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Other Ways: Landscapes of Commuting

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Finding ways through the familiar

'Now I know how to go on!' is an exclamation; it corresponds to an instinctive sound, a glad start. Of course it does not follow from my feeling that I shall not find I am stuck when I do try to go on. 323, p105e, Wittgenstein PI (1973)

'Now I know where I am!' is also an exclamation. It could be a happy realisation that the speaker is no longer lost, or the dread when they recognise that they are in some awful landscape. What sort of response is it to the question 'Do you know where you are?' With a tone of anger, it is a response that the question itself is unwarranted, there is nothing wrong with my grasp of the situation. When those who have suffered a head injury are asked 'Do you know where you are?' it is to check on their level of disorientation or confusion. What we expect of each other in our ordinary circumstances, inhabiting our familiar landscapes is that this very question cannot be asked except under special circumstances. Knowing where we are is part and parcel of being inhabitants of that place. In an earlier article (Laurier, 2001) one of us pursued a common situation where people say where they are: at the beginning of mobile phone calls. 'I'm in France', 'I'm stuck in traffic', 'I'm about to leave the house', 'I'm in a meeting' and so on. The question there was not: do you *know* where you are, simply it was: where are you? Under those circumstances, responses were seldom in fact to do with location in any pure geographical sense. To say 'I'm in France' to someone calling from the UK is to begin warning them that the tariff for phone call will be high and that the respondent is not in their 'home' place. To say 'I'm at the pub' is to say as much about what one was doing and how available one was as it is to give a location (Schegloff, 1972; Weilenmann, 2003).

Tim Ingold has argued that the problem with classical research on wayfinding is that it does not consider how we know our way around under ordinary circumstances. Classical wayfinding studies have become increasingly familiar with the nature of exploration even as they forget that they have stopped exploring the nature of the familiar. As Ingold goes on to argue our daily wayfinding in the landscapes that we inhabit is more than, and quite different, from navigation.

We are no more navigators in our everyday lives – in finding our way around in a familiar environment – than we are cartographers when we retrace these movements in narrative. Navigation (or map-*using*) is, I contend, as strange to the ordinary practices of wayfinding as is cartography (or map*making*) to ordinary practices of mapping. (Ingold, 2000), p. 236)

In his stimulating chapter on wayfinding Ingold targets, firstly, the large body of work that has adopted the idea of the cognitive map first developed by Tolman (Kitchin & Blades, 2002; Tolman, 1948) and latterly grafted the concept onto neuroscientific studies of the brain. Secondly, he notes the equally important collection of studies that assume that the navigation of ships, planes and cars with maps, charts and satellites equates with how we find our way through the places that we live in (Gell, 1985; Hutchins, 1995). In Ingold's review, he is not only dismantling these two approaches, but he begins an inquiry into what wayfinding at home might be if it is neither the simplicities of the following of internally stored mental representations of space, or the complexities of hiking in unfamiliar mountains with a map and GPS equipment that Lorimer documented in an earlier essay (Lorimer & Lund, 2003).

Ingold begins his inquiry into the wayfinding of the familiar by fleshing out why 'where am I?' is not usually answered in terms of 'a location in space, determined by the intersection of coordinates' (Ingold, 2000, p237). Ingold replaces the question of 'where am I?' with 'where are we?'. He makes little of this switch from 'I' to 'we', yet already it is a move toward an encounter between an 'us' and a place rather than an 'I' that finds itself in an abstract environment. No longer lonely Robinson Crusoes, here is wayfinding with others. More central to his argument is Ingold's situating of the question in two imaginary conversations in two different landscapes, each one returning the question to ordinary circumstances. In the first we are both in the *unfamiliar* terrain so well studied by modelers of navigation and in the second we are in a *familiar* place walking with a companion, a stranger to the area. In the former situation when one of us asks the other 'where are we', we will look around for landmarks, match those to figures on the map and one of us may well place one's finger on the map to declare 'we are here' or, more likely, 'I think that we're just to the left of that road' (for actual cases, see (Brown & Laurier, 2005)). In the second scene, walking around the urban landscape of your home town, when your companion asks 'where are we?', you may mention a place-name first and then elaborate upon the name with some form of story about the place that relates to your biography, 'this is where I first fell off my bike', or to a general history, 'these houses were built in the 19th century to house medical staff for the nearby hospital.' As Ingold goes on, when we know a place, the answers to questions of 'where are we?' involve retracing steps already made and 'expectations of how one may reach it, or reach other places from it' (Ingold, 2000, p237).

In this article we wish to elaborate upon Ingold's second scene, to investigate a form of intimacy with our routes through places that is perhaps not best expressed as belief or knowledge (Cavell 1981) and to touch upon the intimate bond between commuters that grows (or, sometimes, does not grow) in their daily wayfinding (Balch, 2005). McHugh (2007), similarly, argues that intimacy escapes the standard idea of representation such as is found in a map. The commuter's movement through the world, once established, is a steady back and forth along well-worn paths. Their exploration is long since finished. There is perhaps an echo here, across the species divide, of animal herds and human herders observing similarly well-worn routes and pathways (Lorimer, 2006). Getting lost, the potential failure that haunts explorers and mountaineers seems almost irrelevant. What sort of commuter would they be if they got lost on their way home from work? Thus, it might seem a little peculiar to want to talk about wayfinding in relation to commuting back and forth on familiar roads between home and work. Except that, as Ingold established, each day the commuters need to recall that way into work and from time to time their ways change due to congestion, road building, other places they have to go by along the way or even just whim. In other words, the routes we regularly take to travel between home and work, house and supermarket, cinema and bar, would always become unremarkable and un-noticed but that our quickest routes get diverted, disrupted and rebuilt by others, moreover, we gradually connect and extend the ways that we know to other routes through the landscape. Or to say something more fruitful – we can look for, or find, or are given, or stumble upon: other ways between A and B.

A short note on the project

The Habitable Cars project that we present here has been concerned with people travelling *together* as families, friends and car-sharers. We are interested in such groupings

for a number of reasons. Firstly, in terms of data collection, we used video to record social interaction in the car, and with only one person in the car there is simply not as much happening as with two, three, four or more. Secondly, in terms of informing transport policy and design on environmentally-friendly ways of car-sharing we also wanted to bring to light some of the more subtle problems and possibilities of travelling together in a small vehicle. Finally, at a more conceptual level we wanted to contrast project findings with psychological research on driving and car travel which have been predominantly on individual drivers (Groeger, 2000; Ranney, 1994). A great deal of the existing research on 'driving behaviour' motivated by accident prevention has involved simulators, a methodology that has estranged and individualised travellers from the places through, and the routes along, which they move. In so doing drivers become calculative agents perceiving distance, speed and time, constantly cognising and seldom cogitating. With passengers beside them, the drivers' lives inside their cars take a 'social turn' in two respects. Firstly, passengers start getting involved in the organisation of the journey and indeed in the very driving of the car itself, in other words the driving becomes socially organised. Secondly, the car journey becomes a setting for family, friendship and acquaintanceships collectively dealing with all manner of matters; transport shifts from being individualistic to sociable. There has, of course, also been an ongoing 'mobility turn' (Cresswell, 2006; Juhlin, 2005; Merriman, 2007; Miller, 2001; Urry, 2004) in the social sciences – of which the project is a part – which seeks amongst other things to revive our interest in how people and things move. New mobilities research is variously formulated and directed, some focusing specifically on 'automobilities' (Featherstone, Thrift, & Urry, 2005) where the habitable world inside the car is examined in-depth (Bull, 2004; Laurier, 2004; Thrift, 2004), some exploring socio-technical relations produced between driver, car and road (Dant, 2004; Edensor, 2003; Merriman, 2007).

Twenty vehicles and their occupants participated in the Habitable Cars project, from Clios to Espaces with corresponding mixes of single people and their friends, colleagues, car-sharers and families. The different groups allowed the project researcher to ride along for a week with them asking questions and taking notes (Laurier, 2007). Over a subsequent month the cars were given a pair of DV cameras and asked to film half a dozen similarly typical journeys for the project. The hundred and twenty hours of video footage generated by the vehicles was broken down into shorter clips which were indexed for retrieval. A corpus was produced of several hundred video fragments of social action in cars. This was then drawn on for more detailed analysis in data sessions of the kind pioneered in conversations analysis and ethnomethodology (Heath, 1997; Heath & Hindmarsh, 2002; Livingston, 1987). In what follows we will use two of the video clips where the route itself is manifest as a problem for the car travellers.

Our usual route home

We would like to begin with a fragment where a departure from 'our usual route' between two places occurs. The driver, Ford, and the passenger, Greg, have been car-sharing for several years. For a while there were four people who car-shared their way from the same town into and out of the city. Swapping between their four cars week by week, they travelled for over an hour each way between their country town and the city. Now with only Ford and Greg remaining, they only halve the fuel consumption and the wear and tear on their cars. However, their sharing is more than a financial matter, Ford and Greg share out the labour of the driving. They do this in two senses, firstly, through their swapping back and forth of the job of the driver and, secondly, whenever one of

them is the passenger they would assist in monitoring the traffic ahead (Brown et al., 2006). The busy A road they travel daily was a treacherous one with three or four fatal accidents a year. That Ford or Greg frequently catch up on sleep in the early morning when the other is driving is thus, not only a sharing out of the work of driving, but also, a sign of the trust they have come to place in one another's driving over the years. Though we should note that sleeping while the other drives has to be done with some sensitivity. Ford and Greg told stories about one of their former car sharing quartet who on arriving in the car in the morning would go to sleep almost immediately, only waking up on arrival at his workplace. This minimum presence on the journey was problem enough until there came a day when he fell asleep at a set of traffic lights when he was the designated driver.

The point of this story was that sharing the car raised expectations of commitment to one another, in ways that it doesn't for commuters sharing a carriage on the train. That expectation is part of the anxiety that accompanies the beginnings of car-sharing relationship. A worry over the whats and hows of commuters hearing one another's news, sharing their troubles and their successes and more. As became clear in our project (Brown, et al., 2006) as it had for Balch's earlier study (2005) those who share cars to commute become acquaintances of a special kind, in some ways akin to people sharing a flat. They can become firm friends, come to detest one another or, as some of our participants reported, it can lead to romance. Car-sharers have in common with flatmates the qualities of regular contact, a certain inescapable intimacy and the duration of the time together. Cars were shared from between a couple of months to a number of years. Except the cars are not in fact the things that *are* shared in these relationships as we shall see a little later. In some cases in our project it was always the same car that was taken and the petrol costs were simply halved. This had its implication in that it was, in the end, always X's car and always X that was driving. For Greg and Ford as for many other car sharers each took his own car on alternate weeks. Thus, one week it was Greg's car with Greg as the driver for that week and the next Ford with his car (not a 'Ford' in case you were wondering).

The car was thus not shared in that the driver got to do the driving with the usual moral limitations on interventions from whomever was the passenger. It was also the driver that was responsible for the repair and maintenance of the vehicle, that cleaned it (or didn't) and decided whether smoking was allowed (or not). As others have observed (Balch, 2005; Benson, MacRury, & Marsh, 2007; Bull, 2004) the choice of music or radio station is where the driver's rights become more limited. What then was the central thing that the car sharers share, if not the car? To answer this question we return to wayfinding and to Ingold's 'attunement ... to other people', which is manifest in coming to agree on the road they will take on a daily basis. The roads and motorways that commuters travel are the equivalent of flatmates' public rooms, toilets, cupboard and hallways. While the car was not 'our car' being either X's or Y's, the route was 'our route'. That said, there were car sharing situations in our fieldwork where with only X driving the route was more X's route than Y's. Even there however a growing sense of common ownership was apparent even if X was the one who initially chose the route to and from work.

Ford and Greg over a number of years had come to agree on their route. For most of its stretch it is an A class road they take from Edinburgh which, for them, is the quickest, most reliable and least dangerous. It thus takes good reasons, such as roadworks, changes in the levels of traffic or having to drop or collect someone else to select the other A

road to work. And these reasons have to be brought up by them, 'I'll take the A68 today Ford and avoid the roadworks.' Over the many years that Ford and Greg have commuted by car between their town and the city they have come to know the limited number of possible variants on their route. There can be no new route to be found here by Ford though there are new combinations. There are, at each end of the two A roads, a number of possible routes through the city and town at either end. Unsurprisingly the city has the most potential small alternatives that can be made. A fair assumption to make would be that most town to city commutes have similar characteristics with a limited number of 'trunk' routes and a wider range of 'branches' or 'roots' at either end.

What we will look at in detail below is just such a selection of an alternative from 'our route' that happens in the last five minutes of Ford and Greg's one and a quarter hour long commute as they enter the town where they live. Turning off their usual route at this point, while still noticeable, has relatively small implications for the two commuters, where at the outset of their commute selecting the other potential A road to go home would be of much greater consequence. As we will see it is not something that the passenger leaves to go entirely un-noticed, though on the other hand he does not become flustered when his noticing goes un-noticed by Ford.

In the fragment Ford and Greg are on their way home from work:

Figure 1: Taking the other road

The premise for Greg's gestural questioning of Ford's left turn is that these two commuters have a route that is *their* route home. An agreed upon path for travelling home that is, for them, 'our route'.

What initiates Greg's sideways look is Ford switching on the indicator, prefiguring a turn to the left. At the stage where the indicator has just been put on (still 3 above) Greg is

only looking at the indicator lever. Head held back and still, only his eyes watching Ford's hands on the wheel, his looking is not designed to be seen by the driver at this point. How cautious passengers are about the visibility of their examination of the driver's use of the controls is a constant in car sharing. Such looks are open to being interpreted as a critical eye on the driver's driving. What then follows (in still 4) is Greg shifting from an occluded glance at what Ford is up to, to an exaggerated pointed look, a 'double-take' at their usual route (out the passenger window) and at this alternate route (in the driver's side of the front window). This look arrives after the initiation of the action but in time with Ford moving into the next step after indicating which is, of course, turning the car itself. At this point it becomes clear that Ford hasn't accidentally hit the indicator. He really is turning off their usual road. As they enter the other road and begin to travel along its short course, Greg takes a last look at their usual route before returning to looking ahead. While presumably Greg's double-take is visible to Ford he produces no obvious response to it.

By their timing and their projectable objects of scrutiny (this road and that road) we can see Greg's double-take as a reaction to the unexpected choice of route today by Ford. By the back and forth of the head movements Greg not only serves to produce the slightly comic double-take, but also shows us that there are two objects of scrutiny. It is a different sort of look to a brief glance at a roadsign or a single extended gaze upon a car ahead. The driver does not warn or provide any sort of other reason for the departure from their normal route to the passenger such as 'just got to nip into the petrol station' or 'thought I'd take the other bridge today'. Without some sort of advanced warning, we then have Greg's gestural response to the indicator and the left turn - 'what are you doing?!' Departures from 'our route' are, in an ethnomethodological sense, not only accountable but very likely to be responded to with a request for an account if one hasn't been given (Garfinkel, 1967). Ultimately, Ford, the driver does not provide any spoken account of why he has taken his unexpected turn off their route on to the other bridge. He might not need to because the journey becomes also an account of itself – the passenger can wait and see what happens next in the journey that might or will provide the reasoning behind the departure from our usual route. The puzzled looks of a passenger are a small thing yet they shed light on what the fellow travellers have come to take for granted - this route. They have their basis in the common ownership of this route, where much like a flatmate lifting the armchair up from the sitting room and setting it down on the kitchen, the other flatmate on seeing the rearranging might do a similar double-take.

Lee and Ingold (2006) have shown how walking side-by-side brings walkers together into a form of sociality, 'walking was often described by our informants as an excellent way of being with other people, a very rich way of socializing, to the extent that there seems to be something distinctive about the sociability of walking together. (Lee & Ingold, 2006) As they argue, there might be something about walking where we are not stood confronting one another's face, that seems to be more fruitful in fact for intimacy, inspiration and thought.

> Crucially, walking side by side means that participants share virtually the same visual field. We could say that I see what you see as we go along together. In that sense I am with you in my movements, and probably in my thoughts as well. We can talk within and around our shared vista and the other things we are doing along the line of the walk. Participants take it in turns to carry the conversation on,

and when not actually speaking one is nevertheless listening, participating silently in the ongoing flow. (Lee & Ingold, 2006), p. 80)

The car journey to work is particularly conducive to discussions of serious and profound topics, to offering, sharing and hearing troubles, though in earlier work we placed more emphasis on its known length of time (Laurier et al., 2008). What we also noted is that except under highly charged circumstances (Dersley & Wootton, 2001) occupants of the car do not walk-out on one another. Turning back to the selection of the path by walkers, if one walker departs from the usual route with another walker, they will simply separate if they are not careful, or at least be asked 'where are you going to today?' In the car the driver can take both themselves and their passengers down a different route with a flick of the wheel. Yet they can only really get away with such a move over a trivial variant of the kind found with Greg and Ford, going over one bridge rather than another before reconnecting with their usual route. Even there we have to wonder what would happen if Ford continues to deviate from their usual route without warning. Rather then speculate further we will move on to an episode where the stakes are higher and we can begin to see how the route car sharers take is indeed woven into other social relations, and how wayfinding is dealt with under those circumstances.

Showing a new way to work

For several months, Niamh and Nina have been working in the same hospital, car-sharing and in the process becoming firm friends. Like Ford and Greg they drive alternate weeks in each of their cars and, like Ford and Greg, they have a route that they regularly take to and from the hospital where they work. A way found that is 'our route' with its unfolding roadscape of bottle-necks, jams, speed cameras and other endemic troubles. Unlike Ford and Greg's route theirs has quite a few possible variations because it involves traversing a city to a suburban hospital. During the period they were filming for us, their route to and from work had been become doubly noticeable and remarkable. Not only were Niamh and Nina discussing their routes with us and video recording their journeys, major road-works were happening with consequent and growing delays and disruptions. What they hoped to find was a replacement for this part of their route which might not be quicker than the original stretch of motorway but at least made for easier driving.

Our concern in this section is not so much the recognition of the importance of stories in telling us where we are, as Ingold argues so persuasively, it is that the finding of our way is done through *talking together* as much as travelling together. Stories, amongst the many uses that can be made of them, are a key format for delivering instructions or information about finding the way. There are other conversational ways, however, and perhaps the most obvious conversational practice that can be used to deliver new or different routes, is simply giving directions to, from or between places (Mondada, forthcoming; Psathas, 1986, 1991)[1]. In Nina and Niamh's case a different road, found by one of them, will be offered to the other as a new way that could potentially be 'our route' from now on. It is not so much the act of finding that is of central import here,

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[1] In beginning to locate topics that we might talk about with those who have undertaken a significant journey to visit us. The question, so often posed, is 'how was your journey?' which leads to exchanging directions on how best to get here from there and is a step toward telling stories.

but the expanded qualities of the road: its road-scape, A roadscape assembled conversationally though recommendations that will lead to the new way's adoption or not by the commuters. The episode that follows is, thus something of a middle ground between Ingold's two wayfinding scenes at the outset. Our commuters are familiar with large parts of the road landscape though still have the possibility of finding new ways through it. They could still find themselves asking 'where are we', though it would be quite a feat to actually lose themselves, to lose any route, along the way.

The fragment begins with Nina, who is driving, as they depart from their usual route, enthusing by saying 'watch this – we're gonnae be flyin' It's not simply an announcement of an alternative, from the outset Nina delivers the route as an already known 'flying along' way. The alternative road is not begun on 'let's see how long it takes us this way' nor that it will take them, say, five minutes less in time.

Figure 2

Nina is way-*showing* to Niamh. 'Watch this', she says, as she brings their joint attention to bear on this new way to work. Way-finding is socio-logically tied to way-showing, way-learning, way-teaching, way-following, way-knowing, way-giving, way-owning and way-sharing. Applied unrelentingly, the concept of wayfinding over-emphasizes the sense that each way found is found 'for a first-first time', obscuring other possibilities involved in how people make their way from A to B. These might include, for instance, one showing the other a new way as we have here, or, one raising questions for the other (as we had with Greg and Ford), or, one taking another along path that is theirs, or whatever other possibilities of knowing our way around and between places.

To go back to our earlier case of Ford's unexpected departure from the usual route, Nina's announcement of the imminent departure from their usual route comes *before* she

hits the indicator and moves toward the motorway exit ramp. Where Ford did not tell Greg what he was doing, he just did it, Nina brings Niamh's perception into alignment in advance of the course of action: 'watch this'. The showing has to be preceded by a remark that gives the other notice that just such a showing is about to begin. The new route they will enter is then prefaced by a phrase which is almost overly optimistic and confident. There is no doubt about 'we're gonnae be flyin'. So at the outset of showing this new route to work Nina treats her discovery as one that her fellow commuter would have to adopt. It sets a tone of encouragement for the two of them under difficult conditions and thus searches not only for agreement but also for what sort of affectual stance is displayed in the response. Niamh's reception of Nina's enthusiasm over the new road is to cheer, 'Yay'. Part of the justification for Nina venturing such enthusiasm over the new route is by contrast to their preceding experiences of being stuck in the painfully slow traffic of the motorway. She makes clear that not only is their departure about to happen but that it is for the obviously good reason of 'flying'. Moreover her announcement is heard in relation to what has become a recurrent and pressing topic for them: the new roadworks on the motorway and ways that they can be avoided.

The announcement has added relevance because just a few turns of talk earlier Niamh had complained about being stuck in traffic on the way out to the airport and this was responded to by Nina with an explanation for why an earlier section of their route has been congested recently. With this looming background of delay and congestion, the possibility of fast moving traffic on the alternative route becomes worthy of celebrating and cheering. That Nina has designed her announcement as something worth cheering and that there are good preceding bases for being so enthusiastic about the alternative route does not then mean that Niamh *has* to cheer in response to the announcement. Equally, Niamh's appreciation of the route does more than respond to the announcement though, she is also maintaining her agreement with Nina in a finely tuned way that accepts the proffered announcement as worthy of cheering over. Compared to saying 'let's hope so' or, worse, 'I doubt it' the 'yay' maintains a strongly affiliative stance on the upcoming object that she is about to try out. That things can go otherwise is well demonstrated in encounters between sales staff and their prospects (Clark, Drew, & Pinch, 2003) and parents involving themselves in the children's homework (Goodwin, 2007).

Niamh's next move as recipient of the route she is about to be shown is that she ought to start learning the new road - 'I better remember this turn-off'. A key element of way-sharing here is locating the point where any new route departs from their usual route. What this warning to herself also does is project to Nina a future occasion where she will drive it, when it is her turn to be driving. Following up the already displayed praise 'yay', there is a deepening of the 'basic agreement' (Clark, et al., 2003) over the new route being the one to be used over the next few weeks. Were this to be a one-off trip along it then remembering it could be held in abeyance. In the brief pause that follows her declaration that she will start making sure she can recollect the road (and note here the groundwork for Ingold's later scenes where wayfinding is bound up with recollection); Niamh looks ahead and finds the motorway sign and reads it aloud. Her announcement accounts for the silence and the look ahead that follows - she is looking around for a landmark or icon or sign to remember this departure point by. There are a limited number of ways in which motorway exits are named: by number or by the place that they are the exit for. In selecting the 'destination' rather than the junction number it is perhaps more memorable though also creates the risk that two exits may have 'Eurocentral' as a destination. Although as Ingold also argues, what we take in is not just the sign but the sign, and its

perspective, and how it flows toward us (Ingold, 2000, p. 238).

Having looked, Niamh does indeed recollect their last attempt at finding an alternative route to work, which she checks with Nina: 'yeah the last time that we didn't come off here did we?' Again, the 'we' is important for these car-sharers. Niamh, in seeking clarification from Nina as to whether they turned off at Eurocentral before,[2] says 'we' where she could conceivably have said, depending on who was driving or who had suggested the alternative route: 'you didn't come off here last time' or 'I didn't come off here last time'. Perhaps it is unlikely that Niamh would ask such a question of a route she had suggested, so really the 'we' is an alternative to 'you' or another party who had suggested the alternative route to Nina. This pronoun choice marks the sense of an 'us', as together, as the car-sharing-pair. To say 'you' to Nina would have begun to take things in different directions, perhaps to perhaps towards compliments, challenges or criticisms.

Nina has provided a description of the road ahead. One which is not entirely irrelevant to Niamh's warning to herself that she should do what is required to remember this road.

Figure 3

As the conversation continues Lindsay is brought in as the person who identified the problem of their previous shortcut 'you have to do a right turn' and has offered the new route. What we have in the satisfying synchronised gesture (figure 3, above) is how the right turn is known in common by Nina and Niamh as a problematic feature of the rush

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[2] If Eurocentral is to be the point of departure it will work best if it is not the same point of departure as for the shortcut they took the week before.

hour drive. Where to those of us not so familiar with rush hour driving the 'nightmare' is the arcade-game-like challenge of leap-frogging and begging your way across queued traffic. Nina and Niamh need say no more than 'right turns are a nightmare', which formulates why their previous shortcut was not a good alternative and why this one is worth trying.

Next, Niamh brings up a roundabout-filled road she thinks has similarities with Lindsay's suggested route. Here we have a reversal of the 'nodding through' of references as reported on by Heritage (Heritage, forthcoming). Cases where places are clarified are actually rare as Heritage notes because the business at hand, be it offering news, complaining or suchlike, tends to have priority over whether both parties know exactly where they are talking about. Except, of course, here we have a situation where the business at hand is getting to the bottom of where exactly they are talking about. What we find is Niamh venturing a route that appears to have some similarities with the one Nina is going to show her today:

Figure 4

Nina is then required to use a 'no' prefaced correction, accompanied by looking across at Niamh to watch and see whether she picks up on the correction, that is not the *other* road, it is the same road that Niamh has brought up. The two catch each other's eyes for a moment marking this piece of news. That it is news is further marked by Niamh with a 'oh' preface where 'the particle is used to propose that its produce has undergone some kind of change in his or her locally current state of knowledge, information, orientation or awareness' (Heritage, 1984). What realising that Niamh knows something of the detour brings them to, is a point where Nina *reconnects* their detour to their usual route. At this point Niamh shows an appreciation – 'oh class' – of how nicely it reconnects with their usual route:

Figure 5

The positive assessment from Niamh is, in a classic sales pitch manner (Clark, 1990), developed by Nina into a three part list of qualities that will 'sell' Niamh the new route. Certainly the list of qualities which fit with her passenger's interests as a fellow

commuter, and their run of shared positive second and third assessments, are reminiscent of the rapport that salespeople accomplish with their prospects (Clark, et al., 2003). Yet it would be a teasing take on what Nina is doing to call it 'selling' the route to Niamh. They are friends, and it is not Nina's job to sell this route a number of times, Niamh is not a substitutable other like a 'prospect' for a sales person. With their enduring relationship as car sharers comes a different moral charge to both sides. Salespeople can always be treated with suspicion around their selling and can settle various things in that way. Where car sharers verge into becoming friends as Nina and Niamh have done, then their responsibilities to one another over in proposing and accepting route are quite different.

Each quality of the new route as Nina describes them are appreciated by Niamh and she demonstrates by her changing and incrementing assessments ('class', 'brilliant', 'our saving glory') a degree of uncomplicated acceptance of the qualities being proffered, 'strong agreement' as Pomerantz (1984) puts it. It may be that uncomplicated acceptance is actually not a serious enough expression of acceptance to be treated as such, it is more akin to supporting and encouraging Nina before coming to a more serious acceptance later. Just to remind ourselves of the qualities of the new route, as listed by Nina: that it reconnects at the big roundabout beside the car wash, that it bypasses the roadworks, that it works for coming home, that it is nice and quiet and that, finally it can take a brief period of time to travel along it. These are the features that Nina is not merely relaying from Lindsay but has herself experienced by trying the new shortcut the day before.

In having secured Niamh's affiliation to what she is saying and to the appreciation of the road on its first three qualities (connection to their existing route, bypassing roadworks and reversibility) Nina delivers her decision over the new route 'I think this is the way that I'll come to work from now on'. We have a pronoun shift to 'I' rather than 'we', which seems all the more marked given that the response to the previous item on the list of the shortcut's qualities was responded to by Niamh with 'this'll be *our* saving glory'. Moreover contrasting with Niamh's marvellous enthusiasm, Nina prefaces 'this is the way I'll come' with 'I think', which softens what would otherwise could be heard as an unexpected and so potentially confrontational jump to the 'new route', like Ford's taking the other route without warning and adding 'this is the way we'll go from now on'. So even though Nina is indicating that she has made her mind up already, she softens that decision and adds two further positive qualities (quietness and quickness) that makes her prefer it, not just for the roadworks but from now on. Once the proposal is made Niamh does not respond 'yes we'll come this way too' or with some other way of saying they will drive that way together from now on. 'Yeah' while not a disagreement, certainly sounds like a dampener after her earlier praise, though she finds a further supporting assessment of how 'unquiet' motorways are. As we leave them, and they leave the topic of their 'new route' for the time being, Niamh is still agreeing with Nina's assessment of the new route while not yet quite committing herself to it.

We might find ourselves asking: why is Niamh holding off on making it 'our route' when Nina has finished by saying that it will be her route from now on? By holding back on confirming the choice, even though she has praised it throughout, Niamh shows her sensitivity to the big change for them as a pair of commuters a new route is. This will not be a temporary saving glory while the roadworks are on, Nina wants to stick with it. To say 'yes let's take this way' without trying it would be to show a lack of proper judgement. How could Niamh judge this new route without experiencing it for herself? To agree to the route now before she has actually been shown and tried it for herself

would be back-to-front. It would be like saying that this is 'our new local café' at the moment Nina touches the door handle, rather than once Niamh has sat down, felt the ambience and had a few sips of their single estate of Kenyan beans. Trying the route together is involved in properly assessing this new way of commuting as 'our route'. To say yes at the wrong point in the way-showing would leave the route more Lindsay's (the work colleague who originally made the recommendation) and Nina's route than Niamh and Nina's. To say yes before travelling would allow for that 'yes' to be rejected or at least revised later on. When we consider experience in this way, we are not pursuing so much what the experience of the shortcut is, as where it is placed in the sequence of actions required to secure owning the route in common and what having it allows us to agree to. Wayfinding thus happens in conversation and as a conversation. We begin to see and hear the route here having to be settled through an interpersonal terrain of agreements, disagreements, affiliations, disaffiliations, assessments, acceptances, compliments and criticisms. A terrain which both connects itself to the current landscape through memorising specific features, recalling known routes and in projecting the roads they are about to travel. This then is how speaking together fosters an intimacy between the travellers and landscape in which they dwell.

Concluding remarks

What we have been trying to do here is build on and extend Ingold's thoughts on wayfinders, wayfinding, landscape and their relationship to one another. Hopefully there is also some surprise in how car travellers in their side-by-side arrangement have a shared sociality similar to that of the hikers examined by Lorimer (2003) and walkers investigated by Lee and Ingold (2006). The wayfinding of the familiar, be it as pedestrians or car travelers, is about finding supplemental ways that depart from and reconnect to the commutes, school runs, supermarket trips and so on that we travel daily. Supplemental ways found in variations on the usual way, which are a development of route-repertoires, path-resources and finally of assessments of each route as better or worse. Wayfinding is necessary not just to find ways for a first time, it is necessary to find ways when the departure and arrival points shift, when, and if, the traffic changes on routes and the routes themselves change.

Paying closer regard to wayfinding demands something of a shift in the formulation of landscape; that is, into a thing produced in an through talk. In its ordinariness and functionality, car-bound conversational practice (and the suite of physical actions and driving operations associated with wayfinding) come to express what might usefully be considered 'a feel' for a landscape of the road as a prosaic relationship. Much of this feeling still seems to be orientational and navigational, though hopefully we have shown that wayfinding should not be mistaken for the lonely tunnel vision of the orienteer or lost explorer in the mountains. Car commuters' feel for the landscape is dependent on an intimacy with surroundings and an awareness of possibilities for safe and efficient passage. As such, commuters' conversations about choices of route through landscape are not something shaped by aesthetic consideration, nor are they reflections of careful preparatory design, nor indeed can they be said to somehow reflect the meeting point of the world and complex individual subjectivities; each an outlook in keeping with recognised research approaches that seek better to get under landscape's skin (Wylie 2007). In the two instances studied here, encounters with landscape figure the familiar not so much as a site or an occasion for cultural meaning making, though differing

degrees of attachment and belonging might still be ascribed to what commuters identify as '*our*' route.

The communality of wayfinding with families, friends, colleagues or fellow travellers inevitably involves way-showing as we share one another's ways through the world. The roles produced in showing are, to remind ourselves, the one showing and the other being shown. Surely the showing of a thing to which one is indifferent is a rare thing. Why then, the other would ask, am I being shown this? Way-showing happens, here, as part and parcel of conversational practices in which, on being shown the thing, the other should demonstrate appreciation of the 'thing'. The 'thing' being described through conversation is the way to go. Once the road is being travelled along, once it is being experienced then the other can respond as to whether it is, after all, worth treating as not just anyone's route but *our* route between our homes and our workplace. In the video fragment we catch something of the care with which this is done by the very fact that coming to agreement on our route puts our very togetherness at stake. Even on the road Nina and Niamh remain members of a community whose relationship to place here is one of sharing it with others (Raffel, 2006). It is not the romantic driver, beloved of car advertising, racing through winding single track roads with incredible traction and no one else around.

Finding, offering and taking shortcuts sustains and makes manifest our intimacy with a place. The intimacy here is related to a shared familiarity not simply with ways through and between our places, but with one another and one another's knowledge of these places. It is an intimacy which we are familiar with in relationships in rural landscapes and one that Lorimer has examined between herd animals, herders and their herding grounds (Lorimer, 2006). Emerson is a classical touchstone for this rapport with the world found through escaping the city. In considering the commuters and how they find their ways together there is an affinity with each other and their modern mobile world upon what Stanley Cavell at the end of his book on Emerson has put forward as a relationship to the world that is not best treated as one of 'knowing', instead, as he puts it: 'our relationship to the world's existence is somehow *closer* than the ideas of believing and knowing are made to convey' (Cavell, 1981, p145). Cavell suggests a natural relationship to the world *next* to the laws of nature, our *neighbouring* the landscape or finally our being *beside* ourselves. In each of these the emphasis is on relations of intimacy that are not best understood as forms of knowing. To return to our opening quote 'now I know how to go on!', an equally pressing concern is how we go on beside each other, sociably, sharing our direction as part of a pair or more of persons. To go along through the landscape will involve us getting along with others, seeing whether they are glad about our glad starts.

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