Points of departure: listening to rhythm in the sonoric spaces of the railway station.

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This paper argues that rather than simply enabling studies of regulation and embodiment, rhythm can facilitate reintegration of the apparently separate dimensions of mobile experience enabling them as

Cresswell says to 'make sense together'. Taking a critical lead from Lefebvre's engagement with Lacan, it argues that in order for this to happen a more active and reflexive sense of listening to rhythm is needed than that provided by Lefebvre. Drawing on a conception of listening developed by Ihde, Nancy and the paper concludes by exploring some ways in which the rhythms of the railway station produce experiences which are simultaneously affectively embodied and deeply socially and culturally meaningful.

Introduction

Railway stations have been characterised as one of the rhythmic hubs of urban life. The diurnal flows of commuters cut across the episodic surge of long distance passengers and the intermittent movements of leisure travellers. Together these provide compliment and counterpoint to the rhythms of street life beyond the station as people move in out and through the city. As nodal sites within networks of linear routeways radiating out from towns and cities, stations constitute key sites for understanding the rhythms of urban life based on mobility. The mobilities studies literature has frequently drawn on ideas of rhythm in order to understand the nature and experience of movement itself and a key text for many is Henri Lefebvre's (2004) short book *Elements of Rhythmanalysis: An Introduction to the Understanding of Rhythms.* Typically within this literature rhythmanalysis has been a starting point for studies concerned with both the regulation of mobility and the affective flow and flux of embodied mobile experience (Binnie et al 2007; Edensor 2009; Fincham et al 2010). Yet the infrastructures and technologies of mobility such as railway stations also have cultural meanings which inform our use and experience of them, as car

drivers, cyclists, or passengers on trains and buses. In his pioneering work on the cultures of travel and mobility Cresswell (2006; 2010; 2011) has adopted a formulation based on Lefebvre's (1991) tripartite division of conceived, perceived and lived space in order to recognise this multi-dimensional nature of mobile experience which is simultaneously both affective and reflexive. This paper argues that rhythm can contribute to such an inclusive approach to mobility providing a productive means of reintegrating the apparently separate dimensions of mobile experience enabling them as Cresswell says to 'make sense together'. Taking a critical lead from Lefebvre's engagement with Lacan, this paper argues that in order for this to happen a more active and reflexive sense of listening to rhythm is required than that provided by Lefebvre. Thought of this way, rhythm instigates and informs culturally rich and historically situated meaningful experience and the railway station becomes a place of imaginative resonance and creative interjection rather than simply a site of regulation and embodied routine. The paper begins by considering Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis in relation to themes within the mobilities literature as these apply to the specificities of the railway station. It then considers rhythmanalysis in relation to Cresswell's call for an approach to mobilities able to engage simultaneously with affective and reflective experience, habitual routine and cultural meaning. Drawing on a conception of listening developed by Ihde, Nancy and , the paper concludes by exploring some ways in which the rhythms of the railway station produce experiences which are simultaneously affectively embodied and deeply socially and culturally meaningful.

Mobility, rhythm and the railway station

Studies of mobility within social science have increasingly drawn on the experience of rhythm as a means of engaging with the experience of mobility. Studies of walking, cycling, and public transport have stressed the ways in which the polyrhythms of motion, stasis, engagement and detachment forge specific embodied experiences of movement (Hein et al 2008; Bissell 2009a: 2009b; Fincham et al 2010). Edensor has usefully highlighted three major themes in Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis which inform mobilities studies within social science. The first

common characteristic, according to Edensor, is a concern with rhythm as a modality of regulation and governance. This is couched in terms of both conformity and opposition to dominant rhythms (Edensor 2009:2). Railways have clearly played an important part making the rhythmic patterns which govern and regulate modernity. As Kern and others have shown, railways played a central role in the making of a modern time sensibility resulting in the regional, national and ultimately global integration and co-ordination of time zones, working patterns and economic activity (Kern 1983; Schivelbusch 1986; Tsuji 2006). The importance of the timetable to the safe and efficient functioning of railways as spatially extensive 'machine ensembles' (Schivelbusch 1986) and the strict time discipline placed upon workers and travellers has been key to the inculcation of time discipline as a key component in the collective and individualised responsibilities of industrial capitalism. In the nineteenth century, 'railway time' was more than just a practical reality, it was a moral imperative calling for self discipline and respectability. The ways in which railways played a central role in the establishment of unified time zones across Britain, Europe, North America and eventually the world was clearly central to the development of temporally and spatially co-ordinated commercial and social activity. Ultimately this resulted in the integration of local , regional and national economies, and social and cultural systems within networks of global reach. Perhaps it is no co-incidence for example, that Richard Sears, founder of Sears, Roebuck and Co the giant US mail order company, began his career as a railway station agent in Minnesota where he sold timber, coal - and most importantly for both his developing business and a growing sense of time consciousness – watches (Revill 2012:172). Sears, Roebuck pioneered scientific salesmanship which in turn helped to define the modern consumer at the same time as making the latest and most fashionable consumer goods available to people living in remote rural places. Thus the railway station as a point of rhythmically ordered co-ordination and exchange participated in the construction of nationally based markets. These resulted in the increasing orientation of consumers towards national and international trends and fashions, leading to the greater co-ordination of patterns and styles in the purchase and consumption of goods and services (Chandler 1977:230-5; Cronin 1991: 136-40).

In this way the rhythmic scheduling of railways helped produce both markets and consumers.

A second area of shared concern for the moblities literature is the body as a rhythmically permeable and responsive entity. Rhythm based studies of travelling by public transport, waiting at railway stations and sitting on trains have frequently been couched in terms of the passivity and boredom generated by habitual routine and the civil inattention developed to cope with crowding and social uncertainty (Bissell 2009c). Lefebvre foregrounds bodily rhythms, emphasising that the rhythmanalyst must draw on 'his [sic] breathing, the circulation of his blood, the beatings of his heart and the delivery of his speech as landmarks' (2004:21). According to Lefebvre, rhythmanalysts must take their own body – 'its respirations, pulses, circulations, assimilations... duration and phases of durations' – as the measure of other rhythms (Edensor 2009:4). It is certainly the case that the regular scheduling of trains, the visceral experience of mechanical energy, rhythmical counterpoint of stillness and motion, interruption and connectivity feed senses of presence and absence, excess and lack, belonging and loss, boredom and engagement which are deeply seated in our bodily experience of the railway. Sigmund Freud couched his thoughts on the embodied experience of railway travel primarily in terms of rhythms of repetition and interruption. He entertained lifelong fears about missing trains, and about being caught up in railway accidents. His earliest thinking concerned with railways focused on the psychopathology of shock, what we might call today post-traumatic stress disorder. Cultural historian Wolfgang Schivelbusch (1986) has most usefully explored this in his discussion of "railway spine", the condition elaborated by doctors during the 19th century to explain human reactions to the experience of technologically mediated accidents and catastrophes. However, Freud's more long term interest is demonstrated in the case of 'Little Hans' and the study in infant sexuality. Here the train's psychological significance lies in the rhythmical experience of bodily motion. Dread for railway travel here signifies repression, that blockage on the psychological journey to satisfactory adult sexuality in the modern human subject (Freud 2001:202; Carter 2001:202).

As Kirby (1997) shows in her study of the depiction of railways in early cinema, both the experience of rail travel and that of the cinema spectator can be understood as constitutive of a new urban subjectivity through a series of rhythmic correspondences, analogies and equivalences. Following Freud and Schivelbusch she argues that key to this experience was the shock and trauma manifest in relation to speed, acceleration and simultaneity. This was exemplified in film by rapid point-of-view shifts within the frame and jump cuts across different shots. On the one hand these new 'spectator passengers', were psychically habituated to anticipate and be immune to shock. Whilst on the other hand they were:

> ... jostled by forces that destabilized and unnerved the individual, creating a hysterical or, in nineteenth-century terms, "neurasthenic" subject.' In the urban railway films of early, classical, and avant-garde cinema, the power of disruption and discontinuity as expressed doubly by the train and the cinema contributed either directly or indirectly to the creation and re-creation of such an unstable subject (Kirby 1997:7).

For Kirby (1997:8-9) what mattered most in early railway films was the shock effect in and of itself, 'the thrill of instability, which addressed a new subject cut loose from its moorings in traditional culture.' Thus many early films exploited the train image for its shock potential often at the expense of narrative coherence. The fear of accidents as commonly reported in newspapers and magazines informed cinema's representation of the train as a 'terroristic creature' exemplified in the allegedly terrified response for the first spectators of the Lumière brothers 1895 film *L'Arrivée d'un train en gare de la Coitat* (Loiperdinger 2004). In these and other ways rail travel provides a multiplicity of embodied and associational rhythmic experiences ranging from the clickety-clack of wheels running over rails to the sound of a whistle or horn cutting through the still silence of the night.

A further key area in the engagement between mobility and rhythm identified by Edensor relates to the rhythmic production of place. In this sense rhythm informs the progressive sense of place originally outlined by Massey (1993). The enfoldings of space and time create nodal points through which pass a multiplicity of flows and practices which make place as a fluid, contingent and highly permeable formation.

As Edensor (2009:4) says '(p)lace can thus be depicted, performed and sensed through its ensemble of normative and counter rhythms, as Lefebvre suggests'. Edensor highlights the railway station as a key site:

> The obvious example of a train station reveals a very recognisable though shifting polyrhythmy composed out of separate strands, with its periodic announcements, flows and surges of passengers, departing and arriving trains according (or not) to the timetable, the presence of newspaper sellers during rush hours, and the ongoing pulse of buying and selling in the retail outlets, as well as the interruptions, unexpected incidents and breakdowns (Edensor 2009:4).

It is unsurprising that Edensor should pick on the railway station as an archetypal place made in mobility. The railway station itself has been variously figured as a conduit and collecting point for a wide range of flows, practices, biographies and narratives. Variously characterized by contemporaries as cathedrals to commerce and as kaleidoscopic 'babel towers', the railway station has been called by social historians Richards and Mackenzie (1988:137) 'an extraordinary agent of social mixing'. As a location where heterogeneous voices and cultures interact, commune and conflict, the railway station acts as a simultaneously centrifugal and centripetal force in the production of modern urban life (Revill 2012:128). From a complimentary perspective, Schivelbusch (1986) characterises the railway station as 'the gateway to the city' both regulating and controlling its flows and announcing the point of transition and translation into the rhythms of city life. Such figurations are expressed in a wide range of cultural materials exemplified by W.P. Frith's painting of a crowded station platform at the Great Western Railway's terminus at London, Paddington (Freeman M. 1999:237). *The Railway Station* (1862) has all the qualities of a Victorian novel with its wealth of characters and incidents, plots and subplots. John Schlesinger's documentary film *Terminus* (1961) echoes the cameos and conversations set up in Frith's painting by portraying a day in the life of London's Waterloo station. In a series of panoramas and interludes his film charts twenty four hours in the life of the station as it intersects with a wide range of individual biographies, reflecting and engaging a wide range of temporal rhythms in the process. Opening and closing shots of the bee hives located on the roof, figure the

station and by implication the city itself in terms of the naturalised habitual co-ordinated pulse, flux and flow of the swarm (Revill 2012:129). In Schlesinger's film the intensities of rush hour are framed by quiet cadences of morning preparation and the slow wind down of late evening closedown. In between earnest city gents, frightened lost children, irate holiday makers and busy workers move in and through the station. The tannoy system punctuates the day with periodic announcements cutting across an infinite variety of conversations, exclamations and exchanges. In this context Richter describes the rhythmic encounter of the station as simultaneously a mode of governance and a distinctive and particularly modern experience of place. She argues that even as the social life of the railroad mirrored that of cities, train travel differed from urban life and created a distinctive milieu. Only rail travel demanded the constant and simultaneous negotiation of both urban social disorder and the systematic ordering associated with large technological systems and corporate business. Thus 'the railroad stood squarely at the crossroad of the major social, business, cultural and technological changes remaking national life during the second half of the nineteenth century' (Richter 2005:81).

Rhythm and the experience of mobility.

Mobilities researchers are right to emphasise the regulatory role of rhythm as a key part of Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis. For Lefebvre rhythm seems to suggest the underlying structures of city life deeply embedded in the processes and practices of capitalist reproduction. This is most evident in his well known description of the view of Paris from the window of his apartment. Here Lefebvre looks out from the balcony of his apartment in the centre of Paris and reflects on the flux and flow of pedestrians and automobiles, the diurnal cycles of commuting, work and leisure and the long durée structurings of architectural form and ecologies of organic growth. However it would seem that Lefebvre's major concern here is to undermine precisely the notion of spectacle suggested by the view from the window.

> The window overlooking the street is not a mental place, where the inner
> gaze follows abstract perspectives: a practical, space, private and concrete,
> the window offers views that are more than spectacles; mentally prolonged

spaces. In such a way that the implication in the spectacle entails the explication of this spectacle. (Lefebvre 2004:36)

From Lefebvre's balcony, vision and the cultural superstructure it represents is epiphenomenal, an enticing and distracting theatre of display, a 'simulation of the real' (Lefebvre 2004:32). To this extent Lefebvre's concern with rhythm is grounded in fundamental regulatory processes. The visible surfaces and intersections of rhythmic interplay offer a mere 'glimpse', hinting or 'murmuring' the truth of underlying systems, logics and processes. Within this mind set the body seems to offer little more than a site for the realisation of foundational truths. Taken as a whole, *Elements of Rhythmanalysis* is strongest on those elements of rhythm that point towards underlying economic, social and political structures, their cyclical and linear, interjections and interpolations, repetitions and flows. If as Elden (2004b:xiii) suggests Lefebvre's writing on rhythm is influenced by Gaston Bachelard's poetics of space then there is little in the book to offer a systematic unpacking of the creative and the poetic. Even the chapter on music is most centrally concerned with metre and measure as rule governed bodily experience rather than the processes and practices of invention and elaboration (see Said 1992).

Transport infrastructures such as railway stations are often obdurate and deeply embedded in social and material life. Our encounters with them are frequently experienced as either transitory, just in passing as we move through the ticket barrier or take the phone call; or superficial to the extent that our attention lies beyond the technology itself on the task or action it enables or facilitates. To this extent, the railway station is indeed a model for the tacit structuring of regulation and the embodied experience of flux and flow. Yet at the same time we should remember that transport technologies such as railway stations have a distinctive and sometimes high profile and iconic presence in popular imaginations and public histories. Transport infrastructures and related iconic machinery continue to play highly charged and richly layered symbolic roles in histories of modernity, imaginings of nation building, social, economic and cultural progress and narratives of individual self fulfilment. Modern mobile lifestyles, tourists and travellers, career professionals and commuters, are enabled by practices, habits, expectations and norms informed

by these histories. Travel decisions are rarely made through rational logic alone, the rise of the motor car no less than the reluctance of many to use public transport has grounds in the social and cultural positioning of these transport modes and especially in the public histories, social values and personal memories that inform their use. Cresswell and others have forcefully argued that writing the experiences of mobility without locating its practices within historical and geographical specificity generalizes the experiences of mobility, flattening out difference, universalising and naturalising inequalities in the process (Dival and Revill 2005; Solnit 2001:28-29; Cresswell and Verstrate 2002). In this context Cresswell (2010:18) has characterised mobility as 'a fragile entanglement of physical movement, representations, and practices'. For Cresswell such 'constellations of mobility' are formed from three elements, in turn these are: particular patterns of movement, representations of movement and ways of practicing movement. In concert they constitute entities or systems which 'make sense together'. Here Cresswell draws on Edward Soja's (1989) reading of Lefebvre, in a tripartite formulation which owes much to Lefebvre's theorisation of conceived, perceived and lived space developed in *The Production of Space* (1991). In this way Cresswell seeks to bring together the apparently disparate components of mobility as meaningful experience, drawing together sensitivity to the affective experience of movement with a critical politics of cultural representation.

This suggests a rather more co-constructed and balanced relationship between the apparently hidden underlying rhythms of mobility, the cadences of its immediate and affective practice and the reflective social and cultural meanings through which we make sense of and come to reflexively understand these experiences. In many respects rhythm seems an ideal medium with which to address issues of co-construction and mutual dependency. Rhythmic qualities of amplitude and frequency, periodicity, recurrence and intensity direct attention, for example, to the co-constitution of space and time. An attention to rhythm ensures as Elden (2001:818; 2004a) suggests that we learn a primary lesson from Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* and recognise the relationship between time and space as no longer 'one of abstract separation coupled with an equally abstract confusion

between these two different yet connected terms' (1991:351). In this way the capacity of rhythm to produce, carry and disclose the topological enfolding of times and spaces in the making of lived experience should point directly to a range of processes which integrate and envelope. As Burgin (1996) says, the imbrication of social space and mental space within lived space is central to Lefebvre's problematic and consequently rhythmanalysis should provide a clear route towards making these resolutions.

For the above to be fully realised rhythmanalysis would have to be as comfortable with the meaningfulness of reflexive cultural experience as it is with regulatory structurings and embodied affectivities. In this context, Burgin (1996: 30) has forcefully argued that a major stumbling block is Lefebvre's essentially passive understanding of perception. He attributes this to Lefebvre's division of the labouring from the perceiving body:

> Lefebvre's insistence on the centrality of the body subverts the distinction he makes between "representations of space" and "representational space." If as he insists, and as psychoanalysis would agree, "The whole of (social) space proceeds from the body," then how is he able to see such "representations of space" as geometry as exempt from the same bodily determinations as "representational space"? The answer to this question probably lies in Lefebvre's division of the labouring body from the perceiving body, in which perceptual processes are seen as essentially passive (Burgin 1996: 30).

Burgin's criticism of the theoretical separation of the labouring body from the perceiving body might also cast light on Lefebvre's insensitivity to the productively creative dynamics of rhythm. Perhaps this is the key to its underdeveloped theorisation of the processes and practices of reflexively organised invention and creativity suggested above. Railway stations are clearly encountered through a range of historically resonant and culturally meaningful symbolic codings and associations in addition to a range of experientially rich sensations and stimuli. In fact as Ihde's post-phenomenology of technology suggests these two dimensions of experience are mutually co-constituted (Ihde 2003, 2009). In this context, Idhe champions what

he calls a relational or interrelational ontology which is sensitive to historical specificity and by implication to the reintegration of affective and reflexive experience.

> Technologies transform our experience of the world and our perceptions and interpretations of our world, and we in turn become transformed in this process. Transformations are non-neutral. And it is here that histories and any empirical turn may become *ontologically* important, which will lead us to the pragmatist insight that histories are also important in any philosophical analysis as such (Ihde 2009:44).

Listening to rhythm

In one important sense Lefebvre is well aware of the active qualities of perception. An often neglected aspect of Lefebvre's rhythamanalysis project is its engagement with the work of Jacques Lacan and its formulation as a sort of 'listening cure' in contradistinction to psychoanalysis (Gregory 1995:41, 1997). In this respect the idea of listening as an active practice is contrasted with the more passive physiological sense of hearing. It suggests an active engagement with a speaking subject, an openness and sensitivity to positionality, intention and meaning. Listening is thus a hermeneutical disposition made possible in conjunction with recognitions of historical and geographical context, sequence and situatedness. Though Lefebvre is keen to assert the attentiveness of the social scientist as rhythmanalyst he seems to have neglected this as a mode of being in the world which extends also to the subjects of his study. Listening is not just the preserve of the analyst or the social scientist, rather it is fundamental to social relations and reciprocities. To this extent these aspects of Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis remain underdeveloped and require further expansion and explanation.

By championing the place of the social scientist as a listener, Lefebvre usefully shares common ground with recent writing in sociology and cultural studies. Back (2007), for example, promotes a conception of the rhythmic and the sonic thought together as part of a more attentive and engaged sense of 'listening' to social practice. This is

couched in terms of the multi sensory qualities of human experience, as an ethical exercise in hermeneutical sensitivity in response to the apparently alienating distance of vision. Yet, if rhythmanalysis is to be a medium of social listening then, as Burgin suggests, Lefebvre's essentially passive understanding of perception provides something of a conceptual barrier. In contrast to Lefebvre's search for underlying truths in rhythm, more recent theorists have figured listening as a much more active engaged and co-constructed set of practices. Thus listening becomes a site for the processes and practices of invention and creativity in terms of both reflexively organised poesis and self organising autopoesis. In this context Jean Luc Nancy (2007: 3-4) questions the foundational ontology of rhythm as underlying reality whilst usefully echoing Lefebvre's concern with the rhythmic body:

> ... shouldn't truth "itself," as transitivity and incessant transition of a continual coming and going, be listened to rather than seen? But isn't it also in the way that it stops being "itself" and identifiable, and becomes no longer the naked figure emerging from the cistern but the resonance of that cistern – or, if it were possible to express it thus, the echo of the naked figure in the open depths?

For Nancy, the resonance of the cistern not only provides a container, a ground on which the meaningful truth of the body is presented to the world but its echoing cavernous volume transforms and remakes truth in the process. For Nancy, the sense of reverberation, the interference patterns created by the interaction between body and cistern actively produce rather than simply reflect. In fact Nancy (2007: 5) argues that hearing and listening, activities most closely associated with rhythm, have '… a special relationship with *sense* in the intellectual or intelligible acceptance of the word (with "perceived meaning)'. In this case to sense is to make sense. It is an active conscious process of ontological making in a manner which resonates with Idhe's interrelational ontology. Perhaps it is not surprising that Ihde's relational ontology is also informed by his earlier work on listening (Ihde 1976). Here one has to turn to more recent theorists informed by these sorts of ideas and concerned with rhythm as an expression of meaningful experience to find work which might carry the task of rhythmanalysis forward if it is to embrace the experience of mobility in terms of Cresswell's fragile entanglements. As with Nancy and Ihde many of these

authors engage with rhythm as part of a broader sense of the sonic (see also Attali 1977; Schwarz 1997; Erlmann 2004).

LaBelle's (2010) work on acoustic territories begins to suggest some of the potential for a broader conception of rhythm which is often embodied and experienced in sound and expressed through acoustic and resonant spaces of reverberation, repetition, diffusion, interference and echo. For , the qualities of sound produce distinctive spatial experiences, sounds are diffuse and pervasive, they reverberate, resound, echo and decay in complex and unexpected ways. The substantially passive receptivity of hearing and the active interpretative processes of listening encourage sounds to encompass us whilst at the same time seeming to reverberate deep inside our heads, engaging and questioning senses of self and other. Thus sound brings us into intimate contact with activities, actions and events which lie well outside the reach of other senses, round the corner, over the next hill or in an adjacent room (Revill 2013). The meanings created, communicated and translated through sound are associative:

> The *associative* dynamics of sound lends greatly to triggering *associative* forms of discourse and knowledge. This is both participant within physics and phenomenological behaviour of sound, as well as forming the conceptual and psychodynamic frame for recognizing how hearing is already an associative act. For what we hear is not mostly what we seem nor can it strictly be pinned down to a given source, or brought into language. Often sound is what lends to directing our visual focus – we hear something and this tells us where to look; it eases around us in a flow of energy to which we unconsciously respond. Sounds are associated with their original source, while also becoming their own thing, separate and constantly blending with other sounds, thereby continually moving in and out of focus and clarity (2010: pxix).

Where for Lefebvre the view from the balcony is merely an image simulating the real and requiring rhythm to engage its deeper reality, for the rhythmic and the sonic shape vision, structuring social experience as complex and contingent. Thus argues that sound and by implication rhythm is simultaneously a sense of feeling and a

considered reflection on experience, it wraps together that which is affective and that which is representational in contingent topological formations. It is multisensory always in dialogue with vision, touch and language and to this extent his account is sympathetic to Serres' (2008) understanding of the semiotic importance of touch, contact and connection as moments of decision making and differentiation in which meanings are made and conveyed. It is also congruent with the sense of rhythm developed in Karen Barad's (2003, 2008) adaptation of diffraction as a way of figuring difference within phenomena rather than between oppositional terms.

Barad asserts (2003:817) contra Lefebvre that reality is not composed of things-in-themselves or things-behind-phenomena but "things"-in-phenomena. Here her work intersects with Ihde's relational ontology of technology and Nancy's conception of listening. It is through specific intra-actions that a differential sense of being is enacted in the ongoing ebb and flow of agency. Thus according to Barad (2003:818), '[t]emporality and spatiality emerge in this processual historicity. Relations of exteriority, connectivity, and exclusion are reconfigured'. In this way she argues that 'the primary ontological units are not "things" but phenomena – dynamic topological reconfigurings/ entanglements/ relationalities/ (re)articulations' (Barad 2003:817). Rhythm and particularly for her the interference patterns created in diffraction might be thought of as key to such a figural and processual sense of ontology able to weave together a heterogeneous range of socio-material textures (Crang 2001:200). also draws on this sort of processual ontology, sounds are spatio-temporal events, arcs of rhythmical movement linking two points in time (Revill 2013). Thus:

> Auditory knowledge is a radical epistemological thrust that unfolds as a spatio-temporal event: sound opens up a field of interaction, to become a channel, a fluid, a flux of voice and urgency, a play of drama, of mutuality and sharing, to ultimately carve out a micro-geography of the moment, while always already disappearing, as a distributive and sensitive propagation (2010:xvii)

Such a conception of sound seems in sympathy with the idea of rhythm as the means of connection between disparate milieus suggested by Deleuze and Guattari for whom rhythm exists whenever a passage is 'transcoded' from one milieu to another.

Thought of in this way, communication between milieus is thus a co-ordination between heterogeneous space-times. In describing such lines of flight, refrains organise territories, register and inscribe understandings of the world and open up a 'virtual' world of possibility and becoming (Thrift and Dewsbury 2005:105; see Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 315-17). In these ways rhythm may be seen to connect apparently separate realms of existence not merely as the epiphenomena of underlying processes but as a set of ontologically generative processes creating a relational ontology which connects the affective and reflective, the material and the imaginal.

In this sense rhythm can be thought of as more than a cipher for regimes of governance or a marker setting out the phenomenological contours of the flow of unreflected sensory experience through the body. Rather it is a key medium through which Cresswell's fragile entanglement of physical movement, representations and practices might be understood as making sense together. In this context following Nancy and Barad 'making sense together' is itself productive of phenomenological reality rather than merely an assemblage of parts resting within an underlying ontological realm. Thus if the railway station is an archetypal site for the examination of urban rhythms then it may prove instructive to revisit the themes of governance and the body highlighted by Edensor. The following section returns to the railway station in order to explore a few of the possibilities for a rhythmanalysis better able to embrace the reflexivity and cultural creativity of rhythm in light of the above discussion.

Governance and body: interruption and repetition
As Law has shown in his discussion of the Ladbrooke Grove train crash, though infrastructures often appear almost transparent as they run unnoticed in the background, system failure brings us up sharp with their existence and our dependence on them. At such moments infrastructures take on a phenomenological presence which may shape experience in creative and reflexive ways well beyond the affordances of habit. In this context the interruption of rhythm may not only

alert us to the presence of underlying cyclical patterns of regulation but also to its creative capacity to reverberate, resound, gather momentum, amplify and actively transform. Take for example, that most evocative of poems written about a train stopping in a station - Edward Thomas's poem *Addlestrop*. Written in 1915 after he had signed up for military service in the army and published posthumously in his collected works (1920) (Lucas 1997:43-7; Longley 2004). It tells of an unscheduled stop at a rural station during a hot summer's day. Window open in the pause after the train has come to rest and before the signal drops and the train moves off again, the author's attention is drawn beyond the railway in the stillness and heat of the afternoon. The sound of a single blackbird punctuating the silence catches his attention. As its sound resonates out across the landscape so the author becomes sensitized to the natural sounds of the day and he becomes increasingly aware of a world beyond the tracks. Resounding at greater and greater distance bird song transforms the dull silence of the moment created by the train's unscheduled stop. The detachment initially felt by the author is soon transformed into an intimate and connected sense of a landscape full of life, vitality and hope.

> And for that minute a blackbird sang
>
> Close by, and round him, mistier,
>
> Farther and farther, all the birds
>
> Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.
>
> (Thomas 1920:52)

In this example the rhythm of the train journey, the way it is structured by timetable, signalling and safety systems, is not just revealed by the unscheduled station stop rather it is creatively transformed. Interruption of the predictable routine of the journey initiates an expansive rhythmically induced sonoric resonance which opens out from the traveller in ways which heighten perception and activate an imaginative reflexivity (Revill 2013).

Thought of in this way, railway stations are not just nodal points managing processes of pulse, flow and switch, but rather are sites of amplification, elaboration and transformation. In this context railway stations can be understood, for example, as participating in the life of national communications as much more than points of

arrival and departure for passengers and goods. Rather, they act as resonant and lively conduits for political messaging. Interruptions to station routine have thus instigated a wide range of temporary and contingent political spaces. As Lisa Mitchell has shown in her study of language and regional politics in Southern India since the 1950s, railways continue to act as a powerful and informal conduit for political communication. They are sites for protests, violence, and graffiti feeding back local and regional complaints and objections to the centre of power. Such extraordinary means of political communication continue to be important for the poor, and those who believe themselves to be otherwise unheard or disenfranchised. Perhaps in this way we can come to better understand a range of incidents from the Dutch train hostage crisis in 1975 involving a group claiming independence for the south east Asian islands of South Molucca, to the Madrid train bombings of 2004, often attributed to al-Qaeda inspired terrorists. In May 2007, for example, full scale riots broke out when services were interrupted during the evening rush hour at Constitución station, Buenos Aires, one of the largest stations in South America. One hundred police attended the incident, firing rubber bullets and tear gas as rioters pelted them with rocks, smashed windows, set fire to the ticket sales area, looted shops and ripped payphones from the walls as the protest spilt out on to the street. The riot was the second outbreak of violence within a year. The previous September cancelled trains resulted in three train carriages being set alight and police making seven arrests (Guardian 2008; Daily telegraph 2008). Such behaviour was indicative of a complex array of otherwise pent up frustrations relating to Argentina's recent history especially its serious economic problems and the subsequent widespread unemployment, welfare cuts, raging inflation and neoliberal reforms. Passengers had complained for years about poor commuter rail services on lines leading from Constitución station in downtown Buenos Aires to the capital's poor southern suburbs. Privatized in the 1990s, failure of the Buenos Aires commuter lines to provide punctual services on overcrowded routes provoked commuters from poor suburbs to give voice to a range of long standing social concerns amplified through the nation and beyond by the railway station (Revill 2012:100-101). In these examples the rhythmic counterpoint of routine, system failure, pent up anger and spontaneous protest produces and reshapes the civic

sphere, creating direct connections between local, national and international concern. Thus rhythm intentionally and unintentionally becomes an active and reflexive part of governance enabling people to participate in political processes in complex, informal and unexpected ways. Such rhythmic elaborations invited and enabled by failures in regulatory rhythmic structuring not only reflect public concerns but actively promote the construction of publics as more or less informal, contingent and temporary formations.

Like the inventive elaborations of interruption, the rhythmic interplay of repetition and routine, arrival and departure, transfer and embarkation can also be creative. Lefebvre readily admits that repetition is never exact and always embraces the sort of contingency which produces social and material difference. The repetitive moments of expectation, loss and excess which exceed and inform the habituation of routine at the railway station also form starting points for complex cultural imaginings. Such rhythmically founded imaginings are evident in a wide range of well known cultural materials from Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1873-77) to David Lean's film *Brief Encounter* (1945)*.* Meeting and parting, separation and union, desire, yearning and fulfilment are central to an experience of personal mobility in which the railway station is both a space of routine and simultaneously highly charged with imaginative expectations. Films, songs and novels portray lovers meeting and fugitives escaping by train, wracked with guilt and despair heroes and villains commit suicide under advancing locomotives, whilst chance meetings result in life changing encounters on platforms and in station waiting rooms. Thus routine repetition is not just a vehicle for a retreat into reactive passivity rather it is also a medium for inventive rich and culturally complex day dreams, imaginative flights of fancy and bodily desires.

The experience of individualised social proximity is familiar for many who use public transport and frequent railway stations. Yet rather than simply marking underlying rhythmic alienation such rhythms produce social interaction with deep social and cultural resonance, characterised in for example Simmel's idea of the 'proximate stranger'. Take for instance this newspaper report from the 19th century:

> I was a passenger on an excursion train to Melbourne last Saturday, and upon returning witnessed at that station a disgraceful proceeding on the part of several railway clerks… This young gentleman was drunk… on the platform he threatened if he did not actually molest a minister who had in no way interfered with him, he attacked and forced a man onto the railway and directly commenced a free fight….

> He dared a porter to touch him, stating he was a clerk with a first class pass, which he frequently exhibited, and there is no doubt whatever that if it had not been for this – if he had been an ordinary passenger, unconnected with the company, who had thus acted, he would surely have been arrested. ...

> (Letter to the Derby Mercury 24/07/1872)

This minor altercation between a drunken railway clerk and a platform full of day trippers must have been echoed in countless encounters and at many times and places. Yet in spite of its trivial nature, it seems so highly suggestive of the social relationships forged by the experience of railway travel. The anonymity of the crowd on the platform, the mixing of ages, genders and classes, the vagaries and incivilities of the random encounters produced by such coincidence, all seem to suggest those anxieties and intensities by which late nineteenth century sociologists distinguished modern mobile urban life from what they perceived as its sedentary rural predecessor. It is not without significance that the drunken railway clerk flaunts his first class pass, as a talisman protecting him from the sanction of those around him. A corporate perk for higher status administrative staff allowing free first-class rail travel, the first class pass signifies both social and physical mobility in bodily terms. Waving his pass in front of fellow travellers and railway workers alike he tells the world as both a privileged passenger and a career bureaucrat 'you cannot touch me, I am going places'. For Simmel (1903), the stranger represents a synthesis between 'freedom' (mobility) and 'fixation' (stability), between near and far, somebody who is connected yet disconnected. Thus the stranger met on trains and station platforms disturbs expectations of physical and emotional distance, bringing into intimate presence the kind of difference and otherness anticipated and tolerated only at a distance. Thus the stranger challenges individualised senses of self at the same time

that the response to this presence both encourages assertions of individuality and objectifies the generalized presence of the crowd. Coding the body within encounters generated by polyrhythmic pulse and flow on the crowded station platform thus forms a point of departure for culturally charged social positioning in terms of both self and other.

Conclusion

In these brief examples rhythm is a medium of elaboration rather than just habituation. The sound of bird song beyond the carriage window no less than the gathering voice of protest on the station platform produce rhythmic arcs of sound in the sense suggested by LaBelle. They bridge material and social realms moving out beyond the immediate and the local, gathering and generating energies, alliances and social meanings embedded in and embodied by patterns of sympathetic resonance and semiotic association. Whilst the routine rhythms of habit form a ground from which a range of imaginative excursions proceed, repetition is itself a maker of difference in which even minor variations produce loss and excess which is socially and culturally as well as materially generative. As the example of the clerk with a first class travel pass shows, random initial encounters develop in contingent ways drawing on a wide range of social and culturally situated understandings and expectations. Interruption almost by definition produces a moment of reflexivity in the break or space between iterations raising awareness of relationships based on situations of presence and absence involving self and other. Whilst the imperfections and context dependence of repetition encourage configurations of interruption, refraction and diffraction generating difference as rhythms contingently overlap and reinforce each other. In this context listening is an active and always to some extent reflexively organised practice not only for social scientists as researchers but for all social actors. The conception of listening developed by Ihde, Nancy, Back, and LaBelle takes this as a starting point when considering rhythm as a medium of social organisation and communication which moves between and brings together material and imaginal, affective and reflexive realms. From this position rhythm does not so much reveal underlying realities in the sense Lefebvre might have thought of it. Rather rhythm is an active producer of realities as contingent ontological

couplings of complimentary, divergent and disparate dimensions of experience. From such a starting point, this paper has argued that rhythm can contribute more fully to an inclusive approach to understanding experiences of mobility. This may provide a productive means of reintegrating the apparently separate dimensions of mobile experience enabling them as Cresswell says to 'make sense together'.

For Ferrarini (2005) the contemporary conception of the railway station based on the maximisation of its income generating capacity is envisaged as a junction for different kinds of traffic, a 'fulcrum for the reorganization of the surrounding area itself'. For her, this marks a 'transformation in the very conception of the railway station'. The regeneration of the Kings Cross / St Pancras area of London related to new high speed and regional rail links is an iconic example. Relevant here is the conception of 'terminal' present in the work of architectural critic Martin Pawley (1939-2008) and deriving both from the transport hub and the computer. In this conception a terminal is a nodal point for the access and exchange of a heterogeneous mix of information, flows and services. It is significant that Steven Connor (1997:212) positions such a nodal networked conception of experience as central to 'the switch-board experience' of modern life found in early telephone systems, radiophonic broadcasting, and the cinema. The juxtaposition of 'switchboard' and 'broadcasting' suggests a complex combination of directed and arbitrary flows, gatherings and dispersals which have direct relevance to networked infrastructures such as railways. Together these suggest on the one hand processes of channelling and exchange, and on the other to emit, transmit, shed, throw, shine, radiate and spread. Thus for Connor (1997:212) these means of communication perform a new shuffling between the 'rapture and capture' of sight and sound. There are echoes in this formulation of LaBelle's (2010:x1x) notion of rhythmic associational 'promiscuity' and the trajectory of spatio-temporal events, arcs of rhythmical movement linking two points in time. Like the computer terminal the station has become a junction point within a territorial system, of mixed traffic flow, a place in which movement is translated into millions of individual lifestyle choices, acquisitions and purchases. Thus as makers of place, stations as terminals are

culturally generative and exemplify the points where objects or actions are translated from one mode or register of circulation to another. The act of translation or transhipment is a point of creative elaboration. It marks cultural location and value as tradable commodities at once remaking and elaborating social meaning. The rhythmic interplay of lack and excess, movement and stasis constitute the station as a place where multiple points of departure, fulfil and generate desires, wants, needs and expectations.

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