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A SENSE OF TOUCH - THE FULL-BODY EXPERIENCE - IN THE PAST AND PRESENT OF ÇATALHÖYÜK, TURKEY

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A SENSE OF TOUCH - THE FULL-BODY EXPERIENCE - IN THE PAST AND PRESENT OF ÇATALHÖYÜK, TURKEY

Ruth Tringham

Abstract

In this paper I come to the more general issues of a sensuous archaeology through the sense of touch - the haptic sense. Using data from the Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük, Turkey, I stress that the sense of touch involves far more than just fingers and skin, far more than the obvious haptic sensations, such as surface, form, pressure, pain, temperature, and texture. It involves the full-body sensations of balance and the sense of movement in any part of the body. I anchor my investigation of touch and movement in the past in the archaeological data using existing methodologies such as contact trace analysis and human kinetics. I argue that the concept of taskscapes enables us to think about the temporality, events, and rhythms of the body's haptic responses, which themselves are essential elements of understanding social practice. I suggest that another anchor to investigating sensory responses in the past is the process by which practices that started as new and unfamiliar experiences became familiar and 'enactive knowledge'. I end with an exploration of the potential of digital technologies to transform the sharing of archaeological interpretations of past multisensorial experience that include the sense of touch.

SENSING PLACE THROUGH PRACTICE

The potential of a sensuous archaeology is gaining momentum pursued through exploring ideas of embodiment, landscape perspectives and by embracing phenomenology (for example, Bender 1993; Bender et al. 2007; Joyce and Lopiparo 2005; Tilley 1994; Tilley 2008)..

My concept of place and its multisensorial experience is very much in line with the practice-based concepts of place as expressed by cultural geographers. Tim Cresswell (2004), for example, summarizes a view of place, incorporating remembered or imagined fragments of practice and events that are triggered through movement, sound and visual media, that is very different from the traditional 'visualizing' of past places by archaeologists. The connection of place and senses has been made by a number of writers (Gibson 1968; Ingold 2000; Merleau-Ponty 2003; Porteous 1990; Rodaway 1994; Tuan 1993).

My aim in this paper is to address the more general issues of a sensuous archaeology and sensing place as embodied social practice through the sense of touch - the haptic or tactile-kinesthetic sense. In our practice as archaeologists we are highly sensitive to touch; you might say our discipline is inherently as tactile as it is visual. Moreover, the sense of touch provides a key component for an archaeologist to empirically experience the sense of past places. And yet explicit reference to the tactile-kinesthetic sense is so subverted as to be wholly unconscious in the discipline of archaeology. Likewise, Paterson draws attention to a similar situation in general: "But within an academic climate that celebrates visual cultures, and the popular media's infatuation with visuality, touch remains largely neglected, forgotten" (Paterson 2007:1).

TOUCH AND THE HAPTIC EXPERIENCE: THINKING ABOUT TASKSCAPES

The tactile-kinesthetic sense is the most fundamental, immediate, intimate, and erotic of all the senses and is important in structuring space and thus in the interpretation of a person's relationship to other people and to the physical and built environment (Ackerman 1990; Classen 2005; Paterson 2007; Porteous 1990:6). The connection between touch deprivation and violence is well documented by experimental and observational research (Kennebrew 2010; Synnott 2005). Touch is far more than just fingers; it includes the whole skin surface (Montagu 1971). The tactile-kinesthetic sense includes not only the more obvious haptic sensations, such as surface, form, pressure, pain, temperature, and texture, but also those full-body sensations of balance and the sense of movement in any part of the body (Gold 1980; Ingold 2000; Merleau-Ponty 2003; Porteous 1990:5). Constance Classen does not have a chapter on movement and kinetics in her *Book of Touch*, but suggests that it is a theme that runs throughout the book (Classen 2005). In this paper, I am forefronting this aspect and giving less attention to pain, pleasure, and the erotic issues.

As I was writing for the final report of my research at Çatalhöyük (Figure 1) about the senses of place in the present and the past (Tringham 2012), I was forced to step back and think about how we create and experience this place. To this end, I was especially attracted by the concept of taskscape-landscape that is central to Ingold's perception of place (Ingold 2000:195), according to which each actor's place is created through an embodied multisensorial experience, as part of her/his rhythmic repetition of sets of movement and activities. We call these tasks and participate in them (consciously or subconsciously) every minute of our waking day, alongside and aware of other people in our social group (Hodder 2006a:126; Hodder 2006b; Ingold and Vergunst 2008a).

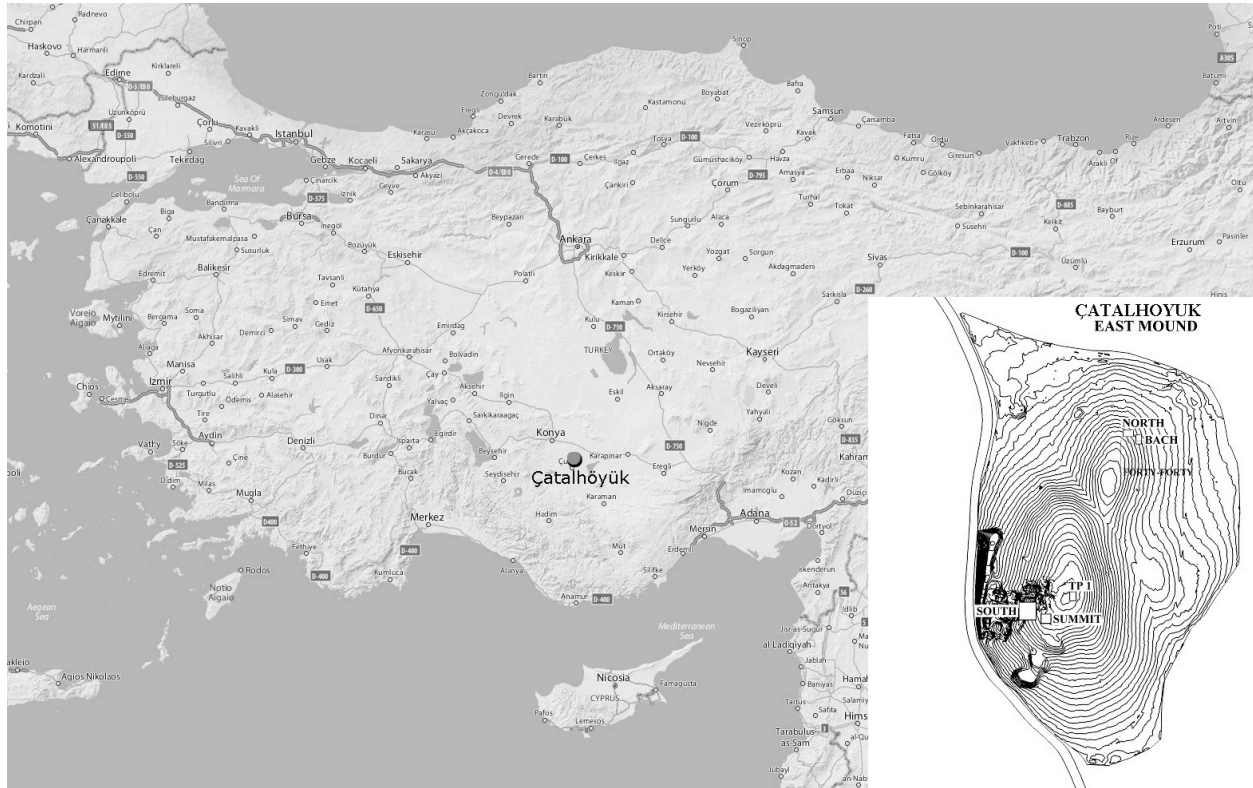


Figure 1: Map of the location and excavation areas (Archive Report 2002) of Çatalhöyük, Turkey

Whereas Seamon's (1980) concept of "body-ballets" and "place-ballets" has been developed from time-space geography, Ingold's (2000) concept of taskscape grew out of an interest in labor as social practice, whose value is measured in terms of time (hence temporality). Thus a 'task' is "any practical operation, carried out by a skilled agent in an environment as part of his or her normal business of life" (Ingold 2000:195). Moreover "every task takes its meaning from its position within an ensemble of tasks, performed in series or in parallel, and usually by many people working together" (Ingold 2000:195). This ensemble of mutually interlocking (entangled) tasks is called by Ingold a 'taskscape'.

Each taskscape can be conceived as a place, but it is a place that is hard to grasp in the imagination and to describe, since its nature is constantly changing. With repetition and habituation of tasks some aspects may be grasped, but, as Ingold – following Merleau-Ponty (2003) – mentions, a taskscape by its very complex nature cannot be perceived but is to be participated in; that is, it is to be lived in order to experience the multisensorial embodied social interaction. The challenge for an archaeologist trying to imagine taskscapes (places) of the past, then, seems to be insurmountable – but, I will argue, perhaps not quite. My argument (and starting-point) in this paper is that taskscapes or "place-ballets" as they have elsewhere been termed (Seamon 1980) are the expression of the full-body haptic-tactile-kinesthetic sensual experience, and thus our link between present and past places.

MOVEMENT AND CONTACT: ANCHORING THE TACTILE-KINESTHETIC SENSE IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The sense of touch can be approached in a number of ways: the internal effect of touch on the human skin (such as pain and pleasure); the kinetics of human to human touch contact, humans to external materials contact, and human to animals contact; and the touch of atmospheric and environmental features on the human body (Figure 2).

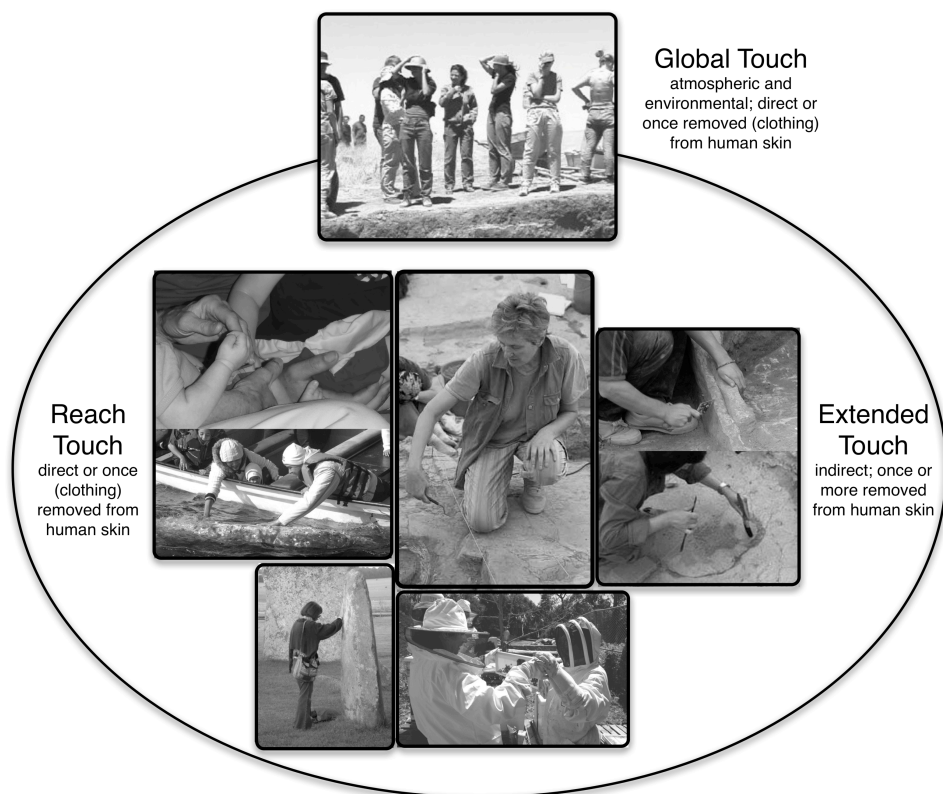


Figure 2: The different kinds of touch

One anchor to the construction and multisensorial experience of place by multiple actors of the present and the past is the idea that movement of the body and the temporality, events, and rhythms of the body's haptic responses and movement are essential elements of social practice and the construction of sensed places. Although such an anchor has been discussed in geography and anthropology (Bourdieu 1990; de Certeau 1984; Giddens 1979:201-210; Ingold 2000; Thrift and Pred 1981), it has rarely been problematized in archaeology.

Thousands of sensory experiences, events, ballets, and taskscapes contributed to the growing of the East Mound at Çatalhöyük during the 1000 years of its life 9000 years ago. I (and I am not alone in this) can become overwhelmed by the endless questions that need to be asked and answered. For those who take up the challenge of illustrating the constructed past, such as John Swogger and Katherine Killackey at Çatalhöyük, the enormity of the task becomes even more obvious (Phillips 2005; Swogger 2000). Did their skin and hair become caked with dust and sweat for months on end in the summer, creating in fact a protective layer against

insects, the sun, dust and wind, or did they protect themselves by layers of clothing as we do when excavating outside the shelters. Did they wash themselves and/or their clothes in the river, or was this not regarded as a priority? What did they wear on their feet? A key to constructing or imagining these experiences of everyday practice in the past is to ground them in the empirical remains of these ephemeral events and performances. In this section of the paper, I attempt to think of how this could be done.

Variables involved in Movement and Touch

One direction is to reduce the haptic events and experience of the past to their most basic physical elements – the contact between two materials and the traces that these might leave in the archaeological record. The main premise of *contact trace* studies in archaeology (sometimes called "microwear" and "use-wear traces") and criminal investigation laboratories, first expounded by French forensic scientist Edmond Locard in 1918, and later by Soviet archaeologist Sergei Semenov, is that any contact between two materials will leave traces (physical abrasions or chemical changes including residue additives) that can be identified by observation with or beyond the naked eye (Locard's Exchange Principle) (Houck 2009; Semenov 1964). These principles have been adapted in archaeology especially to identify the use of stone and bone tools, the contents of ceramic vessels, and a few other materials (Barnard and Eerkens 2007; Keeley 1980; Kooyman 2000:151-166; Middleton et al. 2005; Schiffer and Skibo 1989; Tringham 1978).

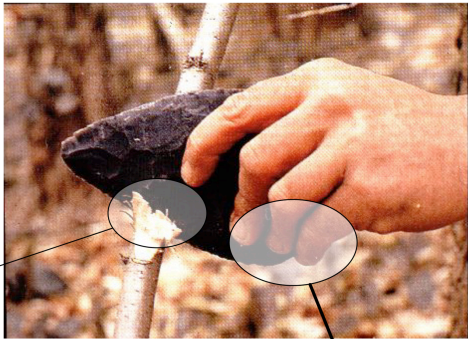
Touch	Contact with human body	Materials leaving traces of contact archaeologically	Kinetics of Contact	Traces of Contact
Extended: once or more removed from human skin	handle haft shaft container	wood soil macrocrystalline rocks microcrystalline rocks clays/bricks/ceramics bone/antler/teeth metals	pressure percussion additives heat damage	residues abrasions fractures polish/fine abrasion
Reach: direct or once removed from human skin	clothing shoes soil	bone/antler/teeth soil		
Global: direct or once removed from human skin	clothing shoes			

Figure 3: The contact traces that might survive archaeologically from different kinds of touch

In the full-body sensual experience, however, many of the contact situations in which we are interested, for example, of the surface skin of the human body with other human skins or with softer and harder materials will leave traces that are extremely challenging - if not impossible -

to identify because of their poor preservation archaeologically (Figure 3). On the human body, after soft tissue has disappeared, traces of contact are limited to bone deformation as a result of injury or illness, muscle indentation, indirect traces on bone through specific activity, occasional residues of substances that were originally inside the internal organs, and, of course, wear on teeth - the most direct of the contact traces on the human body (Hager and Boz 2011; Molleson et al. 2005). So when thinking about the haptic experience of tasks in the past as in terms of movement and contact, we are directed to the materials with which contact with body surface may have been made, including tool surfaces (many of which themselves may not have survived but can be inferred); and to surfaces that act as intermediaries between skin and the outside world/material, such as clothing, bags, sheaths, handles, and hafts.

In contact trace studies, the nature of the materials is but one aspect of a contact situation. The other important aspect comprises the kinetics of the contact, including percussion, pressure, variable force, and so on, and its direction, speed, friction, between two inanimate materials and between inanimate material and the human actor. Which part(s) of the human body are involved and the kinetics of the human body itself are significant factors in the traces that created. As mentioned above, the bioarchaeologists analyzing the Neolithic human remains at Çatalhöyük remarked on the trauma and degeneration of the body caused by repetitive tasks in the house interiors, such as the preferred squatting position (Hager and Boz 2011; Molleson et al. 2005:288). They also suggested that pain was probably a common haptic experience for the Neolithic residents, hopefully ameliorated by strong good-tasting potions. Through experimental replication and vicariously through ethnographic observation or historic description, we archaeologists can experience the kinesthetic details of tasks from fine, fiddly movements of the hand required in tasks such as bead-making and obsidian-knapping to tasks that required movement of the whole body such as threshing, digging, brick-making, and hammering. Through the same means - what I have earlier termed "educational experiments" (Tringham 1978) - we can share with the Neolithic residents of Çatalhöyük the sensation of touching and working with clay, plaster, obsidian, flint, andesite, straw, bone, wood, reeds, grasses and other plant materials, live animals, dead animals, fire, and so on.

What tends to be taken for granted in our construction of contact situations in the past are the environmental haptic experiences: heat, cold, the wind that carries stinging dust in the summer, rain, and other sensations that we have sampled during our field seasons. Another environmental context of haptic sensation is the changing ground surface underfoot during - an important consideration in the Neolithic when foot transport dominated every movement. At Çatalhöyük we include not only traffic across the mound and beyond, but also across and inside the houses (built environment). What amounts to contact trace information in these contexts has been provided by micromorphological and microstratigraphic analysis (Matthews 2005a, 2005b) and analyses of a variety of residues on the occupational surfaces of the plastered mud-brick buildings (Middleton et al. 2005). Moreover, we have almost no experience of the place at other seasons, for example when snow lies on the ground, but all seasonal factors need to be taken into consideration when constructing tasks in the past.

HAPTIC ASPECTS OF NEOLITHIC TASKSCAPES AT ÇATALHÖYÜK

In a single context excavation, each archaeological unit that is excavated represents a depositional event in the life of a building. Each depositional event can be related to others chronologically and spatially, represented, for example, in the Harris matrix. The 'unit' comprises soil and/or building matrix and its associated materials and samples. From this

foundation of contact trace evidence in the archaeological record, it is up to the archaeologist to bring all his/her powers of inference and imagination to construct the wealth of tactile contact that was experienced, the everyday repetitive practices - tasks, rhythms, and activities - that were carried out by the different actors.

In his book *The Leopard's Tale*, Ian Hodder (2006a) has carried out the exercise of imagining the everyday entanglements of tasks within a complex tapestry of domains of domestic, symbolic, spiritual practices. Rob Swigart in *Stone Mirror* (2007) has also imagined the daily routines. Rather than reiterate their excellent narratives here, I shall offer some fragments that focus exploration of Neolithic multisensorial experiences through the sense of touch.

Rhythmic Repetitions

The *rhythmic repetition* of the task is one that is emphasized by all those who write about taskscapes and social practice, and for which information can be winkled out of the ground, and much can be inferred and is often taken for granted (the carrying of water, the pounding of clay for plaster, the plastering of walls and floors).

The rhythm of movement that lies at the heart of the temporality of taskscapes is multiscalar: rhythm at the pace of contact between human body and material - the footstep, gestures of storytelling, hand on obsidian core, hand stirring soup; the daily rhythms of eating, drinking and other bodily functions; seasonal rhythms and annual rhythms, all of which can be imagined or inferred against the longer rhythms of the life-cycle of people, and of the houses and the village(s) itself whose debris creates the mound that we call the East Mound at Çatalhöyük. Changes in taskscape rhythms can be created by the demographics of an aging population in a building, or accidents and illness and serendipitous meetings that might occur at a crucial time. To disentangle these different scales of rhythms through the archaeological record is an enormous challenge. Surprisingly, some of the most constructive responses to the challenge at Çatalhöyük have come from the most intimate scale of observation in the microartifactual and microstratigraphic analyses, through which it is possible to plot the shifting locations and intensity of daily tasks during the life-history of a building (Cessford 2003; Cessford and Mitrovic 2005; Matthews 2005a, 2012; May 2005; Middleton et al. 2005).

Walking, Running, Slipping, Falling, Tripping

The kinetics of moving, especially on foot, has been extensively and engagingly explored by Tim Ingold and his colleagues, opening up the topic of the tactile-kinesthetic sense and movement in very interesting ways (Ingold 2000, 2007; Ingold and Vergunst 2008b). There are many general aspects of movement that we can infer from our own experience. From the time we are born, we never stop moving. Daily we engage repeatedly in tasks to produce, maintain, and store food, tools, containers, and clothing, in solitude or in company while we are moving in various ways: walking, squatting, sitting, and standing. We know that the body can be both adversely and positively affected by movement, and we have seen this in the human remains of the result of long-term squatting in Neolithic Çatalhöyük. "The habit of squatting in one form or another and working from the ground has resulted in the presence of extended kneeling articulations on the first metatarsals of most individuals, both male and female" (Molleson et al. 2005:289).

Moreover, the world moves – or, rather, places are created and re-created - as we move. At Çatalhöyük we thought often about moving and creating places. There is still lively

discussion as to mapping the surface of the mound at different times in its prehistoric past (Hodder 2007; Matthews 1996). For example, both Building 1 and Building 3, which are dated in the middle of the occupation of the East Mound, were excavated at its modern surface. So the question is how much earth has been lost through erosion; how close is our experience of walking across the mound to the Neolithic experience? For the purpose of this and my other papers on the same topic, I have assumed that the surface of the East Mound was probably very similar to what it is today, minus perhaps a meter of earth (Tringham 2012). The Remediated Places project (Tringham et al. 2007), whose first location was the East Mound at Çatalhöyük, forefronts the process of walking and movement in the present and past as a process of thinking about prehistoric topography and constructing place. Ingold (2007) distinguishes between a goal-oriented ('navigation') mode of movement and an exploratory ('wayfaring') mode in which the process of the journey takes priority. The Remediated Places project forefronts the latter mode of walking, focusing on what people are thinking and saying as they move rather than the goal of their destination.

But the goal of the movement and by what path it is reached is also an important element to consider. We imagine that movement in the house interior and across rooftops between houses was regulated by rules and prohibitions that permitted pathways and destinations that changed during the lifetime of the house and the lifetime of a man or a woman. The data from the archaeological excavations at Çatalhöyük lead us to ask many questions about movement, most of which cannot be answered definitively but which nevertheless inspire the creative imagination. What kind of choreography allowed multiple residents of Building 3 to move around its main room (that started off 6 x 5.5 m and ended its life 6 x 4 m), while avoiding hazards such as open fires (Stevanovic 2012b)? Who was allowed to tread on the platforms under which the dead were buried? Who moved (crouch-walking?) through crawl-holes to reach stored items? Was the ceiling of the Neolithic rooms high enough to allow residents to move or stand upright? If we assume that entry was predominantly from the roof by ladder, can we also assume that at certain points in a person's life-cycle it became too hard to climb the ladder (too young, too old, injured, too slippery, or a broken ladder). Did people ever fall down the ladder or off the roof? At this point we can ask ourselves how did the mature woman who is buried under platform F.162 and identified as F.634 dislocate her hip and break her ribs (Hager and Boz 2012)?

As a result of the recent excavations in the northern part of the East Mound at Çatalhöyük, Ian Hodder has suggested that the densely packed buildings were actually grouped in small neighborhoods or zones (Hodder 2006a:101, fig.40) separated by alleyways. Thus, to travel from one zone to another a walker would be required to go down from the roof to ground level. Movement from house to house within the neighborhood may very well have been across the rooftops, as has been surmised by the majority of authors. But it would be remiss not to imagine that alleyways between houses at ground level were also accessed from at least some of the buildings. Hodder and Matthews and others in the research team, however (Hodder 2006a:101), have argued that the surfaces in these alleys do not show the fragmentation and trampling evidence that would indicate their use for walking or animal transport. I have argued, however, that to imagine a soft-footed walker not minding or noticing the smells and picking his/her way between the larger obstacles in order to escape the confines of his/her neighborhood is not unfeasible (Tringham 2011). All of this speculation becomes irrelevant if, as my colleague Colleen Morgan has mused (personal communication, March 2009), the outside walls of the

Neolithic buildings were not exposed at all, but were buried in the matrix of the mound with only their ‘roof and roof structures’ showing above the surface!

To walk up the northern end of the mound on a path takes us four minutes. We are walking along a dusty path that rises at a steady rate; it is summer and we are wearing shoes. The path is covered in soft very fine dust which makes our tread almost soundless. How different is this modern path in winter or spring with rain and snow? How different would it have been for the Neolithic residents and visitors? Would they 9000 years ago have had a clearly defined path? Would there have been grassy or weedy covered slopes on each side, or would there have been buildings in various stages of decay, construction, and occupation? Did the path rise gradually as it does now across the mound surface, or would it have wound its way along streets, rising in steps, similar to walking through the Plaka on the slopes of the Athenian Acropolis?

The question of footwear is important and has implications both for the haptic contact between foot and path and movement across the mound and beyond to the fields or salt lakes, and to hearing the presence of other people. We can draw ideas of possible footwear from the fortunate remains of leather and fiber “shoes” that have been found in other (later) archaeological contexts, such as on the frozen “Oetzi” found in Similaun glacier in the Alps (Goubitz et al. 2001:380-381), or in the Areni-1 cave in Armenia (Pinhasi et al. 2010), both leather and both 5500 years old, or the 8000-year old fibrous sandals from the North American Midwest (Kuttruff et al. 1998). Perhaps because no such remains of footwear have been found at Çatalhöyük, illustrator John Swogger in his visualizations – unintentionally, perhaps – tends to cut off any views of the feet of the residents. In fact, however, what was covering the feet (or not) can be investigated and inferred through the anatomical changes that are effected by footwear, such as narrowing of the feet and higher peaking at the heel and metatarsals (D’Aout et al. 2009). No such investigation, however, has been carried out on the human remains at Çatalhöyük.

I keep coming back to the multisensorial whole body experience of walking because I believe that, whether we think of their paths as taking place in Ingold’s (2007) goal-oriented ‘transport’ mode or his exploratory ‘wayfaring’ mode, this was as essential a part of social practice as the traditional focus on sitting or squatting still. As the Neolithic residents of Çatalhöyük walked through the village or across the mound from one village to another, their attention may well have been on the immediate landscape of houses and people (as ours tends to be on the excavation). But they may also have been much more in touch with life, views, and sounds beyond the mound than we are today.

Whereas we see a boundary around the base of the East Mound and around the modern archaeologists’ compound, their boundary between the familiar and the unfamiliar may have been much further away; perhaps even chronological, so that walking at dawn in the surrounding marshland may have been familiar, whereas at night it was the realm of the unfamiliar. Walking to the fields – a short walk of an hour or two – is very different from a longer overnight adventure. Obsidian, for example, was acquired from Cappadocia in the mountains to the northeast – many days walk from Çatalhöyük – where it was reduced into workable pieces (Carter et al. 2005). Rob Swigart has imagined in his book *Stone Mirror* (2007) the long journey to Cappadocia in the kind of detail that I find valuable for considering the multisensorial experience of Neolithic walking: how many stops were taken along the way; were they nervous in the dark of the Central Anatolian night; did they appreciate the enormity of the numerous and bright stars of the night sky?

In their quest for materials – stone, timber, and exotics – it is clear that the Neolithic villages of Çatalhöyük did not exist in a social vacuum (Asouti 2005; Baird 2005). Visits to and by distant villages and relatives in the mountains, or at the seacoast, must have been at least an annual event, in addition to more frequent visits to friends, allies, or relatives closer by. All of these visits at 7000 BC involved walking.

There is much to think about walking (Ingold 2007; Ingold and Vergunst 2008b). In addition to its mechanics, some of the less considered items include whether these are group walks or in solitude, what they are talking about as they walk, what they are thinking about. Do they look at the ground, but not see beyond their memories and imagination? Do they hear voices and birdsong, but not listen? Are they aware of the wind or heat or wet or cold or tired, painful feet? As Vergunst (2008) points out, accidents happen when you walk and don't pay attention: falling, slipping, tripping, and losing your way (remember the demise of F.634 at Çatalhöyük mentioned above).

Carrying

In addition to movement and walking, daily routines almost always involve some kind of carrying. “ ‘A woman carries three corners of the farm and helps her husband hold the fourth’ is a saying often heard in Croatia”, writes Eva Skold Westerlind at the beginning of her book *Carrying the Farm on Her Back* (1989). We archaeologists tend to carry heavy loads (e.g., flotation samples, finds) *down* the mound; the Neolithic residents would have carried heavy loads *up* the mound (water, bricks or building materials). They would have climbed up the mound at the weary end of the day, whereas we stagger down the mound at the end of probably a less tiring day.

Early morning rhythms are all about carrying: carrying water, carrying firewood or dung, carrying waste to its various dedicated places, carrying food to animals. And all these tasks are much harder in winter and in the rain. Whole body labor in the fields and marshes and forests is always followed or accompanied by carrying stuff; carrying raw materials back to the village, including wood, reeds, dead animals, and plants for food and a multitude of other purposes every day.

The idea of the life-cycle of places, people, and things has drawn us to focus on the formation of the tell itself, on house life-histories and human burials. House construction and maintenance involves a good deal of walking and carrying from locations away from the mound (Stevanovic 2012a). Such tasks at Çatalhöyük included: finding the clay, choosing the clay, walking to the clay and other construction materials, carrying the tools for digging, digging the clay, carrying the clay, carrying tools for cutting reeds and wood, carrying reeds and the timber, all to the base of the mound; at the base of the mound mixing plaster, mixing mortar, mixing packing, making bricks, making the roof, carrying it all from the base of the mound to the house site (see Stevanovic 2012a:Sec.6.3.12 for a discussion on the empirical data to support this inference). These were complex tasks, involving organization and planning, and were unlikely to happen on a daily basis or when people were occupied with other tasks. It is likely, as has been argued by Mirjana Stevanović, that these tasks were combined and collaborative, involving more than one household.

LEARNING, APPRENTICESHIP, HABITUATION

I suggest here a third anchor to investigating sensory responses in the past, that is, the process by which practices that started as new and unfamiliar experiences became familiar and ‘enactive knowledge’. It is unusual for a practice to become familiar to a learner by its repetition in social isolation. It is more likely for observation of, communication with, and even instruction from others who are further along the learning curve to provide the context of the growing familiarity; this process of familiarization or learning as described, for example, by Jean Lave in her ‘apprenticeship’ model (Lave and Wenger 1991) or by Lev Vygotsky (1978) in his ‘zone of proximal development’ is the process of acquiring knowledge that is termed ‘enactive’, “that is stored in bodily sensori-motor responses” rather than acquired through symbolic or iconic means (Bennett and O'Modhain 2007). We tend to apply this model of learning to childhood development, but I believe that it can be constructively applied to learning throughout a lifetime.

To think about how and why a practice becomes ‘embodied’ or - as some think of it – ‘internalized’ leads us beyond the practice itself to its historical contingency and to its entanglement in other practices. Let us consider a practice as ‘simple’ as bringing water to the 9000-year old Building 3 at Çatalhöyük. Imagine it is a younger person; at some point they have to be shown the container, how to hold it to collect water, where to fill it, how to carry it filled with water, and which is the best path by which to carry it. In most cases we think of these skills as already learned, and not even objects for our investigation. But in fact each step in the task has to be learned by observation, discovery, copying, and demonstration, each of which is an important social practice, contributing to a multitude of experiences in an endless process of learning.

TRANSPOSING THE HAPTIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST TO DIGITAL ON-SCREEN ENVIRONMENTS

I want to end with a short discussion on the use of the on-screen environment to address the challenge of sharing our ideas about the past (prehistoric or historic) whole-body haptic and kinetic sensual experiences. The explosion of digital consumer products that provide changing contexts of haptic sensation (iPodTouch, iPhone, and now the iPad) is just the tip of the iceberg of the ways in which digital technology is fast revolutionizing the way in which we can incorporate the sense of touch into our digital archaeological interpretations.

Mark Paterson (2005, 2007), embarking on what he calls an archaeology of the technologies of touch, describes the many different ways in which the ability of the body and its extremities to move, to manipulate, to inspect, and to explore in space within a dynamically changing environment (with other people) with all senses cooperating has been used to trigger a tactile experience in a digital audience. These are haptics or technologies of touch. He has given a foundation to his “archaeology” in the philosophical discussion of haptics and tactile sensation. He contrasts haptics or technologies of touch to multimedia technologies in which visual and audial senses are stimulated as “Whereas the keyboard is a passive mechanical channel between the computer and user, haptics enables a more active exploration, is programmable according to the type of data or object to be manipulated, and allows the user not just to see three dimensional shapes on the screen visually but also to feel them and mould them through the haptic interface” (Paterson 2007:128). Currently haptics are designed for specific industries such as medicine, engineering, or architectural design or – at the consumer level - for

computer gaming and simulation experiences (e.g., Wii). Archaeological applications are very few, but it is only a matter of time before the exploration of artifacts, sediments, residues etc. incorporating haptic technologies becomes commonplace.

Even without the use of haptics, however, digital media can contribute to vicariously experiencing a haptic sensation. Digital media –photography and video – can provide audiovisual cues that might trigger a haptic metaphorical response in the viewer; for example sweat dripping off an excavator’s forehead triggers a feeling or memory of heat in the viewer. The audiovisual “multimedia” exploration of archaeological remains and cultural heritage sites and buildings through QTVR and VR interfaces has long been favored by presenters and viewers of past reconstructions. Even though digital media can now express movement of the first person through space at a human wandering exploratory pace instead of the soul-sickening fly-through pace that are much favored by VR reconstructionists, such presentations have been quite heavily criticised as encouraging passive acceptance of the presented reconstruction or the present state of the past environments (Morgan 2009). In the Remediated Places Project we aimed to confound – and thus enhance – the body’s haptic experience by requiring the user to swing from virtual touch and movement to physical movement and touch (Tringham et al. 2007). We are currently seeking ways to increase the bodily haptic experience; for example, by giving instructions to move one’s hands in certain ways, or remove oneself from the screen and move the feet. Meanwhile we can be content with the awkward virtuality of Çatalhöyük at Okapi Island in Second Life (Morgan 2009)ⁱ. Even the challenges of building and gesturing through the medium of an avatar, however, can set one using imagination on the experience of moving around a Neolithic village where entry is through the roof. Moreover on our virtual replica the Remediated Places videowalks have been mirrored, so that a virtual walker can – through the medium of their own personal avatar – walk along a virtual path, holding a virtual iPod, on which they view a video that ultimately mediates a real event.

It cannot be repeated enough that meaning from a sensuous experience, and even the experience itself will be very different for people 9000 years ago, or 9000 miles away from our own (Classen 1993, 2005; Howes 2005). Others, such as Pink (2009) and Stewart (2007), would argue it is different for each contingency and for each person. However hard we imagine, we of the Now situation are the filter through which we construct the rhythms and taskscapes of the Then situation; hence the close attention paid to how we experience East Mound now. In contradiction to what our intuitions tell us, it is only by being aware of our experiences of the Now, that we can begin to find our way to the event-filled everyday of prehistory.

Notes

ⁱ <http://okapi.wordpress.com/projects/okapi-island-in-second-life/>

http://web.mac.com/chimeraspider/Ruth_Tringham/Okapi_Island.html

Due to the doubling of land rent on Second Life, Okapi Island itself will probably be archaeological by the publication date of this chapter

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Figure 3: chart and photo by Ruth Tringham