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Is motility a useful concept for historians?

Being mobile requires specific knowledge, various social abilities, some money, etc. A kind of capital called *motility* by sociologists, but how an why could historians use this concept?

"A useful tool for mobility: motility"

**Mobility leads to the plurality of transport means.
Motility, symbolized by the Swiss Army knife, includes the amount of varied knowledge required if you want to be mobile. As with the multi-purpose knife, you select specific information that will help your mobility!**

Is motility a useful concept for historians?

Historians have to be aware of the ideas and debates of other disciplines. Among them, sociology is a near neighbour, whose research objects are often shared with historians. For instance, sociologists of mobility have introduced the concept of *motility*, in order to define the kind of capital that you need in order to be mobile: knowledge of the territory and of the networks, social abilities allowing to use the mobility systems, financial resources giving the access to real modal choice, etc.

For historians, this notion can be considered a useful tool in order to reverse the traditional history of supply of mobility. It opens the way to social differentiations in the world of mobility. It may also help historians to address the values acting in the modal choices.

The paper is based on three examples of historians who have used motility in their work in various contexts. It tries to discuss the problem of translating a sociological concept into a tool for historians : sources, plasticity of the notion, identification of motility levels, etc.

Authors

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