



Roaming the Mountain Forests: Wandering to Perfect the Capacitive Body

Frédéric Guyon

Translator: Julia Lelay



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rga/7762>

DOI: 10.4000/rga.7762

ISSN: 1760-7426

Publisher:

Association pour la diffusion de la recherche alpine, UGA Éditions/Université Grenoble Alpes

Electronic reference

Frédéric Guyon, "Roaming the Mountain Forests: Wandering to Perfect the Capacitive Body", *Journal of Alpine Research | Revue de géographie alpine* [Online], 108-3 | 2020, Online since 14 January 2021, connection on 29 March 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rga/7762> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/rga.7762>

This text was automatically generated on 29 March 2021.



La Revue de Géographie Alpine est mise à disposition selon les termes de la licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Pas de Modification 4.0 International.

Roaming the Mountain Forests: Wandering to Perfect the Capacitive Body

Frédéric Guyon

Translation : Julia Lelay

Some contemporary immersing?

- 1 Since 2017, France has seen some extensive literature on forest bathing or “shinrin yoku”. Indeed, all major press media outlets have dealt with the social phenomenon (Huffington Post, Les Échos, CNews, etc.), which was also of interest for fashion (Marie-Claire, Vogue, Grazia, etc.), and health magazines (Santé magazine, Psychologies). The large number of books, mainly written by professional specialists, but also by Japanese researchers, which explain to the general public the functioning and the contributions of forest bathing in terms of health, is also to note. Finally, leisure and sightseeing programs offer activities around this theme. Institutional players (regional councils, tourist offices, etc.)¹ are riding this general trend by promoting these offers, identifying the best roaming sites and organising some long-lasting itineraries. This social phenomenon reflects a present-day concern, which reminds us the practice of wood collectors/gatherers. Indeed, it can be defined by “starting from the field, with a particular state of mind, a way of conceiving our surroundings as a common wealth capital, which one can enjoy depending on their needs” (Mechin, 1989, p. 169). The object of this analysis takes place in some mountain forest area and requires travelling in order to reach the goal of the quest, whether material and/or symbolic (Guyon, 2004). Here, such as with other forest tours, a whole series of relationships between the individual and their surrounding space (route, landmarks, corners, wandering, reading of the environment) are at stake beyond the simple potential materiality (mushrooms), such as time (slowness), body (bodily mobilisation, care, meaning), movement, natural elements and finally imagination (holistic philosophy, consciousness).

- 2 The term “sylvotherapy” or “forest bathing” should be questioned, as it seems to be a self-proclamation of some health and care practises. However, the majority of people who turn to forest bathing are not “sick”, but are in search of some improvement of their well-being (back pain, digestive problems, etc.), are undergoing some major change in their lifestyle or are curious and want to make some discoveries.
- 3 The purpose of the analysis described here is to explore “the various ways humans experience and perceive their engagement into the world” (Descola, 2005, p. 135). Specifically, we can say that roaming the forest, when it becomes a regular “immersive re-creativity” (Andrieu, 2017), aims above all at creating links between the human and non-human parts of the environment. Observing the elementary patterns of practice and the different configurations makes it possible to take into account the wide range of relationships with all existing creatures (mountain, tree, myth, etc.). These “internalised psychic, sensorimotor and emotional systems” (Descola, 2005, p. 151) contribute to developing the skills necessary to structure the flow of perception, to organise both the practical activity and the thoughts and feelings, and to provide a framework for interpreting behaviours and events. We could thus assume that each body incorporates some multiple actions (sensorimotor, perception, evaluation, appreciation patterns, etc.) and habits (Lahire, 1998, p. 42).
- 4 The capacitive body reflects this system, made up of some knowledge, skills, motor and sensory capacities, which is “able to modify its action or perception abilities from one moment to the next, by grasping new tools” (Hanneton, 2017, p. 193). Its actions can be transparent to consciousness. The capacitive body represents “an unprecedented potentiality of the body which materialises under the effect of a greening evolution” (Andrieu, 2017, p. 43). The capacitive body must be contemplated as a resource or as the centre of potentialities to be activated, which are not or are no longer in a conscious state, or which have not been awakened by incorporated interactions. Nevertheless, these interactions were able to participate in its construction through socialising experiences, such as an anthropological matrix that would require an adequate environment to become real (Guyon, 2013). The resulting body pattern appears as integrating sensitive data which contain some gestures and perceptions, some representations and sensations, some memories and emotions and as going beyond them in a synthesis which is continuously destroyed and renewed (Ajuriaguerra, Hécaen, 1952).
- 5 Today’s forms of roaming the forest are adapted to the living conditions of the modern society (connected, urban, informed, sedentary, immobile, etc.). These practices may appear as a symptom of contemporary societies, as the result of an urban society of which they are the antidote, but they should not be construed as the “anti-city” (Urbain, 2002), as they only constitute instants of fresh air in the urban everyday life. The questions which are to be developed here, through two forms of forest bathing, are an attempt to define the spatial, existential, and socio-cultural dimensions of roaming, by mobilising the underlying anthropology. This approach combines the notions of adventure and immersion, discovery and encounter, as well as safety.

Methodology

- 6 To constitute our corpus, we analyse the arguments of professionals (mountain guides, coaches, therapists, sylvotherapy guides) and practising students (picker, hiker, client).

The corpus is made up of oral and written speeches, materialised in collections of comments and opinions, communication tools (website, blog, commercial offer from professionals)² or semi-structured interviews (18). We complement our sources with some active observation³, during sylvotherapy sessions lasting an average of 2 hours and during picking. Here, we examine the gestures, listen to the words, capture the moods. Our observation area is mainly mountains and forests in France, in particular mid-mountain ranges (Vosges, Jura, Massif Central, Préalpes).

- 7 The development and enthusiasm for sporting activities in outdoor natural spaces reflect the “contemporary worship of nature” (Kalaora, 2001). With regards to the four mountain sports cultures which we have identified to date - namely traditional, modern, transmodern and environmentally friendly - it appears that our activities fall into the scope of the traditional trend (predatory and local culture), and especially in the transmodern and ecological movement (culture of naturalness, soft vitality, “hypernatural” (Corneloup, 2006)). We assume that the current forms of roaming the mountain forest areas are a result of recent social and environmental changes. Indeed, the urbanisation, the collapse of biodiversity, the pollution of air, water and soil affect the landmarks where human beings live, and endanger their longevity and future. These changes feed human beings’ soul-searching (their origin, subtle worlds). Likewise, the new rhythms of life, work and consumption are the source of actual pain, such as technostress, which is considered as the epidemic of the 21st century by the WHO. Liberalism and its idea of individual responsibility influence the environmentally friendly social behaviours.
- 8 Human beings have become “nature less” since the biological modifications which allowed the development of their intelligence threw them out of nature (Prochiantz, 2012). To adapt to their environment, culture has replaced nature, ethics is the new organic and rules are now more important than instinct (Picq, 2013). Yet, mankind lives “in our modern societies with a body which is always adapted to a natural environment” (Miyazaki, 2018, p. 26).
- 9 The arguments of actors who develop these leisure forms of nature seem to “initiate a recreational transition allowing a change in bodily ecology” and the political promotion of transmodern recreational practices is “the condition for participating to this transition” (Corneloup, 2017, p. 7). Here, our standpoint implies rethinking the relationship with oneself, with others and with nature (Corneloup, 2011).
- 10 If we try to define forest bathing through a socio-practical definition, we notice that this activity consists, during some tour, itinerary or path, to wander in a forest area to come and meet the trees and their universe, i.e. “immersing the body and soul in the tree community”⁴. Therefore, there is a need for a walk through a woodland environment, for contacts to be created (visual, touch, imaginary), for conceptual framework to be built and for rituals to be initiated. This teaches us about the use of different senses, about aesthetics and about the imagination which is mobilised. There are several forms of practising, from the simple observation of a tree during a forest walk, from 2 to 3 hours, to identifying and exchanging energy, including by staying several days in the forest to be penetrated by terpenes and other plant substances. The question of the definition of the body, its dimensions and its place in the environment arises. Defining practising patterns is not an easy thing to do, it may be initiated by observing “the rituals and the types of interactions [...] as much as the myths or ritual formulas, the techniques of the body [...] or the use of space, as well as the theories of

ontogeny” (Descola, 2005, p. 157). These are the dimensions we question through our observations.

- 11 The current developers of this practice are inspired almost exclusively by Eastern influences (Buddhist, Taoist, shamanistic, from the perspective of chakras and meridians). The term *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing) certainly tells us about the current geographical origin, but above all reflects the phenomenon of interculturality, that is to say a shift in models of thought and its practices, from the eastern world to western societies.

Approach of wandering and narrative

- 12 Professionals use the terms “excursions”, “rejuvenating walks”, “walking”, “conscious walking”. They describe a mode of travel, but also of a personal journey where the immersion in nature transforms the body, the soul, the spirit (Schmitt, 1998). The therapeutic aspect takes shape here. Roaming represents a contemporary practice that would be part of transmodern naturalness (Corneloup, 2016). What is sought here is not the rational control of the elements of nature, but a different quest: “worlding” aims at getting a “relational knowledge” (Andrieu, 2017, p. 18) of the links between human senses and elements of nature. This immersive re-creativity is a way for the individual to discover new sensory coordinates but also the meaning of their presence on Earth.
- 13 As the urban human beings have severed their ties with nature by becoming an indoor species, which spends 90% of its time there⁵, they neglect their triple connection to nature to through their emotional, spiritual and physical relationships. Therefore, human beings must “define their relationship to the environment through representations organised in speeches. By structuring space and time in an orderly universe, mythical narratives give meaning” (Bozonnet, 1992, p. 16). By what mystery does the mountain forest area, which is a simple contributor to the forest ecosystem, the mountainous forest area, a simple support for a sylvan ecosystem, become so meaningful?
- 14 It should be noted that there are numerous close or even similar myths around forest and mountain areas. Thus, we will find the theme of peaks, touching the sky, elevation, link between cosmos and the Earth, quest for light, rejuvenation, survival of Eden, etc. (Corbin, 2014; Bozonnet, 1992). They are confidants, sacred incarnations, place of the savage land (Brosse, 2001, Corvol, 2004, Corbin, 2014). These elements are mobilised differently according to the individuals, that is to say according to their itinerary and wanderings. Using the anthropology aspect of roaming allows us to identify the different parts of the question. Indeed, the spatial, cultural, bodily, emotional and spiritual dimensions allow us to get a glimpse of the mechanism at stake.
- 15 Wandering literally means losing one’s way. This loss of control can happen over work, time, space and value. The wandering process can be cultural, so the transition to “modernity is therefore reflected as the result of a process over which local actors have little control”, where they no longer own the various events. The image of “a man lost in his own field” (Prado, 2012, p. 795) would be an indication of the shift towards a lack of meaning.
- 16 Wandering also means finding oneself in an unusual place at the end of the journey. The encounter with the outside then occurs: “the outside occurs under certain

conditions, and first and foremost that of a “misguidance”, the impact of which on its origin having to be determined here” (Alazet, 2005, p. 57).

- 17 Finally, wandering may be construed as leaving the paths of religion, morality or reason (Fourier, 1847). Like a maze, this area of physical concern introduces a metaphysical question. Breaking free from tradition to lead one’s own life and be oneself reflects one form of this.
- 18 Therefore, wandering represents a journey, an unusual land and a state, generally of short duration, characterised by a loss of consciousness or of self-control. It can result from an excess of pleasure or pain, from a strong surprise, but also from a temporary mental disorder, close to madness, to foolishness. Creativity will stem from wandering through reality, by ignoring current events. Creative self-intensification may be the means by which the subject manages to free themselves from their individual determinations (Nietzsche, 1977).
- 19 The wandering state lies between body philosophy and activation of the living body, then through the modification of the representation of oneself and the environment. The capacitive body is thus challenge. The following dimensions – new geographical territories, cultural openings, a more sensitive body, freeing the spirit and finding one’s way – are a way to identify the reference cultural system which explains these behaviours.

New territories

- 20 A stroll in some mountain forest can be a first step to wandering, from a geographical point of view. Indeed, it is then all about fitting in a décor, in a field of evolution, i.e. a socio-telluro-ecological organisation which is unknown.
- “I will never come here alone” (F, 47 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Vosges, onsite interview, 11/2019).
- 21 When entering the mountain forest area, people are immersed in the atmosphere of the site. Indeed, each place, each beech grove, chestnut grove, spruce forest, has an environment of its own, structured by the growth of the trees (shape of the trunk and the crown, height of the canopy, filtered light, smells, colours), but also by the slope and ground shapes. The ground is made up of various elements, rocks, branches, trunk, leaves, mushrooms, paths, which offer some spatial landmarks. The stroller can, with each step, make discoveries, but also get lost. The stroll will be divided in several stages and complemented by some recreational activities, silence, reflection and discussions.
- 22 Roaming the forest (getting lost, letting oneself be guided, finding oneself) takes the form of following a guide (supervisor), a desire, an idea or an intuition, or even a memory. Starting to practise marks a double break both in space and time. Indoor and outdoor are divided, as well as before and after. Forests are thus a crossing point and the beginning of something. Let’s note that before starting our journey, as soon as entering the forest, some things are “left on the parking lot”, such as the weight of one’s thoughts, habits that need to be changed. Then, entrusting the tree with emotions, feelings, works as some sort of cleanse.
- 23 “We never get lost here, we just wander around” (M, 63 years old, regular hiker, Alsace, onsite interview, 2014).

- 24 The second wandering stage therefore consists in breaking habits and daily reflexes. “Modern human beings, trapped by the civilisation they created, need to escape from it” [...]. Forests “offer them some variety, irregularities” (Plaisance, 1985, p. 246), [in shapes, colours, smells, textures, heights, movements, atmospheres, scenes]. This journey sets the body in new territories or awakens old ones, which were lost under layers of past experiments. Trees and telluric specificities represent geodesic landmarks. A path or a way, “a memory set in the very earth” (Le Breton, 2012, p. 37) then becomes a milestone that allows the body to wander around in a space, adapting to progress made and seasons changing, without ever mastering it.

Cultural openings

- 25 Outings in the forest are a way to discover or rediscover one’s environment, nature and body. In the current context where a nature withdrawal syndrome appears⁶, this type of therapy relates to *natura medicatrix*, which first set the idea of the benefits of natural elements. We thus discover “an antidote to the disenchantment of the world in some redemptive and already threatened wilderness” (Descola, 2005, p. 89). A counter-culture of the body emerges. Can we link these practices to Eastern holistic philosophies, such as the tantric view of the body related to the cosmos? The distance between human beings and their natural environment, their confinement in an urban and indoor environment, becomes a handicap and creates some sort of “haze in our minds” (Malaurie, 2008), which contaminates the capacitive body. Mountain forests therefore appear as cultural reserves, in which human beings can come and absorb colours, smells, social practices (gathering, active leisure). Mountain is a territory to be explored to discover one’s internal map.



Photo 1: "sensations"

Photo by the author

"Trees are beautiful right now. These colours, these flowers, this is wonderful" (F, 47 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Vosges, phone interview, 10/2019).

- 26 Strollers distance themselves, for a moment, from the technical culture and its parasites (cellphones are turned off before departure), which lack sensations and generate a sense of fog. Of course, technical equipment facilitate action and protect the body, while also limiting sensations felt. For example, wearing shoes changes walking (Mauss, 1950, p. 370) and breaks direct contact with the ground, which makes the body visually impaired or blind.

**Photo 2: "foot"**

Photo by the author

- 27 This intellectual wandering process gives access to some new knowledge, stemming from this plant life preserved from "social emanations" (de Senancour, 1804) and human productions which pollute the wild universe. The rhythm and time-scale issues of contemporary everyday life (urgency, instantness, continuous connection, excess information) distance man "from biological time, from the time of the seasons, from the time of human life" (De Gaulejac, 2009, p. 83). Here, freedom reappears momentarily as slowness is crucial to questioning the body.
- 28 "Some would even sit down to better absorb the environment [...] Slowing down facilitates the reception of forest benefits" (Bernadette Rey, therapeutic forest guide).

A more sensitive body, some new or reactivated bodily capacities

- 29 Walking and climbing are physical and physiological actions, which burn energy, but they are also a set of gestures and sensations that gain meaning in a narrative. Thus, roaming “uses the five senses to live the sensory experience of walking through the woods” (Camille Courbion, mountain guide and yoga teacher). Nature can be seen, tasted, heard, touched, named. Closing one’s eyes opens up other senses. Awakening the senses through immersion means being able to connect to the environment. First of all, there is a need to empty the senses saturated with everyday parasites, in order to be completely receptive to the world around. It is a question of “healing, rehabilitation, self-building or personal integrity” (Bozonnet, 1992, p. 39).

“Seeing the beauty of the forest environment, marking the seasons, seeing colours, smells, atmospheres, that puts us in the right mood” (F, 45 years old, regular stroller, Jura, phone interview, 11/2019).



Photo 3: “scenery”

Photo by the author

- 30 Gaining altitude and being in the forest has some health benefits: finding air, height, the outdoors.
- “This is amazing how well we breathe in this forest. I feel good when I am surrounded by the trees” (forest bather, 56 years old, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).
- 31 Walking barefoot brings one’s back to childhood (or to a more primitive life) as well as some material and symbolic grounding. Some strollers speak of a “full sensory experiment”, which allows them to absorb realities, or of poly-sensory experiments (Besse, 2010). This bodily liberation, which makes it possible to go “from the sleeping

body to the awakened body” (Sayeux, 2008, p. 108), necessarily implies a phase of contemplation and then meditation.

“It’s crazy what one can feel through the skin, as if new sensations were coming from there ... (she shows her skin), by the nature that you touch” (F, 57 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).

32 We will go as far as feeling the flow of sap, the flow of energies and the ground and plant magnetism, in short, as grasping the functioning of the macrocosm. This connection allows energy to flow between the human body and the earthly body, through an exchange of electrons “which has some powerful healing power” (Qing, 2018, p. 206). Thus, like the tantric yogin, strollers seem to “perceive their body [...] as a constituent part of the cosmic whole” (Padoux, 2003, p. 171). These outings allow us to “connect to nature, to trees, to the tree inside of us and to “our” nature”⁷.

33 Forest bathing led to the idea of mountain bathing: “Guided sensory tours [will be likely to] create a state of connection to the mountain and to oneself that goes beyond an ordinary hike”⁸. These immersions and itineraries allow strollers to taste “the healing power of trees”⁹ and of the mountain environment.

“I feel as if roots were coming out of my feet, I feel the earth, like an energy” (F, 15 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).



Photo 4: “tree”

Photo by the author

“I feel more relaxed, but I did not feel an exchange, the tree has remained a tree... (laughs)” (M, 44 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 10/2019).

34 The tree is identified by a whole set of properties that require appropriate behaviours depending on the nature perceived. Rituals of presentation, of contact are used, such as words, caresses, glances or taking off one’s shoes. We can draw a parallel between

mountains, these “cathedrals of the Earth” (Hélar, 2005) and trees, as both generates some kind of mystical exaltation. Thus appears a notion of threshold, of sacredness of the place, of change in behaviours, etc. When roaming in forest mountains, strollers summon the imagination of the physiological, energetic, existential regeneration, in short of the prophylactic capacity (Papillon, Dodier, 2011) of trees and mountains (filtered air and radiation, concentration of small negative ions, physical, moral and social regeneration). Climbing, progressing and being in a space has bio-psychic effects and transform the capacities of the body through the resources encountered.

“It is rejuvenating” (F, 30 years old, second guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019). It is literally a return to the origin, the origin of life or of anthropology.

- 35 Cosmosis, or the immersion in nature, symbolises the “experiment of self-merging in the world of elements and the community of natural beings” (Andrieu, 2017, p. 11). If cosmosis is construed as the access, is it just as significant to reach such extension of oneself through the mobilisation of gestures, attitudes, rhythms and thoughts then forgotten or unknown.
- 36 When wandering around, the body and its physical, physiological and mental functions are mobilised. Attentiveness to the present moment is very useful for the psyche (Plaisance, 1985, p. 246). The forest bathing experiments led with senior citizens in old folks’ homes (EHPAD) show that contact with the odours of wood and with touch of bark awakens lost memories and moments of consciousness. Emotions are reborn because senses are providers of memory, and wake up capacities put on standby.

Freeing the spirit

- 37 Roaming and wandering represent a moment that allows thoughts that are bursting in the mind to be at peace. The need to focus on an object functions as a form of meditation, by freeing “the monkey of the mind” (Ricard, 2008, p. 29), that is, by calming a turbulent mind, thoughts and emotions. Thus, it is the “forest fusion” that help us make a distinction between “the big I” and the “small I” which tends to separate us from the world” (Monce, 2018, p. 3). Strollers stand still in front of a tree, disappear in their thoughts: the one who seeks to solve a problem will become “this mass without a glance and almost without thoughts, nailed to a point in space, and which is more in the world than by the anonymous vigilance of their senses” (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, p. 191). Trees become confidants, advisers, caregivers.
- 38 Going and meet the trees allows us to “strengthen our intuition, and find peace. “In fact, when we meditate in front of a tree, we are not alone, all of nature is meditating with us” (Sabrina Millot, forest bathing guide)¹⁰.



Photo 5: "connection"

Photo by the author

"When I think about it, I realise that this is like mindfulness mediation. During the walk, we focused on pieces of ourselves, pieces of nature, a bark, a colour, a sound, we created a void, a contact" (M, 50 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).

- 39 Mountains and their universe, combined with the purpose of the process (observation, slowness, quest), force us to slow down our progression and facilitate roaming. Daydreaming, contemplating one's feet, trees or even searching relentlessly for a detail allow one to get closer to the rhythm of plant life (Granger, 1994) outside the bursting family, professional and urban life. The tree-lined mountain is thus a safe haven. We will even come to rest, physically and symbolically at the foot or against the tree, a sort of singular behaviour that goes against the expectations of society. This opens the way to unfold one's creative potential.

Forest surroundings give us the "opportunity to slow down and be happy, to stop time and sometimes torment" (F, 49 years old, several experiments, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).

"I want to reconnect with our origins, from the start, it is nature, the land that has nourished us" (F, 55 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).

Finding one's way, listening to one's body

- 40 The objective sought is some reconnection to the body (through emotions, sensations, meaning). Wandering, in its existential dimension, consists in acquiring new cosmogonic benchmarks in order to accept one's status as a member of the universe.

Forests and spatial arrangements are ways to be sure of feeling outside a given territory, which facilitates the appearance of the supernatural. Forest is the scene of a “subtle sociability in which, day after day, people come to meet beings, which only the diverse appearances and lack of language really distinguish from humans” (Descola, 2005, p. 22). “Feeling like you belong to something bigger”, becoming a part of the universe and blending in with nature (Qinq, 2018). Therefore, human beings consider themselves as components of a cosmological whole.

- 41 Thus, some kind of holistic philosophy emerges: “forest is our path and the beings, visible and invisible, who live in it are our guides and our allies to discover the sacred song that our heart wishes to offer to the Earth” (forest bathing guide)¹¹.
- 42 Expanding one’s capacitive body can consist in putting oneself at the same frequency as woodland or trees: “getting in touch with your inner body. This is what some call the energetic body” (Jean-Marie Defosse, forest bathing therapist). We speak of energy frequency. In Eastern practices, the permanent interaction between the physical, energetic, emotional, mental and spiritual bodies and the environment leads to body awareness techniques (Caulier, 2012), i.e. a search for the awakening of the bigger “self”. Perception patterns seem to be evolving. Tuning in thus means adopting some new vocabulary to communicate in this universal language.



Photo 5: “Wi-Fi”

Unknown source

“You come out of the woods with your head empty and with a pleasant feeling of fulfilment” (F, 45 years old, first guided tour in the forest, Alsace, onsite interview, 11/2019).

- 43 The stage of identification and cosmosis remains necessary. In the mythical geography, trees and human bodies merge to root human beings, who find their rhizomes which

arise at the bottom of their trunk and above, with the arms as branches. Like Daphne in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, whose heart beats under the bark, her hair turns into leaves, her feet are attached to the Earth, the tree feels the heart of humans and humans hear messages from the plant kingdom. These practices are considered "from the point of view of our current conception of nature" [...], they are seen as irrational and the corresponding actions as magic" (Weber, 1971, p. 430). However, they help to define this animist dimension which goes beyond naturalism and its opposition between nature and culture. Thus, if most Europeans are spontaneously naturalists [...] "because of their formal and informal education, this does not prevent some of them, in certain circumstances, from treating their cat as if they had a soul" (Descola, 2005, p. 322) or trees as if they were confidants, analysts, healers. These actions ensure some new discovery of the sacredness of mountain forests and of new territories for human beings. The integrating schemes of practice (identification, relationship, figuration) are thus mobilised (Descola, 2005).

- 44 These motor experiments develop as bodily awakening sessions that leave memory traces, marks whose duration may vary, but also that create an emotional bond, which links the individual to a territory, a community, values, thus improving the "coherence" of the person (Durkheim, 1968).

Conclusion

- 45 Roaming the mountain forest sheds light on the way strollers perceive the mountain forest environment and on the way they act in it. Wandering around gives rise to transient, controlled, states, whose goal is to further, reconquer or expand the capacities of the stroller. The process represents a progression (a tour, a journey between two points, two states), the discovery of uncharted territory (change of framework, of references, temporary alteration of habits), and a state (characterized by a loss of consciousness or self-control), before finally, a marking (some sort of inscription in the body). Wandering cannot be construed without taking into account security and stability, which is ensured by socialization, supervision and organization of space. The first phase of this forest journey consists in a dual acceptance: that of belonging to the cosmos (which is also a part of oneself) and that of allowing oneself to live new experiments. Taking time, slowing down, observing, smelling, feeling, thinking, constitutes a meditative practice which combines visual representations and mantras to build a cosmic vision of the body. The majority of people consider that they listen to their body.
- 46 Today, entering a state of osmosis with nature by roaming the mountain forests contributes to deepening self-knowledge through the discovery of new atmospheres (calmness, vibrations, freshness, etc.), new horizons (altitude, countryside, forest, etc.), new sensations (feeling the raindrops on the face, the wind, the bark, the smells, etc.), new emotions (sadness, joy, awakening, tenderness, etc.), i.e. skills to perfect the capacitive body. Weather, physical and landscape properties are therefore incorporated in bodies through perceptions, analyses and actions.
- 47 We are witnessing both a change in states of consciousness and physiological changes confirmed by scientific studies¹² (decrease in anxiety and stress, improvement of cognitive functions, improvement of mood, decrease in heart rate and blood pressure, increased creativity, increased sense of well-being, improved immune system).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ajuriaguerra J. de, Hécaen H., 1952.-*Méconnaissances et hallucinations corporelles*, Masson.
- Alazet B., 2005.- « Écrire l'égarément », *Roman 20-50*, 2 (n°40), p. 57-64.
- Andrieu B., 2017.-*L'Écologie corporelle*, Tome 1, *Bien-être et cosmose*, L'Harmattan.
- Besse J.-M., 2010.- « Le paysage, espace sensible, espace public », *Meta : Research in Hermeneutics, phenomenology and practical philosophy*, Vol. II, N°2, pp. 259-286, www.metajournal.org.
- Brosse J., 2001.-*Mythologie des arbres*, Petite Bibliothèque Payot.
- Caulier E., 2012.- « Taijiquan et calligraphie, Trouver sa propre écriture », in Grison Benoit, *Bien-être/ Être-bien ? Les techniques de conscience du corps entre Orient et Occident*, L'Harmattan.
- Corbin A., 2014.-*La douceur de l'ombre. L'arbre, source d'émotions de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Champs, Flammarion.
- Corneloup J., 2006.- Les cultures sportives de la montagne d'aujourd'hui et de demain, in *La montagne, Terrain de jeu et d'enjeux*, Édition du Fournel, Collection sportnature.org.
- Corneloup J., 2011.- « La forme transmoderne des pratiques récréatives de nature. », *Développement durable et territoires*, Réseau " Développement durable et territoires fragiles ", 2 (3), pp. 1-15.
- Corneloup J., 2016.-*Sociologie des pratiques récréatives en nature, Du structuralisme à l'interactionnisme*, L'argentièrre-la-Bessée, Fournel
- Corneloup J., 2017.-*Transition récréative et écologie corporelle*, halshs-01459037
- Corvol A., 2004.-*Éloge des arbres*, Robert Laffont.
- De Gaulejac, 2009.-*La société malade de la gestion*, Points, Éd. du Seuil.
- Descola P., 2005.-*Par-delà nature et culture*, nrf, Éd. Gallimard.
- Durkheim, E., 1968.-*Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (3e éd.), Paris, PUF.
- Fourier C., 1847.-« *Égarément de la raison* » (1806) Une édition électronique réalisée à partir du texte de Texte publié dans *La Phalange*, mars-avril-mai, http://www.uqac.quebec.ca/zone30/Classiques_des_sciences_sociales/index.html
- Granger M., 1994.- « Le détour par le non-humain », in Michel Granger (dir.), *Henry David Thoreau*, N°65, Cahier de l'Herne.
- Guyon F., 2013.- « Comment peut-on être chasseur ? La question de l'ancrage contemporain corps et âme dans une activité de prédation », *Loisir et Société / Society and Leisure*
- Guyon, F., 2004.-*Analyse des rapports pluriels à l'espace « naturel », chasseurs, pêcheurs, cueilleurs*, thèse de doctorat (sciences et techniques des activités physiques et sportives), Université Marc Bloch – Strasbourg II.
- Hanneton S. 2017.- « Du corps biologique au corps capacitaire », in *Le corps capacitaire*, Éditeurs Jacqueline Decarpentries et Bernard Andrieu, Recherche et Éducation, hors-série, pp 181-193.

- Hélaré A., 2005.-*John Ruskin et les cathédrales de la Terre*, Éd. Guérin.
- Kalaora B., 2001.- « À la conquête de la pleine nature », in *Ethnologie française*, vol. 31, n°4, pp. 591-597.
- Lahire B., 1998.-*L'homme pluriel, les ressorts de l'action*, Nathan, Paris,
- Le Breton D., 2012.-*Marcher, Éloge des chemins et de la lenteur*, Métailié.
- Malaurie J.,*Terre Mère*, CNRS Éditions.
- Mauss, M., 1950.- « Les techniques du corps », in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Paris, PUF, pp. 365-386.
- Mechin C., 1989.-
Du bon usage de la Forêt chez les Vosgiens de la vallée de la Plaine, Du rural à l'environnement : la question de la nature aujourd'hui
, (dir.) Nicole Mathieu, Marcel Jollivet, ARF, éd. L'Harmattan.
- Miyazaki Y., 2018.- *Shinrin Yoku, Les bains de forêt, le secret de santé naturelle des japonais*, Guy Trédaniel Éd.
- Monce L., 2018.-*Ces arbres qui nous veulent du bien : à la découverte des bienfaits de la sylvothérapie*, Dunod.
- Nietzsche, 1977.-*La Naissance de la tragédie enfantée par l'esprit de la musique* (Michel Haar, Lacoue-Labarthe P. ; Nancy J.L. (trad.), in F. Nietzsche, *Œuvres philosophiques complètes*(Vol. I-1). Paris, Gallimard.
- Merleau-Ponty, M., 1945.-*Phénoménologie de la perception*. Paris, Gallimard.
- Padoux, A. 2003.- « Corps et Cosmos, L'image du corps du yogin tantrique », in Bouillier V. ; Tarabout, G. (dir.),*Images du corps dans le monde hindou*. Nouvelle édition [en ligne]. Paris : CNRS Éditions.
- Papillon P., Dodier R., 2011.- Les forêts périurbaines : des usages récréatifs à l'espace prophylactique, 99-3, *Revue de géographie alpine*.
- Picq P., 2013.-*Au commencement était l'homme*, Odile Jacob.
- Plaisance G., 1985.-*Forêt et santé, Guide pratique de sylvothérapie*,Éditions Dangles.
- Prado P., 2012.- « Boemerezh ou de l'égarément », *Ethnologie française*, 4 (Vol. 42), p. 787-795. DOI : 10.3917/ethn.124.0787. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/revue-ethnologie-francaise-2012-4-page-787.htm>
- Prochiantz A., 2012.-*Qu'est-ce que le vivant ?*, Seuil.
- Qing L., 2018.-*Shinrin Yoku, l'art et la science du bain de forêt, Comment la forêt nous soigne*, First Développement personnel.
- Ricard M., 2008.-*L'art de la méditation*, Pocket.
- Sayeux A.-S., 2008.-*Surfeurs, l'être au monde*, PUR.
- Schmitt J.-C., 1998.- « Le corps en Chrétienté », in M. Godelier et M. Panoff, éd., *La Production du corps. Approches anthropologiques et historiques*, Amsterdam, Éditions des Archives contemporaines, p. 339-355.
- Senancour de, E. P., 1984.-*Oberman*, Folio classique.
- Urbain J.-D., 2002.-*Paradis verts désirs de campagne et passions résidentielles*, Paris, Payot.

Weber M., 1971.-*Économie et société*, Paris, Plon.

NOTES

1. <https://www.touraineloirevalley.com/balades-en-foret-sylvotherapie>, <https://www.sancy.com/equipement-loisirs/sylvatorium>, etc.
 2. Around thirty sources, including Corine Moëns <http://www.lavoixdelaforet.com>; Camille Courbion, <https://www.bain-de-foret.fr>; Jean-Marie Defossez, <http://www.sylvotherapie.net>; Sylvie Triboulot <https://www.sens-a-sons-nature.com>, etc.
 3. Two forest bathing sessions and onsite interviews with a total of 16 people, in 2014, 10/2019 and 11/2019.
 4. <https://www.alsace-destination-tourisme.com/ged/espace-presse/dp-adt-nouveautes-alsace-2019.pdf>
 5. <https://fr.yougov.com> (study made by YouGov with 16,000 people in 14 countries of Europe and North America).
 6. The nature withdrawal syndrome, Réseau École et Nature, version of June 2013.
 7. <http://www.sylvotherapie.net>
 8. <https://www.intentionne.com/stage,therapies-naturelles,3836.htm>
 9. <https://www.bain-de-foret.fr/>
 10. <http://sabinamillot.wixsite.com>
 11. <http://www.lavoixdelaforet.com>
 12. Immerse Yourself in a Forest for Better Health (Department of Environmental Conservation), <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/90720.html>; Qing Li. (2010). Effect of forest bathing trips on human immune function. *Environmental Health and Preventative Medicine*. 15(1): 9-17. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2793341/>.
-

ABSTRACTS

Since 2017, France has seen some extensive literature, books, woodland sites, professionals tackle the issue of forest bathing or “shinrin yoku”. This social phenomenon reflects a present-day concern, an activity which takes the form of taking a tour, following an itinerary or wandering, roaming a woodland environment (i.e. some mountain here) to come and meet the trees and their forest environment. The goal is to immerse oneself in the community of forests and trees. This analysis questions our relationships with our natural surroundings, to get a better understanding of how individuals consider themselves and act within the environment they are in. By structuring space and time in an orderly universe, mythical narratives give meaning to this roaming practice.

These social experiments are analysed from a roaming anthropology standpoint, an approach which combines spatial, cultural, body, emotional and spiritual dimensions. The various forms of roaming the forest are said to enhance the capacitive body.

INDEX

Keywords: mountain, forest, roaming, wandering, capacitive body, forest bathing

AUTHORS

FRÉDÉRIK GUYON

Université de Franche-Comté – Laboratoire C3S, fredguyon@gmail.com