this.

reflective elements that have arisen as a consequence of the current analysis. Her narrative suggests that the category of personhood, and therefore the condition of a relational epistemology is not unproblematic. It is not a romantic, unfettered, pre-cultural, or noble state, which offers reprieve from the inherent difficulties of the human condition. In fact, as we also see with Slavin's own narrative, it may serve to complicate things even more.

4.5 Conclusion

Throughout this analysis, I have sought to contribute understanding around the wayfarers' transformation along the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage route. Current debates around place, personhood and animism have been used to interpret nine narratives as presented within three ethnographies. With the aid of the Turners' theory, I have sought to convey a sense of what transpires within the liminal phase of pilgrimage. It has been argued that movement within an animate landscape fosters awareness of a relational epistemology and critically contributes to the oft mentioned transformation. The overarching argument constructed herein pertains to a search to understand how knowledge and meaning are forged as process along the Camino.

Held within this, is an ontological quest to understand life itself and grasp what it means to be in the world. For Ingold, this pertains to a broader question than that of simply being *in* the world, but rather of being alive *to* the world (2011, p. xii). The later, he says requires one to be observant of the world within which so much of our lives (it could even be argued our whole lives) depend. This state, I have argued, while it might not be central to the 'modernist' world view, *is* a human potential. Returning to the Turners' intuition surrounding the 'out of time' quality held in the liminal phase of pilgrimage, I have build upon it and highlighted a potential quality of

communion between the wayfarer and the landscape. I have proposed that this liminal state facilitates a broader (or more focused) perspective, and makes awareness and observation of a relational exchange between the pilgrim and the terrain, more readily accessible.

I have built my analysis upon new understandings of place and personhood which elucidate the relational possibilities between the pilgrim and the landscape. Through this reading, we have sought to uncover the relational epistemology held within the ethnographies as well as the narratives. Albeit as this is a reflective exercise, the aim is not so much to prove a construct but to broaden potential future readings of both pilgrimage experience and of the existence of relational epistemologies in a modernist context. I have shown that while the landscape may invariably remain 'other' (as Slavin states), the narratives also show traces of significant interaction with the landscape, which advance a sense of familiarity, of reciprocity (Quesada-Embid, 2008) and, I suggest, of a self-in-relation performance, between the wayfarer and the terrain. The elements within the landscape, while perhaps invariably still experienced as 'other', are potentially received as other 'subjects' as opposed to other 'objects'; nonetheless, I propose, this is not unproblematic. The suggestion herein, is that relationality is akin to language, in many ways our mother tongue, and can both be learned and forgotten. We now turn to a reflection around some of the consequences this line of thought may hold.

PART THREE
RETURN, TRANSFORMATION AND INTEGRATION

CHAPTER V
WAYFARING AND RELATIONAL EPISTEMOLOGIES

It is a body that is in constant interchange with its environment.
The human body is radically open to its surrounds and can be composed,
recomposed and decomposed by other bodies.
Baruch Spinoza⁷⁹

We are next to nothing if not kin to our globe and its atmosphere;
but as we grow older we learn that we must employ our senses deliberately
to keep this kinship alive. (...) Our full citizenship in the physical cosmos is
incomplete until we have made ourselves part of each of these latitudes.
Richard R. Niebuhr⁸⁰

Indigenous perceptions of whom and what contributes to a societal structure
are quite different from traditional Euro-Western thought. (...) The idea of 'society'
has revolved around human beings and their special place in the world, given their
capacity for reason and language. Though this idea of society is still largely
attributed to human relationships, in recent times we can see the emergence
of non-humans being evaluated in terms of their contributions to
the development and maintenance of society.
Vanessa Watts⁸¹

Within this final leg of the journey, the quotes by Spinoza, Niebuhr and Watts, situate where we have been, and orient us towards directions which lie before us. The quote by Spinoza brings to light traces of relational epistemologies, within a 'western'

⁷⁹ As cited in Stacey Alaimo (2007, p. 158).

⁸⁰ As cited in Richard R. Niebuhr (1984, p. 9).

⁸¹ As cited in Vanessa Watts (2013, p. 33).

context. His reflection seems to suggest that the hypothesis, proposed within this master thesis, is in no way new or foreign. The Niebuhr quotes speaks to an animacy, founded within, the skilled literacy of relational epistemologies, and Watts' reflection suggests potential stumbling blocks, we might do well to avoid.

This last chapter serves as both a conclusion and as an opening towards further dialogue. In order to do this, I provide a synopsis of the journey taken; situate our current dialogue within its broader context; examine some of the limitations specific to our current exercise; highlight points which have been revealed within the hermeneutic process; and propose some areas for further reflection. Some elements have emerged as a consequence of this interpretive reading. Within this final chapter, I review some of the reflection process, address some of the limitations I have grappled with, and advance three areas for future research. These three areas of reflection may provide useful cues to enrich the dialogue around both the performance of pilgrimage and relational epistemologies. Although introduced separately, in many ways, these three elements are inter-related.

The first reflection advances that, holding a lens of place and personhood depicts a relational exchange between wayfarer and terrain, which is suggestive of intimacy. Secondly, the relational quality with the landscape, pointed to throughout this brief sampling of ethnographies and narratives, suggests that, even when a relationship with the landscape can be pointed to, it may hold various levels of familiarity and import for the wayfarers. Within the recurrent theme of self-in-relation traced within the ethnographies and narratives, we see a relational exchange between the wayfarer and the terrain that exhibits different levels of import and familiarity. Finally, each relational exchange pointed to within the ethnographies holds different qualitative markers, which I hypothesise, may reflect different qualities of self-in-relation initially held by the researchers themselves.

5.1 Self-in-relation along the Camino

Within this master thesis, the contemporary Camino pilgrimage has been used as a vehicle to look at the broader relationship of dwelling and wayfaring within the world. I have looked at the contemporary performance of pilgrimage along the Camino, in both its broadest and more individual sense. In the broad sense, the performance of the Camino has been examined as a ritual phenomenon, which may find some crossover in contemporary vision quests, earth based ritual practices, travel, and in some contexts, even the life journey. In the individual sense, I have re-read three existing ethnographies and nine narratives, in order to identify traces of relationship, between the wayfarer and the terrain, specific to the Compostela pilgrimage experience.

Quesada-Embid states that for centuries, the Camino pilgrimage route has extended a call to people, from all corners of the world, to move over and through its landscape. Accordingly, she explains that to perform the Camino is to undertake a “metaphorical and literal journey of the body, mind, and spirit” (2008, p. 229). The current reflection has advanced that the pilgrimage journey unfolds within both a metaphorical reading of the stories and histories imprinted upon the landscape, as well as through, a literal nexus of body and place. This research has attempted to show that meaning and transformation emerge as much from what I have defined as a co-constitutional relational exchange, between the wayfarer and the terrain along the Camino, as they do from the myths, history and religious symbols.

Throughout, I have identified common motifs, found within the data, which point to ways imprinting may occur. I have sought to identify traces of an imprinting which speaks of a ‘relationing’ between the terrain and the wayfarer. Within this master thesis, I convey that the literal, embodied emplacement, within the sentient

personhood of the Camino landscape, critically informs and imprints the 'cultural' storytelling of the experience.

This research uses pilgrimage as a backdrop, as an example of a structured wayfaring activity. The broader reflection, which underlies this interpretive analysis, pertains to opening understanding on the 'human' experience of dwelling and wayfaring. Wayfaring which occurs in what Merleau Ponty (1962, 1968) and Tim Ingold (2000, 2011) define as a sentient world. Ironically, as I attempt to bring landscape and the material world out of the symbolic realm, I approach pilgrimage as a symbolic canvas upon which to pose dwelling and wayfaring. Pilgrimage, specifically the interpretive reading of three ethnographies and nine narratives from the contemporary pilgrimage to Compostela, becomes the canvas for this reflection.

This research not only emphasizes a reading of the wayfarers' performance along the Camino, it does so from a perspective of place and personhood. Reading the narratives through the performance lens of place and personhood, I have argued, draws out traces of relationship between the wayfarer and the terrain, and highlights a self-in-relation occurrence. The research contributes to a growing body of literature around the mechanics of the pilgrimage experience, as well as, the intricacies of dwelling within a sentient world (Heidegger, 1962; Ingold, 2000, 2011; Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1968). The significance of this research, while mainly focused on the wayfarers experience along the Camino, has the potential to broaden our understanding of relational exchanges with various landscapes (Quesada-Embid, 2008, p. 281).

I have advanced, throughout, that awareness of this exchange is highlighted, in part, because of the specific 'out of the everyday' qualities of the liminal phase. This shift in time may help situate a heightened quality of 'communion' (as the narratives

emphasize), and reveal a relational exchange which reaches outside of a solely human-to-human exchange, and lets us glimpse one which can also be experienced with the other-than-human elements within the landscape. Slavin (2003) and Coleman (2002) explain how this 'communion' needs not exist outside of the cultural imprints with which the wayfarer navigates the Camino. This opens up the nature/culture binary, and allows us to consider both emplacement and culture, as part of a relational, process driven, aspect to wayfaring in the world.

The results of this research support and highlight a self-in-relation state. When interpreted from the perspective of place and personhood, more specifically when the sampling of narratives are read with this lens, traces of a co-constitutive relational exchange can be traced. This is a small sampling, and is not meant to be generalizable; however, the current narratives do appear to indicate that within the performance of pilgrimage along the Camino, the process of knowledge formation and/or transformation is enriched by a self-in-relation process. In defining recent debates around place and personhood, I have sought to illustrate examples of this self-in-relation process between the wayfarer and the terrain. The goal has been to search out the meeting places that point to ways in which the relationship carved between the wayfarer and the landscape has 'imprinted' and informed the experience; to illustrate ways in which the elements of the landscape have served as guides, signposts, 'elders', transferring knowledge and wisdom along the way.

The recurrent theme of relationship with the landscape is shown to exist within the storying provided by the wayfarers. The landscapes and terrains referenced do not exist solely on a symbolic or emotional level (although these are not precluded) but also concretely on a material one. The wayfarer is firmly situated in place, "within specific material circumstances" (Slavin, 2003, p. 16). This emplacement, then critically inform the journey, as process. Quesada-Embid sees the wayfarer as firmly

situated in place, but also critically “molded, confined and defined by it” (2008, p. 246). This reciprocal exchange is imbued with stories, traditions and customs, which arise as a consequence of relationality between wayfarer and terrain. The landscape, she writes, “is not left out of the relationship; it is at the core of it” (*Ibid.*, p. 246).

The current reflection has attempted to draw out places, where the often hypothesized nature/culture divide is perhaps not as broad as we may think. It is hoped, that by showing how a bi-directional relationship between nature and culture can exist within pilgrimage, it may exist elsewhere. Slavin argues that the field of anthropological pilgrimage studies is especially tied to the binary of structure and anti-structure in which pilgrims can only exist within social structures. The Turners’ work on liminality, he concludes, while it has limitations, is a ‘nuanced and useful’ tool for thinking about alterity and marginality. He predicts that “a subtle understanding of the liminal dimensions of bodies in particular, reveals the redundancy of dualism, and bodies as things that can be in two places simultaneously, within and outside social structure” (2003, p. 17). Quesada-Embid, in her ethnography, articulates that research specific to the Camino is significant, because it can serve “as a bridge to the divide between the cultural and the natural, honoring both and showing their interdependence and interconnectedness” (2008, p. 282).

I have shown several examples where the landscapes significance and formative qualities peek through in the narratives. There are references to being marked by the cycles of nature, to the quality of the sky, the wind, the presence of trees as extension of self, to salamanders as teachers of service, or even to awareness of the ways in which the land walks itself upon the wayfarer. The landscape referenced, holds a significant informative quality, one which one wayfarer equates on the same level as that of a mother figure. Immersion in the landscape, the narratives suggest contributes to a sense of the spiritual, to awareness of loving a healthy life, to awareness of the

intentions one places into the earth. In summary, these results show that the landscape is not solely a passive backdrop.

5.1.1 Held within the landscape

Several of the narratives reference a sense of being 'held' within the landscape. The narratives examined show that, for the wayfarer, this relational exchange becomes a critical referent of the experience. Slavin describes the resulting product of this emplacement, as an embodied map which draws together, the body, the self and the world (2003, p. 16). However, what has arisen from the current analysis is that even when a relational exchange is pointed to, many different levels of familiarity, or intimacy, can be seen.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this analysis is that the existence of relationship between the wayfarer and the landscape does not present any uniform occurrence. Interestingly, while relationality appears to emerge from all the narratives presented, there appear to be differences in the level of relationality experienced. These results suggest that while a self-in-relation occurrence may be present, it is not a uniform one. Using the metaphor of language, I advance that relational epistemologies could be measured as a certain form of literacy.

This variation within a self-in-relation state amongst the pilgrims suggests that familiarity with the language of the landscape ties into one of the central characteristics of animism. Namely, that relational epistemologies (and animistic views) arise in direct occurrence to the authority, and observation 'time', accorded them. They are therefore an acquired and intentionally honed skill set. This understanding of animism, as an acquired expertise (rather than as a childish or

erroneous epistemology), may help identify variations within the wayfarers ability to 'read' the landscape. It may also point to some significant directions for future field work, specific to the performance of pilgrimage, but also, perhaps especially, to the performance of place and personhood.

This association between relational literacy and skill demonstrates that the categories of personhood, animacy and nature are not easy, romantic, wilderness concepts which speak of a noble past. Rather they are complex concepts which require much grappling, and provide their own set of problems. As our narratives indicate, the landscape may instil fear or grief on the one hand, and a sense of home and mothering on the other. Taken together, the results provide insight into the suggestion that relational epistemologies and animism are founded upon relational exchanges grounded in skill. Skill which will vary depending on the time allocated to their development and, which may need to be measured on a scale of generations rather than days or years.

This brings us to the final reflection which has arisen as a consequence of this research. The ethnographies as a whole appear to take on the qualities the researcher brings to the table. For Quesada-Embid (2008), it is a quality of service and reciprocity; for Frey (1998) one of process, where the pilgrim is changed by the experience; for Slavin (2003), it is a recurrent theme of movement, of being walked on and by landscape, but also of the spiritual as a journey which transpires on both an inner and outer plane. He describes this as a nexus of movement and perspective, between body and landscape, which brings forth a sense of being both outside and thoroughly within oneself.

Within each of their respective ethnographic studies, only Quesada-Embid (2008), speaks of an initial familiarity with the landscape of Compostela. She names growing

up within its landscape, and of being marked by her grandmother's repeated stories about the landscape and the people within it. Her named goal is to broaden the view of preservation to include both people and landscapes. Interestingly, hers is the one which most openly articulates the 'personhood' of the terrain. Frey most articulates the ways in which her journey was initially one meant to "break from the quotidian" (1998, p. 233). The journey, she writes, shook her and its influence carried over long after her return home. She is also the one who returned the most frequently in a research capacity. She openly names wanting to experience different seasons and cycles of the Camino. Interestingly, her research while more human centered than Quesada-Embid's, reflects more the influence the seasonal rhythm and cycles of nature play upon the wayfarers transformation.

For Slavin, the goal is to "address the spiritual experience" (2003, p. 1); as such, the components of walking and emplacement are viewed as critical contributing factors to the experience. He seems the least familiar with the route, undertaking the journey only once in the summer of 1995. This absence of familiarity, may result in a greater distance between himself and the landscape, a greater gap in skill set, reflected in his suggestion that the otherness of the landscape is one of a "radical" unknown (2003, p. 16). For my part, as noted at the onset, I propose that it is my skill set with a self-in-relation paradigm that provides a lens with which to read this as a possible occurrence in the narratives. These examples raise questions around the import of familiarity with the subject in colouring the weave of the interpretation. They also suggest ways in which we inevitably bias our readings.

5.2 Limitations and learning curves

Certain aspects of this research have proven to be challenging. I hypothesise that the

exercise has been especially limited by difficulties of translation. Some of these difficulties are specific to that of using a relatively new research paradigm, still others are more specific to the format chosen and yet others, to realities of the English language.

Using an Indigenist research paradigm, within an academic container more fluent with previously established qualitative research methods, runs certain risks of interpretation and validity. Kovach describes this as a 'coding' difficulty. Within the academic culture, she explains, each specific methodology "has its own 'code' but that code does not stray too far from the standards of other methodologies" (2009, p. 133). One major difference between an Indigenous (or Indigenist) methodology and that of a qualitative one she writes, is that within an Indigenous paradigm, 'meaning making' is sourced as much through observation and sensory experience as through inductive analysis (*Ibid*, p. 140). Within this research I faced challenges in presenting what constitutes knowledge and in allowing multiple sources to avail themselves as valid sources of knowledge. Specifically perhaps, knowledge received through repeated communion with trees, the posting of narratives above my altar and my frequent contemplative presence to them, information received in dreams or through the almost daily burning of plants in prayer.

Kovach outlines, the research journey of a doctoral student named Laara, to illustrate some of the obstacles she speaks of. I reference it here, because it highlights one of the biggest gaps within my current research, the absence of any outward examination of the sacred. In Kovach's book Laara articulates that:

she did not write much about intuitions, dreams, or energy, and it occurred to me that much of the sacredness of our research would never appear in my written research document – family gatherings, kind words, friends, smiles, teasing, tears, teachers, a deer sprinting across the open prairie, or manitow giving energy when I could go no further. These experiences constitute

meaning that cannot be written, only felt, remembered, and at best spoken (*Ibid*, p. 140).

Within a predominantly modernist research framework, the elements of knowledge formation Laara speaks of may be difficult to acknowledge, and even harder to write about. It became clear, towards the end of my analysis, that any direct mention of the sacred was absent. I made no reference to any potential inference of sacredness within the wayfarer narratives or ethnographies, nor did I define any within my own process. In fact, I realize now that I outright avoided it. I deduce that this stems, in part because of a perceived gap, in the definitional use of the term sacred, between an Indigenous framework and that of a modernist one. It also arises, due to the interpretive rather than ethnographic format, alongside linguistic realities of the English language, which make the 'sacred' difficult to approach.

Therefore a major limitation relevant to this research is one of language. I specifically make reference to the difficulties of transmitting knowledge drawn from poetic, narrative and storied sources, within a written, English language framework; more precisely, within a predominantly human centered, subject-verb-object one. Both of these limitations contributed to the exclusion of specific subject matter. While some of the obstacles are outlined here, the potential relevance of an alternate approach is covered in the recommendation section.

Initially, I chose a reflective format over that of an ethnographic research one, in order to familiarise myself with the intricacies of translation. Although I did not fully understand it at the time (nor completely now either), I intuited that this would prove problematic. Early on, I sensed the need to develop a scaffolding and language base, in order to attempt to translate, what (for me) has always been a predominantly 'oral' and storied field of 'expertise', into a more academic and analytical dialogue. This scaffolding was required to interpret and draw out any potential meaning (from

within the narratives) specific to the wayfarers performance within the landscape. I needed to find a way to bridge the dynamic process-driven form of narrative dialogue, with that of the more static subject-verb-object format of the English language.

According to Gail Fincham, professor of English language and literature, the English language, with its human-centered focus and noun (object) driven structure, makes approaching the qualitative process states of nature narrative difficult. She suggests that our subject-verb-object centered language fixes things in place rather than allowing for process. She quotes author and biologist Lyall Watson in describing this. Watson notes that “in all European languages, there is a predominance of nouns, whose function is largely static” (as cited in Fincham, 2012, p. 142). Words, she goes on to say, designated by nouns become things, or physical objects: “We can see a Cheshire cat with or without a grin, but not a grin without a cat. For, in our language, ‘a grin’ is an act, which requires an agent, who must be a permanent entity. We literally talk ourselves out of a whole range of possible experience” (*Ibid*, p. 142). Fincham argues that, this focus on an oppositional structure of subject and object, emphasises a binary in which things are either true or false, real or imaginary (*Ibid*, p. 142).

The limitation and dilemma thus becomes, how does one speak of a weaving of processes, a weaving which involves other-than-human persons, with a language structure orchestrated to bring the other-than-human into view through an object centered lens? We glimpse this challenge simply in the use of the descriptive. Bird-David (1999), Ingold, (2000, 2011), Harvey (2006) and perhaps even Hallowell, (1960, 1975) have grappled with the coining of an accurate descriptive. Bird-David, states that Hallowell’s use of other-than-human, still conserves the primary objectivist concern with classes (human and other-than-human)” (1999, p. S71). She

advances the term “superpersons (persons with extra powers)” (*Ibid.*, p. S71); a term Ingold describes as problematic for a whole other set of reasons. In effect, I find that Bird-David’s term still maintains a certain level of awkwardness, and ambiguity, such that my spell check does not even recognize it. The difficulty in coining a relevant descriptive hints at the difficulty present in addressing a self-in-relation with the other-than-human.

This bridging and scaffolding exercise has served as an important platform and process within which to grow my own understanding. It has also provided me with, at least a cursory foundation, upon which to approach knowledge which is not solely intellectually based, nor for that matter even human centered. We now address some of the limitations, as suggestions for further dialogue.

5.3 Openings in the dialogue

Morinis (1992) considers that it is the very ambiguousness of the sacred which may have made pilgrimage studies so hard to approach. As noted, I myself have not felt adept at openly addressing the issue here. As I step out of (or more fully into) this process of research, I realize that it may be a central issue which would benefit from being addressed more extensively. Namely, it might be relevant to inquire as to whether or not the level of ‘sacredness’ towards the landscape held by the wayfarer, impacts the level of relationality. In other words, does holding the land as sacred impact ones receptivity and responsiveness to it? Ironically, this line of thought was part of my initial intuition for research. Early on, however, I put it aside, thinking it was not central to my analysis. Returning to the quote by Terry Tafoya, which suggests that stories go in circles, it is perhaps not surprising that it re-emerges as a consequence of the research process.

According to Kovach (2009) and Wilson (2008), one potential problem with using an Indigenist methodology lies in the tendency towards duality predominant in Western thought. Therefore, while, on the one hand, I consider the sacred to be an especially crucial contributing component in the level of intimacy experienced, and therefore of central relevance to that of relational epistemology, on the other, the complexity of addressing, disparate views of the sacred, was surely significant in contributing to my keeping it at bay.

Eade and Sallnow (1991) demonstrate that within the field of religious sciences, two major schools of thought address the issue of sacredness. The first concerns the substantive (or essentialist) theories and the second the functional (or reductionist) theories. The two major discursive positions are whether faith and religiosity emerges out of the 'sacred', or whether the 'sacred' emerges out of the social.⁸² From an Indigenous perspective (obviously a generalization here), this either/or posture is perhaps a non question as the religious is less compartmentalized, and touches all aspects of daily life. It thus becomes a question of either/and where the boundaries between the sacred and the social collapse one into the other and religion becomes a process rather than a noun (Battiste, 2000; Talamentez, 2000; Wilson, 2008).

Perhaps the most obvious place where this contested view of the sacred becomes a problem, when applied to Indigenous Peoples, is in regards to sacred space. In some of the present anthropological work⁸³, pilgrimage sites are viewed as having no

⁸² In the book *Contesting the sacred*, John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, illustrate how many of the predominant concepts surrounding the study of pilgrimage came out of the study of ritual phenomenon. They classify these early theories as problematic, because in some ways they were still 'reactive' to the realities of other, they define them as deterministic and structuralist modes of interpretation. The authors write that Durkheim's insistence that all religious practices are an outgrowth of society, which serve to reinforce social power dynamics, fails to consider the vast array of competing discourse which invariably take place (Eade and Sallnow, 1991, p. 5).

⁸³ Eade and Sallnow (1991) conclude that pilgrimage sites have no meaning in themselves. However, Coleman and Elsner contest this view. They write, that while pilgrimage sites accommodate many potential interpretations, the later perspective "runs the risk of discouraging analysis of how sacred

inherent meaning, save that imparted by the individual. This Durkheimian tendency becomes a problem, if you consider that for many Indigenous Peoples, the land itself has meaning. Furthermore, for Indigenous Peoples the category of 'personhood' contains human persons as well as other-than-human persons. According to Hallowel, this 'personhood' includes land forms and what would be considered 'inanimate' and 'nonpersons' within a Western context (1975, p. 160). This understanding of the role of other-than-human persons in Indigenous 'religiosity' is critical to understanding the way in which the earth lives within their imagination.

5.3.1 Sacredness and agency

For Vanessa Watts (2013), a full time lecturer in McMaster's Indigenous studies program, recognition of the sacredness of the land, is directly correlated to one's care of it. Watts argues that for many Indigenous people, spirituality and responsibility for the land are directly tied together. Sovereignty she says is woven into the fabric of spirituality and responsibility. It is not as it is in the "western view" (*Ibid*, p. 21), based upon a notion of power, rather, it involves an interdependent, interwoven, view of nationhood which includes other-than-human persons, other 'nations' or 'relations'.

Watts predicts that while the boundaries between nature and culture are blurring within the social sciences, the 'western' notion of agency as human centered, upholds an epistemological-ontological divide which anchors a taken-for-granted view of humans as unique and distinct from nature. She explains that within some recent social science debates⁸⁴ views of interconnectivity are emerging, but are only

space is orchestrated (...) and how such organization can have a considerable impact on the perspectives of pilgrims" (Coleman and Elsner, 1995b, p. 209).

⁸⁴ Watts is specifically referencing the work of Linda Nash (2005), Stacy Alaimo (2008), Vicky

permitted as long as the distinction between the thinking human and the acting natural world are upheld. “True, the borders of the flesh and soil rub up against each other but this does not mean one is guided by the other. The border where human-as-the-center begins still exists and continues to determine the bounds for capacity and action” (2013, p. 29). For Watts, this duality is bridged, when understanding of agency is extended to all ‘nations’, when it is tied to spirit, and to the concept of what is sacred.

This brings us to the potential importance of considering the wayfarers perception of the landscape as sacred when attempting to determine relationality, and intimacy. The suggestion herein is that this view of the sacred as a vector of process, rather than as a compartmentalized occurrence, may also exist with wayfarers who are not of an obvious Indigenous descent. This suggests inclusion of the sacred and of spirituality as a potential research component, not as a dualistic inner or outer condition but, as Slavin argues, for a spirituality intricately tied to the process of walking the Camino (Frey, 1998; Slavin, 2003). Understanding the use of the term sacred may therefore prove critical within any potential measurement of the ways in which the outer landscape becomes part of the wayfarers’ inner landscape and by extension the inner part of the outer. To illustrate this, I advance several examples which, while they are sourced as Indigenous occurrences, may prove to have some crossover. The following is a quote by Watts who examines the use of the term agency.

If we think of agency as being tied to spirit, and spirit exists in all things, then all things possess agency. In the words of Elder Fred Kelly, our origin stories state that Sky Woman was able to communicate with the animals and vice versa. Our ability to have sophisticated governance systems is directly related to not only the animals’ ability to communicate with us, but their *willingness* to communicate with us. Vine Deloria (2003) argued that all human events are

Kirby (2008) and Bruno Latour’s (1987) Actor-Network Theory. These similar postures, she argues, may redefine agency on one level, and bring humans and non-humans into relation, they still however, posture a view of “human ownership over non-human things” (2013, p. 30).

referenced to land or with land in mind. This is not intended, at the outset as a political strategy (though it works as one); rather, it is something that we all hold as sacred. Spirit is contained within all elements of nature (Sioui, 1992) and therefore, we as humans, know our actions are intrinsically and inseparably tied to land's intentionality – quite a counter position from notions of diluted formulations of agency (2013, p. 30).

During a conference at Concordia university on September 28th, 2012, Innushkueu and Innu elders, Elyse Vollant and Denise Jourdain, Indigenous women from near Schefferville, Quebec, noted that to have a culture and an identity, they needed a connection to the Nitassinan (the land upon which they live). The Nitassinan is Innu territory situated in northeastern Québec and Labrador. Without this connection they qualified themselves as empty of knowledge. Denise Jourdain articulated this by stating “je suis vide de connaissances, car je n’ai pas été enseignée à être connectée au territoire”. She continued on to say that without this knowledge she could not transmit her culture to her children. Without this culture, she stated, the land was in danger, because to defend land one needs a connection to it. “Pour défendre le territoire tu dois avoir un lien”. Elyse Vollant articulated a similar point and explained that to live her culture she needed the Nitassinan, “pour vivre ma culture j’ai besoin de Nitassinan”.

The Concordia event, hosted by the Center for Gender Advocacy, was titled ‘Defending the land: Indigenous women’s resistance to Plan Nord and community violence’. The panel took on a discussion format which also included Mohawk elder and activist Ellen Gabriel. This event reflected upon the destruction, and exploitation of land, specific to the Plan Nord project, and the ensuing impact upon communities. My query for writing today is this: are we to assume that loss of land as equivalent to loss of identity and of culture is solely an Indigenous issue? An issue which does not touch people from a seemingly more Western background, or Asian, or West Indian, or of all backgrounds? Does the increased number of walks for water, for the earth,

by a multitude of peoples, or the growth of earth based movements, not suggest otherwise? The same year Concordia hosted the event, Elyse Vollant and Denise Jourdain walked the 600 miles from Uashat mak Maliotenam (Sept Iles) to Montreal to publicly affirm their attachment to the Nitassinan and denounce the Plan Nord project. Within their journey, they attended the March 2012 earth day walk in Montreal.

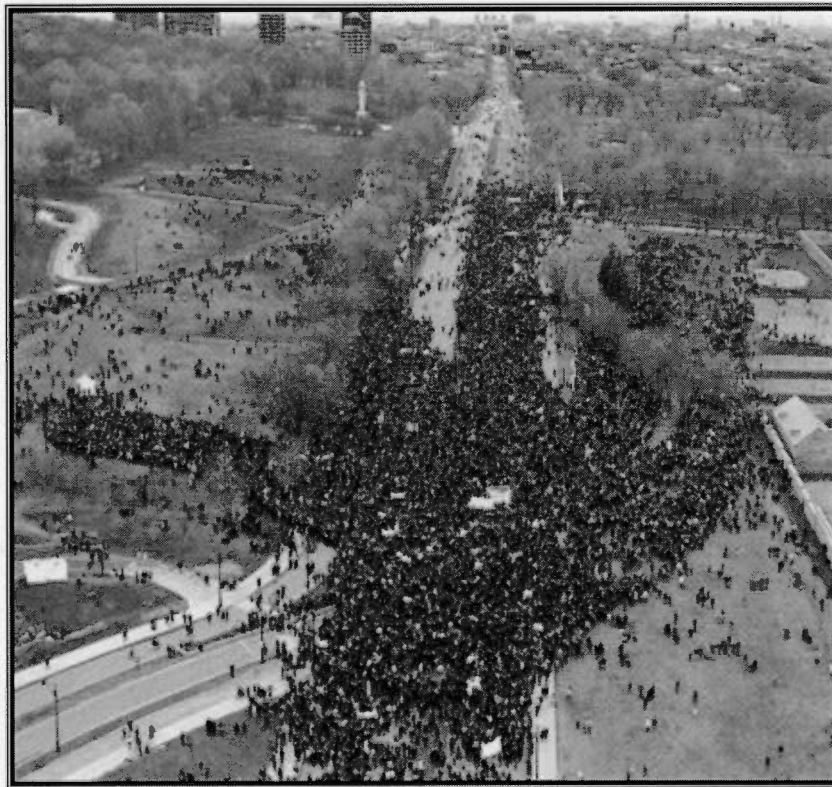


Illustration 5.3 Montreal Earth Day event 2012

This event is reported to be the largest environmental protest in Canadian history, with an estimated 250,000 – 300,000 people in attendance.⁸⁵ Not all of the people in

⁸⁵ As cited in Montreal Gazette, April 23rd, 2012. <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/time-lapse-of-montreals-earth-day-march>

attendance, potentially not even the majority of them, are of obvious First Nations descent. Inevitably, individual attendance to this event may have been motivated by a number of factors, nonetheless such a large scale presence at what was titled as a 'Walk for the Earth', appears to indicate, that concern and consideration for the environment also figures as a critical motivating force. That said, it remains to be seen if these protection movements can be sustained, because as Denise Jourdain noted: protection of the land requires previous connection to it. In other words, if this imprinting is happening, if this relational dance with other-than-human persons does inform the way we live in the world, does the absence of this exchange, place us, our children, our children's children in danger of losing critical parts of ourselves? Does it place us in danger of becoming amputated selves?

5.3.2 Pilgrimage as a lens through which to examine wayfaring

The container of pilgrimage becomes a useful tool with which to pose some of these questions. Firstly, because it contains a large body of data on structured wayfaring, and secondly, because it presents a privileged glimpse at a relationship which, at least momentarily, and to various degrees, exists out of ordinary time. This shift in time has been shown to contribute to a shift in perspective. This shift may thus provide both the wayfarer and researcher with an alternate lens with which to 'read' the mechanisms of the phenomenon.

Another reason to include pilgrimage is that it is purported to be growing more and more (Coleman and Elsner, 1995; Morinis, 1992; Weiss Ozorak, 2006; Quesada-Embid, 2008; Turner and Turner, 1978). According to the Turners, anthropologist Clifford Geertz was predicting that pilgrimage is becoming a "metasocial commentary" (as cited in Turner and Turner, 1978, p. 38). They outline that "like

certain other liminoid genres of symbolic action elaborated in the leisure time of modern society, pilgrimage has become an implicit critique of the life-style characteristic of the encompassing social structure” (*Ibid*) One of the commentaries being had through pilgrimage appears to be an environmental one.

Some recent examples of this environmental lean include: the yearly Anishinawbe (Ojibway) Mother Earth Water Walk pilgrimage, this walk begun in 2003 by Josephine Mandamin, Thecla Neganeegijig, and Violet Caibaosae, which is carried out to raise awareness around the import and sacredness of water; the 2012 Earth Day pilgrimage, from Sept Iles to Montreal, begun by Elise Vollant and Denise Jourdain, to raise awareness about the sacred place the land holds and of Innu opposition to the Plan Nord project; or on another front, the growing number of eco pagan gatherings and pilgrimages, which take place as intentional environmental commentary (Harvey, 2006).

Some scratching of the surface may reveal that even along Compostela, pilgrims are undertaking the journey from a place of environmental awareness and concern. An example of this is the Quesada-Embid’s ethnographic study as a whole, as well as Marina (narrative four) who states that she walked the Camino to experience deeper meaning, with herself, and with nature. Finally, Davidsson-Bremborg’s (2008) study specific to spirituality, silence and nature, within the Swedish pilgrimage phenomenon, concludes that for 7 out of 10 participants, being in nature is the primary motivation. It might prove interesting to examine what exactly motivates this desire?

Only through in depth ethnographic work, can one ascertain if the wayfarers hold any animistic, or Indigenist tendencies. Does considering to world as sentient, seeing the landscape as filled with other-than-human persons, impact perception of what is

sacred? Further, does seeing the landscape as sacred impact ones depth of interaction with it? This could be an interesting branch to explore within future research. One approach would be to conduct before and after inquiries around the status of the landscape held by the wayfarers. This may afford some inkling of their perception regarding the personhood of the terrain, and measure to see if any shift occurred.

5.4 Conclusion

Ingold asserts that human being are not simply blank slates, informed and molded by cultural expressions, but rather, beings whose very tools of life come into existence as life unfolds, through a process of development (2000, p. 379). To be fair, this theory at its roots speaks of a 'process of development' which transpires over many years, generations even, and results in certain 'biological endowments' specific to various peoples (*Ibid*, p. 379). That is not to say that as dwellers of the earth, or as wayfarers, temporarily moving within landscapes, people are immune and 'unmarked' by immersion (even but for the brief period of a pilgrimage), in their environments.

It is critical to recognize this difference (both perhaps on a political level and a quality of life one). Indigenous Peoples who 'belong' to a landscape and are informed by it over generations, will have very different sensibilities and dispositions (biological endowments), to the terrain than say, a fourth generation urban dweller, or a settler, arriving from a different continent, may. David Abram speaks of this literacy sensibility when writing about a modern application and interpretation of shamanism. Shamanism, he writes, has:

Come to connote an alternative form of therapy; the emphasis, among these new practitioners of popular shamanism, is on personal insight and curing. These are noble aims, to be sure, yet they are secondary to, and derivative from, the primary role of the indigenous shaman, a role that cannot be fulfilled

without long and sustained exposure to wild nature, to its patterns and vicissitudes. Mimicking the indigenous shaman's curative methods without his intimate knowledge of the wider natural community cannot, if I am correct, do anything more than trade certain symptoms for other, or shift the locus of dis-ease from place to place within the human community. For the source of stress lies in the relation *between* the human community and the natural landscape. (Abram, 1996, p. 21)

This is not to say that earth centered practices are exclusive to Indigenous Peoples, or that urban Indigenous peoples no longer have access to them. It does, however, give context to elder Denise Jourdain's statement that without a relationship to the land she is void of culture (and knowledge). It also a) points to the value and complexity of Indigenous Knowledges and of the 'religious' practices which accompany them and b) speaks to one of the failings of cultural appropriation.

To return to the relational exchange between the wayfarer and the landscape, and to continue our music analogy, I can very easily not hear the piece of music playing, if my awareness is focused on something else, this does not mean it is no longer playing, neither, I infer, does it mean I am not hearing it. Even if it is only background 'noise', some part of me is still picking up on the music, be it simply a reflexive register within my nervous system. That said, perhaps I will appreciate and experience the music on a different level if I have a skilled understanding of its language? Does being a pianist, help me appreciate and interact with a piano recital more? In the same sense, does being skilled in reading specific environments help me understand and recognize the subtleties within them more?

Stacy Alaimo, speaking from a place of environmental and feminist ethics, illustrates this receptivity with the story of Julia Butterfly Hill. It serves here, as an example of a self-in-relation process, and as a body centered skill building state, in which literacy can be acquired through the performance of place. It also provides us with an

example of the sacredness as process, which ensues conjointly with a relational epistemology. Alaimo states that we should “experience the ‘walls’ of the body, of the human self, as permeable places of connection (...) it is a body that is in constant interchange with its environment. The human body is radically open to its surrounds and can be composed, recomposed and decomposed by other bodies” (2007, p. 158). As an example of this physical permeability, Alaimo uses the experience of Julia Butterfly Hill who spent a year and a half living in a 180 foot, 1500 year old California Redwood, named Luna.

Parallels can be found in Hill’s experience to that of a rite of passage. First, she experiences a separation from her ‘day to day’ life, she then spends a year and a half living in the ‘liminal’ space of the tree’s branches, and finally we see that in her return or re-aggregation, she is changed. Alaimo notes that she is spiritually, politically and corporeally transformed (2007, p. 158). The passage is also illustrative of the context of both relational literacy as a skill and, the sacred as process. It also serves to outline the process of dwelling and wayfaring highlighted throughout this master thesis.

This process Quesada-Embid argues is central to any preservation perspective. She notes that within the works of Heidegger dwelling is demonstrated to be “a form of habitation on the land that compels guardianship, protection, and safekeeping” (2008, p. 282). For Hill, this stewardship is the impetus for her dwelling commentary:

The tree had become a part of me, or I her. I had grown a thick new muscle on the outer sides of my feet from gripping as I climbed and wrapping them around branches. My hands had also become a lot more muscular; their cracks from the weathering of my skin reminded me of Luna’s swirling patterns. My fingers were stained brown from the bark and green from the lichen. Bits of Luna had been ground underneath my fingernails, while sap, with its embedded bits of bark and duff, speckled my arms and hands and feet (2007, p.158).

I have attempted to show that the 'other' personhood of the landscape, can not only be known but it is in our knowing of other that knowledge is formed. Suffice it to know the language. This subtlety of knowing the language, however, is a critical point. The suggestion is that without this language base, as beings that dwell in the world, illiteracy may result in amputated or lost parts of self, and of critical knowledges. The intricacies of relational epistemologies (and of animism) are a skill set which arise through years of practice, as per language proficiency. Relationship between 'persons' are cultivated (as they are amongst human persons) through years of exchange and right practice. This also speaks to the ability to 'read' the environment, Sylvie Poirier writes of. In her article, she notes that regardless of the effort she dispenses, or patient teaching she receives in the art of animal tracking, she has difficulty differentiating between various animal tracks (2004, p. 70).

For Bird-David, a central component to relational epistemologies ties into "what a people becomes attentive to", the presence (and authority) given to the other-than-human is about what a people elaborate upon "on and through what cultural practices" (1999, p. S88). Relational epistemologies, she outlines, are not a distinction "between the animation of living things (animism) and that of non-living things (fetishism)" (*Ibid*, p. S88). Fetishism, she outlines "involves constructing concepts and relations as things, then (with anthropomorphism) attributing human qualities to them, then engaging with them as persons. Animism (as I conceptualize it), involves responsively engaging with being/things, then perceiving them as persons" (*Ibid*, p. S88). This requires active participation and engagement with ones world, and is very different from either a romantic wilderness, or noble Indigeneity, it is more of a responsive, responsibility driven engagement. It is also far from a human centered 'green' movement focused on the preservation of resources for human sustainability, and/or upon a marketing maneuver aimed at increased profit margins. It is a stance filled with challenges and compromise in the face of 'other' perhaps

closest to what Ricoeur demonstrates as the intricacies and difficulties of translation.

The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice they especially reinforce that one not presuppose that interpretation (or translation) is easily acquired. Consideration of 'personhood' is not an 'easy' category. It poses its own set of considerations and potential problems. If we consider other-than-human persons, as a valid category of 'other', then inevitable problems of translation will ensue. Just as the category of mother does not guarantee a relational exchange which is nurturing and supportive, neither does the category of other-than-human personhood assure an exchange which is ideal, easy to understand, and/or free of compromise. To continue in the hermeneutic and languaging posture held throughout, I refer back to Ricoeur's understanding of translation between self and other.

Ricoeur postulates that, translation is an act of tension and suffering. Understanding of 'other' requires a skillful feat of openness, (and I would suggest - observation), in which one must not only be able to interpret the language of other, but one must suspends (forfeit) one's own language in order to do it. In other words:

one must expropriate oneself from oneself as one appropriates the other to oneself. In other words, we are called to make our language put on the strangers clothes at the same time as we invite the stranger to step into the fabric of our own speech. The result of a good translation is when one language rediscovers itself in and as another (*soi même come un autre*)" (Ricoeur as cited in Kearney, 2007, p. 150-151).

Throughout this master thesis, I have argued, that the suspension of a human centered perspective, may open up understanding between the human and other-than-human other, or persons. Although I acknowledge, that this posture (and coding) may cause some tension, my hope is that the exercise provides some use.

I conclude the current reflection with, some questions which have traveled all the way around the circle, and others which have recently emerged. What does it mean in our exchanges of care (or absence of), in the 'stewardship' of our environments, to hold a perspective, of the earth as 'sacred', as a relational entity, as 'personhood'? What are the costs, or potential problems of such a view? Also, what potential problems does it bring forth if place (and landscape) simply does not exist, beyond that of a cultural backdrop, within both the travelers imagination and within the treatment of pilgrimage and religious studies? What does it lay as groundwork for the relationing (or absence of relationing), with the earth and the elements of which it is comprised? Lastly, what are some potential consequences if this ability to read the language of the landscape is lost? As noted in the introduction, the aim of this master thesis has been to uncover some unasked questions within the social sciences, to set them up as scaffolding, if you will, to explore and see if any unquestioned answers around personhood and dwelling would benefit from some digging.

It has also been to bring onto the page a wisp of the stories around relational epistemologies with the other-than-human to which I have been privy to. The irony lies in the fact that to many of my human tribe, the ideas presented in this thesis will come across as common sense, '*d'une évidence*' as we say in French. It may appear almost ridiculous to go to such great lengths to provide such a theorized translation. Still, to others it may appear as a foreign language, bordering on the sacrilegious. I propose it as a bridge between what may appear as two distinct worlds but could also simply be two alternate perspectives from within the circle.

EPILOGUE

I listen for them every day, praying for their safe return. Knowing, or hoping for their return, brings awareness that a whole cycle has turned as I sat writing. It is not a small thing to realize that this process has been marked by humus building, snow squalls, and return. Two days ago, my partner raised some excitement when he said 'those birds are back, the ones from the ocean'. I immediately thought he meant snow Goose, a personhood I am much more familiar and intimate with than sea Gull. Disappointment ensued. This may speak to a struggle to make sense of urban places and to my own modernist relationship to landscape and its other-than-human inhabitants.

Then this morning, I heard them. I was on my way to 'plug-in' with my favorite barista and a few regular customers who have shared several thesis writing mornings. My heart leapt with joy and I felt the urge to dance and call out a welcome. Sadly, I also felt a pull to restrain myself, what silliness to feel affinity with a bird. I wondered how many had not made the journey and if any of their own 'plug-in' rest places had been re-appropriated for human use. Was I mistaken in imagining that there was a significant reduction in the passings? Was it just me who was less observant? I felt both awe and respect, and a similar sense of welcome I experience when I reconnect with members of my human family, after long absences. I do not understand, or know, what knowledges they hold; neither am I always sure I know, or understand, what knowledges my family holds. I do know that for me this morning, hearing their call, raised awareness of the winter journey and of the knowledges which have unfolded within me during mine.

I would guess that my knowledge of other grows exponentially as my time spent

cultivating understanding of them does. Ironically, at times, the language of the land and the trees, of waters, stones, animals and plants, have been easier for me to understand than that of my broad human family. Perhaps simply because that is where I spend so much of my time –where I direct so much of my attention.

Recently, I attended the screening of two Quebec films. The first film was 'Empreint' (imprint), by Yvan Dubuc and Carole Poliquin. The second film was 'Québécoisie' by Mélanie Carrier and Olivier Higgins. Both films speak of the 'cultural' history of Quebec. Quebec's history, they purport, is forged (and imprinted) through intimate exchange and relations between the French European settlers and the Indigenous Peoples who were here when they arrived. The Quebec culture, they state, is particularly colored by an interweaving of relational exchanges between the first French European settlers and Indigenous Peoples. Threads of this imprinting can be traced within our legal, political, social, marital and economic systems. Both films hypothesize that the strategic erasure of the history of this relational epistemology, has led to a form of self denial, a shadow play which critically hinders both peoples. It leads to a form of amputation of self, an unspoken taboo or family secrete.

In proposing that individuals can be imprinted and critically influenced by the culture of another (an imprint which remains over generations), these films raise a similar line of thinking to the current thesis. Which suggests that culture is imprinted and influenced by the landscape within which it is forged, and also, by the 'culture' of the other-than-human persons held within that landscape? Does the abstraction of this relational exchange lead to a loss of familiarity with the language of landscape, and thus, to a critical amputation of significant parts of self and culture? This line of thinking advances that full participation in the world involves a complex interplay of understanding and concession, a continuous readjustment of self in relation to other – or, a multitude of 'others'. This complex interplay could be described as stewardship,

a state in which one is both beholden to other and conscious of the gift received.

As I wrote this thesis, I grappled with increased awareness and sensitivity to both, current large scale ecological destruction and to the call for an investigation into the phenomenon of missing and murdered Indigenous women. I found myself wondering about the connection between the abuse and devaluing with which we treat this land and that with which we treat Indigenous women. How do we redeem the voices, stories and bodies of women (and peoples) Indigenous to this land? How do we recognize the destruction in the continued politics of colonialism?

Stewardship and honor, beholden to other and conscious of the gift received; these must surely be grappled with through, recognition (and grieving) of settler histories and an engaged renewing with 'lost' knowledges. It is difficult to set down deep roots in the superficiality of cultural appropriation. Knowledges, which arise through in-depth familiarity and literacy, require both the failures and successes of one's culture. True literacy, like an old growth forest takes generations to establish. The depth of bacterial, mycorrhizal activity and community wisdom held in such spaces is very different to that of a clear cut. This may come across as a difficult perspective for the current nanosecond time-lapse generation, where high-gloss 'shamanic' weekend workshops now take the place of years of sustained commitment to community and place. Perhaps humility and grief are an integral part of the healing process.

I reintroduce a quote by Ingold to illustrate: "human beings everywhere perceive their environment in the responsive mode, not because of innate cognitive predisposition but because to perceive at all they must already be situated in a world and committed to the relationships this entails" (as cited in Bird-David, 1999, p. S89). I draw attention to the element of engagement he points to in his use of the word committed to. I also draw attention to the fact that there is much to commit to even in a clear cut,

where the berries, Birches and Artemisia's (or mother plants) settle in to build community, nourish the soil and make a foundation for the behemoth Elders to anchor. This is a time which is by no means devoid of life and wisdom, but rich in variety and abundance of nourishment; a time of gifting in the form of edibles for the human and other-than human nations.

For Indigenous scholar Vanessa Watts (2013), stewardship translates as the sacred expression of the interrelation exchange between us and the land. For me, this translates into: a calling to the plants before arrival to announce an intention to gather their medicines, the asking of permission once seated upon their laps, listening for the answer (which is not always in the affirmative), respectful sensitivity to their longevity, and finally, a transmission of gratitude, through prayer or service once the medicines are gathered. This stewardship is held within a day to day transmission and education around the significance of this relational exchange and in accountability. May this ceremony be received in this intention and may it plant seeds of contemplation, reflection and compassion. Any omissions, errors or misrepresentations are my own. I am learning.

One final inhale and exhale extends a debt of gratitude to Indigenous Peoples throughout the world for their sustained ability to give authority to various 'animistic' world views. Still today, this is often done in the face of overt colonialist aims to the contrary. Almost exclusive, all of the theory coming forth around 'new' understanding of animistic world views (and relational epistemologies) has arisen from ethnographic studies with Indigenous Peoples. The relevance of this must not be forgotten.

And yet again, they leave me with a prayer for their return. Thank you.

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND REFERENCE MATERIAL

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