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Introduction: Studying Junctures of Motion and Emotion

By Ann Werner

This thematic section of *Culture Unbound* is concerned with two concepts. We argue that these two are indicating important empirical fields of study: practices of movement and feelings, their place and relevance in cultures and societies. The concepts in question – motion and emotion – are also representing theoretical stands in contemporary cultural research and they have been providing inspiration for developing methodology and performing research. As theory and method the concepts have been widely discussed and used over the past decades, in sociology as well as anthropology, gender studies and cultural studies, just to mention a few. Here the contributing scholars aim to bring motion and emotion together. The idea for the effort came out of the first plenary of *On the move*, the ACSIS conference in Norrköping 2013. Presently, in late 2014, when this work is in the editing phase the importance of considering what intersections of motion and emotion can tell us about power dimensions' roles in human lives is an important feature in all four articles. While power dimensions and subjectivity is addressed differently – affected by orders of age, nation, gender or class – the thematic section considers critical studies of contemporary society and culture. Since both movement and feeling have been understood as central for constellations of power and subjects (Ahmed 2004: 107; Cresswell 2011: 551) motion and emotion must be understood as connected to a global system of relations and injustice.

The thematic section about 'Motion and emotion' is accordingly based on a dialogue between these two concepts: a dialogue where all contributors through analysis of ethnographic material acknowledge the intersection of motion and emotion in mundane cultural practices. The contributors focus on mundane forms of mobility and emotionality that are easily overlooked, taken for granted or may seem hard to verbalize. To such undercurrents of what is perceived as ordinary the authors bring larger questions about contemporary culture. .

Mobility Studies and Affect Theory

First, the contributors take their starting point in the rapidly expanding field of study called 'new mobility studies' (Cresswell & Merriman 2011) researching the processes of travel, physical movement and transportation from a cultural perspective. In new mobility studies physical movement can be transnational as well as local. Besides emphasizing the movement of people and things (Merriman

2011), mobility studies have also paid interest to interplay between movement and contemporary digital communication technologies that are making society increasingly mobile (Sheller & Urry 2006: 3). Movement has historically been charged with positive values: moving forward, making progress, or conquering new geographical areas. And even today travel continues to generally be seen as a positive and to be associated mainly with voluntary touristic travel – not movement of poor guest workers, or the displacement and incarceration of people by force. Therefore investigating travel broadly – not only voluntary travel – lead to questions about power imbalances, inequality and value.

Johan Urry (2002) has argued that travel as physical movement upholds importance in a time of advanced communication technology because of the material body's place in travel. Urry argues that modes of co-presence in bodily travel are emotional, in different ways (Urry 2002: 271), hereby connecting a certain kind of mobility to emotional experiences. Feelings, emotions and affects have been buzz words within the realm cultural studies for quite some time now. Affect theory is a broad conceptualization of the studies of human feelings in the body, in discourse and in social relations. Brian Massumi distinguishes between the affective sensation of feeling in the body – comprised of sensation and movement – and the discursive expression of emotion: that is symbolically charged by language (Massumi 2002: 28). This thematic section is mainly concerned with the latter: emotions, even though emotions are always charged with bodily affects. Thus, when I use the term affect theory I include interest in capturing fleeting feelings, changing atmospheres or emotional reactions (Brennan 2004) as well as the circulation of emotions in culture (Ahmed 2004). Within the affective turn scholars have argued that focusing on meaning – within discourse theory and other linguistic theories in the humanities – without considering feeling is a partial description of human life and culture. Affect theory can be understood as a turn away from the dominance of linguistics in cultural studies, but in the affective turn different theoretical stands co-exist (Koivunen 2010: 9). Koivunen argues that both individualistic and anti-individualistic frameworks for affect are present in feminist theorizing on affect and emotion. The work done on affect in feminist research has in many ways shaped the wider discussion in the affective turn. One of the more used and quoted feminist scholars, Sara Ahmed, asks what emotions do: how do they shape subjects and the world (Ahmed 2004: 4). By this take on emotions Ahmed is linking individual human feeling to structural questions of power and politics. This linking is also central for all contributors in this thematic section.

In order to understand motion and emotion together we are interested in the ways in which motion and emotion work together in people's lives. What moves us? And who is being moved by what? We are asking questions about what mobility does, for travelers as well as foreign nationals entering a country (Mountz 2010, 2011: 266), what ideas and objects emotions in movement orient us toward (Ahmed 2010) and who/what our affects connect us to, or divide us from (Bren-

nan 2004: 94). In order to bring questions of power and the meaning of movement and feelings to our attention the individual contributions discusses for example transnational drug trade and masculinity as well as feelings among children who commute between families. Emotions often work to energize actions and relations, where strong emotional reactions like boredom, anger or passion can be registered when something important is at stake. At times movement and travel induces strong feelings since movement can realize change. The opposite is also true: strong emotions may lead to movement, between continents as well as homes. The authors, therefore, together argue that choosing to combine the study of movement and feelings is a productive effort for contemporary cultural research.

Ethnographic Methods

The individual articles all analyze movement, emotional and physical, in the mundane exemplified in practices like commuting, returning home, listening to music in public space and packing one's bag. All four authors are interested in what motion and emotions do - and all have based their articles on ethnographic field work. Method is thus another area bringing the authors together in this section and the methods used illustrate the diversity in contemporary ethnography. Ethnographic methodology is particularly suitable for researching cultural practices as it is a qualitative method shaped by reflexivity, situated-ness and an interest in peoples' experiences (Davies 1999). Methods of participant observation, interviews, autoethnographic field notes and memory work as well as screen shots, video recordings and films are all part of shaping the material and analysis in the four articles. The empirical material and the collection of it is consciously put to the forefront by the authors and is demonstrating to the reader how motion and emotion take shape and shapes our life and culture. By our methodological efforts we strive to not only theorize movement and feelings but empirically and analytically show its importance and consequences in peoples' lives.

The Contributions

In the first article Orvar Löfgren considers two different types of travelers: tourists and commuters and their different moods. Using both ethnographic observations and examples from films depicting tourists and commuters he discusses how these two groups – while often overlapping – have come to be viewed so differently. He explores how affect and materiality work together as commuters and tourists organize their travels, experience the surroundings and fellow passengers. The focus is on the ways people learn to be travelers, often unconsciously establishing routines and competences as well as perceptions of others. It is precisely this taken for granted nature of such skills and habits which may hide ideas of power and

hierarchy in the seemingly trivial quotidian. Löfgren, furthermore, explores affects at work, in crowded commuter trains, busy stations or in the long waits for delayed connections, showing that affects not only always have a context but also a history.

The second article is concerned with mobile music listening in the age of streaming and Ann Werner discusses how listening to music while moving through public space orients the listener. The contribution is based on autoethnographic material collected by the author while commuting to work and going for walks and runs while listening to two music streaming apps: Spotify and VKontakte. Feminist theory on space and emotions is employed in order to understand how feelings and movement may orient the subject through mobile music listening. The apps' functions and structure are addressed while the main focus of the article is the emotions of mobile music streaming. Focusing on happiness and anger, the orientation of the subject, as well as the interplay between public space, music and technology the subject is studied. Werner argues that cultural consumption through mobile media always must be understood as situated in space and as co-creator of subjectivities shaped by for example gender.

Children's perspectives have rarely been represented in new mobility studies, but in the third contribution Ida Wentzel Winther changes that. She researches children travelling between homes and have on 'field walks' followed and filmed her participants when they pack, travel and unpack in their different homes as a result of their parents' divorce. Winther describes how these children handle the condition that they commute between homes, parents and siblings. She discusses how they practically, emotionally and socially navigate in this changeable landscape, and focus on routines, coping strategies, gaps that occurs as well as the feeling of being dispensable and a guest. Over and over again the children have to re-arrive, re-establish and re-figure themselves and this is both time-consuming and laborious. Commuting, in Winther's article, becomes a mixture of attachment and fragmentations in a grid of more or less stable connection lines.

Henrik Vigh studies, in the fourth and final article, the return of deported young men to Guinea-Bissau. His article looks at the relation between social and physical movement in these men's lives. More specifically, he follows a handful of young men as they seek to escape their marginal position in Guinea-Bissau by migrating though connecting with the cocaine trade that currently ties Guinea-Bissau to the underbelly of European society. However, Vigh's article does not just look at the feeling of hope that arises by gaining mobility but equally investigate the despair produced by being unwillingly returned to Bissau as a deportee. In doing so the article shows how emotions may take a more enduring shape than what we commonly perceive, and how emotion come to be ingrained in physical and collective bodies as a mood directly linked to a position of marginality and social un-substantiation.

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