

Motion in Place: Sounding Spaces, Movement, Affect and Technologised Mediation

Taylor, J.M., Woolford, K., Norman, S.J., Guedes, C., Dunn, S., White, M., Barker, L.

University of Sussex / King's College London / FEUP / INESC Porto

milo@suborg.net, k.woolford@sussex.ac.uk, S.J.Norman@sussex.ac.uk, cguedes@fe.up.pt,
stuart.dunn@kcl.ac.uk, m.white@sussex.ac.uk, L.Barker@sussex.ac.uk

<http://www.motioninplace.org>

1. Abstract

This paper discusses an AHRC-funded interdisciplinary project being undertaken by researchers at the Universities of Sussex, Bedford, Reading, King's College London and FEUP/INESC Porto. The *Motion in Place Platform* project is developing methodologies and tools to articulate the human experience of moving through place. As such it explores an often bracketed liminality that resides between material environments on the one hand and immaterial cognitive and behavioural processes on the other. A key technology used by the MiPP team is motion capture and we have been developing multi-channel movement recording suitable for use in the field. Two comparative case studies are discussed to illuminate the scope of the project.

The first example presents mocap recording and a 6-channel soundscape captured during the University of Reading's Archaeological Field School (Summer 2010). The MiPP team documented this activity of a large group of archaeologists excavating an Iron Age/ Early Roman site at Silchester, Hampshire. A multitude of gestures, both sonic and kinaesthetic are documented, presenting an excess of human/human and human/world interactions. A key question for us, and one generated through the inter-disciplinary nature of the project, is how these recordings may be interpreted as usable data within a framework shaped by the conjunction between experimental archaeology, informatics, critical theory and soundscape studies.

The second study documents a *listening-in-movement* experiment which investigated how an abstract space/place (an interactive sound installation) may be explored. Conclusions reached were derived from 5 subjects' interactions with the installation environment (captured by binaural microphones, inertial mocap data and video) and supported by interview transcriptions. How, within a controlled environment, does the addition of recording technologies modify a subject's internal and external movements?

The paper builds upon the sensory reaching out to the material environment established by soundscape studies and expands upon this from the perspective of subjectivities in motion. It gains its theoretical context from an inter-disciplinary nexus involving the disciplines introduced above and the proximate fields of contemporary dance, anthropology (Ingold's discussion of "the trace"), archaeoacoustics and affect theory (Manning's "relationscapes" and Massumi's treatment of "the virtual" being of particular relevance).

This paper engages directly with the theme of "crossing listening paths" and outlines an experimental non-reductive methodology allowing researchers from a broad variety of backgrounds to analyse *listening-in-movement-in-place* through a radical empiricism located within a contemporary technologised ecology of affective intensities.