

# 老年人移动构成的时空 ——老龄化地理学中非表征理论的引入<sup>①</sup>

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**摘要:**本文主要介绍了非表征理论及其在老龄化地理学研究中的运用。该理论的引入将使老龄化地理学成为一个重新焕发活力的研究领域。该领域涉及老年人生活中广泛而多样的空间移动与体验, 涵盖移动的参与者、时效性和感知等维度, 从而更好地表达和反映空间移动的本质特征。

**关键词:**非表征理论; 老龄化地理学; 地理老年学

## 1 引言

本文将非表征理论引入现有理论工具之中, 这将对当前老龄化地理学在概念、理论和实证方面的有益补充(Andrews et al, 2007, 2009, 2013; Golant, 2003; Hopkins et al, 2007; Skinner et al, 2015)。该理论的提出将有助于对老年移动(movement)进行全面和即时的探讨。在介绍非表征理论的关键层面(及其与社会老年学中现有视角和观点的关联)之前, 首先对老龄化移动研究如何在社会地理学和健康地理学(包括老龄问题研究)中产生进行两个方面的文献回顾, 这将引出本文的主要观点: 非表征理论的应用, 一是可以将研究重心从关注老年人有意识的移动, 以及希望老年人以特定方式移动的有意识的动机和行动中抽离出来, 从而将重心放到无意识和不完全意识的移动上; 二是可以从对特定、有限范围的移动的关注, 扩展到对包括构成时空的所有移动类型、移动形式、参与者和行动者的关注; 最后, 还可以从对过去发生的移动类型、机制及其意义的描述和解释, 扩展到对正在发生的移动及其特征和感知的关注。

### 1.1 当前人类移动的研究焦点: 关键的实证主题

社会地理学和健康地理学是涉及老龄化地理

研究最多的两个人文地理分支学科, 多年来从各种不同的角度开展了对老年人各种行为的研究。正如我们所见, 已有的这些研究并不是以非表征理论的视角来开展的。由于大多数事物(如疾病、服务、资源和人口)都处于变动之中, 因此相关文献非常庞大, 但我们仍可从其中识别出有关人类移动的核心关注领域。例如, 学者们已将人类移动看作人类健康和幸福感的“社会决定因素”(宽泛的定义)进行实证研究, 这一方法在调查研究的三大重要领域中异常普遍。

(1) 人口的迁移。因为健康和卫生保健系统而导致的人口在国家内部或不同国家之间的移动(Boyle, 2004; Norman et al, 2005)。在此方面老龄化研究的长期特别关注点是老年人的迁移目的地、动机、决策过程和迁移经历, 以及对老龄化服务政策的影响(Wiseman et al, 1979; Warnes et al, 1984; Bentham, 1988; Joseph et al, 1991; Glaser et al, 1998; King et al, 2000; Silveira et al, 2001; Moore et al, 2004; Oliver, 2007)。事实上, 这些研究并不关注长距离迁移行为本身, 而关注在总体和宏观尺度上已经完成的(过去的)迁移活动的状况、影响和结果。近年来, 对时空尺度上人类生命历程所起作用 and 迁移的批判性思考和研究已有所增加。这些研

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究对生命的“历程”在微观尺度上的多次迁移和迁移的意义更为敏感(Bailey, 2009; Jarvis et al, 2011; Schwanen et al, 2012)。

(2) 基于体能活动的观点而迅速发展的新兴多学科交叉研究(Witten et al, 2008; Matthews et al, 2009),尤其是“可步行性”概念的提出及相关研究已成为当前研究热点。例如,该方面的研究已经特别关注到可步行城市环境的营造和形式(Ewing et al, 2009; Gehl, 2010),考虑了促进及阻碍可步行性的潜在社会 and 结构因素(Pouliou et al, 2010; Holt et al 2009),探讨了度量可步行性的方法或进行了可步行性的度量(Gebel et al, 2011; Van Dyck et al, 2011),并且就公众对可步行性的感知进行了量化和归纳(Loukaitou-Sideris, 2006; Weinstein Agrawal et al, 2008)。研究关注步行活动的潜在可能性和动机(Andrews et al 2012),特别是聚焦于老年人研究步行活动与财富(King et al 2011)、心理健康(Berke et al 2007)和邻里住区设计(Takano et al 2002; Frank et al 2010; Weiss et al 2010)等因素关联。

(3) 基于活动是健康的关联因素的认识,探讨健康和社会照护服务者与需求者之间的空间距离。这些研究也归属健康地理学关于“可达性及其使用行为”的研究领域(Joseph et al, 1984);通常强调服务使用行为的距离衰减效应(随着距离的增加,对服务的使用频率下降),及其对健康所产生的影响。对老年人口相关的研究,不仅考虑服务的使用行为,也关注“非行动”因素,包括老年人住址与服务设施、居住距离较远的子女和其他照护者的邻近度(Joseph et al, 1998; Nemet et al, 2000)

此外,在社会地理和健康地理的研究中,另有3个研究领域通过以定性方法为主导的途径,对人类移动进行了更为直接和更具批判性的研究。第一个领域主要关注损伤、残疾及其相应情况下的移动性,以及受损个体因此所面临的挑战和社会接纳(Butler et al, 1999; Gleeson, 1999; Crooks et al, 2008)。该领域的研究焦点在于老年人的移动空间与范围(Meyer et al, 1985; Schwanen et al, 2010)、城市和农村所面临的不同挑战(Mattson, 2010)和政策影响(Mercado et al, 2010)。第二个领域关注健身活动,大多数研究关注身体运动的含义和特征、运动发生地,以及所涉及的权力关系(Andrews et al, 2003; Bale, 2004; Vertinsky et al, 2004; Andrews et al, 2005)。尽管对该领域老龄化问题的关注较少,但也有对老年人积极休闲活动和生活方式的研究(Mansvelt, 1997; McConatha et al, 2012; Stratford,

2014)。第三个领域的涉及面更广,且与第一、第二领域的部分研究有所结合,可被广义地描述为关于“新移动性”的研究,阐释了诸如交通、休闲活动、休息、工作、健康、健康护理等多种移动形式的动机、意义和影响(Gatrell, 2011; Warf, 2010; Crooks et al, 2011; Kingsbury et al, 2012)。该领域老龄化的研究侧重点各异,但老年人旅游的移动性和幸福感成为近年关注的焦点(Williams et al, 2000, 2002; Rodriguez, 2001; Schwanen et al, 2011)。

## 1.2 当前移动研究的焦点:揭示“特性”

从社会与科学的立场来看,移动具有某些特性(移动也由这些特性构成)。现有文献对这些特性的探讨关乎但也超出了人的范畴。因此社会和健康地理学已对移动的“节律”进行了初步探索(跨越空间和所在地),这体现在长期以来对一系列现象所进行的时间序列和时空分析的实证研究中(Meade et al, 2010),包括疾病的发生和传播(Smallman-Raynor et al, 1991; Gould, 1993; Rogers et al, 2000; Robertson et al, 2014)和对特定疾病的诊治和住院治疗(Crighton et al, 2001, 2008; Leong et al, 2006)。借助详细的计算机辅助制图和地理信息系统(GIS)等分析工具,本文展现了发生在宏观尺度上诸现象的序列化“节律”。尽管此类研究对老龄化的关注较少,学者们对老龄化和传染病,包括HIV的研究却越来越感兴趣(Yoshikawa, 2000; High et al, 2008)。与此同时,在人口学等其他研究中,已经关注到人口变化的长期时空节律,这与人口健康的规律以及特定地区政府和健康部门面临的挑战相关。有关老年人口的研究成为关注的焦点(Moore et al, 1997; Rosenberg et al, 1997; Smallman-Raynor et al, 1999; Phillips, 2002; McCracken et al, 2005; Lin et al, 2007)。事实上,这些研究更应归入人口老龄化和国际/全球健康的范畴。

社会地理和健康地理学运用质性研究方法开展的大量实证研究都涉及到“节律”的研究议题,大致可分为3个方面。第一,关注治疗、护理等行为的例行化、程式性、“节律”性及其发生地点。例如,在护理(Andrews et al, 2008)和戒毒(DeVerteuil et al, 2009; Wilton et al, 2014)等方面所开展的研究。该领域有关老年的研究主要关注非正式和正式的家庭和社区照护的惯例特征(Wiles, 2003)。第二,探究身体如何与其周围广泛的节律相协调,而这种节律,像大海涨落的节律(Kearns et al, 2012),以及健身活动与环境的节律(Bale, 2004; Andrews, 2005),是疗养场所和个人体验的构成部分。健身活动与

环境节律研究的兴趣点,在于将老龄化过程和健身结合起来(Paulson, 2005)。第三,关注慢性病病人包括心理疾病患者(Dear et al, 1987; Parr, 1998, 2008)的日常活动范围(Moss, 1997; Moss et al, 2003)。这些研究尤其关注老龄化和老年人的行为规律,该行为通常是在人们的健康状况和社会环境发生变化时,通过适应过程所形成的一种临时生存策略(Rowles, 2000; Antoninetti et al, 2012; Stratford, 2014)。

另一个受到有限关注的移动特质是(跨越空间和所在地的)“动量”(momentum)。例如,社会地理和健康地理的相关研究表明,跨空间的“行为动量”会由一种行为(如饮酒、服药或做临时工)导致另外的行为(如随意的性行为),并产生健康效应(如滥交、肝炎和艾滋病)(Luginaah, 2008; Mkandawire, et al, 2014)。然而,有关老龄化的研究表明,老年人身体和精神健康状况的不断变化导致他们在不同护理机构的空间中主动或者被动的迁移,以及所需护理复杂性程度的增加,而这些过程中所产生的动量更多是受到环境的影响而非主动性行为的影响(尽管研究关注的是转变本身及其后果)(Magilvy et al, 2000; Reed et al, 2003; Lee et al, 2013)。此外,慢性病患者的日常生活行为是社会地理和健康地理的研究热点(Moss, 1997; Moss et al, 2003)。研究结果表明,在许多情况下,人们的生活可以更确切地被描述为“受困的”或“静态的”(缺乏动量)甚至是“退缩的”(反方向多余的负动量)(Dyck, 1995; Crooks, 2007)。在老年的相关研究中,增加了对这些兴趣点的关注(Pain 2001)。本文同样关注老年人如何依靠他们自身或者借助优秀的设计和干预措施来应对由于其身体和心理健康水平下降而产生的“动量”变化所带来的挑战(Kong et al 1996; Gant 1997; Rowles, 2000; Wiles et al 2009)。老龄化问题的相关研究已增加了对这些兴趣点的关注(Pain, 2001)。最后,景观与老年相关研究没有直接关系,社会地理和健康地理研究中还关注了“经济动量”,关注在空间和地方尺度上,其变化的速率和力度及其在服务拓展和形成契约的过程中是怎样受政策和市场机制影响的(Joseph et al, 1996; Andrews et al, 2002; Skinner et al, 2011; Hanlon et al, 2014)。

从批判的角度来看,尽管目前与老年移动相关的研究多变而深刻,但对移动的定义仍然狭隘而片面。同时,定量研究揭示了长期时间框架下集体宏观移动的总体趋势,而定性的位置敏感的社会建构则主要关注移动的意义,以及所涉及的权力。然

而,无论哪类研究,都应真正关注移动的过程要素,以及移动是如何在时空中发生的。事实上,我们认为将非表征理论应用于移动的基本构成、即时性、身体性和感知性的研究中具有独特的优势(McHugh, 2009; Andrews et al, 2013; Skinner et al, 2015)。

## 2 对移动的进一步阐述:引入非表征理论

“人类生活以运动为基础,并处于运动当中……运动捕捉了生活乏力而持续的变化”(Thrift, 2008)。

“我们所认识的空间核心在不断地改变…我们逐渐成为“运动—空间”的一部分,这是相对而不是绝对的…无论是在物质上还是精神上,对我们来说,现实已成为永恒。它自生自灭,但从来不被其他事物所改变”(Bergson, 1911; Thrift 2008)。

非表征理论由人文地理学家于20世纪90年代中期提出(Thrift, 1996, 1997),特别是在过去10年里受到认可并得到了广泛应用(Lorimer, 2005, 2008; Thrift, 2008; Anderson et al, 2010; Vannini, 2014a)。正如Thrift(2008)所言,运动是它的“主旋律”,这也反映在上述引用他的语录中。基于对生活的观察,当前的地理学研究中忽视了很多生活的“主观能动性”和“亲密度”,即时空的即时性和连续性。有学者认为,实证主义空间科学的核心在于定量计算和发现一般性规律,而社会建构主义的核心是对解释的理论贡献;深入挖掘以发现事物的作用机制、情感和意义。相比之下,非表征理论并非用于寻求对世界的解释和理论化。它的思想是:世界的持续性、发展性和表现性等方面应该成为研究的核心,包括它们所涉及的许多隐性且通常是无意的行为。正如Thrift(2008)所阐释的,非表征理论应该与现实世界中事件发生的地理环境和场景相融合。一系列的关键特征共同构建了非表征理论的总体“风格”。这不是一种审美风格,而是深入研究核心需要关注的基本要素,以及理解和参与世界的方式。此外,正如其名所示,非表征理论的目标是尽可能地呈现而不是再现世界,尽管这一点存在困难。因此,非表征“风格”是进行研究的一种特殊方式,它通过随后列示的各种描述,将特定类型的生活进行反射。有关其他类型的研究参见相关文献(Cadman, 2009; Thrift, 2000; Dewsbury et al, 2002; Vannini, 2009, 2014a; Skinner et al, 2015)。



## 2.1 非表征理论的层面: 核心概念

### 2.1.1 湍流(onflow)

非表征理论的第一个层面是呈现生活中的“湍流”,呈现原始的、循环的、向前的移动、存在的边界,以及新时空出现的边缘(Pred, 2005; Thrift, 2008; Vannini, 2009, 2014a)。湍流是初始的、非语言表达的,因此通常是非完全意识的见证和参与。湍流也是连续不断的:存在即不会停止,世界在持续地形成过程中(因此,将它视为停止的,并以此寻找趋势或意义,并将其再现为静止的,就会像大多数空间科学和社会建构主义的研究一样,错过实际涉及的大多数事物)(Andrews, 2014)。

湍流的思想与批判老年学中的某些解释和思想产生了共鸣。例如,在实践层面上,Gubrium经典的人种学研究说明了老龄化是如何在日常生活的每分钟、每小时以及每天中展现的(Gubrium, 1997)。然而,尽管这说明与“湍流”的思想相似,但老年学的相关分析主要集中在对日常活动的解释层面,而不是这些活动或事件的实际发生过程。在理论层面上,“湍流”思想更进一步隐含了对时间结构和经验的批评。在老年学中,该思想与Baars(2012)对时间的哲学批判相吻合,即试图把对时间的理解从计时或时序模型中分离出来。据此,对暂时性和活动的即时形式的认知,类似于湍流的概念。

### 2.1.2 关联性

非表征理论的第二个层面是以3种方式将关系思维用于理解生活是如何(再)生产的。正如Andrews(2015)所言,“关系唯物主义”用于理解诸如物品的纹理、形状、大小和颜色等基本事物,以及同样重要的人体和非人类物品的共同进化。“表现关联性”用于理解身体和物品是如何组合、定位和交互作用的(他们的间距构建了时空)。“跨尺度关联性”用于理解发生在任何一个地方的事件是如何与跨空间距离和尺度的思想、身体、物品、过程等产生复杂关联的。这3种形式的同步关系思维共同构成了后人文主义的总体理论视角,从而对以个人为中心,以及倾向于分离和严格定义现象的方法路径提出了质疑(Andrews, 2014; Thrift, 2008; Vannini, 2009, 2014a)。总之,正如Anderson等(2010)所建议的,研究事物之间的相互关系、共同创造、共同制造和协同进化,是非表征理论的重要内容,因为他们是成长的共同体。

到目前为止,批判老年学中的“关系思维”已被清晰、明确地阐述了出来,尽管这与社会文化视角下有关老龄化的身体(Öberg, 1996; Katz, 2010),以

及他们与护理的结构化、经验化和人际关系层面的认识略有不同(Twigg, 1997)。Katz(2010)指出,“身体是结构化授权与协调这些授权的身份代理或实验形式的中心调节点”,但该理解并不只是个体层面的现象。身体和护理动态发生在跨多级实践层次和传统界限的情境中(Dean et al, 1999)。事实上,身体和护理的“关联性”也确实通过跨国环境而被体验(Zhou, 2012),这不仅在家庭内外的时空尺度上产生了复杂的权力关系,同时产生了不同维度和类型的社会问题(Gunaratnam, 2014)。概而言之,无论是非表征理论还是批判老年学,行为者网络理论提供了解释网络、关联性,以及生活事件中同等重要的人类和非人类因素的方法途径(Tatnall et al, 2003; Cutchin, 2005)。

### 2.1.3 生命力

非表征理论的第三个层面是对生命活力的认知:生命是生机勃勃的,有其自身的激情和热忱(Andrews, 2014, 2015)。这一认识包含对新生机学说(neo-vitalism)的特别解释,却未必需要对科学做出神秘的、宗教上的替代性解释;也认识到事物生命力的共同作用,以及集体物质性的充沛能量。的确,正如Andrews(2014)所述,生命力有4种特性(宽泛意义上的理解):丰富多样的身体和物体的独特活力组合造就了地方的活力;其结果给地方提供了自我生成的持续性和目的性;生命力也是一种被设计出来的、有目的性(或偶然)的特性;最后,活力意味着被推力推动的生活,而这种生活是非理性的、不可预测的。

非表征理论表达的生命力概念是关乎世界的。与此相反,在老年学中,当前生命力的概念则是与人类认知活力和对这种认知功能的维持相关联。尽管非表征理论可以扩展对生命力的解释(因而扩大了对经历和生活的解释),但与生命力更密切相关的概念是超越老化理论(gerotranscendence),即一元视角的变换,从一个唯物主义的理性世界观到宇宙的超然世界观,通常伴随着对生活的热情和对生活的满意度的提升(Tornstam, 1996, 2005; Uppsala Universitet, 1997)。这一理论模型提供了对过去几代的沉思、疏离和喜爱,以及对时间、空间和生死的重新定义,并将其作为超越活动与解脱二元论的发展模型(Sherman, 2010)。即使彼此不同,生命力和超越老化理论都提供了一个思辨的、接受晚年生活变化并与生活经历对话的替代性范式。值得注意的是,超越老化理论在非表征理论时空虚拟性和多样性方面也表现出一定的兴趣(其非固定的、

非线性的和破碎化的本质,可能会导致诸如人们感觉“真实”却在时空中不以物质形态存在或不能完全实现的事物,以及(或者)与世界相关联但却发生和共存于其他不同时空中的多样化事件(Cadman, 2009),此外还有非表征理论的基本地位和思维模式,即对世界物质性及个体身处其中的真实“惊奇感”(Andrews 2014)(谈到与其他学科的联系,此概念与老年学和老年实践中的“专注力(mindfulness)”概念相似)(Rejeski, 2008)。

## 2.2 非表征理论的层面:实质性焦点

### 2.2.1 行为与表现

非表征理论将世界看作一个具有持续生产力的王国,因此,其第四个层面是关注其内部的行为与表现,以及产生这些行为与表现的主体。正如 Vannini(2014a)所指出的,这与具有个人观点和意识状态(想法,动机等)的多种形式的研究所关注的内容形成了反差。无论当时是否被期望,是否具有目的性,行为与表现是关于个体的身体、身体的集合、身体与物体的有表现力和目的性的参与(Andrews, 2014)。在此过程中,与 Judith Butler 的著名理论部分不同之处在于,研究目的不一定是为了寻找可被有意解读的身体操演的符号和意义,可能也包括事物及事物之间的物质、时间和空间等构成活动的最基本要素。这些要素通常能够获取足够支持其再生产的稳定性,而且当它们被人们记录时,世界变得更容易被理解(Thrift, 2008; Andrews, 2015)。

在老年学中,与行为和表现结合最好的研究是引入运动社会学的视角并将之用于对老年身体和老年运动员的研究(Wainwright et al, 2004; Tulle, 2008; Phoenix et al, 2009)。在该研究领域中,研究者关注了老年人身体与身体的衰退、管理、重建或重构等文化话语之间的关系(Tulle, 2008; Wahidin, 2002)。例如,有研究借鉴 Bourdieu 习惯(habitus)的概念,发现老年人身体的行为或表现与我们感兴趣的行为和表现密切相关(Dumas et al, 2005)。在此,批判老年学和非表征理论的观点出现了明显的区别。批判老年学关注老年人的身体如何开展日常惯例行为,提供了可操作、适应或抵抗的一种文化框架;而非表征理论关注更多的是存在于框架内、框架间和框架周围可能存在的事物。尽管这两种观点所关注的兴趣点和结果不同,但为了更好地理解老龄化,两种方法在概述身体的文化参考和调节体验的过程上是互补的。

### 2.2.2 感觉(和它的传染性)

非表征理论的第五个层面是关注个体的感觉,

但不是个体或个人的体验,而是超个体的感知,是通过多个个体产生并在其间共享的知觉(Andrews, 2014)。这个特征导致了对“影响”这个概念的关注(Anderson, 2006; Thrift, 2004, 2008)。简单来讲,影响是身体和其受影响过程的过渡,从而改变和影响其他个体。“情感环境”是影响的集体产物以及在时空中超个体的表现(受影响个体和其他个体与物体相互影响,引发进一步的影响)。它们往往不会被人们在完全意识状态下所认知,但却能形成一种不易描述的强大身体感知气场(Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2004; Anderson, 2009)。身体由一种体验状态转变到另一种受影响的状态,经常涉及人们能量强弱的变化。因此,这种情感会对人们在生活中的广泛参与能力产生作用,并且有可能增强或减弱对幸福感的总体感受(Andrews, 2014)。对感觉及其影响的兴趣赋予了非表征理论中地方“氛围”研究的更广泛兴趣,包括地方氛围的形成、发生和体验(Anderson, 2009)。

老年学研究的主要关注点,是由福祉的概念来引领的,而福祉又是通过身体行为、忙碌程度或生产能力,以及(或者)疼痛等特殊感觉来表达的(Katz, 2000; Dillaway et al, 2009)。如上文提到的跨国护理的例子(Gunaratnum, 2014)一样,超个体或感觉分享的研究仅仅是一个开始,而有关“情感维度”和感知状况的大多数研究还是基于心理学的传统范式。比如,老年人通过有选择性地减少他们的社会交往和人际关系(Carstensen et al, 1999)以及(或者)获取“衰退”补偿(Baltes et al, 1990)来使他们的积极体验最大化。与非表征理论关联更为密切的老龄化的情感方面议题,目前尚未实现较好地理论化研究。因此,在推动老龄化研究朝着身体相关性感觉发展方面,的确存在较大潜力,尤其是在老年人的居住和护理存在大量群体性或集体性情况的背景下。

### 2.2.3 日常生活

非表征理论不是专门或特殊的理论,也不以专门或特殊的事物为研究对象。因此,非表征理论的第六个层面是对普遍性的关注:生活中的日常事件,以及事件发生的日常地点。日常事件是指有助于管理人们日常生活的常规琐事(例如制作饮料、散步、购物、打扫、整理花园等)(Cadman, 2009)。这些事件构成了人们生活的节奏。当人们在这些日常活动发生之地(如客厅、厨房、浴室、商场、公交车站)活动时,经常会处于个人完全意识之外,尽管这些地方远不是生活的固有(或中性)背景(Andrews,



2014)。因此我们的观点是,日常事件和日常活动场所不能被学术研究所忽略,因为生活每时每刻都在世界各地进行着(Andrews, 2015)。

对老年学研究而言,研究者更加关注日常地点和空间在老年生活中的作用(Rowles, 1978; Wiles et al, 2011; Rowles et al, 2013),特别是以浴室、公交车(Grenier, 2005)、厨房(Maguire et al, 2014)等为代表的、降低老年人移动性的微观空间中的日常经历。最近老年学的研究转向老年人对日常物品的使用,从而给该领域的研究增加了物质的维度。

## 2.3 非表征理论的层面:理论、方法、融合

### 2.3.1 多元而生动的理论

事实上,非表征理论这一表述存在一些误导,因为“理论”这个词在本文的语境中应该是复数的概念(即它实际上不是单一的理论,而是一系列理论的集合)。因此,非表征理论的第七个层面是对理论的继承,以及生动的理论融合过程。非表征的理论试图实现诸如行为表现研究、物质文化研究、生态人类学、感官与情感社会学等一系列分支学科与批判现实主义、行为理论、新唯物主义和社会生态学等多元化理论及哲学方法的融合(Vannini, 2009; Andrews, 2014)。多样性之外,该理论也具有选择性,可从每一个理论中提取出独特的论点。正如 Andrews(2014)所言,该理论重新解读了 Heidegger 的现象学中关于人类“被扔进世界”、Merleau-Ponty 关于超前意识和活的身体知觉、Derrida 关于物质及其与力量碰撞等观点(同时 Canguilhem 和 Foucault 重新思考了他们所提出的生动的内容和见解)(Philo, 2007, 2012)。其目的是使研究者拥有选择和使用理论的自由,而不是深陷其中被理论束缚,构架或通报研究的目的是为了反映生动真实的世界,而不是深陷于对理论性质本身的深层次阐释中(Andrews, 2014)。研究目的不是让数据和定性的知识从属于理论,也不能让讲述的内容被已知的内容所蒙蔽(Vannini, 2014a)。

与老年学的研究相结合,该领域明显地展现出理论的多元性,像喜鹊筑巢一样,从其他领域借鉴宏观或中观的理论来帮助形成自己的焦点思想。事实上,研究当前的老龄化问题,需要采用超越原有的学科界限与响应的复杂理论视角和方法。因此,批判性的理论观点成为过渡时期理解和探究老龄化问题的依据。该领域的发展导致了“文化老年学”这一将文化、身体、新方法等问题引入老龄化研究之中的新的学科方向的产生(Gilleard et al, 2000; Featherstone et al, 2005; Katz, 2006)。然而,关于批

判性观点之间的关系,尤其是与结构、意义和文化相关的批判性观点之间的关系尚未解决(Baars et al, 2013)。与非表征理论所倡导的混合研究方法类似,建议使用“批判性视角来研究老龄化”,即借助各种相关的传统,从而摆脱对理论的死板应用(Grenier, 2012)。

### 2.3.2 见证、改变、推进

非表征理论的第八个层面涉及众多相关维度:通过方法论的应用“见证”和“参与”现实世界;通过知识转化策略,改变并推进非表征理论的应用,并协助其自圆其说(Andrews, 2014, 2015)。尽管不存在非表征理论的方法操作手册,但基于案例进行实验和生产的混合方法是研究探索的关键,以免研究者的解释与现实情况相差太远(Patchett, 2010; Andrews, 2014)。“见证”主要关注时空中发生的众多事情,甚至包括那些看上去很琐碎的事情。而这样做的目的,是希望在事件发生地收集的有关事项的数据是可信的(Andrews, 2014)。提升“见证”功效的途径之一是采用多种方法,比如,综合运用摄影、录像、传统田野调查笔记等方式,有助于全面展示某种情境,并可提供多方面的感官洞察。另一方面,“参与”揭示了研究者与所发生事情之间的紧密关系,并模糊了观察者与被观察者之间的角色(Andrews, 2014; Dirksmeier et al, 2008)。实际上,非表征理论的方法本身不仅通过数据获取来研究社会现实,同时也进入到社会现实并更新了数据(Andrews, 2014; Vannini, 2014a)。例如,访谈跟故事讲述中的互动类似,参与者观察可以转换角色成为观察参与者,因为他们都在做同样的事情:更深入地参与、投入更多的精力和经验、甚至通过积极地干预改变事件的发生(Thrift, 2000; Dewsbury, 2009; Andrews, 2014)。这一观点引出了“改变和推进”与“对话”的观点。不管是在田野实践,还是在知识传译的形式方面,新现实的创造是非表征理论优先考虑的内容。这引发了基于艺术的研究方法的发展,也促进了激进主义学术研究和公共地理学的进一步发展(Andrews, 2014)。

在老年学研究中,我们看到了基于戏剧活动(Mitchell et al, 2011; Kontos et al, 2007)、激进主义方法论(Minkler et al, 2008; Estes, 2008),以及有声照片和纪录片使用增加的先验综合研究(Kontos et al, 2013; Putney et al, 2005; Raymond et al 2015; Swinnen et al, 2013)。这些案例都对知识转化的传统方法论和标准实践提出了挑战。事实上,这是一个研究者与老年人密切合作、共同创造故事和实施

改变的过程。与更为常见的学术出版和报告不同,知识交流的形式采用基于社区的表演和公共活动等传播方式。例如,剧院演员将老龄化和老年痴呆的具体表现和经历表演出来,在这个过程中,改变了他们的日常关系,挑战了记忆中想当然的假设,并唤起了参与到表演之中的社区和个人的敏感性(例如,加拿大多伦多 Julia Gray 的工作)。这些学者和艺术家铺设的路径,正是非表征理论在老年学研究中应当继承和发展的。

### 2.3.3 生动的学术写作

非表征理论的第九个也是最后一个层面是关于写作的。地理学者和其他学者都不可避免地要用文字进行交流,但正如 Ingold(2014)所描述的那样,在非表征理论中,学者们可能会形成一种风格;这种风格摆脱了僵硬的、固定的学术框架,如同表演艺术一样运用积极而生动的语言来表达。此外,正如 Lorimer(2005)所指出的,这种风格是永不停息的挑逗,具有与它所展现的事物同样生动的质量和形式。这也并非没有问题,因为这种风格和“真实语境(realis mood)”是地理学者与其他学者已经接受过的训练,并对论证地理学与其他领域(权威的、逻辑的、明确的)学术观点习以为常,从而与小说写作和新闻报告区分开来(Vannini, 2014b)。但是,通过努力和调整,地理学者和其他学者可以在写作中融入“非真实的语境”(irrealis mood)(Vannini, 2014b)。正如 Andrews(2014)所言,写作涉及很多不同的亚语境,包括即时语境(写作时事情正在发生却未完全展现,尚不知道结局)、条件语境(陈述具有限制性条款的命题)、潜在语境(十分谨慎且认识到其他可能性)、会犯错误的语境(包含世界上一些不合逻辑、不能被语言所表达的事实,作者本身也抱有怀疑和不解)、假设语境(表达了可能性并提出了假设)、钦佩语境(表达了敬畏、吸引和惊奇)、虚拟语境(表达了不现实或尚未发生的现实情况)和期望语境(表达了个人的愿望和偏好)。事实上,这些不同语境的综合使用,有助于学者们在沟通交流时去除自命不凡、晦涩难懂、精英自诩、排他孤傲等写作方式。

在老年学中,叙事研究展现了口头和书面交流的强大作用(Ray, 2000; Kenyon et al, 1999, 2001; Bornat, 2001)。关注倾听和记录老年人的陈述被认为是听取合理诉求、将权力和能动性交还于那些诉求被专业人士掩盖或被社会边缘化的群体的一种方式(Bornat et al, 2004)。与上述的新方法论相叠合,从研究老年人和学者的博客到摄影之声工程及

电影,这些新方法都说明传统的学术写作方式是可以被挑战、被渗透、被提升的。给予研究者与研究对象同样自由表达的权利,是学术写作与非表征理论的关联之处。

## 3 对理论局限性的认知和应对

如前所述,非表征理论不仅是人文地理学的前沿方法,其与老年学中已有的方法和研究也保持高度一致。就其对老龄化地理学带来的潜在优势而言,非表征理论有助于学者们展现年龄与老龄化的即时变化过程、更广泛的老龄化移动,以及老龄化移动的推动者。然而,像任何其他方法一样,非表征理论也有它的不足之处,尤其在非表征理论与未来老龄化研究产生特殊关联的背景下,需要对出现的有关该理论的各种批评有所了解。对该理论的一致批评正是基于非表征的整个概念。其争论的焦点是:对任何研究者而言,不管他们如何努力去避免,也不管运用哪个领域的方法和知识转化策略,都必须对事件进行再现。与此相关的一个问题,就是所谓的呈现甚或再现的不可能性,尤其当某些事件是非完全意识的记载(如影响),因为研究者的意识作为一种过滤器,总会产生错误的意识(Pile, 2010)。作为回应,除了寻找让已发生事件保持其真实性的创新性表达方法外,学者们建议对非表征理论的表述进行调整,例如 Lorimer(2005)认为“超表征性”(more-than-representational)对于考虑和传达的研究内容而言,是一种更好的表述。

第二方面的批评认为支持非表征理论的学者过分夸大了以往研究所忽略的内容及其“缓冲效应”(deadening effect)。例如,自人类学家、感官人类学家和很多其他学者多年来从事了许多近似于非表征理论的研究,也必然涉及到非表征理论的很多个关键层面。事实上,以往研究不可能不对行动、能量和运动进行探讨,并且确实在一定程度上探索如何将事件赋予生命力。尽管如此,我们仍可把这些先例看作是积极的尝试,并将非表征理论看作是促进这些方面进一步发展的理论工具。

第三方面的批评主要讽刺了非表征理论(特别是早期的解释)在实际应用过程中,使用排他性语言并过度理论化,与其倡导的目标存在明显的反差(本文或许也存在这个问题)。但是,任何新的方法在一开始证实自身在某一学科的合理性时,不可避免的存在这个问题。令人振奋的是,非表征理论已逐渐渗入到诸如社会地理学、健康地理学等各分支

学科,从而使其更具应用性和实证性。

最后,正如 Colls(2012)所言,一些学者对非表征理论的普适性特性提出异议,尤其是在关系性(relationality)方面(Tolia-Kelly 2006)。他们认为,这个方法不能通过重要的社会学和人口学分类来区分身体和认识个体,例如影响到人并构建他们理解自身和生活方式的性别、种族、残疾和年龄(Bondi, 2005)等特征。此外,批评者也认为,非表征理论未能认识到政治的力量和意图(Jacobs et al, 2003; Pain, 2006),同时也是男权主义、技术至上和抽象的(Bondi, 2005; Thien, 2005),不能深刻理解感觉和情绪(Thien, 2005)。与 Colls(2012)的观点相似,我们认为非表征理论的问题和不足无需彰显,因为非表征理论不需将现有的研究方法和领域搁置。我们认为,老龄化地理学具有足够的空间让新老方法共存。事实上,正如 Colls(2012)所言,在表征和非表征研究以及与研究主旨相关的独立研究中存在开发“游牧意识(nomadic consciousness)”的潜力。这

一方法反映了这样的现实,即生活中的大多数积极的、通常非完全的意识与非表征的意识,最终汇入了权利、意义、身份等事物共同作用意识表征领域(也适合上文 Lorimer 对“超表征性”的论述)。

总之,尽管存在上述批评和质疑,我们认为非表征理论具有振兴老龄化地理学研究的潜在能力,通过将移动作为研究的核心,解释老年人自身及其周围更广泛意义上的移动。本文对非表征理论进行了初步和基本的介绍,更希望能够将读者引入更为实质性的思考和辩论之中,并建议读者将目光放得更长远一些。回顾西方过去几十年间人文地理学的历史,从20世纪50年代的空间科学转向,到70年代的激进马克思主义转向,到90年代的文化转向,说明过程式的、即时的、感知的和唯物主义的思想正成为人文地理学范式的基石。作为研究老龄化问题的地理学者,忽视非表征理论就是我们的损失。

参考文献:见英文稿。

## Ageing movement as space-time: introducing non-representational theory to the geography of ageing

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**Abstract:** This paper argues for the deployment of non-representational theory in the geographical study of ageing and provides an introduction to the approach. The result of its deployment, we argue, would be a rejuvenated field of research that is inclusive of a far wider-variety of movement occurrences and experiences in older people's lives, that attends to physical, immediate and felt dimensions of movement, and thus that better conveys - and reverberates - the basic substance of movement itself.

**Key words:** non-representational theory; geography of ageing; geographical gerontology

## 1 Introduction

Adding to ongoing debates on the conceptual, theoretical and empirical advancement of the geographical study of ageing (Andrews et al, 2007, 2009, 2013; Golant, 2003; Hopkins et al, 2007; Skinner et al, 2015) this paper argues for the incorporation of non-representational theory into the current theoretical toolkit used by scholars. This, it is posited, might

facilitate a fuller and more immediate engagement with movement than exists at present. The paper starts with a broad two-part review of how movement conventionally arises in social and health geography, including in ageing-focused studies, before moving on to introduce the key facets of non-representational theory (to locate each, noting connections to existing perspectives and concerns in social gerontology). The main thrust of the paper's argument is that the de-



ployment of non-representational theory could, at one level, take some of the emphasis in research off the conscious movement of older persons and conscious motivations and actions of those who want them to move in particular ways, and place it on non- and less-than-fully conscious movements. At another level, take some emphasis off a specified and often narrow range of movement activities, and incorporate all forms of movement and all actors and movers that constitute space-time. Finally, it could take some emphasis off what movement has happened in the past, how it happened and what it meant, and place it on what movement is happening, how it appears and feels.

### 1.1 Current engagements with human movements: key empirical themes

Social and health geography, two sub-disciplines that historically have contributed the bulk of the geographical study of ageing, have engaged with movement variously over many years. As we shall see, certainly not in the same way as non-representational theory can, but a clear precedent exists. Most things move - whether being diseases, services, resources or people - so the literature is potentially vast. Nevertheless some concentrated areas of inquiry are identifiable in terms of the movement of the latter. Scholars have, for example, engaged empirically with human movement as a 'social determinant' (as loosely defined) of human health and wellbeing, this approach being common in three substantive fields of inquiry. The first focused on migration, whereby people move within or between countries with implications for their health and health care systems (Boyle 2004; Norman et al 2005). The particular ageing focus here being longstanding on the migration destinations, motivations, decisions and experiences of older people and the implications for ageing services and policy (Wiseman et al, 1979; Warnes et al, 1984; Bentham, 1988; Joseph et al, 1991; Glaser et al, 1998; King et al, 2000; Silveira et al, 2001; Moore et al, 2004; Oliver, 2007). Indeed this research is not focused on the act of moving long distances per-se, as much as the shape, impact and consequence of the completed/past movements at the collective and macro scale. Recent-

ly it has been augmented with more critical considerations and studies of the human lifecourse as played out, and moving, in space and time. This research being more sensitive to life's 'journey' including multiple moves, moves at the micro-scale and their meaning (Bailey, 2009; Jarvis et al 2011; Schwanen et al 2012).

The second field of inquiry is a burgeoning multi-disciplinary literature on physical activity (Witten et al 2008; Matthews et al 2009) where specifically the concept of 'walkability', has recently dominated the literature. Here, for example, studies have focused practically on the production and form of walkable city environments (Ewing et al, 2009; Gehl, 2010), considered potential social and structural facilitators of, and barriers to, walkability (Pouliou et al, 2010; Holt et al 2009), discussed methods to measure walkability or have measured it (Gebel et al 2011; Van Dyck et al, 2011) and have quantified and generalized public perceptions of walkability (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2006; Weinstein Agrawal et al 2008). In this research, the potential of movement, motivates studies (Andrews et al 2012), the particular ageing focus being, for example, on older peoples' walking as related to their affluence (King et al 2011), mental health (Berke et al 2007) and local neighbourhood design (Takano et al 2002; Frank et al 2010; Weiss et al 2010).

The third field of inquiry where human movement is considered to be a loose determinant of health, is on the distances between health and social care providers and those in need. Incorporated into health geography under the general theme of 'accessibility and utilization' (Joseph et al, 1984), often highlighted in this literature is a 'distance decay' in use (increasing distance lower usage) and the concurrent impact upon population health. Focused then as much on 'non-movements' as movements the ageing interest has been on both older peoples proximity to centralized facilities, children and other carers who live away from them (Joseph et al, 1998; Nemet et al, 2000).

Elsewhere across social and health geography human movement has been engaged more directly

and critically by three other substantive areas of inquiry that use predominantly qualitative methodologies. One is focused on impairment and disability, and mobility in these contexts, and the challenges facing and (non)acceptance of individuals affected (Butler et al, 1999; Gleeson, 1999; Crooks et al, 2008). The particular ageing focus in this literature includes, for example, the range and scope of older peoples' mobility (Meyer et al, 1985; Schwanen et al, 2010), their unique urban and rural challenges (Mattson 2010) and policy implications (Mercado et al 2010). Another area of qualitative inquiry is focused on fitness activities, much of this research unpacking the meaning and identity of bodily movement, the places where it occurs, and the power relationships at play (Andrews et al, 2003; Bale, 2004; Vertinsky et al, 2004; Andrews et al, 2005). The ageing focus here has been only occasional but includes attention, for example, to older peoples' active leisure and lifestyles (Mansvelt, 1997; McConatha et al, 2012; Stratford, 2014). The final area - which being more of a broad approach, does incorporate some of the research in the first and second - can be broadly described as 'new mobilities'. It conveys the motivations, meanings and implications of varied movement forms - such as in transport, leisure, respite, work and health and health care (Gatrell, 2011; Warf, 2010; Crooks et al 2011; Kingsbury et al 2012). The particular ageing focus here is varied but has been particularly attentive in recent years to older peoples' tourism mobilities and wellbeing (Williams et al, 2000, 2002; Rodriguez, 2001; Schwanen et al, 2011).

## **1.2 Current engagements with all movements: exposing some 'qualities'**

From both social and scientific standpoints movement possesses, and is composed of, certain qualities, and these have been explored in the literature in regard to, and also beyond, the human. In social and health geography one can thus observe a rudimentary engagement with the 'rhythm' of movement (across space and of/in place). This arises, for example, in a positivistic research tradition where time-series and spatial-temporal analysis has been applied to a range of phenomenon (Meade et al, 2010) including

occurrences and spread of diseases (Smallman-Raynor et al, 1991; Gould, 1993; Rogers et al, 2000; Robertson et al, 2014), and treatments and hospitalizations for specific diseases (Crichton et al 2001; 2008; Leong et al 2006). This research presents - often with detailed computer-aided illustration/GIS - a sequenced 'rhythm' of phenomenon collectively occurring over macro-scales. Although the ageing focus in this research has been sporadic at best, scholars have become interested in ageing and infectious disease more broadly, including HIV (Yoshikawa 2000; High et al 2008). Meanwhile, in other research, demographic studies have conveyed and displayed the long-term spatial and temporal 'rhythms' of population changes, as they themselves relate to the rhythms of population health, and the challenges for governments and health sectors in particular places. The ageing focus here being particularly central (Moore et al, 1997; Rosenberg et al, 1997; Smallman-Raynor et al, 1999; Phillips, 2002; McCracken et al, 2005; Lin et al, 2007). Indeed, this research flows into more general disciplinary concerns for ageing and international/global health.

Qualitative research in social and health geography meanwhile displays some consideration and representation of 'rhythm' across a wide-range of empirical subjects, fitting loosely into three broad categories. First, there are studies that convey the routinized, processional and 'rhythmic' nature of treatments, caring practices and the places where they occur. For example in nursing (Andrews et al, 2008) and addiction detoxification (DeVerteul et al, 2009; Wilton et al, 2014). The ageing focus here being mainly on the routinized nature of informal and formal home and community care (Wiles, 2003). Second, there are studies that explore how the body becomes synchronized with broader rhythms that surround it as part of therapeutic places and experiences, such as rhythms of the sea in coastal life (Kearns et al, 2012), and rhythms of fitness activities and environments (Bale, 2004; Andrews, 2005); this latter interest incorporating a sporadic concern for ageing and fitness (Paulson 2005). Third are studies that convey the daily geographies in the lives of people with chronic health conditions (Moss, 1997; Moss et al,



2003) including and mental illness (Dear et al, 1987; Parr, 1998, 2008). These studies pay particular attention to the embodied rhythms - oftentimes part of makeshift survival strategies - that arise as peoples' health status and social contexts change, and regularly engage with ageing and older people (Rowles, 2000; Antoninetti et al, 2012; Stratford, 2014).

Another quality of movement that has received some limited attention is 'momentum' (across space and of/in place). Across social and health geography, studies illustrate, for example, 'behavioural momentums' whereby for example, one human activity (such as drinking alcohol, taking drugs or undertaking casual labour) leads onto another (such as casual sex) with health implications (such as Hepatitis or HIV transmission) (Luginaah 2008; Mkandawire, et al 2014). In studies of ageing, however, human momentums are typically less behavioural and more circumstantial, either about the momentums that build as older people move - or are moved - spatially between care settings and services of increasing comprehensiveness in line with their changing physical and mental health (although studies focus primarily on the transitions themselves and their consequences (Magilvy et al, 2000; Reed et al, 2003; Lee et al, 2013). Elsewhere the momentums in the daily lives of people with chronic health conditions are a popular concern of social and health geography (Moss, 1997; Moss et al, 2003), these studies conveying how, in many cases, people's lives might be more appropriately characterized by being 'stuck' or 'immobile' (lacking in momentum) or indeed 'shrinking' (possessing momentum in an unwanted and reverse direction) (Dyck, 1995; Crooks 2007). These interests and observations arise in ageing studies (Pain 2001), although this research is equally concerned to illustrate how older people negotiate and deal with such challenges - including the 'momentum' of their own declining physical and mental health - either on their own or with the aid of good design and intervention (Kong et al 1996; Gant 1997; Rowles, 2000; Wiles et al 2009). Finally momentums in social and health geography arise as 'economic momentums' in considerations of the rate, and forcefulness, at which policies for people are developed, and/or markets developed

and/or at which services expand or contract - in place and across space - this being a very common interest of ageing studies (Joseph et al, 1996; Andrews et al, 2002; Skinner et al, 2011; Hanlon et al, 2014).

In terms of critique, whilst current research engagements with movements are varied and insightful, movement remains rather narrowly defined and only partially conveyed. Whilst quantitative studies show general trends in collective macro-scale movements over long timeframes, qualitative place-sensitive studies are concerned, for the most part, with what it means to move or not move, and/or the powers involved. Neither group of studies, however, really engages with the process elements of movement, and how movement happens as space-time. Indeed, non-representational theory, we argue, might be well-placed to shed light on the fundamental making, immediacy, physicality and feel of movement (McHugh, 2009; Andrews et al, 2013; Skinner et al, 2015).

## 2 Taking a step further with movement: introducing non-representational theory

'Human life is based on and in movement... movement captures the animic flux of life' (Thrift, 2008)

'the basic cardinals of what we regard as space are subsequently [sic] shifting... ... we are increasingly a part of a 'movement-space' which is relative rather than absolute in which 'matter or mind, reality has appeared to us as a perpetual becoming. It makes itself or it unmakes itself but it is never something made' (Bergson, 1911; Thrift, 2008).

Non-representational theory was developed by human geographers in the mid 1990s (Thrift, 1996, 1997), and has gained acceptance and been applied particularly in the past decade (Lorimer, 2005, 2008; Thrift, 2008; Anderson et al, 2010; Vannini, 2014a). As Thrift (2008) notes, and as reflected in his quotations above, movement is its main 'leitmotif', being based on the observation that much of life's 'activeness' and 'closeness' - the immediacy and progression of space-time - has been overlooked by the discipline. It is ar-

gued that whilst at the core of positivistic spatial science lies a dedication to numerical calculation and generalizable explanation, at the core of social constructivism is a theoretical dedication to interpretation; to digging down to find mechanisms, emotions and meaning in things. In contrast, non-representational theory does not see a world begging explanation and theorization. Its idea is that the world's ongoing, living and performative aspects should instead take centre stage in research including the many tacit and often inadvertent practices they involve. As Thrift (2008) explains, non-representational theory thus communicates the geography of what occurs in the active world; the 'taking place' of occasions. As we shall see, a number of key facets together create the overarching 'style' of non-representational theory. This is not an aesthetic style but, reaching to the core of research, entails the fundamental things that are looked at and the way the world is understood and engaged. Moreover, as its name suggests, despite some difficulties (that will be discussed later), non-representational theory aims to, as much as possible, present not represent the world. Thus the non-representational style is a particular way of doing research to potentially reverberate the happening of life (Andrews, 2014) (for the specific typology on which the following description is based and, for other aligned typologies, see Thrift (2000), Dewsbury et al (2002), Cadman (2009), Vannini (2009, 2014a); Skinner et al (2015).)

## **2.1 Facets of non-representational theory: central concepts**

### **2.2.1 Onflow**

The first of non-representational theory's facets is to present the 'onflow' of life; the raw, unrolling, forward moving, frontier of existence; the very edge at which new space-time is emerging (Pred, 2005; Thrift, 2008; Vannini, 2009, 2014a). Onflow is initial, thus often less than fully consciously witnessed and participated in, and certainly is non-verbal. Onflow is also continuous; existence does not stop, and the world is constantly becoming (thus, to view it as stopped, then to look for trends and/or meaning and represent it as stopped, like with much spatial science and social constructivism, misses most of what it is actually involving (Andrews 2014).

The idea of onflow resonates with certain accounts and ideas in critical gerontology. At the practical level for example, the classic ethnographic work of Gubrium demonstrates how ageing unfolds in the everyday, throughout the minute, hour and day (Gubrium, 1997). However, while such illustrations parallel the idea of 'onflow', analysis in gerontology has focused primarily on the interpretive aspects of everyday activities and less on the actual unfolding of these events. At a theoretical level then, the idea of 'onflow' goes one step further and contains an implicit critique of the structure and experience of time. This aligns well in gerontology with Baars' philosophical critique of time that attempts to unhinge understandings of time from chronometric or chronological models (Baars, 2012). Hence, in this line of thinking, recognition of immediate forms of temporality and movement are akin to the notion of onflow.

### **2.1.2 Relationality**

A second facet of non-representational theory is to embrace relational thinking in three ways to understand how life is (re)produced. As Andrews (2015) describes, a 'relational materialism' that recognizes such fundamental things as the textures, shapes, sizes and colors of things, as well as the equal importance, and co-evolution, of human bodies and non-human objects. A 'performed relationality' that recognizes how bodies and objects are assembled, positioned and interact (thus, with their spacing, constitute space-time). A 'trans-scaled relationality' that recognizes how events in any one place are complexly networked with ideas, bodies, objects, processes that span geographical distances and scales. Together these three forms of simultaneous relational thinking constitute an overall theoretical perspective that is post-humanist and thus is cynical of approaches that are overly person-centered, and that tend to separate and rigidly define phenomena (Andrews, 2014; Thrift, 2008; Vannini, 2009, 2014a). In sum, as Anderson et al (2010) suggest, in non-representational theory it is important to study mutuality - co-invention, co-fabrication and co-evolution - between things. What, together they are becoming.

To date, in critical gerontology 'relational thinking' has perhaps been best articulated, albeit slightly



differently, through socio-cultural perspectives on ageing bodies (Öberg, 1996; Katz, 2010) and their relationship to the structured, experienced, and interpersonal aspects of care (Twigg, 1997). As Katz (2010: 367) outlines, ‘the body is a central mediation point between structured mandates and the agential or experimental forms of identity used to negotiate these mandates’. Yet, such understandings are not only individual level phenomena. Body and care dynamics are understood to take place across levels of practice (Dean et al, 1999) and across traditional boundaries. Indeed ‘relationality’ of the body and care is experienced across transnational settings (Zhou, 2012), producing not only complicated power relations within and across families in space-time, but also dimensions and types of social pain (Gunaratnam, 2014). More generally, in both non-representational theory and critical gerontology, actor-network-theory presents an approach that can explain the networking, relationality and equal importance of humans and non-humans in life’s events (Tatnall et al, 2003; Cutchin, 2005).

### 2.1.3 Vitality

A third facet of non-representational theory is to recognize the vitality of life; that life is spirited and has its own zest and zeal (Andrews, 2014, 2015). This acknowledgement involves a particular interpretation of neo-vitalism that, whilst not necessarily wanting to come up with mystical or spiritual alternatives to science, recognizes the life-force of things acting together; the energetic animation of collective materiality. Indeed, as Andrews (2014) describes, four loose understandings surround vitality: that the vitality of places results from particular active assemblages of bodies and objects with richness and diversity; that the result is something that gives a place a self-generating continuance and purpose; that vitality might be a quality that is engineered and purposeful or that might be accidental; and finally, that vitality signifies life moved by its own impulses (life as irrational and unpredictable).

The notion of vitality as expressed in non-representational theory is about the world. In gerontology in contrast, the current notion of vitality is often connected with humans’ cognitive vitality (the maintenance of their cognitive function.) While non-repre-

sentative theory could be used to broaden such interpretations of vitality (thus expanding interpretations to a sense of experience and life), a concept more closely connected with ‘vitality’ is perhaps gerotranscendence - a shift in meta perspective, from a materialistic and rational view of the world to a more cosmic and transcendent one, normally accompanied by an increase in enthusiasm for life and life satisfaction (Tornstam, 1996, 2005; Uppsala Universitet, 1997). This model offers contemplation, solitude, affinity with past generations, and a redefinition of time, space, life and death as a developmental model that extends beyond the dualism of activity and disengagement (Sherman, 2010). Although distinct from each other, both vitality and gerotranscendence offer alternate paradigms that are reflective, accepting of changes in late life, and speak to an experience of living. Notably, gerotranscendence also speaks to an interest in non-representational theory in the virtuality and multiplicity of space and time (their non-fixed, non-linear and ruptured nature) that might result, for example, in things that are ‘real’ to people, yet are not physical or fully actualized in space-time, and/or multiple happenings that are related in the world but emerge and co-exist in different spaces-times (Cadman, 2009), and also non-representational theory’s fundamental disposition and mindset - a real sense of ‘wonderment’ with the physicality of the world and one’s place in it (Andrews 2014) (which, illustrating multiple disciplinary linkages, itself draws close to the idea of ‘mindfulness’ in gerontology and gerontological practice (Rejeski, 2008)).

## 2.2 Facets of non-representational theory: substantive foci

### 2.2.1 Practice and performance

Non-representational theory sees the world as a continually productive realm. Hence a fourth facet is to focus on the practices and performances within it and which make it. As Vannini (2014a) suggests, this contrasts with a concern in many forms of research with personal outlooks and states of mind (ideas, motivations, and so on). Practice and performance are instead about the expressive and purposeful engagement of the body, bodies together, and bodies and ob-

jects together, whether in the moment they be expected or unexpected, intentional or unintentional (Andrews 2014). In this endeavour, and in partial contrast to Judith Butler's famous theorization, the objective of research is not necessarily to look for signs and meanings in body performativity that might be consciously read, but might just as well be about very basic active elements - including things and timings and spacings between things. These often gain enough stability that they reproduce themselves and, when registered by people, make the world intelligible (Thrift, 2008; Andrews, 2015).

In gerontology, perhaps the most notable well-aligned trend with regards to practice and performance is that of scholars drawing on insights from the sociology of sport and applying them to the study of older bodies and older athletes (Wainwright et al, 2004; Tulle, 2008; Phoenix et al, 2009). In this field of study, researchers focus on the relationship between older bodies and cultural discourses such as decline, and the management, reconstruction, or reconfiguration of older bodies (Tulle, 2008; Wahidin, 2002). Work drawing on Bourdieu's notion of habitus, for example, and the practices and/or performances of older bodies closely aligns (Dumas et al, 2005). Here, a clear distinction emerges between critical perspectives on ageing and non-representational theory. Where critical gerontology tends to focus on how routinized practices carried out through the older body represent a cultural frame that can be managed, adapted or resisted, non-representational theory would focus more on what may exist within, between and around these frames. Although the point of interest and outcome of the two perspectives differ, the approaches are complementary in outlining the cultural references and processes of mediating experience through the body in order to better understand ageing.

### 2.2.2 Sensation (and its infectiousness)

A fifth facet of non-representational theory is to focus on bodily sensation, but not as an individual or personal experience, as something 'transpersonal'; being produced through, and shared between, many bodies (Andrews 2014). This particular facet has led to the study of 'affect' as an elucidatory concept in research (Anderson 2006; Thrift 2004; 2008). In ba-

sic terms, affect is the transition of the body and the process whereby the body is affected, modifies and affects other bodies. 'Affective environments' are thus the collective manifestation of affects and their transpersonal working out in space-time (affected bodies interacting with other bodies and objects, provoking further affects and further affects occurring). They are experienced less-than-fully consciously by people but possess a 'feel' that reveals on a somatic register as a powerful yet non-descript atmosphere (Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2004; Anderson, 2009). The transition from one experiential state of the body to another in affect, often involves changes in peoples' energy - it being either boosted or sapped. Thus affect impacts upon peoples' broader capacity for engagement and involvement in life and has the potential to increase or decrease their immediate feelings, and general state, of wellbeing (Andrews, 2014). The interest in sensation and affect informs a broader interest in non-representational theory in the 'atmospheres' of places; their making, happening and experience (Anderson 2009).

While much attention in gerontology is guided by notions of well-being, these have tended to be approached through physical acts, 'busyness' or productivity, and/or through particular sensations such as pain (Katz, 2000; Dillaway et al, 2009). Analysis of the trans-personal or shared sensations are only beginning (as illustrated in the above example of transnational care (Gunaratnam, 2014)). Instead, the main body of work on 'affective dimensions' or feeling states, is articulated from within the psychological tradition. Here older people are considered to maximize their positive experiences through selectively narrowing their social interactions and relationships (Carstensen et al, 1999) and/or compensating for 'decline' (Baltes et al, 1990). The affective aspects of ageing that would more closely align with non-representational theory are much less well theorized. Indeed there is potential to move, in research, towards bodily sensations that can be relational, particularly as so many group/collective situations exist for older people in residence and care.

### 2.2.3 Everyday

Non-representational theory does not aim to be



special or specialized nor focus only on the special or specialized. Hence, a sixth facet is a concern with the ordinary in terms of everyday events in life, and the everyday places where they occur. Everyday events are the routine things people undertake (e.g. making a drink, walking, shopping, cleaning, gardening, etc.), that help them manage their daily lives (Cadman, 2009). They constitute the rhythms of people's lives. The everyday places where these things occur (e.g. living room, kitchen, bathroom, shopping mall, bus station) often remain outside of individuals' full consciousness as they move through them, although they are far from being innate/neutral backgrounds to life (Andrews, 2014). The argument is that everyday events and everyday places cannot be overlooked by academic scholarship because life happens all the time and everywhere (Andrews 2015).

In terms of alignments in gerontology, researchers have focused more generally on the role of everyday places and spaces in older people's lives (Rowles, 1978; Wiles et al, 2011; Rowles et al, 2013), and in particular on the everyday experiences in micro-locations where reduced mobility may feature most prominently such as the bathroom bus (Grenier, 2005) or kitchen (Maguire et al., 2014). There has also been a recent turn in gerontology towards the use of everyday items by older people, adding a material dimension to this field of research.

### **2.3 Facets of non-representational theory: theory, method, communication**

#### **2.3.1 Diverse and lively theory**

The term non-representational theory is in fact a little misleading because the word, theory, in this context is plural (i.e. it does not in fact mean a single unified 'theory', rather a collection of 'theories'). Hence, a seventh facet of non-representational theory is a diverse theoretical heritage and a lively theoretical engagement. The approach attempts to bring together a variety of sub-disciplines such as performance studies, material culture studies, ecological anthropology, sensory and emotional sociology, and diverse theoretical and philosophical approaches including speculative realism, performance theory, neo-materialism and social ecology (Vannini, 2009; Andrews, 2014). In addition to this diversity, it can be se-

lective, drawing out particular arguments within each. As Andrews (2014) suggests, it re-reads Heidegger's phenomenology, for example, for ideas on humans being 'thrown-into-the-world', the works of Merleau-Ponty for ideas on pre-consciousness and lived bodily perception, and the works of Derrida for ideas on materiality, and force encounters (whilst, Canguilhem and Foucault have also been reconsidered for their own lively content and insights - Philo, 2007; 2012). The intention is that a freedom should exist to select and use theory but not to get bogged down in it. To frame or inform studies in order to reverberate the active world, but to not get too involved in deep interpretation and/or the nature of theory itself (Andrews 2014). Indeed, the objective is to not make data and qualitative knowledge secondary to theory, so that telling does not become muffled by the business of knowing (Vaninni 2014a).

In terms of alignment with gerontology, the field obviously shares in common a theoretical plurality, a 'magpie' tradition of taking what grand or mid-range theory fits from elsewhere to help formulate its own focused ideas. Indeed, contemporary issues in ageing require complex theoretical perspectives and approaches that transcend former disciplinary boundaries and responses. As a result, the 'critical' theoretical perspectives used to understand and explore ageing are in a period of transition. Developments in the field have resulted in a new disciplinary boundary of 'cultural gerontology' (Gilleard et al, 2000; Featherstone et al, 2005; Katz, 2006) that brings questions of culture, the body, and new approaches into the studies of aging. Yet, questions about the relationships between critical perspectives, in particular those related to structure, meaning and culture have not yet been resolved (Baars, et al 2013). One suggestion, parallel to the blended approach suggested by non-representational theory, is the use of 'critical perspectives to the study of aging' - a language that moves away from a rigid application of theory, into drawing on and across various traditions where relevant (Grenier, 2012).

#### **2.3.2 Witnessing, changing, boosting**

An eighth facet of non-representational theory, has a number of related dimensions through methodological engagements to 'witness' and 'act into' the

active world and, primarily through knowledge translation strategies, to ‘change and boost’ it, assisting it in ‘speaking back’ (Andrews 2014, 2015). Although no methodological rulebook exists for non-representational theory, a willingness to experiment with, and produce, case-specific hybrid approaches is key to inquiries so that researchers do not go too far down the route of interpretation (Andrews 2014; Patchett, 2010). ‘Witnessing’ is to thus pay attention to many occurrences in space-time, even those that might seem trivial. By doing this it is hoped that the emerging data might have a faithfulness to events of interest that take place (Andrews, 2014). One approach to enhance witnessing is adopting more than one method, for example, combining photography and film with traditional field notes to help show a situation and provide a more than one sensory insight. ‘Acting into’, on the other hand, denotes a close relationship between the researcher and what is happening in the field, and a blurring the role of observer and the observed (Andrews, 2014; Dirksmeier et al, 2008). Indeed with non-representational theory, method is itself a performance that does not only study social reality through the acquisition of data, but also enters a social reality and lives the data (Andrews, 2014; Vannini 2014a). Interviewing, for example, can be as much about the interaction itself as the stories told, and participant observation can be reversed to become observant participation, which is about doing the same thing as the subject, getting more involved and invested in the effort and experience, and even actively intervening to change happenings (Thrift, 2000; Dewsbury, 2009; Andrews, 2014). This point raises the ideas of ‘changing and boosting’ and ‘speaking back’. The making of new realities is a priority of non-representational theory, both in the field and in forms of knowledge translation. This has led particularly to the development of arts-based methods and a more general move towards activist scholarship and public geography (Andrews, 2014).

In gerontology we see precedent and alignment in research based theatre initiatives (Mitchell et al, 2011; Kontos et al, 2007), activist methodologies (Minkler et al, 2008; Estes, 2008), and a general increase in the use of photovoice methods, and documen-

tary film (Kontos et al, 2013; Putney et al, 2005; Raymond et al, 2015; Swinnen et al, 2013). Each of these examples challenges traditional methodologies and standard practices of knowledge translation. Indeed, the process is collaborative, with researchers working closely with older people to co-produce stories and enact change. The forms of knowledge exchange also differ from the more known mediums of academic publication and reports to community based performances and/or public events. Theatre groups for example, have acted out their experiences of ageing and dementia, and in this process, altered everyday relationships, challenged taken-for-granted assumptions about memory, and sensitized communities and individuals who take part in their performances (for example the work of Julia Gray in Toronto, Canada). Indeed these scholars and artists have forged a path that gerontology informed by non-representational theory might continue to follow.

### 2.3.3 Lively academic writing

A ninth and final facet of non-representational theory is specifically about writing. Geographers and other and other academics unavoidably have to communicate with words but, as Ingold (2014) describes, within non-representational theory they might develop a style that does not lock automatically into stilted, categorical academic frames, but instead – like language used in the performing arts – actively embraces movement and expression. Moreover, as Lorimer (2005) notes, a style that is restless and tantalizes; that has a living quality and forms itself in the image of the very things it presents. This is not problem free because the style and ‘realis mood’ geographers and other academics have been trained in and are accustomed to (which is authoritative, logical and definitive) justifies the very existence of geographic and other academic scholarship, distinguishing it from fictional writing and journalistic reporting (Vannini, 2014b). Nevertheless, with some effort and adjustment geographers and other academics can incorporate an ‘irrealis mood’ in their writing (Vannini, 2014b). As Andrews (2014) suggests, this involves a number of sub-moods that can be used variously including the immediate mood (writing as if in the moment, as if events are unfolding as one writes, with-

out a known outcome), conditional mood (stating propositions with provisos), potential mood (being cautious and acknowledging other possibilities), fallible mood (embracing the fact that some things in the world are illogical and cannot be expressed by words, and that the writer themselves can often have doubt and ignorance), hypothetical mood (exploring possibilities and posing 'what if'), admiring mood (expressing awe, fascination and surprise), subjunctive mood (expressing states of unreality or realities that have not yet occurred) and desiderative mood (expressing personal wishes and preferences). Indeed, these sub-moods, if employed together, might help escape the pretentious, obscure, elitist and exclusionary way academics often correspond and communicate.

In gerontology, narrative research has drawn attention to the powerful acts of verbal and written communication (Ray, 2000; Kenyon et al, 1999, 2001; Bornat, 2001). Focus on hearing and documenting the accounts of older people are often characterized as a way to hear legitimate voices, and/or give back power and agency to groups whose voices have been overshadowed by professionals or as a result of marginal social locations (Bornat et al, 2004). Overlapping with the aforementioned turn toward new methodologies, new approaches ranging from blogs (both those created by older people and by researchers), to photo voice projects theatre and films are illustrative of the ways traditional forms of academic writing can be challenged, informed and augmented. The connection here to non-representational theory is that the same freedom of expression given to 'subjects' should also be afforded to researchers.

### 3 Recognizing and addressing limitations

Non-representational theory is not only the latest 'cutting edge' approach in human geography, as this paper has described, it clearly aligns well with the existing range of approaches and research in gerontology. In terms of what it potentially brings to the geography of ageing, it could clearly help scholars present the immediate movements in age and ageing, a wider range of movements and a wider-range of movers.

Like any approach, however, non-representational theory has its detractors, and a number of emerging critiques of the approach should be acknowledged as they have particular relevance to the future study of ageing. One line of criticism is based on the entire notion on non-representation. The argument is that any researcher must represent events no matter how hard they try not to, and no matter what field methods and knowledge translation strategies they employ. A related concern is the supposed impossibility of presenting, or even representing, certain events that are registered less-than-fully consciously (such as affects), because the consciousness of the researcher will act as a filter always producing a false consciousness of them (Pile, 2010). In response, in addition to finding creative and expressive ways to stay true to events that occurred, scholars have suggested adjustments to the title of non-representational theory, such as Lorimer (2005) who argues that 'more-than-representational' would be a better term to describe what is considered and conveyed.

Another criticism is that the neglects and 'deadening effect' of previous research has been overstated by those who support non-representational theory. It can be argued, for example that auto-ethnographers, sensory ethnographers and other scholars have undertaken work close to non-representational theory for many years, and past are involved with many of its key facets. Indeed research is in no way devoid of action, energy and movement and does to some extent seek to bring events to life. Yet, we see this precedent as a positive thing and non-representational theory being an overall package which might develop these ways of working even further.

A third criticism meanwhile highlights the irony that most non-representational theory - particularly early explanations - does in fact involve exclusionary languages and excessive theorization which is clearly contrary to its stated objectives (indeed this paper might also be guilty of this criticism). Whilst this might to some extent be inevitable at the launch of any new approach in order to justify it and locate it within a discipline, it is heartening to see non-representational theory gradually filter down to sub-disciplines - such as social geography and health geography - which tend to use it in more applied and empiri-



cal ways (Andrews 2014).

Finally, as Colls (2012) argues, some scholars have taken great issue with what they see as the universalist nature of non-representational theory particularly in terms of its relationality (Tolia-Kelly, 2006). It, they argue, fails to differentiate bodies and recognise persons through important social and demographic categories - such as gender, ethnicity, disability and age - that impact upon people and constitute the ways in which they understand themselves and their lives (Bondi, 2005). Moreover, critics argue that non-representational theory fails to recognize political power and intent (Jacobs et al, 2003; Pain, 2006), is masculinist, technocratic and abstract (Bondi, 2005; Thien, 2005), and distances deep feelings and emotions (Thien, 2005). Like Colls (2012) however, we argue that these problems and shortfalls need not arise, because non-representational theory does not require that existing approaches and areas of research be shelved. We consider there to be plenty of room for both old and new in geographies of ageing. Indeed, like Colls (2012), we see potential in developing a 'nomadic consciousness', between the representational and non-representational both between studies and even within single studies where subject matter allows. This approach reflects the reality that in life much that is active, less-than-fully conscious and non-representational eventually flows into the conscious representable realm where power, meaning, identity and such things come into play (and also fits Lorimer's 'more- than- representational' descriptor noted above).

In sum then, whilst acknowledging these concerns, we argue that non-representational theory might potentially revitalize the geographical study of ageing, placing movement at its core, and accounting for a greater breadth of movements *of* older people, *with* older people and *around* older people. This paper has provided an initial and basic introduction to non-representational theory but, it is hoped, one that might lead readers to the door of more substantive explanations and into more substantive debate. We recommend that readers take a long look. The emergence of a more processual, immediate, sensory and materialist human geography in the past decade in the

west has been as fundamental as the cultural turn was in 1990s, the radical Marxist turn was the 1970s and the turn to spatial science was in the 1950s. As scholars, and geographers who study ageing, we ignore it at our cost.

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