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## TRANSIT

### Title

BOOK REVIEW: *Fliehkraft. Gesellschaft in Bewegung—von Migranten und Touristen* by Tom Holert and Mark Terkessidis

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Tom Holert and Mark Terkessidis. *Fliehkraft. Gesellschaft in Bewegung—von Migranten und Touristen*. Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2006. Pp. 285. Paper, €8.95.

In *Fliehkraft*, the collaborating authors, Tom Holert and Mark Terkessidis, have teamed up to examine the relationship between tourism and migration. Mobility and travel have increased dramatically since the Cold War, attaining greater proportions today than ever before. This growth has raised many questions and sparked arguments concerning the future of nations, employment, and borders. New technologies and forces of globalization play a role both by offering new means of mobility and by contributing to its necessity, in forms ranging from travel required to conduct business or real estate deals to the movement of political or economic refugees. The authors question our conceptions of such issues and deliberately complicate the notions of migrants and tourists to closely examine these titles' possibilities as social positions. These two spheres of mobility are often charged with positive and negative connotations according to the immigration politics of a given nation, which this work seeks to expose.

The title, *Fliehkraft*, can be read as a centrifugal force that is mobilizing people outward away from any given center, and a similar de-centering force is at work in the way the authors upset definitions of nationalism and static readings of migration. However, the authors also have a particular interest in places where the two "powers of flight" (another reading of the word *Fliehkraft*) are juxtaposed and recognizable in economic, cultural, and political contexts. The way in which locations respond and adapt to this mobility is of particular concern to them. For this reason, the authors traveled quite extensively to offer a diverse trail of data and varied responses to the same phenomenon. From Morocco to Spain, from Albania and Italy to the former Yugoslavia, with a brief look at several major European cities, the resulting picture is a multifaceted canvas of mobility where tourism and migration are increasingly interconnected. This spatially sprawling study brings a certain insight to the ubiquity of mobility. By opting for a longer list of examples rather than focusing on a thicker description of a single location and its mobile bodies, the authors sacrifice depth for breadth and a comparative perspective. Rather than interviewing migrants or merely reviewing statistical information, the authors are able to capture a "ground level" snapshot of current mobility by personally traveling migratory paths and visiting tourist hotspots, which they illuminate with solid research and compelling insights. The authors' method brings a welcome and noticeable sense of experience and *movement* to their writing.

In the first three chapters, the routes of migrants are discussed: for example, the possibilities of movement from Morocco to Europe. A system of networking and consultation is presented that resembles the travel industry for "tourists" in some respects. The "Sturm auf Europa" is more closely examined and, far from a simple monolithic body of fleeing poverty-stricken refugees, it is represented as a complex and diverse group of opportunity-seeking and strategically sophisticated people who function much like tourists, except for their inferior status according to nation-states that attempt to quell and control such mobility.

Organizations and buildings that are constructed to handle the issue of migration are telling locations for the authors. In the former Yugoslavia, for instance, a motel has been turned into holding quarters, and elsewhere temporary sites of safety have evolved into more urban and modern settings as the function of architecture adapts to growing demand for and against human mobility. The convergence of tourism and migration is also encapsulated in the beaches of the Riviera, where the two categories are both strongly represented, but the distinction between tourist and migrant is generally drawn as starkly as possible. Such distinct demarcations are

exactly what the authors blur. The power and privilege of the desired tourist over the dreaded migrant is merely a factor of representation and political policy. Yet it must be conceded that no matter how the authors view it, tourists enjoy a mobility that is decidedly more privileged than that of any migrant, in that they are economically solicited and advantaged. The coming and going of migrants may function “like” tourism, but it is perpetually haunted by a lack of power, which is denied those whom the nation-state deems unfit for entry or residence.

The midpoint of the book hinges on the paradox of migrants returning to their homelands for a season, and the influence of this return-flow of money and bodies on these locations that are normally quite empty. The cities, like the industry of migration, evolve by adapting to the mobility of people to and from hotspots of transit. These spots defy customary definitions. They are both “ländlich und doch städtisch, chaotisch und doch geordnet, lokal autark und doch global vernetzt” (139). Despite their resistance to firm definitions, these places of waiting, departing, and occasional returning are a reality that enables and composes the current system of mobility.

Even as the writing turns to tourism in the remaining chapters, the migrants are ever-present in the background, sharing the same locales as tourists while performing construction work or other jobs to support their own survival. The chapters concerning tourism emphasize the visual appeal and the constructed image of a location. The authors duly historicize the tourist and even colonialist pasts of various locations before analyzing the current images that the state apparatus seeks to convey. The spectacle of tourism is presented alongside migration as a key element in the constellation of modern mobility.

Mobility is a privilege and a necessity that is increasingly available and generally employed in order to obtain a better life. There is a certain sense of hope accompanying mobility that the authors share in expressing their optimism for its future, despite the drawbacks of current methods of dealing with this multifaceted phenomenon. Although this book focuses on two facets above all, each face is shown in turn to be very diverse. While the positions of migration and tourism are commonly viewed as falling at opposite ends of the continuum of “temporary mobility,” the last chapter provides ample evidence that these forms of mobility are intertwined and suggests that we should question our categorization. The main sites where tourism and migration meet have become heterotopias in Foucault’s sense, other spaces. This means that locations, like the mobility that joins or separates them, have developed features that elude our conventional understandings.

Holert and Terkissidis offer an enlightening look at mobility that considers the interconnected state of tourism and migration. In a time when mobility blurs our conceptions of who is going and coming and whether this is positive or negative, Holert and Terkessidis suggest that we adapt to the idea of a “post-national citizenship” rooted in *international* and *regional* politics. Movement is shown to play a central role in the way that people relate to their countries of origin or residence. This relationship is described as becoming increasingly constructed by notions and experiences of mobility instead of nationalism. This argument serves to expose the inefficient and outmoded nature of current debates clinging to notions of *Leitkultur* and integration.

Perhaps they are correct in arguing that one’s rights must become contingent upon place of residence and not national citizenship. However, it seems obvious that just as the authors have exposed the generally hidden complexities of mobility, the project of open borders and shifting globalized politics is altogether thorny and daunting, despite its seeming urgency. Yet *Fliehkraft*, or the power of fleeing, is here to stay and the book makes it quite clear that something has to give under this increasing pressure. For those interested in mobility studies, tourism, migration,

or even travel, this work offers an engaging and provocative look at two seemingly opposed forces of mobility that are truly changing the way we live.

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