

PACING MOBILITIES: TIMING, INTENSITY, TEMPO AND DURATION OF HUMAN MOVEMENTS

VERED AMIT AND NOEL SALAZAR (EDS.)

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Vered Amit's and Noel Salazar's edited volume, *Pacing Mobilities: Timing, Intensity, Tempo and Duration of Human Movements* was released in June 2020, and is the 8th volume in the series 'Worlds in Motion' by Berghahn Books. The book was released during a period when notions of 'mobility' are being challenged, and what used to be taken for granted or infused with a sense of privilege –at least for those described in the volume as of 'middling, Euro-American profile'- is longed for. This context makes the volume's insights into diverse aspects of experiencing mobilities, as defined by the complex settings within which humans move, even more interesting as they highlight the contested character of 'moving.' Reviewing a book on the 'pace of mobilities' after a year of the ongoing pandemic and lockdowns that have unquestionably perplexed humans' mobilities, and at the imminent materialization of the promise for easing restrictions and resuming mobilities, can be pretty interesting on its own.

As Amit and Salazar argue in the Introduction, so far, emphasis has been placed on spatial dimensions of mobility, rather than temporal ones, although movement occurs within time. While 'pace' has always underpinned mobility, it has not been extensively employed as a tool to explore and understand it. However, it is the very notion of 'pace' that is key in understanding the complexities that (im)mobility entail, as this book highlights. As Amit and Salazar eloquently argue, 'pace is a concept that helps us understand the dynamic relationships between people, space and time' (p. 2). In other words, pace allows us to situate the embodied experience at the intersections of spatiality and temporality. Consequently, focusing on 'pace' can help reorient our view of (im)mobilities to look beyond geographic and/ or social movement (see Reed-Danahay 2020 for a recent take on Bourdieu's notion of 'social space'). 'Pace' enables us to understand mobility within the conditions that define it, as well as view mobility itself as a condition defining and a practice shaping everyday life.

In terms of identifying the purpose of mobility, the chapters are distinguished into three parts, focusing respectively on recreational mobilities (Salazar, chapter 1; Dyck and Hognestad, chapter 2; Kaaristo, chapter 3), the wish to 'escape' from a given 'pace of life' and search for a more suitable one (Forget, chapter 4;

Korpela, chapter 5), and mobility undertaken for employment and/or educational purposes (Suter chapter 6; Reed-Danahay, chapter 7; Amit, chapter 8). Each chapter shows individuals' endeavours to move efficiently, their narratives of experienced mobilities, and the constraints they had to consider and navigate. Such approaches reorient the reader into critically assessing stereotypical understandings of mobility as 'positive' or 'negative.' They suggest that we reflect on who and under which circumstances is someone eligible for a particular type of mobility, and eventually what it takes 'to move.' What emerges palpably throughout the chapters comprising this volume is that mobilities and their respective distinct pace, occur at the intersections of overlapping or conflicting spheres of life, such as balancing work and family needs with the desire to accompany athletes on road trips (Dyck and Hognestad); balancing the inner body rhythm with external factors urging for movement at a specific pace, so as to retain the leisure character of an activity (Kaaristo); navigating migration bureaucracy and meeting the needs of family members at different stages in their lives while pursuing an alternative to the Western lifestyle (Korpela).

Moreover, mobilities actualize within pre-existing sociocultural contexts that urge particular types of mobilities to occur in the first place. Sociocultural contexts may comprise the structures that enable or hinder mobilities for professional or educational purposes illustrating the dependency of the people who undertake these mobilities and their limited control over the conditions of their movement (see Suter; Amit). Sociocultural contexts also shape the imaginaries and emotions that lead to the individual choice to move, either for well-being reasons (Salazar), to enhance their social position (Reed-Danahay), or to live in a way that resonates with culturally embedded notions of 'freedom' (Forget).

Focusing on the notion of 'pace' enables the reader to understand mobility in both its spatial and temporal dimensions. Under this scope, the reader can grasp the interactions of competitive factors, namely the wider, sociocultural contexts that suggest specific mobility trajectories, and the individual's efforts to control and/or negotiate them. The idea that pertains to this volume is that mobility is actualized not only across space, but rather, also across time. What really affects the overall experience is the timeframe within which spatial movement occurs, and the factors that determine it.

Undoubtedly the volume focuses on a wide range of mobilities, though this is undertaken by a very specific group of people. As the editors themselves clarify, the prime focus is on types of mobilities that are undertaken by people of a 'middling Euro-American profile.' More specifically, the focus is on people whose sociocultural references are located in Europe and (North) America and come from a 'middle' economic background. The latter, means that while they may have access to resources that facilitate their mobility, at the same time they need to carefully consider how to manage these resources, which are subject to the

terms and conditions of the respective providers (e.g. funding scheme, firm's policies etc.). Moreover, their capacity to move is further impacted by the broad range of infrastructures (e.g. transport policies, governmental regulations etc.) that facilitate and/or constrain mobilities.

This volume is the fruit of a call for papers on pacing mobilities hosted among the 2018 meetings of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA). The comprehensive discussion developed in each chapter benefits from rich ethnographic accounts and diverse theoretical frameworks. Thus, it provides insights into mobilities that exceed the particular scope of the volume. This volume could benefit anybody interested in studying and understanding mobilities more broadly. It draws relations between the sociocultural context within which mobility occurs, the desires and struggles of those who undertake it, and how the overall spatio-temporal mobility experience may affect those who undertake it.

Reference

Reed-Danahay. 2020. *Bourdieu and Social Space: Mobilities, Trajectories, Emplacements*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books