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## Mobilities – Migratory Experiences Ethnographically Connected

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# Mobilities – Migratory Experiences Ethnographically Connected: An Introduction

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## Introduction

Migration studies and mobility studies have long inhabited different academic fields, creating their own discussions and conventions. In recent years, however, the mutual enrichment of the two fields in theory and method has inspired scholars of both fields. Rather than opposing the two terms, thereby risking essentialising the differences among its proponents, we argue that in starting from ethnographic cases, cross-fertilisation between migration and mobility studies is particularly productive in several respects. It promotes overcoming artificial distinctions into forms of spatially bounded mobilities (local, regional, international migration) and provides informative, empirically rich and theoretically fresh analyses of complex migratory configurations and resulting diversifications. There is no one single way of juxtaposing and connecting migration and mobility conceptually, politically or empirically; each paper has its own proposition. This introduction highlights how the papers speak to each other, foregrounding the spatial, temporal, and social interconnections that emerge from the analyses of migratory experiences, which broaden and deepen the study of diversities as heterogeneous forms of social difference.

Our common starting point is *ethnography*, that is, its force to connect various, often separately analysed movements in the same analysis. Ethnography is particularly apt in exploring the everyday social accommodation and navigation of such multiple, intersecting and seemingly contradictory stories (cf. Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013). Letting the messiness of the ethnographic

situation guide the analysis is different from the majority of approaches which already address their fields through a specific lens such as transnationalism, diaspora, international or internal migration, among others. We argue that if a field researcher working on migratory experiences pays attention to the complexity of his/her ethnographic field, which requires reaching beyond the immediate focus of one's project, s/he will most likely witness multiple co-occurring or intersecting im/mobilities. Here lies the innovative potential of the special issue, which will question existing analytical distinctions into migration and mobility or internal and international migration leading to disconnected analyses.

Contrary to spatially, temporally and socially bounded approaches characteristic of some of migration and mobility studies (Hickey and Yeoh 2016, Hui 2016, King and Skeldon 2010), various forms of (migratory) movements are almost always connected in our empirical cases, sometimes in unforeseen and counterintuitive ways. Therefore, the conceptual proposition of this special issue is to take specific ethnographic sites as points of departure to explore (i) why and how various forms of im/mobility become parts of the same account, or are excluded from it, (ii) how we compare, contrast and relate different kinds of im/mobilities, (iii) how established concepts of migration and mobility studies preconfigure the respective research design, (iv) how they could be re-combined in new ways to broaden our insights on migratory im/mobilities and (v) what the advantages and obstacles of

the conceptual and methodological approaches are in the various research fields. Following this approach, the authors in this special issue make innovative contributions in the connected fields of migration and mobility studies. The ethnographic situations we propose as starting point of the analysis are thus not only to be understood as territorially bound locations but often consist of a certain form of migratory movement. Looking at migratory experiences through the lens of movement leads us beyond spatially demarcated ethnographic sites by following the respective im/mobilities (Hannam, Sheller, Urry 2006).

Therefore, contrary to much of the existing literature, the contributions to this special issue do not establish a single line of when it is analytically preferable to use either migration or mobility, nor is the distinction between the two their primary focus. Rather, each contribution takes up the task to critically define how the two terms are positioned to each other within the particular ethnographic context. In general, mobility is the overarching and more encompassing term, while migration clearly relates to social process induced by physical movement on various scales. However, both concepts share the destiny of existing only in a mutually constitutive relationship to periods of immobility and feelings of stasis. In this sense, understanding interconnected migratory experiences as an intertwined trajectory of mobile and immobile experiences not only furthers insights into the diversification of migrant trajectories (Schapendonk and Steel 2014, Schapendonk et al. forthcoming), but also into countless migratory configurations in diversifying localities (cf. Vertovec 2015).

In this introduction, we will further develop these above points by intertwining them with the existing literature, showing the particular strengths of the contributing papers. Based on the accounts of the contributions to this special issue, we argue that the diversity of migratory experiences encountered in the field compels us to go beyond contained concepts of migration by incorporating theoretical as well as methodological insights from mobility studies. Thus, the

contributions to this special issue exceed spatial, temporal and social frameworks which are broken up (Cresswell 2006), following connected forms of im/mobilities that combine distinct historical, spatial and social dynamics.

### **Ethnographically interconnecting spatial, temporal and social dimensions of migratory experiences**

In addressing the questions raised by this special issue, the contributors start from their particular ethnographical cases and engage with authors from different research fields (internal, international, circular, onward migration and im/mobilities) and various disciplines (anthropology, geography, history) that best help to address them. In doing so, they bridge the sometimes separated strands of research and make the interconnections and the potential of cross-fertilisation more explicit.

#### *The role of ethnography*

Starting from ethnography demands a short reflection on the underlying assumptions and caveats of this methodology. Firstly, rather than presupposing anthropologists are empty vessels able to collect everything possible in the field, we are positioned in it according to our own personal characteristics as well as through conceptual and theoretical lenses. Only by reflecting on such limitations can we eventually widen our horizons. Secondly, funding structures are such that questions need to be clearly formulated before the empirical work can be done, results ought to be published quickly, and the political and societal outreach must be clear. This is unavoidable particularly in the politicised field of migration research. While the contributors are aware that these kinds of challenges are linked to academic production, their papers take a second look, or one outside established, politically relevant and fundable lenses, to include spatial, temporal and social dynamics that are often neglected.

Instead of choosing to study a specific mobile subject in the first place and then thinking about

the methodological consequences (cf. Salazar et al. 2017), we attempt to do the opposite. Rather than exploring different methods or reconceptualising existing ones, in order to study im/mobilities, we return to ethnography as an apt way to find out about underestimated or overlooked interconnections of diverse migratory experiences and the deeper understanding of people's lives that emerge from them. Vergunst has argued that "ethnography is an excellent way to get at important aspects of human movement, especially in relating its experiential and sensory qualities to social and environmental contexts" (2011: 203). The interconnections between different forms of im/mobility and migration are part of these important aspects of human movement. It is not one form of ethnography that is best to study these interconnections, but various ethnographic fields/situations reveal their specific interconnections. Such ethnographic methodology can be adapted to movement and mobility in the first place (Hannam, Sheller, Urry 2006), or it can actually address a specific locality that might seem immobile at first, but turns out to be the crossroads of various mobilities.

As for the contributors, Cingolani, while studying the transition to adulthood, rethinks the combination of various forms of geographical im/mobilities and meanings attached to them in a longitudinal and therefore historically contingent way. Studying the return of expats to their home country, Bal et al. explore the secondary and parallel migrations of employees and family members that co-constitute the mobility regime of India's gated communities. Blanchard, in her analysis of return migration into the Alps, considers both internal and international mobilities that stretch beyond generations. She supports family stories with historical insights into seasonal mobilities in the Alpine region. All the accounts are anchored in the ethnographic situation engaging with the repertoire of individual and collective tactics and their interplay with the hazards, unpredictables and power relations shaping them. In such a vein, Müller and Camenisch argue in favour of a "mobilities-informed, and

data-grounded ethnographic research" (43) relying on the emic perspective of Swiss expats in China and expats in Sweden, which stems from their biographical analysis. The introduction proceeds following this perspective.

#### *Spatial interconnections*

As Salazar et al. convincingly argue, mobile ethnography is by no means new in anthropology and can be traced back as far as to Bronislaw Malinowski, who followed exchange patterns of the Kula across different islands (2017: 4; following Basu/Coleman 2008; cf. Hannerz 2003). The long tradition to track people and things in anthropology includes Arjun Appadurai's call to "follow the thing" (Appadurai 1986; see Salazar et al. 2017: 8 in detail) as well as approaches of multi-sited ethnography, claiming to follow the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot/story, the allegory, the life/biography and, finally, the conflict (Marcus 1995). Concerning migratory experiences, mobile approaches further developed during the last years including auto-ethnographic accounts like the masterfully personated life-story of the "'Illegal' Traveller" by Shahram Khosravi (2010) as well as trajectory approaches that aim to follow open-ended migratory journeys and thus consider the migratory process as the primary focus (e.g. Triulzi and McKenzie 2013; Schapendonk and Steel 2014; Schapendonk et al. forthcoming 2017). Besides moving along with mobile people, trajectories can be explored through biographical tools or life histories (as in many articles of this special issue), which often allow an in-depth analysis of experiences, changing views, sudden changes of plans, expectations, and perceptions.

Even though mobile approaches seem to have been quite common in ethnographic research long before the much quoted 'mobilities turn,' what we deem necessary to remind scholars in migration and mobility studies is the way in which mobile ethnographic approaches may be used to counterbalance theoretical models containing our research in distinct research areas. Taking migratory movement as the entry point

of our studies enables us to discover spatial, social and temporal linkages which may not be foreseen in our theoretically informed research designs since “all depends on what one is actually researching, and on the ways in which ‘the field’ is allowed to intrude into one’s methodological infrastructure” (Salazar et al. 2017: 10). A mobilities-informed, and data-grounded ethnographic approach in migration studies inevitably needs to permeate both the methodological and the conceptual infrastructure of our research projects to allow for unforeseen aspects and interconnections to be taken into account. Priori (in this issue) demonstrates this clearly. In his research on migrations from Bangladesh to Rome, he initially focused on local insertion and its links with transnationalism. Following the trajectories of his interlocutors along a considerable period of time and collecting their life-accounts, though, he was introduced to a complex overlap of different spatial im/mobility patterns. This led him to draw from the dialogue between anthropology of migration and mobility studies in order to engage with fragmented multi-scalar trajectories in his ethnography.

#### *Temporal interconnections*

Questioning our ethnographic material beyond the initial research questions, which are inevitably linked to a certain period of the proposed research project and suitable methodological as well as theoretical approaches, does not only widen our spatial field of inquiry but also calls attention to temporal aspects stretching beyond our preconfigured research. Most of the authors in this issue thus felt the need to stretch their analysis of temporary contained migratory experiences and adopt a long-term perspective on their respective ethnographic sites. This implies (i) to include an extended understanding of the migratory process going beyond a temporal limited relocation from country of origin to destination country (Camenisch and Müller in this issue); (ii) to take intergenerational patterns of im/mobility into account and take a closer look at migrants following a family tradition of migratory

movement (Blanchard in this issue) as well as (iii) incorporating a broader historical perspective on migratory experiences in the research area.

#### *(i) Pre- and post-migratory experiences*

The temporal interconnections emerging from such inductive accounts reveal that migratory experiences cannot be conceptualised as temporally contained or strictly limited to a seemingly specific form of movement, such as a linear relocation or a movement between two specific places only. Pre-migratory experiences may be mobile as well as immobile and include various factors like seasonal work in the region, rural-urban migration, confrontation with causes for flight and migration, as well as with those who migrated before or long to migrate, stories about migratory journeys, possible destination countries and much more. All of the contributors to this special issue show an awareness for this and thereby broaden a longstanding debate particularly evident in African Studies, among others. For instance, Miriam de Bruijn and Rijk van Dijk use the examples of two very different mobile groups, namely, cattle herding Fulbe from Mali and Ghanaian Pentecostals, to show how mobility has always been a ‘way of life’, a field of practices, institutions and ideas that has a specific dynamism in its own right (de Bruijn et al. 2001). In the American context, Jeffrey Cohen (2004; cf. Cingolani in this issue) shows that a “culture of migration” developed within Mexican internal migration before it went on to sustain the ongoing and widely researched phenomenon of transnational migration between Mexico and the US. Indeed, historical, geographical and cultural links between local, regional and international migrations can be found on every continent.

#### *(ii) Intergenerational dynamics*

A fine example of how an ethnographic approach creatively re-combines what at other times has been separated conceptually, is Blanchard’s (this issue) study of household histories and intergenerational im/mobility patterns in two Alpine regions. Stretching her analysis over various gen-



erations, she mainly critiques her initial interest in return migration, showing how so many more movements have followed each other, intersected, amplified and inversed each other. The same holds true for Cingolani's (this issue) analysis of three generations of young men in Romania who draw from a number of different physical mobility options in order to become socially upwardly mobile. Another version of intergenerational dynamics emerges from Bal et al.'s analysis (this issue) of entangled mobilities of inhabitants of gated communities and their parents.

Contemporary migrants act within complex systems of movement that are sometimes circular, and which also integrate other trajectories directed towards more extended transnational and transcontinental destinations. New forms of migration are similar to older ones in many ways, or have been developed out of these older trajectories, even if they have been geographically more restricted at times (cf. Blanchard, Cingolani and Bal et al. in this issue). This is yet another reason why time plays an important role in affecting migratory development and why an historical perspective helps framing the interconnection between internal and transnational mobilities.

### *(iii) The historical context*

The history of migration within, from, and towards the Alpine region clearly invites reflection about overcoming the 'gap' between internal and international migrations (King and Skeldon 2010; Hickey and Yeoh 2016) and focuses instead on the "internal and international nexus in migration" (Riccio 2016: 9), through a mobility lens. As Blanchard (in this issue) and Viazzo (1989) before show, the Alps are "good to think with" as a geographical, historical and economic region in which internal, international and transnational mobilities intersect or converge. The case of Albanian migration also provides a very good example of the "links between internal and international migration" (Vullnetary 2012). As King clearly states, Albania witnessed the "most massive dislocation of its population due to a combination of emigration and internal migra-

tion since 1990" (2016: 93). Those regions, however, are no exception but a rule to most research areas we use as starting points for our ethnographic engagement. Cingolani and Blanchard (in this issue) clearly demonstrate the importance of the broader historical context of the research areas we work in as to understand the multiple processes facilitating or hampering migration. Embedding migratory experiences into extended temporal contexts does not only reveal the migratory history of certain research settings but often refers the social ties influencing the migratory process as the intergenerational im/mobility patterns demonstrated already.

### *Social interconnections*

Mobility studies have been criticised for extending the concept of mobility beyond analytical value to cover a wide range of issues, studying everything from commuters to itinerant populations, from tourism to forced migration, as well as framing mobility as a virtual synonym for either freedom, personal fulfilment or the social fluidity or liquidity of society per se (Bauman 1998). What is more, the interest in "mobilities" often neglected differences created by class, gender, power, nationality etc. and was thus criticised as demonstrating a lack of interest in inequalities. Some scholars thus called for including power relations and the analysis of inequalities into mobility studies (e.g. Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Gutekunst et al. 2016). Taking power dynamics into account, a mobilities-informed ethnographic account queries concepts of exclusionary groupism and may both help to enrich accounts focused on privileged movement (Camenisch and Müller in this issue) and overcoming what Hui called "migrant exceptionalism" (2016; cf. Dahinden 2015). It challenges the scientific construction of "the migrant" as a unique subject through the study of "sometimes-migrants," as it raises awareness for similar im/mobilities contained in other concepts describing mobile groups like "expatriates," "tourists" or "internationally mobile students." Countering migrant exceptionalism may be use-

ful “as a means of modulating existing boundaries and opening new spaces for interdisciplinary dialogue” (Hui 2016: 66).

The authors in this issue contribute to opening such spaces by critically reflecting on (i) the interactions between the nation state as a defining force of relevant but problematic categories in academic analysis and everyday commentary; and (ii) influences and interdependencies of mobile groups others than “migrants” and interconnections with actors who are not considered as part of the mobile group but who form part of the social setting. In this respect, the collected papers do not limit themselves to usual forms of sociality, such as kinship and ethnic networks, but also consider social dynamics of non-kin care, service and exploitation. At this moment, migratory movements become closely intertwined with concerns about social upward/downward mobility.

#### *(i) National container models*

The central and key role in bringing about migrant exceptionalism is the nation state and its normative force in defining collective identities. Due to this and the co-development of the social sciences and the modern nation state, many approaches in migration research continue to bear the imprints of either methodological nationalism (Glick-Schiller and Wimmer 2002), the ethnic lens (Glick-Schiller and Caglar 2006), or methodological regionalism (Lipphardt and Schwarz 2018). They point to the problem of an assumed congruence of geographic borders and boundaries of groups or nation-states which precludes a critical investigation of this relationship. Furthermore, both ‘migrants’ (here only referring to those crossing national borders) and ‘ethnic minorities’ (by means of migrants categorized by their ethnic affiliation) received attention not least as the quintessential other of the nation and its legitimate national population. The contributors to this special issue engage with this critique. However, they also show an awareness that the nation state remains a central structuring power which reveals itself in both the com-

mon sense of mobile and immobile people and the actual structures of opportunity and constraints (laws, labour markets, welfare systems) continue to ‘see’ like a (nation)state (cf. Priori in this issue, Scott 1995). The authors in this special issue therefore pay attention to the working of ethnic lenses and the nation-state’s perspective as a historical and social fact. If we want to take emic perspectives seriously, we may appreciate how even the (high skilled) mobile professionals, with whom Camenisch and Müller (this issue) worked, provide us with narratives stressing the importance of the Swiss state in affecting (emotionally as much as strategically) their mobile decisions and practices.

#### *(ii) Im/mobile groups*

In contrast to the migrant exceptionalism predominant in migration studies, mobility studies shed light on “all those who travelled within a country or circled the globe – whether they were seeking refuge or were students, consultants, volunteers, tourists, labour or return migrants” (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013: 183-4). However, the diverse mobile groups researched were mainly analysed independently and their experiences of im/mobility thus decoupled. Interconnecting experiences of diverse mobile groups bears new insights into our preconfigured fields, however. As Schapendonk, van Liempt, and Spierings have argued for example, “‘the journey’ – as embodied form of travel from one place to another – is a fruitful analytical starting point to bring migration and tourism studies in closer dialogue with each other” (Schapendonk et al. 2015: 49). This interconnection of diverse mobile experiences is not only convincing from a mobility-informed perspective, but is integral to the case of data-grounded ethnographic migration research and holds true for a whole variety of mobile groups. This cross-fertilisation also enriches a critical diversities studies agenda.

As Camenisch and Müller (this issue) argue, a perspective informed by mobility studies broadens “the still somewhat static and state-focused gaze of migration studies and adds consider-



ations about all sorts of economic, political and social fluidities and fixities and the diversity of human movement to the agenda of those who study human migration” (45). It thus allows them to include privileged migratory experiences into the field of migration studies which often describes less privileged forms of migration. The comparison of privileged and unprivileged migration, however, points to interdependencies and similarities which lead us beyond a contained prefiguration of “the migrant.” Furthermore, Blanchard (this issue) includes agricultural workers and their seasonal mobility patterns into her analysis of international returnees into the Alpine area and illustrates intergenerational mobile practices and their alteration in highlighting the interdependency of seasonal and international mobilities.

In their analysis of gated communities of returning international high-skilled migrants, Bal et al. (this issue) speak of “sites of mobility convergence, where migration and mobility patterns of the diverse groups of residents (returnees, their relatives, and staff) have become entangled and mutually constitutive” (15). On the one hand, the creation of these estates has caused thousands of low-skilled workers from various parts of the country to move with the hope of finding work, but now reside in slum settlements close to the estates. On the other hand, the parents of the returning transnational migrants also migrated from different parts of India in order to live with their children in their new residences.

Apart from this first insight into the multiple intersections of migratory movements of distinct social groups, Bal et al. furthermore come to speak of the asymmetrical and classist consequences of the immobilisations which resulted from the privileged mobility of transnational returnees. While initially the domestic staff had moved for work and circulated between slum and estate on a daily basis, on a larger scale, they had to be immobile – both socially and geographically. The estates functioned at their cost: first, on the basis of their continued low wages and second, since they had to stay put when their employ-

ers travelled. Awareness for the social interconnections between distinctly im/mobile groups advances our understanding of complex ethnographic situations substantially, a conclusion which Cingolani also obtains from his analysis of the changing links between physical im/mobility and being socially upwardly mobile.

Finally, the interconnections of the im/mobility between specific social groups extends beyond physical and social im/mobility and also include the dimension of the imaginary (Priori in this issue; cf. Salazar 2011). As recent anthropological work has demonstrated, many people primarily experience mobility in its absence, as the unavailability of departure (Gaibazzi 2016). Nonetheless, “cultures of mobility” develop (cf. Cingolani and Blanchard in this issue), as traditions of migratory movement and involve migrants and non-migrants alike. These complex interconnections of migratory experiences and more encompassing dimensions of the social dynamics of im/mobility provide a fertile basis on which to enquire into the local dynamics within the sites that our ethnographic analyses encompass.

### **The diversity in “sites of mobility convergence”**

While in the prior section we engaged with three sets of interconnections separately in order to obtain a closer understanding, eventually it is the cross-sections between the temporal, spatial and social interconnections which really matter. While the individual papers do this skilfully for each ethnographic case in its singularity, in this last section we provide such a general view in relation to the localities that are part of the configurations which emerge from an ethnographic engagement of migratory experiences and the multiple interconnections between im/mobilities. We argue that such regimes of im/mobilities contribute with their various temporalities and social dynamics to the diversification of the resultant interlinked localities, the “sites of mobility convergence” (Bal et al. in this issue). Exploring the full spectrum of im/mobilities, the papers thereby also contribute to a refined understand-

ing of new diversities. Apart from old and new diversities in a particular site (Vertovec 2015), a mobilities-informed perspective multiplies the diversifications which can be – and indeed should be – combined within a single ethnographic analysis. For example, the different profiles of mobile populations become apparent in all of the contributions to this special issue, be it in the gated community in India, among the Bangladeshis in Rome, or the Romanians. Apart from the obvious questions of socio-economic background, the contributors also show a refined analysis of life-style (Priori and Camenisch and Müller in this issue) and ideologically charged habitus due to changing political systems, social remittances and generational dynamics (Cingolani).

The analyses of the contributing authors do not remain bound to a particular site, but can stretch – if need be – along the migration trajectories or make connections between particular sites. As such, return migration leads us to consider the diversification of Alpine localities under the impact of decades spent abroad (Blanchard). Furthermore, we become aware of the new diversities in migrant-sending contexts and how they define the horizons of future migrants (Cingolani). Finally, as shown by Priori, we can see how the perception by social actors of multiple and intersecting diversities inspires representations that, in order to find an “appropriate” place for the migrants’ families, partition the space on its different scales according to these differences.

Another noteworthy aspect of considering the conceptual contributions of mobility and migration studies together for understanding diversity becomes most apparent in following Swiss professionals around the globe. Camenisch and Müller (this issue) make it explicit how geographical mobility is closely linked to aspirations to social mobility and progress. Social-cum-geographical mobility becomes negotiated in a fluid time frame which raises questions of how we understand such fluctuations as part of the more or less temporary diversification of specific localities and the churning up of social class structures.

Finally, maybe the most complex of new diversifications emerges from the confluence of mobile populations in Indian gated communities (Bal et al). The co-occurrence and interdependence of the geographical mobility of very different social classes intersected with generational dynamics and life-style choices and the resulting conviviality explicate why diversity research, always having maintained strong links to migration research, can also profit from a mobility lens and the complexification that comes with it.

In taking multiple and intersecting im/mobility patterns and regimes into account, this special issue contributes importantly to a nuanced understanding of new configurations and encounters of diversity that we see taking place around the globe. It also highlights new diversities in sites (e.g. Alpine regions, seemingly homogenous gated communities) and among “communities” (e.g. Bangladeshi migrants in Rome) that go unnoticed under the predominant angle the diversification narrative stresses (i.e. urbanisation, mega-cities, new and old migrations). Discussing the multiple interrelations of im/mobilities, the special issue thus broadens the understanding of diversifying societies in significant ways.

#### **Outlook. Drawing from the breadth of ethnographic cases**

This special issue thus aims at scholars from the interdisciplinary fields of migration, mobilities and diversity studies, since it contributes to the rethinking of both intersecting and interconnecting migratory experiences as well as of the diversity at the “sites of mobility convergence” (Bal et al. this volume). It does so by drawing from a set of ethnographic studies which would not normally come into conversation, which strengthens our argument. To conclude, let us reiterate the diversity and breadth of the ethnographic material combined in this issue. **Bal, Sinha-Kerkhoff and Tripathy** observe how different forms of im/mobility overlap inside gated communities in three Indian mega-cities in which the return of highly-skilled migrants is entangled with the

internal migration of their elderly parents and the low-skilled work force coming to facilitate their lifestyle. They understand the estates as “sites of mobility convergence” under a complex mobility regime. **Priori** anchors his ethnography in Rome while his interlocutors’ lives span the globe, back to Bangladesh and onwards to the United Kingdom and other Western countries. This translates into a fine analysis of fragmented migratory routes which are in constant struggle with the legal and economic frameworks. **Camenisch and Müller** explore the life histories of Swiss citizens in Scandinavia and China and argue for a “mobility-informed migration lens,” empowering scholars to differentiate their analytical categories from those of the common sense and political power, and to overcome the theoretical and methodological pitfalls of both mobility studies and migration research. In contrast, **Cingolani** explores the historically variable significations of mobility in the case of three generations of Romanian men, whose mobility patterns evolve in close interaction with the evolution of the national state, the public representation of im/mobilities and actual economic options. Finally, **Blanchard** brings us to the Alpine region and shares the biographic accounts of families combining short-range and seasonal mobilities as well as international migrations. She understands mobility as a “‘total social fact’ (Mauss 1966) encompassing multiple dimensions of human life” (75) stretching beyond generations.

Together, the papers of this special issue provide the basis for a mobility informed, ethnographically rich exploration of interconnected migratory experiences. They each provide a critique of the multi-layered relation of the concepts of migration and mobility. Despite their distinctiveness, they contribute to the spatial, temporal and social interconnections of diverse lived experiences, empirically and theoretically. They thereby go beyond the usual focus of studies of diversity in providing nuanced readings of new diversities in particular sites and among particular migrant populations. The picture that emerges from this special issue is thus one which

broadens and deepens the arguments around diversifying socialities in an ethnographically “deep” way.

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