



Review of Gångarter och gångstilar. Rum, rytm och rörelse till fots (Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Göteborg: Makadam 2018)

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Citation for the original published paper (version of record):

Svensson, D. (2019). Review of Gångarter och gångstilar. Rum, rytm och rörelse till fots (Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Göteborg: Makadam 2018). *Ethnologia Scandinavica*, 49: 266-267

N.B. When citing this work, cite the original published paper.

ing work. This book opens up the everyday life of the present-day school from the perspective of the teenagers.

Majja Mäki, Turku

The Culture of Walking

Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Gångarter och gångstilar. Rum, rytm och rörelse till fots. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2018. 299 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7061-264-0.

■ Walking is perhaps one of the most mundane practices that humans engage in. Most of us walk on a daily basis, for all kinds of reasons. Although rarely in focus, it is a major part of much of our literature, film, art and other forms of cultural expression. It is hardly possible to imagine a world where humans do not walk. The sheer volume of walking through human history – in different styles, for different reasons and by different actors – makes it a rich and diverse research field, to say the least.

In this book, the ethnologist Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, docent in Nordic folklore at Åbo Academy, investigates cultural practices and ideas about walking in Sweden and the traditionally Swedish-oriented parts of Finland, while also making comparisons with other Nordic countries. She formulates several research questions: what might distinguish Nordic walking from other forms, whether tourists, pilgrims and others who travel by foot have distinct walking practices, and how walking has narrative potential.

The first chapter presents an introduction to the field of walking studies, as well as a presentation of the somewhat eclectic theoretical and methodological starting point for this journey on foot. A rich combination of archival sources, fieldwork, interviews and more has been used. Walking itself is included in the methodology, as part of an autoethnographic approach. Österlund-Pötzsch underlines how field trips and personal experiences of walking in different ways and in different places have been an integral part of the interpretation and analysis of source material (pp. 12–13). Then follow a brief overview of the research field, where Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust* and Frédéric Gross's *A Philosophy of Walking* are rightly mentioned as important works. Others, such as *The Routledge International Handbook of Walking Studies* (ed. C. M. Hall, Y. Ram & N. Shoval, 2017) or Susanna Blomqvist's

(2018) *Encountering Nature and Nation on Foot: A Comparative History of the Outdoor Movement in Britain and Sweden, 1880–1939*, are not mentioned here. Still, Österlund-Pötzsch shows the diversity of the field of walking studies, with contributions from ethnology, history, cultural geography and several other disciplines. She then discusses some theoretical starting points, of which perhaps the most important is the dual understanding of walking as both experience and performance (p. 20), with reference to phenomenology as laid out by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others. Walking, presented as a basic ability for human beings, is tangled up with a lot of different ways of experiencing and performing.

The second chapter is an overview of different ways of walking throughout history. Pilgrims, refugees, nomads, workers, merchants, philosophers, soldiers and many others used walking as a means of transport, and in some cases as a form of socio-cultural performance (p. 35). The latter dimensions became increasingly important in the eighteenth century, with scientific expeditions and cultural travels growing more common. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and other authors began to popularize a new understanding of walking as a means to experience the landscape (p. 47; see also Björn Billing's 2017 book about Rousseau's travels on foot). The popularization of walking continued with researchers and scholars, poets, aristocrats, urban middle classes and eventually even the working classes.

Chapter three delves into the discussion of whether there is a certain form of Nordic walking. At least in a cultural understanding, walking here has been more linked to nature than to the cities. It is also striking how walking and other forms of physical effort to move through natural surroundings (swimming, running, skiing) have been promoted as a way of strengthening the population for military and economic reasons. Walking in forests and mountains is also strongly connected to ideas about being Nordic.

Chapter four is a case study about how walking was used by folklorists to collect material about Swedish culture in Finland. This corresponds to similar efforts in Sweden to gather material about Finnish culture through fieldwork on foot in the so-called Finn forests. Walking was not just a means of transport, it was consciously used as a method in such endeavours.

Chapter five brings an important theoretical contribution. With reference to the “tourist gaze”, Österlund-Pötzsch introduces the concept of a “tourist gait”, a distinctly touristic way of walking with maximum engagement with one’s surroundings (p. 129). It is a fruitful way of framing touristic walking, and perhaps other forms of touristic mobility as well?

Chapter six explores ritualistic ways of walking. While everyday walking can be somewhat invisible in its mundanity, other forms of walking (e.g. in a parade or a demonstration) are more easily recognized as performative acts.

The final chapter has a discussion about rhythms of walking. Different styles and ideas affect which rhythm is seen as ideal. And when walking with others, we tend to negotiate a common pace that works for all. But at what speed does walking become something else? How do pace and rhythm change the experience and performance of walking? Though not within the scope of this work, a discussion about the differences and similarities between walking and running would also have been interesting. Research on how running relates to landscape in different ways, by scholars such as Alan Latham, Hayden Lorimer, Kai Syng-Tan, Mattias Qviström, John Hockey, Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson and others would be highly relevant if the discourses about walking and running were more in dialogue.

The role of infrastructure and technology is somewhat underdeveloped in Österlund-Pötzsch’s analysis. Though mentioned briefly several times throughout the book, it is not integrated with the general analysis. Given how profoundly new infrastructure and technology (streetlights, pavements, cars, buses, trains, trams etc.) have changed and challenged walking practices in urban areas, and how new (faster and large-scale) technologies in mining, forestry, industry and agriculture have affected the small-scale infrastructures of walking in both Sweden and Finland, a more thorough discussion about such issues would be warranted. Perhaps Paul Virilio’s dromology, i.e. the idea of how faster technologies and practices out-manoeuvre old and slow equivalents, has something to add to a discussion of this kind?

Nonetheless, Österlund-Pötzsch has made an important contribution to research about walking, both as an overview of the field and through new empirical cases such as the popularization of Nordic walk-

ing (i.e. walking with poles) and the role of walking in the articulation and understanding of Swedish influence in parts of Finland. The concept of a “tourist gait” will also prove helpful in future studies. The book is rich with references to historic walking literature and is reflexive and meandering all at once. It takes our understanding of walking, in all its complexity as experiential and performative practice, quite a bit further.

Daniel Svensson, Gothenburg

Kitchen of Dreams and Everyday Life

Köket. Rum för drömmar, ideal och vardagsliv under det långa 1900-talet. Ulrika Torell, Jenny Lee & Roger Qvarsell (eds.). Nordiska museets handlingar 143. Nordiska museets förlag. Stockholm 2018. 352 pp. Ill. ISSN 0346-8585. ISBN 978-91-7108-599-3.

■ One of my earliest memories is the kitchen floor in Ringstorp, an early 1960s area in Helsingborg. I remember crawling on a plastic rag rug that was black, white, and pale yellow. Maybe I was trying to reach the BRIO rattle that was a bit further away, while my mother’s legs went back and forth between the sink and the cooker. The first photograph of me was also taken in a kitchen. I am lying on the stainless steel sink top in the summer house, where I am basking contentedly in the morning light in the summer of 1966, having just been given a clean nappy.

Such associations arise from a reading of this large collection of studies, with a title meaning “Kitchen: Room for Dreams, Ideals, and Everyday Life during the Long Twentieth Century”, published by the Nordic Museum and written by historians, economic historians, historians of ideas, museum curators/ethnologists and an art historian. It is of course a subject that all cultural historians should regard as central, “the heart of the house” as the kitchen has sometimes been called.

The period covered by the study is what the historian Giovanni Arrighi named “the long twentieth century” (1870 to the present), what was previously called the age of industrialism. There are no links to the long lines of history, which is a pity. I remember my aha-experience at a Pompeii exhibition in the 1990s, where I saw that many kitchen utensils from antiquity were strikingly similar to those we still use. The long twentieth century was not very uni-