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Book Review: Intersections of Tourism, Migration, and Exile

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Spatial mobility processes can be categorized into different types and are often closely related to similar fields. However, the matter becomes even more complicated if we have a look at the overlaps and the relationships between tourism, migration, and exile (Williams & Hall 2002a, Cresswell 2011, Cohen 2021). Usually, these social phenomena are defined within a space-time framework, and all have been subject to sometimes chaotic conceptualization. Migration is usually defined spatially as movement across the boundary of an areal unit, and it is generally agreed that there will be some permanence to a move described as migration (cf. Boyle et al., 1998). The first of these is an arbitrary criterion given the diversity of processes that have produced boundaries. The second criterion is equally problematic, for there is no theoretically grounded definition of “permanence” (Williams & Hall 2002b, p. 6).

The great merit of the anthology presented here is that, through a series of studies from different parts of the world, it challenges the classic conceptual separation of studies on tourism, migration, and exile by revealing overlaps between these spatial forms of mobility. The volume consists of an introduction “Problematizing Siloed Mobilities Tourism, Migration, Exile” by the editors, Kathleen M. Adams and Natalia Bloch, that sets out the thematic framework of the volume, followed by 13 case studies on various aspects of spatial mobility. In the introductory chapter, Adams and Bloch challenge the classic division of studies into the three thematic areas of tourism, migration, and refugee movements by examining and highlighting the multiple intersections of

these spatial forms of mobility. The authors also provide an overview of previous scientific findings on intersecting forms of human mobility as well as the topics of the 13 predominantly ethnographically oriented contributions of the book, which include case studies of tourists, migrants, exiles, refugees, returnees and volunteers, etc. The authors also present the results of their research in the field of tourism, migration and refugee movements.

Chapter 1: Temporality and the Intersection of Tourism and Migration – Mobilities Between Cuba and Denmark (Nadine T. Fernandez)

Through the “lens of temporality”, Nadine Fernandez examines in this chapter how migration and tourism are interconnected, focusing on the consideration or incorporation of the factor of time (specifically length of stay, rhythm, and life course) into theoretical considerations of mobility, migration, and tourism research. The chapter then presents findings obtained from open-ended interviews with three Cuban-Danish couples. All of the interviewees were multilocal people involved in long-term, mobile relationships, all at different stages of the life course, and whose travel between Cuba and Denmark was for both leisure-and work-oriented reasons.

Chapter 2: Migrant, Tourist, Cuban-Identification and Belonging in Return Visits to Cuba (Valerio Simoni)

This chapter focuses on return visits of Cuban migrants to Cuba and the questions of identification and belonging that are triggered by such visits to the former home country. Empirically, Simoni's contribution is based on long-term studies with Cuban migrants in Spain and on situations they are confronted with when returning to the Caribbean island, such as the question of what it actually means to be a Cuban when living abroad.

Chapter 3: Diasporic Im/mobilities-Migrants, Returnees, Deportees, Expats, Tourists, and Beyond in the Vietnamese Homeland (Long T. Bui)

Bui's article examines different groups of “exiled Vietnamese” using online ethnography and newspaper and social media analysis. The first group consists of those who returned to Vietnam as tourists but were imprisoned and eventually expelled from Vietnam. This is in contrast to the “criminal aliens” (Vietnamese Americans) who were forcibly returned to Vietnam by the United States even though they were not wanted by the Vietnamese government. The second sample group studied by Bui are Vietnamese Americans who have returned to their home country to work and/or live, and

their difficult position they occupy in Vietnamese society as expatriates/tourists. Bui also understands his contribution as a call for increased research in the field of diasporic im/mobilities of individuals trying to find their way in life in a world in which they do not always fit.

Chapter 4: Student Migration as an Escape from Protracted Exile-The Case of Young Sahrawi Refugees (Rita Reis)

Chapter 4 analyzes the intersections between exile, educational mobility, and migration by examining the perspectives of young Sahrawis (people from Western Sahara, most of them coming from refugee camps in Algeria) living in Extremadura, Spain. Rice focuses primarily on “transgenerationality”, attempting to show how, after 40 years in exile, the paths and expectations of the young people who left the refugee camps in Algeria to study in Spain differ from the life paths of their parents and siblings who remained in the camps. The findings in this chapter are based on 24 months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2018 and 2020. The case of the Sahrawis serves here as a prime example to observe the intersection of exile, flight, educational mobility, and economic migration.

Chapter 5: The Intersections Between Tourism and Exile –Justice Tourism in Bethlehem, Palestine (Rami K. Isaac)

In this chapter, the author offers a case study of so-called “justice tourism” in Bethlehem, Palestine, to show how this form of travel embodies intersecting forms of mobility. According to him, Palestinian refugees have become a kind of “tourist attraction,” with tourism to refugee-related sites in Bethlehem helping to build empathy and solidarity between international tourists and Palestinian refugees. Bethlehem is an international religious destination, and tourism is the main source of income for locals, especially in the form of pilgrimages. However, due to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, new forms of tourism in Palestine are on the rise: increasingly, tourists are attracted to Palestinian refugees coming in hopes of visiting refugee camps. Using “refugee tourism” to Bethlehem as an example, Rami shows the intersection of tourism or pilgrimage and exile, all forms of travel shaped by politics.

Chapter 6: Crafting Activists from Tourists-Volunteer Engagement During the “Refugee Crisis” in Serbia (Robert Rydzewski)

Rydzewski discusses the interactions of asylum seekers from the Global South and volunteers from the

Global North at the external border of the European Union in Serbia during the “European Refugee Crisis” in 2015 and 2016. The data comes from ethnographic fieldwork, and the author analyzes the entanglements and interactions between white privileged subjects and asylum seekers. In addition to the study of overlapping forms of mobility, the significance of self-realization and the emergence of new forms of political action and solidarity are also up for discussion.

Chapter 7: Panama's Temporary Migrants in the Tourism Era (Carla Guerrón Montero)

This chapter focuses on the politics of migration in Panama, drawing on nearly a quarter-century of ethnographic study of the intricate web of mobility and connectedness that characterize the historical experiences of Afro-Antillesians in Central America. Montero's thesis is that the tourism industry in Panama has become a transnational instrument that makes an important contribution to reinterpreting the emergence of a “nation of Panama.”

Chapter 8: Intersections of Tourism, Cross-border Marriage, and Retirement Migration in Thailand (Kosita Butratana, Alexander Trupp, Karl Husa)

Thailand is one of the most popular tourist destinations worldwide and experiences dynamic inbound and outbound mobilities, which increasingly problematize binary perspectives toward tourism and migration. This chapter examines the intersecting terrain between tourism and migration in the Thai context. An analysis of marriage migration and retirement migration shows that these two forms of mobility often originate from a tourist experience or a “host-guest” relationship which can then lead to a longer-term stay. This study draws on semi-structured interviews, surveys, and participant observation to better understand so-called Western retirement migrants in Thailand and Thai marriage migrants in Europe.

Chapter 9: The Tourist, the Migrant, and the Anthropologist – A Problematic Encounter Within European Cities (Francesco Vietti)

In the last two decades, the complex migration patterns in big cities have increasingly become the focus of spatial mobility research. Vietti examines the extent to which anthropology can contribute to organizing encounters between tourists and migrants under scientific guidance and in this way contribute to more “mobility justice”. In this context, the author also critically evaluates the project “Migrantour”, a network of groups in about 20 European cities in which first and

second-generation migrants conduct intercultural city tours and accompanied walks for tourists, residents and students. The analysis is based on 50 in-depth interviews conducted with migrants, tourists, students, and project staff, as well as on longer ethnographic observations.

Chapter 10: In and out of Brazil-Overlapping Mobilities in the Capoeira Archipelago (Lauren Miller Griffith)

The chapter focuses on an analysis of typical spatial mobility patterns of the so-called “capoeiristas”, i.e., people who practice the Afro-Brazilian martial art capoeira. The study includes the mobility of people who live outside Brazil and travel to the origins of the martial art in order to develop their skills, as well as the travel activities of Brazilian teachers within and outside Brazil. Not infrequently, the master also becomes a kind of tour guide for his students. Miller Griffith's study of the complex mobility processes surrounding capoeira clearly shows how difficult and sometimes conceptually unsatisfactory it can be to distinguish between migration, tourism and pilgrimage.

Chapter 11: Intersections of Professional Mobility and Tourism Among Swedish Physicians and Researchers (Magnus Öhlander, Katarzyna Wolanik Boström, Helena Pettersson)

This chapter focuses on the nexus between occupational mobility and tourism practices, illustrated by the example of scientists and doctors who spend time abroad for professional reasons. The authors assume that expats not only work abroad but also switch to a tourist mode from time to time, although here, too, a sharp demarcation between occupational and leisure-oriented mobility does not prove useful. The empirical part of the paper is based on 73 ethnographic interviews with medical professionals and humanities scholars from Sweden.

Chapter 12: Mobility Through Investment-Economics, Tourism, or Lifestyle Migration? Narratives of Chinese and Brazilian Golden Visa Holders in Portugal (Maria de Fátima Amante, Irene Rodrigues)

Chapter 12 provides a further contribution to the topic of demarcation problems between migration and tourism, focusing here on the mobility behavior of Chinese and Brazilian investors in Portugal who have so-called “golden visas” (GV). Based on interviews with investors and their family members, the authors show that GV investors in Portugal are not only perceived as capital investors, but also show migrant ambitions in their mobility behavior, since on the one hand they are

looking for opportunities to leave their countries of origin due to lifestyle considerations, and on the other hand they also appreciate the tourist attractions that Portugal offers them.

Chapter 13: Pandemic Postscript – Tourism, Migration, and Exile (Stephanie Malia Hom)

The COVID 19 pandemic not only had a profound impact on the lives of most people around the world, but also shook up previously taken-for-granted stereotypes about spatial mobility, migration, and tourism. For example, the author describes how, virtually overnight, desirable tourists became undesirable carriers of disease, and suddenly the influx of migrants was no longer seen as a potential threat, but rather their absence as an indispensable workforce due to pandemic-related mobility restrictions. Hom connects three interrelated effects of the pandemic in her paper: the transformation of immobility into a place of privilege; a state-imposed “biopolitics” toward the mobility of tourists, migrants, and exiles; and the eruption of a wave of disinformation and conspiracy myths related to Covid-19.

Summing up this collection of primarily ethnographic case studies makes an important contribution to overcoming the limitations of “traditional” mobility research by focusing not primarily on the ways in which different forms of mobility can be distinguished, but on their multiple

overlaps. In this way, this book also provides important impulses for the further development of theory building in the field of mobility research and thus offers important food for thought for both established researchers and students dealing with mobility phenomena. Only statisticians, who depend on delineating forms of mobility as precisely as possible and categorizing them clearly, will be rather skeptical of the considerations expressed in this anthology or consider them rather unhelpful.

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