

Bob Pierik, *Urban Life on the Move. Gender and Mobility in Early Modern Amsterdam*, PhD-thesis, (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 2022). 288 p. No ISBN.

DOI: 10.52024/tseg.12297

'Who accessed the street, and how?' This is the question that Bob Pierik aims to answer in his dissertation 'Urban Life on the Move. Gender and Mobility in Early Modern Amsterdam', recently successfully defended at the University of Amsterdam. As part of the larger project 'The Freedom of the Streets', Pierik investigates the everyday practices of mobility throughout the city of Amsterdam, especially along the gender axis.¹ The thesis departs from the apparent paradox of Dutch female mobility in the early modern period: on the one hand contemporary foreign travel literature is struck by the strength and freedom of the Dutch housewife, while, on the other, historians have pointed to the urban Dutch Republic as a context of early invention of (middle and upper class) domesticity, and, with it, its related ideal of the stay-at-home housewife. In tackling this paradox, Pierik re-evaluates broader grand modernisation narratives by Habermas, Sennet, Duby, Ariès and Elias on the transition of an earlier 'public' society towards an increasingly 'private' modern one. By historicizing the mobilities-paradigm, he aims to rescue the early modern period from the caricature of a mere transitional era. Central in his argument is the notion that: 'early modern urban dwellers had distinct mobility regimes that were shaped by various factors, including their gender, work, social class and the materiality of city life itself' (p. 19). To reconstruct this 'etnography of street life' (p. 44), Pierik takes advantage of the *AlleAmsterdamseAkten*-project, by interrogating the exceptionally rich notarial depositions for their data on intra-urban mobility.² Especially interested in the 'pre-crime scenes' of the depositions, the author combines numerous of these microlevel histories in order to produce data on broader historical processes of mobility, a method that the project members have coined the 'snapshot approach'.³

1 For more info on the project as a whole, see: <https://www.freedomofthestreets.org/>

2 For more info on this digitization project by the City of Amsterdam, see: <https://alleamsterdamseakten.nl/>

3 See also: Danielle van den Heuvel, Bob Pierik, Bébíó Vieira Amaro, and Ivan Kisjes. 'Capturing gendered mobility and street use in the historical city. A new methodological approach', *Cultural and Social History* 17:4 (2020) 515-536.

In the first chapter, Pierik takes a macro approach to the above question. Very quickly it becomes evident that the notion of urban domesticity for women does not hold. While the depositions reveal that men were always found to be farther away from their home than women, women were constantly found outside and on the move, especially in their immediate neighbourhood. In their rhythm of mobility, i.e. the time of day, men and women show remarkable similarities. Furthermore, the chapter showcases the impact of the city's materialities – the city gates and street pattern – on mobility regimes. The second chapter then zooms in on the micro level, the mobility in, through, and around the individual household. Building on Eibach's notion of the 'open house', Pierik forwards the concept of 'gatekeeping' to unveil power struggles of access and exclusion of space in and around the house by various urban dwellers, including extended household members like servants and lodgers. The chapter determines that honour was crucial in determining (the legitimacy) of movement, and while interactions themselves were highly gendered, claims and assaults on one's honour easily extended to the entire household. In these micro level appropriation processes, social borders of cultural norms and values often proved harder to cross than material ones of locks, gates and fences. Chapter three turns our attention to the geography of work. Here Pierik argues for a spatial conceptualisation of the domestic – extradomestic divide in order to tease out which household tasks took place within the house, and which ones took people outside. Indeed, 'It has been too easily presumed that not engaging in commercial or waged work means staying at home, and vice versa' (p. 142). The depositions confirm that women show a relative stability in the domesticity of their work, while men were increasingly engaged outside. But this does not mean women led isolated lives, as their activities frequently required them to step outside, or to interact with people entering their homes for goods and services. The final chapter turns to the emergence of vehicles in the Amsterdam streetscape, what Pierik labels the 'vehicularization' of society. With its distinct sleigh-culture Amsterdam provides a unique case, although Pierik argues that vehicularization was likely never unproblematically integrated into European urban life. The depositions, supplemented with a tax register from 1742, reveal a spatially mixed geography of vehicles. Access to these vehicles was also crucially determined by social class and gender: deeply rooted norms denied women the status of driver, and for them to travel alone in coaches was considered highly suspicious.

'Urban life on the move' is an outstanding work. Pierik has meticulously constructed each chapter with a solid theoretical foundation, pointing out clearly where he is moving the debate forward with valuable conceptual contributions. In doing so he carefully navigates the reader through complex theoretical debates without losing track of his main objectives or neglecting biases in his source material. Yet occasionally, Pierik misses opportunities in making the whole dissertation more than just the sum of its parts, and more connections could have been made between the chapters. Take for example materiality, a central causal factor in the main argument. It serves as a strong determinant in the first chapter, but remarkably not so in the second. As to why materiality mattered on the macro but not on the micro level, the thesis remains silent. Pierik's solid sense of narrative building partially negates this matter. The vivid retellings of the depositions make the book pleasant to read, and allow the reader to imagine the premodern urban world to a degree few other works manage. Highly innovative in applied methods, and strong in theoretical and conceptual contributions, Pierik has put down an impressive dissertation, one that many historians interested in gender, the urban, the household, labour and mobility can learn from and enjoy.

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Peter Gorter, *Gereformeerde migranten. De religieuze identiteit van Nederlandse gereformeerde migrantengemeenten in de rijkssteden Frankfurt am Main, Aken en Keulen (1555-1600)* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2021). 235 p. ISBN 789087048693.

DOI: 10.52024/tseg.12298

The sixteenth-century Reformation demolished the myth of a united Christendom, handing rulers a new tool – confessions of faith – to increase authority over their subjects, a process described as 'confessionalization'. The result was a century of religious conflict and warfare forcing hundreds of thousands of people from their homelands. Among these were sizeable groups of Netherlandic Protestants (followers of Calvinism) fleeing the violence, impoverishment, and religious persecution caused by the Spanish occupiers of the Southern Netherlands. What did that experience do to them, and to their religious iden-