

Book review of Amit, Vered
& Salazar, Noel B. (eds.)
(2020) *Pacing mobilities –
Timing, Intensity, Tempo
and Duration of Human
Movements*. New York,
Oxford: Berghahn Books,
194 pp.



BOOK REVIEW

SARI TUUVA-HONGISTO 

HUP HELSINKI
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

The emergence of a contemporary interdisciplinary field of mobility studies has markedly shifted away from a linear conception of moving. The volume *Pacing mobilities – Timing, Intensity, Tempo and Duration of Human Movements* edited by Vered Amit and Noel B. Salazar is based on the new mobilities paradigm (see Sheller & Urry 2006; Cresswell 2010). In the volume, the anthropological research steers its focus towards mobility from a temporal point of view, rather than advancing a sole focus on where people are heading or moving. Journeys may be on-off, repeated, take circular and/or form part of a succession of moves. Moves can traverse short or long distances, involve exceptional or quotidian situations, and different types of moves may intersect, whereas one type of voyage can prompt or shape another.

The volume focuses on pacing, which invokes questions of tempo, duration, intensity and timing. Pace helps us understand the dynamic relationship between people, space and time (p. 4). Pace is made meaningful through practices, discourses and imaginaries that are imbued with significance. The concept of pacing, therefore, offers a useful lens to examine the multifaceted character of mobility.

A number of ethnographic case studies in eight chapters of the volume investigate the dynamic relationship between people, space and time. The book scrutinises the representations of movement with explorations of pace-making, political pressure to make choices about moving and staying, seeking out forms of mobility that seem to offer the promise of greater autonomy over pacing or the slower rhythm of movement. It also reveals the restrictions of mobility and pacing in the face of occupational pressures, life course transitions and corporate or organisational scheduling. The contributions of the book concern a variety of movement from running, boating, RVing (living full-time in recreational vehicles) to air travel.

The book elaborates mobilities from different angles. Majority of the mobilities examined are not framed through migration except for lifestyle migration of Euro-Americans. Mostly, the mobilities explored in the volume are made possible by

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Sari Tuuva-Hongisto

Juvenia – Youth Research
and Development Centre,
South-Eastern Finland
University of Applied
Sciences, FI

[Sari.tuuva-hongisto@
xamk.fi](mailto:Sari.tuuva-hongisto@xamk.fi)

KEYWORDS:

Mobility; Pacing

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Tuuva-Hongisto, S. 2022.
Book review of Amit, Vered
& Salazar, Noel B. (eds.)
(2020) *Pacing mobilities –
Timing, Intensity, Tempo
and Duration of Human
Movements*. New York,
Oxford: Berghahn Books,
194 pp. *Nordic Journal of
Migration Research*, 12(1),
pp. 105–108. DOI: [https://
doi.org/10.33134/njmr.497](https://doi.org/10.33134/njmr.497)

resources of time, finances, professional credentials or different technologies, and in that sense, they all can be regarded as middling Euro-American mobility stemming from a 'middling status'.

The multifaceted nature of mobility is particularly described in the article by Noel Dyck and Hans K. Hognestad. In their chapter (2) 'Finding a satisfying pace – navigating the social contingencies of sport mobilities' they approach mundane sport schedules of Norwegian football fans and spectators and the Canadian community sports participants. Especially the study of formal and informal negotiations of travel schedules established for child and youth athletes and parents by community sport organisations in Canada contest the representations of mobility and variety of journeys. It reveals the mundane mobility and the 'overheating' (p. 45) of everyday temporality.

The decision to support a child's sport participation is no small matter, not just because the mobilisation plans become an inescapable feature of domestic life and travel is an essential, taken-for-granted aspect of local community sport. Moreover, household income and levels of parental education are closely related to the rates of children's sport participation, and the socioeconomic attributes of those children who are more likely to play sport are instructive. Dyck and Hognestad (p. 48) argue that resources and commitments in mobility are important factors in shaping possibilities of sport participation. If the children's leisure sport activities overheat the pacing, it is deeply rooted in a representation of leisure mobilities as free from work and duties as well as control. Mobility and travel are often associated with the ability to leave the routine pacing of mundane everyday life behind and enter another sphere of life, like in the chapters (3, 4, 5) written by Kaaristo, Forget and Korpela.

Maarja Kaaristo's chapter (3) 'Rhythm and pace – the diurnal aspects of leisure mobilities on the UK canals and rivers' enters a socio-natural slow scape in which holiday canal boaters escape from the accelerated pace of modern lives. As Kaaristo demonstrates, leisure mobilities, especially those connected to slowness, are creating islands of timelessness in modern life. Moving p(e)acefully through natural (real or perceived) environments may provide the framework needed to add a sense of genuineness to the embodied experience. The purpose is to experience time more meaningfully while 'doing nothing'. The practice of slow boating is a form of privileged mobility, because those doing it possess the cultural, financial and temporal capital for enjoying slow travel.

Nomads, as well as new nomads or neo-nomads (also urban nomads, global nomads, digital nomads, grey nomads), have a deterritorialised relationship with space, experience spatial displacement and use mobility as a way to differ or escape from the dominant society. Escaping the everyday rhythm is elaborated in Mari Korpela's chapter (5) on lifestyle migration: 'We must stay for the exams! Pacing mobilities among lifestyle migrant families in Goa, India'. The lifestyle migrant families are seeking a temporary escape to the relaxed and timeless bubble, where constraints are not placed on them from outside. Migration to Goa can be seen as an eternal holiday and a leisure paradise where time stops or at least moves very slowly. Korpela demonstrates that the timeless present eventually turns out to be an illusion: the pacing is partly shaped by bureaucratic factors such as India's visa policies but also children's schooling. Initially, the parents want to escape to a timeless paradise, but time eventually catches up with them and forces the families to reconsider their lifestyle choice and mobility trajectories.

For a growing number of contemporary professionals, mobilities of varied sorts – short-term business travel, extended sojourns abroad or residential relocations – have become significant aspects in the development of their careers and/or everyday work routines. These professionals are examined in Vered Amit's chapter (8) 'In a couple of years (or three or four), I'll stop travelling so much: The challenges of modulating skilled work mobility'. Eurostars, middling migrants, expatriates and relatively privileged people are mobile for employment or educational opportunities of varying durations, although these infrastructural temporalities interact with personal and social imaginations of life course, family life and relations. These mobilities are synchronised with the timing of different institutional regimes, the pacing of life course transitions and the workings of family relations that these migrants seek to construe in relation to the right time or ideal duration of mobility. Although skilled mobility presumes a capacity to offer qualifications that employers or contractors are willing to pay for, setting the pace of that mobility requires a degree of structural control and power that middling workers do not often have.

The book provides an inspiring insight to mobility, and through this, novel perspectives on how everyday life is structured by movement. At what pace is everyday life? Examining the tempo and the rhythm of the pace reveals something essential about living as a human being and Lefebvre's (2004) rhythm analysis has inspired many of the writers of the volume. The rhythm and pace have been overheated and the challenges caused by this growth in a variety of mobilities can be identified in a broad range of transnational communications and networks (Eriksen 2016). At this moment in spring 2021, when I am writing this review, the situation is totally different and reveals the explorations of pace more accurate. Mobility is paused and restricted by the lockdowns of Covid-19. Restrictions of mobility constrain the middling Euro-American mobility, sharply described by this volume. The pandemic has changed our idea of mobility and movement, which has constituted an essential right and feature of our modern lives. Does this situation permanently change the perception of mobility? Will (middling Euro-American) mobility ever return?

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Sari Tuuva-Hongisto  orcid.org/0000-0001-9328-4927

Juvenia – Youth Research and Development Centre, South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, FI

REFERENCES

- Cresswell, T.** 2010. Towards a politics of mobility. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28: 17–31. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407>
- Eriksen, TH.** 2016. Overheating: The world since 1991. *History and Anthropology*, 27(5): 469–487. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2016.1218865>
- Lefebvre, H.** 2004. *Rhythm analysis: Space, time and everyday life*. London: Continuum.
- Sheller, M** and **Urry, J.** 2006. New mobilities paradigm. *Environment and Planning A*, 38: 207–226. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1068/a37268>

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Tuuva-Hongisto, S. 2022.
Book review of Amit, Vered
& Salazar, Noel B. (eds.)
(2020) *Pacing mobilities –
Timing, Intensity, Tempo
and Duration of Human
Movements*. New York,
Oxford: Berghahn Books,
194 pp. *Nordic Journal of
Migration Research*, 12(1),
pp. 105–108. DOI: [https://
doi.org/10.33134/njmr.497](https://doi.org/10.33134/njmr.497)

Submitted: 24 June 2021

Accepted: 28 June 2021

Published: 07 March 2022

COPYRIGHT:

© 2022 The Author(s). This
is an open-access article
distributed under the terms
of the Creative Commons
NonCommercial-
NoDerivatives Attribution
4.0 International License
(CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0), which
permits unrestricted
distribution, and
reproduction in any
medium, provided the
original author and source
are credited, the material
is not used for commercial
purposes and is not altered
in any way. See [https://
creativecommons.org/
licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

*Nordic Journal of Migration
Research* is a peer-reviewed
open access journal
published by Helsinki
University Press.