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Jeff Ferrell, Drift

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male di controllo creata dal dodicesimo governo golpista della storia thailandese.

Owners of the Map è insomma un libro di straordinaria ricchezza, poetico ma senza sbavature, che non cela neanche per un istante il posizionamento dell'autore, ma non appare né romantico né stucchevolmente partigiano. È un testo che si rivolge agli accademici così come a chi pratica la politica. Soprattutto, è un testo che ha molto da insegnare sul piano dell'analisi e del metodo anche a chi non ha alcun interesse nei confronti dell'Asia. Da leggere.

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Jeff Ferrell, *Drift. Illicit Mobility and Uncertain Knowledge*, Oakland, University of California Press, 2018

In this book, the cultural sociologist and criminologist Jeff Ferrell makes a case for «drift» as a notion to deepen our understanding of the contemporary age. Part cultural history, part ethnographic inquiry, *Drift* is a finely written book that crosses several territories of knowledge. As an accomplished freight train hopper, Ferrell not only guides readers through the practices of American hobos, tramps and vagabonds since the late 19th century, but also through the «illicit knowledge» that these subjects have deployed vis-à-vis the established order of society.

Ferrell argues in particular that drift is a tension-laden notion that can only be appreciated «dialectically». Indeed, drift is a historically recurrent phenomenon whereby people subsequently attach to and detach from place (there seem to be successive waves of drifting in the late 19th century, the 1930s, the 1950s, and today). The problem is precisely how to qualify such a dynamic: is it an expression of dependency (the drifter as social underdog), or one of autonomy (the drifter as truly emancipated person)? Is it a practice that creates new communities (as people live most intensely by drifting together), or one that severs and individualises (as people simply drift apart under unexpected circumstances)? Is it an experience that concedes to despair, or one that redresses current widespread cultural desperation in the mainstream society and paves the way towards new hope?

Developing a cultural and critical approach to criminology, Ferrell details how drift has been interpreted sociologically (how people become drifters) as well as how it can be seen through the lens of political economy (how the government has increasingly focused on punishing and criminalising drifters). Whereas classic sociologists such as RE Park, N Anderson, R Merton and D Matza focused on the link between dislocation and anomie, Ferrell suggests that the picture needs to be complemented by a study of how capitalism has been producing and multiplying the conditions that have set people in motion and shape their very wandering trajectories.

The two central chapters in the book are occupied by the exquisite encounter with Zeke, a gutter punk in his mid-20s who engages in train-hopping, sign-flying, and dumpster-diving to make ends meet. Animated by a shared «love of trains and the outdoors», Ferrell's conversation with Zeke enables the reader to come into direct contact with the experience of the drifter in contemporary American society. It is, as Ferrell beautifully defines it, «a mercurial mix of self-determination and abandon amidst situations beyond their control ... a sort of survival surfing». Fascinated by Zeke, and in an attempt to better understand his mind-set, the author embarks on a train riding session with him from Forth Worth to Pecos through the desert landscape of Texas. The ride is rich with reminiscences (also from Ferrell's previous decade-long ethnographic research), lessons and learning about the peculiar visibility strategies and tactics of drifters, parsing the singular combination of speed and slowness in their travels, their constant negotiations between plan, variation, waiting, hiding, and the enjoyment of moving.

Ferrell suggests that, despite the hardships experienced by drifters (increasingly marginalised, stigmatised, and punished), it is precisely by producing uncertainty and precariousness that their practice of drift may also provide the premises for a new politics to come. A veritable passeur of the ancient and venerable nomadologic tradition of wanderers, Ferrell does not hide his sympathies, and devotes the final chapters of his book to a critique of contemporary positivist methodologies in the social sciences. A critical take on methodology gives way to the search for possible alternative views – namely, the elaboration of a «ghost method» suitable for tackling transient and evanescent living situations, which, the author argues, characterise not only hobos but increasingly larger shares of society. Whereas the social sciences have so far had a penchant for presence and evidence, we might now need to turn towards documenting absences and «ghost stories», too. In conclusion, not only is Ferrell's book well researched and rich in human stories, it is also thoroughly informed by passion and respect and, as such, it is a truly inspirational work.

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Ester Gallo, Francesca Scrinzi, *Migration, Masculinities and Reproductive Labour. Men of the Home*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016

In questo convincente e solido volume Ester Gallo e Francesca Scrinzi sintetizzano e articolano un lungo e approfondito lavoro di ricerca sugli immigrati (uomini) impiegati nel «lavoro riproduttivo» – lavoro domestico e di cura – in Italia. Si tratta di un ottimo esempio di rigorosa ricerca qualitativa: in 16 anni, tra il 1996 e il 2012, Gallo e Scrinzi hanno raccolto 250 interviste, in primo luogo con lavoratori e lavoratrici migranti e, in secondo luogo, con un ampio spettro di persone tra cui, per fare solo qualche esempio, datori di lavoro attivisti, vo-