

The mobility turn: epistemological obstacle or breakthrough?

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Introduction

- Context: « new mobilities paradigm »
- Questions:
 - How the "mobility studies" are structured differently from the research on mobility and migration produced during the 1950-2000?
 - Which kinds of research are left out?
 - How the migration issue fits within the newly structured field of research?
 - Which analytical categories are produced through mobility and migration research, and with which consequences?
- Method: Analyzing key texts in sociology, anthropology, geography

Emerging mobility studies in the 1990's

- Several trend of research arise at the same time:
 - The questioning of sedentarity as the main lifestyle of humanity
 - The rise of the liquid life
 - The rise of nomadism
 - Taking into account the plurality and multiplicity of spatial referents
 - The development of a debate on the transnational social space

The 2000's: recomposition of questions and approaches in an integrated field studies

- Beyond movement
 - Urry: « I elaborate some of the material transformations that are remaking the 'social', especially those diverse mobilities that, through multiple senses, imaginative travel, movements of images and information, virtuality and physical movement, are materially reconstructing the 'social as society' into the 'social as mobility' » (2000, p.2).
 - Cresswell: « « mobility as the entanglement of movement, representation, and practice » (2010, p.19)
 - Lelièvre & Marshall: « Mobility, as the analytical object of study, can only be approached by bringing into dialogue the practices, perceptions, and imagined conceptions of movement” (2015, p.440)
- The forgotten fixity
 - The question of the moorings (Hannam, Sheller, Urry, 2006)
 - Inhabiting as practising places and movement (Stock, 2004)

The contribution of the migration studies

- The rise of a research on minorities
- Agency
- Gender studies (Morokvasic; Miranda)
- Taking into account the networks
- Methodological nationalism critic (Glick Schiller et Wimmer)
- Locating migration (Glick Schiller & Caglar 2011; Salzbrunn 2011)

Breakthrough of the mobility turn

- Imaginary of mobility
- Values of mobility
- Establishing links between movement of persons, objects and information
- Experimenting movement
- Spatial capital

Limits of the mobility turn

- Field effect
- Characterizing movement: mobility as part of migration
- Elitism (Kofman 2005: critique of Urry; Beck)
- Every kind of movement is analysed, but mobility as « system » is not recognized

Conclusion 1/2

- Until the 1990s mobility studies, can be described by four elements:
 - 1) A conceptual distinction between "migration" and "circulation"
 - 2) An emphasis on the concept of "transportation" and "modal choice"
 - 3) Research on migration, multi-housing, tourism, daily mobility are studied separately
 - 4) The rise of a trend of research in anthropology and sociology about circulating practices and transnational social spaces

Conclusion 2/2

- The *mobility turn* synthesizes a new way of dealing with mobility:
 - 1) a way of considering mobility" that captures the movement in all social situations
 - 2) transnational approaches that build a social world beyond the state borders including circulations
 - 3) a multi-housing approach that articulate practice of several residences and the circulations between these places
 - 4) The importance given to the imaginary of mobility
 - 5) The relationship between movement of persons, objects, information studies of material culture, information and communication technologies.