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Rhythm and Pace

The Diurnal Aspects of Leisure Mobilities on the UK Canals and Rivers

Maarja Kaaristo

Introduction

Movement of any kind is 'the spatialization of time and temporalization of space' (Cresswell 2006: 4). When produced or practised in a sociocultural context, it is termed 'mobility', the travelling of 'peoples, objects, images and information' (Urry 2000: 49) that produces and reproduces social and cultural life in various environments and contexts. This theoretical perspective on mobilities – termed 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry 2006) – that emerged in the 2000s paid attention to the practices, corporealities and materialities of movement, the imagined and virtual mobilities, as well as to the politics of movement, the power and authority over different mobilities and immobilities. Mobility became an increasingly important notion analysed as physical, sociocultural, or representative and the practices connected to it often nondiscursive, performative, mundane and subtle (Sheller 2014).

Nevertheless, some aspects of especially leisure-related mobilities have received less attention. Even though 'travel involves speeding up, stopping, slowing down, hurrying and waiting ... relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to the significance of pace in understanding tourist mobilities' (Germann Molz 2009: 272). Pace, as Adam (1995) defines it, is a tempo of activity; the everyday practices of getting up, having breakfast, going to work, etc. are all done by constant appraising of how long these activities

take and how fast are they completed in relation to other activities as well as the available time. Indeed, 'our lives and the spaces we dwell in and move through are composed of a multitude of different rhythms, temporalities, pacings and measures' (Edensor and Holloway 2008: 483). However, following Germann Molz (2009), who argues that movement is paced through rhythm, I suggest that in order to better understand mobilities, we should pay more attention to how rhythm and pace relate to each other.

In order to ascertain how mobilities are paced, we need to study rhythms, which on the general level means focusing on time instead of space, for which Lefebvre (2004) suggests the theory and method of rhythmanalysis. As Edensor (2010: 1) asserts, 'rhythmanalysis is particularly useful in investigating the patterning of a range of multiscalar temporalities – calendrical, diurnal and lunar, lifecycle, somatic and mechanical – whose rhythms provide an important constituent of the experience and organisation of social time'. However, it is important to note, as Smith and Hall (2013) point out, that studying rhythms does not warrant merely discussing the spatial and temporal – we also need to consider mobilities. In this chapter, I will therefore pay particular attention to how mobilities of the holiday boats on the rivers and canals of the United Kingdom are paced through the junctures and connections between the natural (diurnal) and sociocultural rhythms, paying particular attention to the role the interchanging of light and darkness plays in pacing the modern boating mobilities.

The reason for taking this focus is that although the 'perception of luminous and gloomy space is a key existential dimension of living in the world' (Edensor 2017: vii), these perceptions have rarely been researched in relation to rhythm and pace. The notable exceptions here are Cook and Edensor's (2017) study of the rhythms of night-time cycling, and Jóhannesson and Lund's (2017) research on Northern Lights tourism. After discussing the theoretical context, the intersections of mobilities, rhythm and pace, I will give an overview of my research background and the methodology: ethnographic fieldwork, boating on the canals and rivers of northern England and northern Wales. Subsequently, I will analyse the empirical data on canal boating, exploring how the pace of boating is determined by and negotiated in terms of the diurnal rhythms. The chapter will conclude with the identification of the key elements of the diurnal pace of boating and suggest being attentive to the ways in which mobilities are paced through various rhythms.

Pacing Mobilities

When movement is produced in a social context, it is termed 'mobility' and mobilities perspective focuses on 'how the spatialities of social life

presuppose (and frequently involve conflict over) both the actual and the imagined movement of people from place to place, person to person, event to event' (Sheller and Urry 2006: 208). Mobilities and, by extension, immobilities (Salazar and Smart 2011) can be corporeal, material, political, social, institutional, spiritual, virtual or imaginary; the practices connected to them are often nondiscursive, performative, mundane and subtle (Sheller 2014). Both humans and nonhumans construct and modify their environment when and by moving about the space-time, resulting in a myriad of temporalities that emerge from various activities and practices. Mobilities theory conceptualizes movement as an amalgamation of the empirical and the physical, the representational and the symbolic, the embodied, the sensorial and the experiential (Cresswell 2006). Cresswell (2010) suggests that all mobilities should be studied focusing on their constituent elements of velocity, rhythm, routes, experience, emotions and friction. However, even though we can theoretically distinguish between these elements, they should not be treated as silos, which is why it is important to analyse more thoroughly the relationships between them. In this chapter, I will therefore focus on the convergences between velocity and rhythm, which, as I will show, are the key notions for understanding pacing.

Tempo is the speed, pace and intensity of various activities that take place, change and are changed in various social situations (Adam 2004). However, it is important to note that the notion of speed is relational: in order to consider something slow or fast, there needs to be a point of comparison. It can also be political in terms of the 'power chronography' (Sharma 2014), as the meanings attributed to particular temporality can depend heavily on the various power hierarchies pertaining to gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic status in society. A group of people slowly walking along a country road can be seen in a positive light if they are hikers enjoying a socially acceptable, healthy and environmentally friendly pastime; conversely, they can instead be perceived as unwanted or even dangerous if they turn out to be a group of refugees fleeing war or poverty. We should therefore 'understand modernity in terms of friction, tension and ambiguity as we pivot between stillness, slowness and acceleration' (Germann Molz 2009: 284).

Contemporary industrialized societies have been characterized by acceleration and time-space compression, where the space is perceived as shrinking into the global village, where people are always preoccupied by speed and saving time (Zerubavel 1981) while simultaneously perpetually focusing on the present moment (Harvey 1990). The reasons for this change lie mainly in historically relatively recent technological acceleration in terms of transport (Virilio 2012). In addition, advances in information and communication technologies have brought about the perceived acceleration of

the pace of life, have created new ways of how time is perceived, and have transformed the practices and habits of communication between people (Wajcman 2008), leading to, for instance, a diminution of private time and the right to be unavailable for communication, both of which have become somewhat scarce resources (Agger 2015).

A response for this perceived acceleration is the emergence of the idea of slow living, a cognisant pacing of everyday temporalities with a purpose to experience time more meaningfully (Parkins 2004). In the tourism and leisure context, this includes slow tourism, which includes favouring sustainable transport, staying longer and travelling shorter distances (Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010) in order to create a pace that differs from the perceived hectic mainstream holidays and work life (Guiver and McGrath 2017). Thus, in terms of leisure and tourism, pace itself can be regarded as destination (Germann Molz 2018) and this is especially the case in transport tourism such as taking cruises, sailing or canal boating.

Therefore, as Germann Molz (2018) highlights, pace is multiple and relational, intertwined with attention, simultaneously individual and externally imposed, and a 'rhythm is slow or lively only in relation to other rhythms (often our own: those or our walking, our breathing, our heart)' (Lefebvre 2004: 10). The coexistence of various paces reveals 'the coexistence of multiple periodicities, and by implication a lack of coordination between scales and registers of temporal order' (Shove et al. 2009: 3). Many uncertainties and discontinuities of the timing of mobilities that shape the pace of people's mobile practices exist simultaneously, both fast and slow, in a field of 'uneven multiplicity of temporalities that is complicated by the labour arrangements, cultural practices, technological environments, and social spaces that respond to this so-called globalized, speedy world' (Sharma 2014: 9).

The Social and Natural Rhythms of Movement

Time has often been theorized through the binary notions of cyclical (traditional) versus linear (clock) time (Fabian 1983; Herzfeld 2009). Ingold (2000a) addresses this dualism in terms of social and clock time, with the former corresponding to individual and sociocultural temporality, and the latter to time as measured by the physical movement of the earth around the sun, as well as around its own axis, happening externally to human activities. All these notions therefore attend to a certain tension between time as a sociocultural phenomenon and as something determined by physical realities. Most of our understandings of time and temporality, whether determined by physics, biology or society and culture (Zerubavel 1981),

are relational and, as Iparraguirre (2016) argues, they are mostly about rhythmics.

Lefebvre (2004: 15) is often quoted for the statement that 'everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm'. However, exactly what is rhythm – how are we able to determine that something is rhythmical? Honing (2001) defines rhythm as a repetitive occurrence of an action over time, which then becomes a temporal structuring device. Another important aspect of rhythm is anticipation and 'the definition of rhythm should be based more on duration as lived time than on frequency or periodicity as in a mechanical clock' (You 1994: 362). The repetitiveness of rhythm therefore does not mean that it is somehow metronomic; instead, the rhythms grow out of and are essential parts of people's everyday activities (Ingold 2000b):

> For there to be rhythm, there must be repetition in a movement, but not just any repetition. The monotonous return of the same, self-identical, no more forms a rhythm than does some moving object on its trajectory, for example a falling stone; though our ears and without doubt our brains tend to introduce a rhythm into every repetition, even completely linear ones. For there to be rhythm . . . long and short times, recurring in a recognisable way, stops, silences, blanks, resumptions and intervals in accordance with regularity, must appear in a movement. Rhythm therefore brings with it a differentiated time, a qualified duration. (Lefebvre 2004: 78)

This means that inherently rhythmic human practices are both 'fundamentally and necessarily open' (Blue 2019: 927) as they emerge through intensive repetition and routine, yet are never the same: 'rhythm is not only a repetition of the same, but also the emergence of difference within that repetition' (Simpson 2008: 814).

Inspired by Lefebvre's (2004) unfinished project of rhythmanalysis, academics have started to pay serious attention to the role various rhythms play in social life (Edensor 2010). For instance, Jauhiainen (2007) adopts rhythmanalysis as a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach that pays close attention to the relationship between the body, the rhythms and the surrounding space, in order to study geography departments in Finland and Estonia. He concludes that 'the everyday at the university is a mixture of rhythms in-between natural changes of seasons, soci(et) ally imposed spatio-temporal practices and technologies of domination, unexpected instant disruptions and the small bodily tactics of presence and absence making a difference' (Jauhiainen 2007: 251). Edensor and Holloway's (2008) study of a coach tour in Ireland is another example of this approach, demonstrating how different rhythms take centre stage in

different phases of the coach journey and that a tourism practice (such as a coach tour) involves a multiplicity of rhythmic assemblages of affect, technologies, materialities and embodied sensations. Drawing attention to familiar and unfamiliar rhythms, mobile, embodied and everyday rhythms, Edensor (2012) argues that rhythmanalysis is a useful tool for analysing a variety of practices, spatial qualities, multisensory experiences and convivial as well as individual habits.

Rhythms are multisensory, embedded in personal lives but also dependent on particular tasks, as well as modes of movement, and they are as important in the spatial orientation, as well as the organization of various periodic activities (Ingold and Kurttila 2000). Natural rhythms such as the seasonal and diurnal rhythms determine what goes on in the environment with its specific changes and variations, whereas humans, animals and plants operate in a circadian rhythm of a 24-hour period. Biological rhythms can be internal, such as the menstrual cycle (Glass 2001) or external, as controlled by various cues. These stimuli are called *zeitgebers,* which is German for 'time givers', and for humans and other mammals the most powerful *zeitgebers* are light and darkness (Murray 2006). However, the timings and durations of work, leisure, sleep or eating also depend heavily on numerous social and cultural factors as well as interpersonal relationships, known as the 'social zeitgebers' (Ehlers et al. 1988). As Lefebvre (2004: 74) also points out, circadian rhythms can change for various technological, social or economic reasons, as 'social practice eats bit by bit into the night'.

Rhythms are omnipresent, happening concurrently in any given situation and place, forming an incessant 'polyrhythmia' (Lefebvre 2004: 16) of varied simultaneous occurrences: the day and night alternate (natural rhythms); people drive to work and back home (sociocultural rhythms); hearts beat in their bodies (physiological rhythms). Paying attention to the rhythms means bringing the temporal properties of the experience to the foreground, and the rhythms of both collective and individual social performance are a result of sequencing, pacing and timing of tasks as a set of coordinated activities (Lyon 2018). For Lefebvre (2004: 78), rhythm is repetition in movement: 'long and short times, recurring in a recognisable way, stops, silences, blanks, resumptions and intervals in accordance with regularity, must appear in a movement'. The main goal of the rhythmanalysis is not necessarily identifying and describing the rhythms that characterize specific place or location; instead, it allows us to 'examine the ways in which rhythm shapes the mobile experience of space' (Edensor 2011: 191).

Context of the Study: The UK Canal Network as a Temporal Waterscape

There are ca. 3,000 miles (4,800 km) of navigable inland waterways in England and Wales, managed mostly by the Canal and River Trust (CRT), formerly the governmental organization British Waterways, which was reorganized into a charity in 2012. The network consists of various material elements (and their remnants) as well as layers introduced and added over different periods, making them a 'liquid chronotope' (Peterle and Visentin 2017). Throughout their life cycle (Tang and Jang 2010), the canals have undergone a significant transformation: they provided efficient – and speedy – transport links when constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but were gradually phased out as a goods transportation network following the introduction and growth of the faster railways in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. After the waterways were briefly again used for carrying cargo for the war effort during the world wars, when they were operated mainly by women (Hately-Broad and Moore 2014), their use for transportation ceased and they were left largely derelict. The next important stage came about with the network's growing leisure usage and the largely volunteer restoration that started in the mid-twentieth century in order to accommodate this (Trapp-Fallon 2007).

Today, nearly half of the 65 million population of the UK lives within 5 miles (8 km) of a waterway. The value of canals as a resource for leisure, tourism, health and wellbeing is now widely recognized, and a variety of uses, including leisure boating, walking, angling and cycling, in rural and urban areas are promoted. In 2017/18, 4.3 million people visited waterways during a typical two-week period (Canal and River Trust 2018a). There are 34,000 licensed boats currently on the network (Canal and River Trust 2018b), 83 per cent of which are narrowboats (Canal and River Trust 2017), a type of vessel designed specifically for the narrow canals of the United Kingdom. Contemporary canals have emerged as blue-and-green corridors in urban spaces used for leisure and tourism, as industrial heritage, as spaces for urban waterfront development, as water resources and as urban cooling systems, and the towpaths have increasingly been used as service routes containing telecommunication fibre-optic cables (Jones and Mean 2010; Airas 2017; Kaaristo and Rhoden 2017; Pitt 2018).

The data for this chapter was collected in 2015–17 as part of my research on canal and river tourism via ethnographic fieldwork in northwest England and north Wales. I gathered data via qualitative in-depth, semi-structured interviews and participant observation of canal boating, as well as informal conversations with leisure boaters, live-aboard boaters, employees of the

CRT and members of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA). The main empirical basis for this chapter is formed from twenty in-depth interviews with British leisure boaters aged between twenty-four and eighty-three, and fieldnotes of participant observation from the fifteen boat trips undertaken during the fieldwork period. As requested by the research participants (except for one who has been given a pseudonym), I refer to them using their real first names in the chapter.

The Slow Pace of Light: Daytime Rhythms of Boating

'To see the sky is to be the sky, since the sky is luminosity and the visual perception of the sky is an experience of light' (Ingold 2005: 101). In practical terms, both the light and its absence, the dark, determine a large part of the canal boating pace. Boaters inhabit the 'boat time' (Bowles 2016) on the inland waterways, which, even though based on the understanding of time and temporality largely stemming from 'Western' or 'modern' notions, is nevertheless still based on natural rhythms with their cycles, repetitions and restrictions (Koselleck 2002) and is perceived as 'slow' by the boaters. On the canal, the natural rhythms take greater precedence and create a 'boat time', encompassing daily routines of the boaters differing from those on the land (Bowles 2019). Whether cruising along the canal, operating the locks or walking on the towpath, canal boaters are negotiating the diurnal rhythm of the alteration of day and night combined with the numerous social *zeitgebers*, which result in various configurations of the rhythmical pacing of the canal boating every day.

Time feels 'different' on the waterways because of the pace: canal boating is a form of slow mobility (Fallon 2012) for engine-powered vessels and vehicles, as the maximum speed allowed on the narrow UK canals is 4 mph (6.4 km/h). This is equivalent to a walking pace and is one of the most common motivating factors for canal boaters:

> I like the pace [of canal boating] and I think that's part of the draw of it – the slow pace. It gives you a chance to engage with people, with the environment. If you're in a rush to get somewhere, it's not that sort of holiday. (Janet, sixty-six)

Becoming attuned to this changed temporal regime is therefore regarded as almost unavoidable: 'There's this calmness and peacefulness [on the canal]. Even if you wanted to be in a rush you really couldn't be in a rush' (Katie, twenty-four). The holiday boaters, often middle-class and relatively affluent white British, practise slow boating as a form of privileged mobility (Amit 2007), since they possess the cultural, financial and temporal capital

for enjoying slow travel. For them, the slowness of the moving canal boat relates to nostalgia for rural temporalities common in tourism imaginaries (cf. Kaaristo and Järv 2012):

> Generally, you're in the countryside, aren't you? And I think the weather's nice. It's lovely in the mornings, because it's so peaceful and you can hear the birds and you can see the wildlife and I think that's really, really nice and I think generally, we've lost touch with nature. You know, we're all leading busy lives – it's all dash here, dash there. And we live in areas where it's really all houses and sometimes, I think – well, especially when I walk, as well – I think that you need that. You need that space, mentally. I think the countryside is really lovely and you get that on a canal boat. (Linda, sixty-six)

However, boating also includes several strategic practices of pacing as sometimes leisure boaters make a conscious effort to better slow down. This can include leaving laptops, phones or, in some cases, even books behind at home, which allows the boaters to engage in 'doing nothing' (Ehn and Löfgren 2010), such as sitting in the bow and 'watching the world go by' (Kirsten, thirty-two). Thanks to this 'slow pace of life [on the canal], you have a chance to see nature, see the birds, the plants' (David, sixty-eight), which results in a counterscape for a perceived accelerated everyday and work life, as well as other holidays. Boating is therefore a tactical means of deliberately altering the pace by putting yourself into temporal situations where mobility is governed by slowness. However, this slow pace is not always necessarily perceived as desirable or indeed positive, as some boaters also mention suffering boredom and frustration at the inactivity encountered whilst canal boating, where the mobile phone switches off regardless of their will due to a lack of signal and data coverage or simply power (which depends on the running engine). There is also a certain period of adjustment in which temporalities change, the slower pace is acclimatised and acquiesced to, and the boaters effectively change from one 'temporal regimen' (Symes 2012) into another:

> When we first got on [the boat] – if you were stuck in a queue at a lock, I'd get quite aggravated and tense, because I was so used to rushing. But after a certain length of time, that goes away and you become more relaxed. I used to get annoyed. 'We're first, we're next, not them!' – that type of thing, you know. But then you get more relaxed about it all, as time goes on, because you're only travelling very slowly. (Linda, sixty-six)

Diurnal rhythm determines an aspect of the boat mobility in a most straightforward way, as most of the cruising on the canals is done during

or planned for the daytime. In fact, the whole activity is largely 'dictated by the light. As soon as the light starts to go, you need to pull over, because you can't safely moor up and jump off [the boat] and everything' (Kirsten, thirty-two). This is a matter of convenience and practicality: it is simply easier to handle the boat and negotiate the canal locks (which are manually opened and closed by the boaters) during daylight and with good visibility, and therefore the amount of cruising hours can directly depend on the number of daylight hours available in a particular day. During the boating season (traditionally defined as from when Easter falls to Bonfire Night on 5 November), when the days are longer with the sun rising earlier and setting later, the boaters can and do more hours of cruising, thereby covering longer distances. An important aspect determining the pace of the boaters' daily mobility is therefore monitoring and following the diurnal rhythmicity of the dawn (sunrise), daytime (daylight), dusk (sunset) and night-time (darkness).

An example of this is the common practice of holiday boaters of waking up with the sunrise at dawn (or as close to it as possible) in order to extend their cruising hours regardless of the clock-based, conventional workday-orientated rhythms that might characterize their nonboating life. Similarly, every boating day is characterized by the moment the approaching sunset becomes evident, which means the need to start looking for a place to moor before it goes completely dark. This pace of boating is especially pronounced for those on hired boats, as it is not just a practicality or convenience, but an administrative rule: the hireboats are not allowed to cruise in the dark (as opposed to the privately owned boats). The CRT boaters' handbook advises the boaters to 'moor up before it gets dark and avoid using locks at night' and reminds boaters that 'cruising after dark is not permitted by the hire boat companies' (Canal and River Trust & Environment Agency 2014: 53).

The pace of boats on the canal is therefore governed by the mixture of entangled diurnal and administrative rhythms; for example, it is common to request that a hired boat be returned 'by 5 p.m. or sunset if earlier on the same day' (personal communication with the hire company). Some boaters therefore must adjust and balance their individual daily rhythms with the diurnally as well as administratively dictated pace and their habitual social *zeitgebers* might have to be altered and adjusted:

> My friend wasn't really a morning person, but since you're only allowed to cruise on the boat during daylight hours, we couldn't go with his normal, nocturnal habit. So I'd have to get him up early. That was my first task. And make him a cup of tea, so that he was ready. (Angela, forty-one)

Since the hireboaters need to accomplish particular routes before the boat must be returned on the specific day and hour as stated in the hiring agreement, their pace depends heavily on the administrative rhythms imposed on them by the hire companies. Their movement along the canal thus creates an eurhythmia of the natural and administrative, with the bundles of synchronized and normative rhythms (Blue 2019), allowing for the rhythms of the hireboat companies with their repetitive practices of their working days to be synchronized with their boats moving along the waterways network.

The boat time is therefore characterized in terms of the chronological difference and is primarily perceived as slow in pace. It emerges from the interactions between the boaters and the environment, but also from the constant interferences from and chance and happenstances (Bowles 2019), to which the boaters constantly must react by the means of 'tacking' (Amit and Knowles 2017). The diurnal rhythms and administrative rhythms mutually influence each other, certain practices and habits are developed, and all these play an important part in the development and emergence of the slow pace of mobility. To borrow a word from Ian McMillan's libretto to Ian Stephens's 2016 *Super Slow Way: A Rhapsody to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal*, contemporary canals are 'superslowways', where mobility is creatively negotiated and paced in a manifold of converging tasks, practices and embodied actions through multiple social and natural rhythms.

Pacing the Darkness and Illumination

'The night does not interrupt the diurnal rhythms but modifies them, and above all slows them down' (Lefebvre 2004: 30). The general practice of boating during daylight hours does not mean that the dusk and ensuing darkness necessarily always signifies a break in the movement of boats on the canal. There are several reasons for the need to keep moving in the dark, such as searching for a suitable mooring space, in the case of a breakdown, or simply wanting to keep going since mooring up at sunset would result in little cruising time during the short days of winter. As Phil (sixty-seven) explains: 'If we go [boating] in November, it will be dark after five o'clock. Certainly, at Christmas – then you won't get anywhere, if you're stopping, if you're doing it in daylight hours.' Therefore, when the diurnal rhythms meet seasonal rhythms, the pace of boating might change and this includes constant creative action and reaction, being attendant to the changing situation or 'tacking' (Amit and Knowles 2017), readiness to improvise and creatively react to new circumstances.

Just as important as the 'weather-wise skills' (Rantala et al. 2011) that are needed for successful negotiations with the weather in tourism, the

boater similarly needs diurnal skills in order to cope and negotiate with darkness. These include being able to consider the time of sunset and the ensuing darkness (determined by the visual clues) and to combine them with information about the surrounding canal environment. Knowledge about the potential availability of, and distance from, suitable mooring spaces, the anticipated time needed to reach those spaces, as well as the number and location of locks and winding holes (turning points) on the canal, are all-important for a successful boater and are crucial elements that determine the pace of boating:

> If it's your own boat, you can travel at night, but why would anybody want to do that – because you're passing everything that you've come to see. That was obviously something from back in the day, when they [the working boats] were used constantly. Yeah, we've done a few extended days, and it's not nice – travelling in the dusk, struck dark; not nice, but we've only done that because of nowhere to moor and being delayed further earlier in the day, because of locks, and water, and that has delayed our travel. We've always tried to stick to a routine. We've changed it to an extent, if we've got further than we thought because of luck of the draw with locks – then we've carried on and gone a bit further. (Mike, forty-eight)

Not possessing the requisite diurnal skills, or the failure to exercise them properly, can result in arrhythmia, or disruptions, which can be daunting, especially for the novice boater. The linearity of the canals means that they can take boaters to places perceived of as unsafe, the sense of which is further amplified by the surrounding darkness, for a variety of cultural and sociological reasons. The following interview excerpt describes the only time Kirsten (thirty-two) has felt unsafe during her boating trips, a result of miscalculated trajectory and the feelings amplified by an environment characterized by diminishing daylight:

> On our last trip, we turned off from the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, which was such a stupid thing to do, and went off to [the] Grand Union Canal towards Birmingham. And it was getting darker and darker and we were getting more and more into the depths of Birmingham, and it's an industrial part of Birmingham. And it started to get like, the kind of, people along the towpath started to change as well, so we were getting lots of people shouting 'Ooh, can I have a ride!' And I was like, 'Tom [her partner], I really don't like this' – 'I know, neither do I, but keep on going, be brave!' [laughing] . . . And eventually, it was getting so dark, and we were like, we have got to pull over and we had to stay in this little industrial estate in Birmingham. It was so creepy . . . Neither of us slept very well that night. Because that wasn't like your usual rural spot.

> It felt quite creepy and we actually bumped onto, like a floodlight. We moored under a floodlight in an industrial estate – at least then, there is some form of light. (Kirsten, thirty-two)

As is evident from this narration, Kirsten, a novice boater, perceives the darkness as dangerous and unwanted, and the little security she found was derived from mooring under a floodlight during the night. This has multiple reasons as, on the one hand, it corresponds to the general fear of the dark in the Western part of the world, with the associations with folk beliefs of various spirits and creatures inhabiting the darkness, as well as Christian ideas connecting night-time with the devil (Edensor 2017). On the other hand, the aversion to darkness is also linked with the negative perception of the setting – an industrial estate of Birmingham – as Kirsten's fear relates to the notion that particular urban areas can be dangerous, especially during the night. The resultant concerns can often be 'filtered through the pervasive lens of race and class', with particularly women expressing 'fears of homeless people, minority gangs, and young people drinking' due to their socialization to be wary of strangers (Wesely and Gaarder 2004: 657). Nevertheless, in this extremely unfamiliar situation, she and her partner were still able to successfully 'tack' the situation: as it became increasingly evident that they would not be able to leave the estate, they improvised by mooring on the offside of the canal (the nontowpath side) under the floodlight that provided them with a sense of security.

On the tidal rivers, boating in the dark can be necessary due to the timings of the tidal passage, directly connected to the rhythm of the river. For example, the River Trent becomes tidal (known as 'aegir') below Cromwell Lock in North Muskham. During my boat trip in October 2016 with a group of experienced canal boaters, we had to arrive on time in order to be allowed into the West Stockwith Lock between the river and Chesterfield Canal – failure to do so would have meant a delay and would have impacted upon the successful completion of the entire trip. The rhythms of the river here intersected with the planned pace of the boaters, as lunisolar temporality took over, 'driven by the interlocking rhythms of day-night (solar rhythm) and tidal rise and fall (lunar rhythm)' (Jones 2010: 190). Our arrival at the lock was well calculated in advance by Gordon and Phil, both experienced boaters, and had we not made it in time, our rhythms would have been disrupted and our pace slowed down by having to moor at the lock and wait for three days before the next passage. It was afternoon when we got through the lock and, while on the river, it started getting darker and darker. By the time we reached our destination, the Torksey Lock, it was pitch-black outside and Gordon and Phil had to rely on a combination of illumination from the torches, the boat's front light and their embodied

knowledge, memory and skills of boating in order to successfully moor up for the night.

Due to the utilization of electrical lights, the natural rhythms of the alteration of daylight with darkness now has less influence on human activities in the contemporary world. Since the end of the nineteenth century, electricity has had a significant impact on both rural and urban space, and has in effect contributed to the formation of the modern sense of space by altering the appearances of both cities and landscapes, as well as the rhythms of socializing (McQuire 2005). The electric lights are now social *zeitgebers* that extend and regulate the waking hours of those on board as well as 'pacers' of such things as the external headlights that enable and facilitate cruising in the dark. Boat lights enhance the surrounding environment with artificial illumination in order to secure better visibility for the boaters as well as allowing them to be visible to others, thus enabling mobility. 'Illumination always materializes power' (Edensor 2017: 81) and the boat lights are there not only for better visibility, but because they are legally required by the navigation authorities in the illumination codes for boats on rivers. The general rule is to feature white lights on the bow (front) and stern (back) while on the canals. For boating on rivers, an additional green light on the right and a red light on the left must be installed. This provides other boaters with a number of visual cues, and the ability to read these codes is another important part of the diurnal skills of boating: e.g. seeing a white light above a red one whilst in the dark on the river means a boat crossing from your right to left.

Illuminations, however, are not merely used for practical or regulation-related purposes – the boats can also become venues where the experience of boating and the canals is enhanced through the conduit of noninstrumental illumination, leading to 'the production of distinctively festive atmospheres in domestic spaces . . . informed by forms of tacit knowledge, shared tastes, and moral conventions' (Edensor 2017: 157). Combining the noninstrumental lights with those afforded by the natural environment can then become a means of further enhancing the holiday experience; for example, Barry (sixty-six) describes a dinner under the full moon on a boat decorated with fairy lights. This vernacular illumination on the canals can be practised in several ways, from the illuminated boat to a showerhead with changing multicoloured lights that Phil and Gordon installed on their boat, an expression of their ever-continuing home improvements and various technical and engineering experiments on the boat.

The interplay between the light and dark is an important factor in canal boating, but even though it is rhythmical, every evening the dusk arrives with some alterations from the boaters' perspective as there are number variables that keep changing, including the environment, landscape or cityscape,

other people, boaters' plans, etc. The boaters constantly negotiate the small changes that sometimes can require specific skills in their tacking practices to successfully deal with the situation at hand. The natural darkness that the boaters constantly negotiate is also enhanced by electrical lighting (including the administrative purpose of signalling and conveying information to other boaters), which then can serve as a pacer for various activities.

Conclusion: The Diurnal Aspects of Pacing the Water Mobilities

For a better understanding of pace, we need to discuss how movement is paced through rhythm (Germann Molz 2009) and how the rhythms often emerge in mobilities and mobilities in rhythms. In this chapter, I have focused mainly on how the rhythmical alternation between the day and night determine the pace of leisure boating mobilities on the inland waterways. This pace, generally perceived by boaters as slow, is a result of intersecting natural and administrative rhythms to which the boaters respond with particular practices and strategies. My goal has not been to identify the rhythms that characterize the waterway network as a fixed location; instead, I have scrutinized how some aspects of boating mobility on the canal are paced through the diurnal rhythms, which is never static or metronomical, but includes boaters' dynamic and changing responses to the environment.

The boaters on inland waters move at a slow pace, completing their passages as afforded and sometimes directed by the diurnal rhythm of changing daylight and darkness. In order to be successful, they need to fulfil a wide variety of somewhat repetitive yet never identical boating tasks that often need a specific set of diurnal skills and require creativity and improvisation. The boaters also negotiate the rhythms of administrative power, as various institutional frameworks and limitations also govern their pace. Inland waterways therefore become a site where the pace of mobility emerges through several relational practices that respond to the rhythmical patterns of the diurnal cycle, rendering them kaleidoscopic and potentially hybridic (Cheetham et al. 2018) in their constantly changing sequences.

The pace of boating therefore emerges from the creative responses to the particular temporal complex of the waterways, partly determined by the diurnal rhythms, where the alterations between dark and light point us to pay attention to the relationship between the natural as well as social and individual perceptions of time and their implications. In a watery socionatural rhythmscape, individual and collective, natural and social, meet, determining the boaters' everyday pace as well as their ways of thinking about the pace of life, slowness, everyday life tasks and safety. Boaters constantly

negotiate the various *zeitgebers*, as well as the various human and nonhuman actors, and utilize their 'tacking' skills through numerous creative practices. The diurnal rhythms on the canals are therefore important factors in creating this ever-changing, dynamic and liquid pace of watery mobilities.

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