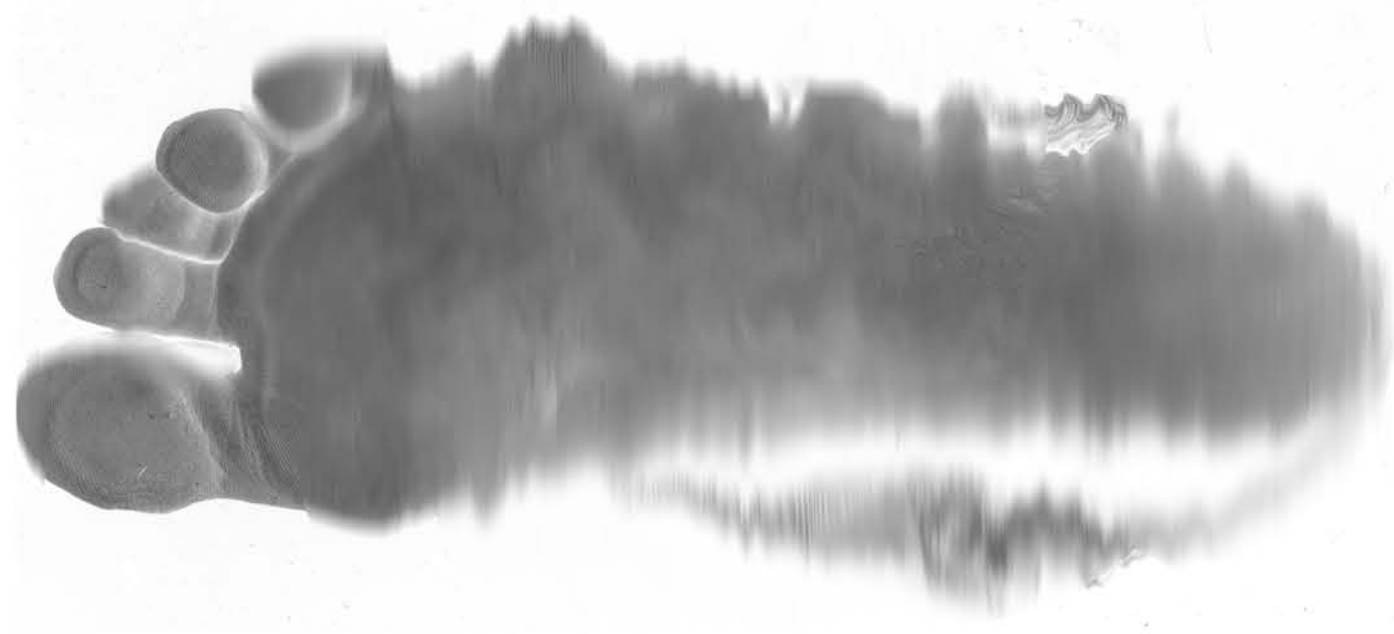


Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.

Al andar se hace camino
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.

Caminante no hay camino
sino estelas en la mar...

"Cantares" (fragmento)
Antonio Machado
Castilla, 1912

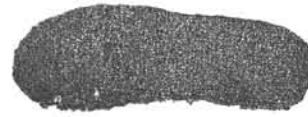
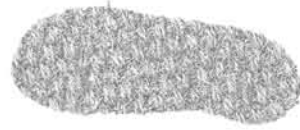
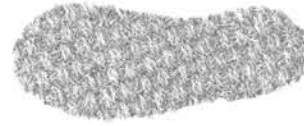
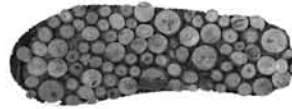


in memoriam



**GROUND
(THE LAST PATH ON A LIFETIME NARRATIVE)**

Alejandra Bernal



17:53 Live or die this way.



A sandy shore. Debris-laden sea ice drifted onto gently shelving shorelines at high tide; at low tide, the ice pans carrying the boulders were grounded and eventually stranded. Over many years, a rampart was built. Give yourself away to it. All that remains is landscape.

17:21



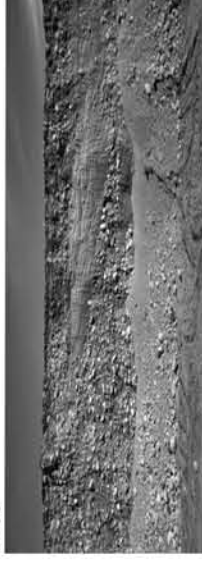
Kames are mounds of coarse material that has been sorted and deposited by glacial meltwater. These boulders were carried and rounded by meltwater from glaciers that advanced from the north and deposited them on a completely different rock type. Alien limestone. Incidentally stuck there.

15:48



Woods. Ex-woods. A coastal plain. The hills are bare because of clear-cutting of timber. Subsequent erosion has removed most of the soil, exposing the bedrock. Like memory without a conscience. Or forgiveness, or regret.

14:39



A path of gravel. Stop on an oasis, man-made. I'm Horton's, McEverywhere. Some landscape architect pretends gravel looks like The Ground Itself. Bring memories of a swimming pool for a child to bathe. Good cigarette disposal. A major source of aggregate for the construction industry. Outwash: myself.

13:47



A highway. Asphalt. Its blackness evokes its scent. A civic scar moves forward as the car accelerates. "There are cracks on everything, man..." -let's say. Turn on the radio. Could have taken the train. From Montréal to Ottawa. Could have died in the middle of the way. A town called Alexandria. What a hell!

12:08



A sidewalk. The flattened kingdom of concrete. Smells like tar. Tar-tar. "Goudron" in French. Standing on a grey ground, waiting for a green light to start the passarelle. Cars seem to have direction, that hidden sense: enjoyment, humor, pleasure... What else? Who else?

10:47



A doorway. The enclosed intimacy opens to the public space. Close it. Leave all belongings inside, behind, away. Step down the stairway. A spiral, a chromosome. A rug of natural fabric suggests a way. Out of the way.

07:13



A room. A random day. Wake up. Quit bed. Its dreams; its nonsense; its logic. Life is still there, standing, walking.

Walking

Motion is the keyword for nomadism.
When deprived of vehicles, motion is up to your feet.
Your vehicle: your feet
Your ground in motion
The reflecting surface of your chosen way
The living memorial of what had no choice
But moving on in search for choice.
No choice but walking
Walking: your choice.

Not Walking

A world of prosthesis
The shoe as a personal ground
Keeps your feet far from contact
Still, grounded
Standing up or sitting down.
Or lying with your ear on the flat.
The paradox of a moving surface
A train, a car, a boat, an aircraft:
When deprived of ground for feet in motion
Time passes by as a visual fact
A treat to the open eye.
The passer-by, yet, deserves the name
Passer-by.

Bare-feet

So let's play a game
Of bare feet
Wide-open textures.
Remember the naked nature
Of the starting point.
The first time you stepped on
Your own weight
Your gravity
And the Earth beyond.
Skin as a basic surface.
Like water, like soil
And so on.

Shoes on

Back to the usual comfort
Tamed with protection and horizon
--not much--
An artificial sole
Keeps memory
Of the daily journey you perform.
The figure-ground disruption
Stands still on your thoughts.
The visual soul of the landscape
--today, tomorrow--
Stood you up.