

ENTANGLED IMMOBILITIES

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

March 18–20, 2021
University of
Vienna

Research Platform
Mobile Cultures and
Societies

Call for Papers

—
**Entangled Im/Mobilities:
Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences**

In times of crisis, im/mobilities within a global-local continuum become ever more perceptible, yet not equally transparent. As the COVID-19 pandemic has most recently shown, im/mobilities are embedded in and constituted by social relations, practices and structures. These entanglements are by no means new in academia and have been theorized within the field of mobility studies in the past years. The multifaceted field of mobilities research, expanding across and beyond disciplines, tackles topics ranging from im/mobilities resulting from climate change and (post)colonial displacements, through experiential qualities of embodied movement, to cultural and literary representations and materializations of im/mobilities.

This conference, organized by the Research Platform Mobile Cultures and Societies, conceptualizes im/mobilities as the potential for movement or stillness which is »entangled in the way societies and cultures assign meaning through talk, images and other representations and live out their lives« (Adey, referring to Cresswell, 2017: 7). The myriad entanglements between mobile and immobile actors, practices and objects shed light on different *Regimes of Mobility* (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013). Through entanglements, circumscribed within unequal power relations and colonial legacies, translocal mobilities may be perpetuated or reinforced via spatio-temporal entrapments and friction »to keep global power in motion« (Tsing 2005: 6) – leading to the intersection of different scales and modes of im/mobility. Further levels of entanglement ensue from the fact that im/mobilities arise through interactions between human and non-human actors, material objects as well as the natural and built environment or spatiotemporal structures. What is more, im/mobilities are inscribed in semantic contexts and relations of

meaning, becoming subjects of artistic and epistemic representations, but also of institutional discourses and policies. In order to cover a wide variety of topics and to combine reflections from the humanities and the social sciences, we have divided the conference into the following panels:

1: Entangled Inequalities: Intersectional Approaches towards Public Health Crises

2: »Points of Entanglement« in and beyond the Caribbean

3: Entangled Im/mobilities in Postcolonial African History

4: Of Other Mobilities. Entangled Embodiments and Narratives Between Mobilization and Immobilization

5: Mobility Justice? The Underrepresented Entanglement of Im-mobilities in Climate and Environmental Change

6: Open Panel: Topics not related to panel 1-5 that contribute to »Entangled Im/Mobilities«

One of our intentions is to find out how a nuanced view of entangled im/mobilities could reveal complex relations of meaning, shaped by geographic, cultural, and historical contexts. We especially invite papers which look beyond Eurocentric forms of knowledge production when considering entanglements in relation to im/mobilities. As we also see mobility as closely entangled with immobility, we call for contributions that explore how mobilities and immobilities interact and are co-produced.

We aim to open up a dialogue both between disciplines and between academic and non-academic participants. We accept proposals in English and German for papers to be presented in panel format (a 20-minute presentation followed by a discussion) as well as artistic contributions (e.g. performance, poetry or short films). We especially encourage submissions from early-career scholars.

List of Panels

1: Entangled Inequalities: Intersectional Approaches towards Public Health Crises

In this panel, we seek contributions that analyze how different axes of inequality, social mobilities, and immobilities are entangled in the context of pandemics and public health crises. We particularly welcome papers that adopt intersectionality as a prism of understanding critical socioeconomic issues. The aim of the panel is to capture how different aspects of a health crisis, such as HIV, Ebola, or COVID-19, (re-)produce inequalities based on gender, class, and ethnicity in their entangled historical, micro-, and macro-dimensions.

- How do we conceptualize entanglement of (social) im/mobilities as an issue of intersectionality?
- Which inequalities are intensified by a situation that stresses structures, institutions, and patterns of social reproduction? How are these inequalities related?
- Which methodological approaches are particularly capable of providing new insights into entangled inequalities in a public health crisis?

2: »Points of Entanglement« in and beyond the Caribbean

In this panel, we are looking for papers that examine how entanglement might be generated from different forms of mobilities and immobilities in the Caribbean, which may include the diaspora or inter-Caribbean im/mobilities. Mobilities and immobilities have fundamentally shaped the Caribbean and continue to do so to this day. One of the Caribbean's preeminent theorists, Édouard Glissant, writes about the »points of entanglement«, from where Caribbean experience and cultural creation is forged and from which it has to be understood. In particular, we are interested in papers analyzing these entanglements as they play out in literature, film, and other arts, and as they reverberate throughout the Caribbean and beyond.

- How does a given work of art negotiate, portray, enact or push up against the entangled state of the past and/or contemporary Caribbean?
- How do these entanglements play out within the Caribbean and how do they intersect with other parts of the world?
- What might a theory of Caribbean entanglement updated for the current moment look like?

3: Entangled Im/mobilities in Postcolonial African History

The myriad manifestations of mobility and immobility in postcolonial Africa stretch within and across national and continental borders as well as across geographical and social space. Contributions to this panel should exemplify and discuss the use of historical methods to study some of these manifestations – for instance, labor migration, tertiary education abroad or the spatial and social im/mobility of women – and their attendant entanglements with states, political actors, localities, inequalities, etc. over a specific period of time. While the main focus is on human im/mobilities of the postcolonial period, papers can also analyze entanglements of human and non-human im/mobility as well as provide *longue durée* perspectives extending to precolonial and colonial pasts. Contributors can consider the following questions:

- How can entanglements be conceptualized from a historical perspective, both in a spatial and temporal sense?
- How can notions of agency, dependency and inequality be captured through an entangled perspective on im/mobilities?
- In what ways can methodological approaches such as oral history and personal narratives contribute to understanding how im/mobilities are entangled with structural contexts?

4: Of Other Mobilities. Entangled Embodiments and Narratives Between Mobilization and Immobilization

In this panel, we are looking for contributions which explore the spaces between mobility and immobility. We want to uncover material as well as literary relations and entanglements that question common modes of classification and open up spaces for multi-layered mobilities. In particular, we are interested in approaches that focus on alternative spatio-temporal localizations and materializations in selected literary examples and items of material culture.

- What forms of movement can be identified in literary texts that undermine the dichotomy of mobility and immobility?
- To what extent can objects and bodies, when they become mobile, detect and open static orders?
- In what ways can processes of immobilization generate mobilities and how can mobilization produce immobility?

5: Mobility Justice? The Underrepresented Entanglement of Immobilities in Climate and Environmental Change

For this panel, we request papers that investigate human immobilities in the context of climate or environmental change. We look forward to proposals regarding policies, discourses, methodologies, or case studies about immobile perceptions and trajectories, as well as how researchers can better address the »sedentary bias« within climate mobility studies. Approaches questioning mobility regimes and spanning disciplinary boundaries are particularly welcome. Thereby, we seek to understand different regimes of mobility that are constitutive of and can lead to immobility (see Sheller 2018: 23):

- How are differential access and means and modes of movement entangled with environmentally-induced immobilities?
- To what extent can spatial patterns and forms of mobility management promote or impede environmentally-induced immobilities?
- How is im/mobility justice conceptualized across various scales (local, regional, urban, national, and global) in your own research?

6: Open Panel: Topics not related to panel 1-5 that contribute to »Entangled Im/Mobilities«

*All panels are organized and will be moderated by PhD-students from *Mobile Cultures and Societies*.*

To submit your paper proposal (pdf), please send us the following information: name, a short biographical note (100 words), contact information, the title of the paper, an abstract (max. 250 words) and the name of the panel you wish to participate in (see the list of panels) to this email address: entangled.mobilities@univie.ac.at

Please specify the subject of your email: »Application + Panel [1-6]« and also specify your pdf title: »Panel [1-6]_Name_Keyword of your topic«.

Deadline: September 30, 2020

You will hear back from us by November.

There are no conference fees. Financial aid might be available and there will be more information on funding opportunities in autumn. Please contact us via email in case you need funding.

Note on the impact of **COVID-19 travel restrictions**: We plan to inform selected participants by November to allow ample time for visa and travel logistics. As of now, the conference is planned in-person, but we are happy to work with participants who may prefer presenting online.

Adey, Peter (2017): *Mobility*. Second edition. London, New York, NY: Routledge (Key ideas in Geography).

Glick Schiller, Nina; Salazar, Noel B. (2013): *Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe*. In *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (2), pp. 183–200.

Sheller, Mimi (2018): *Theorising Mobility Justice*. In *Tempo Soc.* 30 (2), pp. 17–34.

Tsing, Anna (2008): *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

