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Feelings on the Move: (Im)mobilities, Embodiment and Emotions

As culturally contingent social constructs, embodied emotions are mutually constitutive of lived experience, forms of sociality, and intersubjective meaning-making, not to mention the ethnographic endeavour itself. In the study of (im)mobilities, recent anthropological research interrogates the feelings stirred by movement across multiple modes, scales, and temporalities, as well as by stasis: in stillness, stuntedness, and waiting. Questions of agency, freedom, rights, equity, and justice are evoked as bodies move through space, are prevented from doing so, or are re-moved, as exemplified by the drawing of fraught distinctions between “voluntary” versus “forced” movement. Taken together, affective and embodied experiences are being increasingly recognised as central to social, political, economic, and moral domains of life. Emotions are intertwined with (im)mobility, not least because they produce what are termed affective publics. Feelings of closeness or distance, belonging or exclusion, comradeship or alienation are generated as bodies are read and emotional styles are prescribed through patriarchal and racialised registers. Careful attention to such dynamics as well as to the manifold ways in which we are implicated in them is therefore not only part of our mandate as researchers, but is also our responsibility as human beings living through a global polycrisis. As the horrors in the Mediterranean, Palestine, Sudan, and beyond unfold and reach us on our many screens, and as climate breakdown continues at an alarming pace, we must refuse the role of the disembodied, distanced spectator. What are we, as anthropologists, equipped to offer publics as we also feel our ways through such a moment? How might we re-envision our collective task now, as those involved in the (re)construction, (re)presentation, and (re)circulation of deeply emotional stories of suffering and loss, on the one hand, and solidarity and hope, on the other? This international workshop on 11-12 September 2025, organised by the EASA AnthroMob network in collaboration with the LDE Centre for Governance of Migration and Diversity will bring participants together in The Hague to explore how bodies, embodiment, and emotions can productively relate to the study of (im)mobilities. We warmly invite submissions for both in-person and online participation addressing

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