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Abstract

The chapter begins from an acknowledgment of the porous boundaries between formal and non-formal education. Such opportunities are supported across the European Union (EU) through supranational institutional arrangements that encourage young people to engage in non-formal education, promoting it as a gateway to active citizenship. We seek to investigate the particular configurations of learning that become possible when young people undertake mobility exchanges. Despite the general risk of incurring additional hardship, when “on the move,” learning is usually reported as being faster (because it is “compacted”), wide ranging, and motivating. One reason this topic has attracted scholarly attention in recent years, and could now be described as a preoccupation, lies with the new, post-pandemic limits imposed on mobility.

Drawing on the work of the Italian sociologist Paolo Jedlowski (*Il sapere dell’esperienza. Il Saggiatore*, Milan, 1994) – who in turn borrows from German philosophy – this chapter uses the distinction between “Erfahrung” and “Erlebnis,” both translatable into “experience,” to discuss varieties of learning on the move. By “Erfahrung,” we signify the cultivation of experience, based on active engagement and the knowledge that derives from it; by “Erlebnis,” we refer to “lived experience,” or the way we feel in any given situation in the present. Undertaking mobility encompasses both of these, but precisely because it implies interacting with new sites – specifically, new sites of learning – the resulting configuration of learning is particularly interesting. The chapter exemplifies these notions by discussing empirical material collected for a large, ongoing research project investigating the futures of young people in Italy (“Mapping Youth Futures”).

Introduction

This chapter seeks to discuss the process of learning that happens when young people are engaged in mobility. Our discussion begins first by clarifying the very nature of learning. An outdated notion of learning ties the process inextricably to educational contexts, such as schools, universities, and other sites traditionally devoted to education. More recently, research starts from the assumption that learning may in fact happen anywhere and everywhere. Obviously, not all locations foster or facilitate learning; some, in fact, may ironically impede it despite being designated for that very purpose. Additionally, it may be

useful to offer a reminder, as British sociologist Diane Reay does in “Miseducation” (2017: 11), of the words of Basil Bernstein, who wrote that “education cannot compensate for society” (1970). By this, we refer to the need not to overload education with all-solving expectations. Education itself has many limits. And if that holds true, learning that happens outside of education is the most precious of all. Moreover, it is somehow liberating to acknowledge that occasions of learning are to be found outside of institutions.

We move from these assumptions to point to the importance of discussing those sites in which learning is facilitated rather than hindered. This is the broadest objective of this chapter, which does not concentrate on a single location as a site of learning. Conversely, we seek to investigate the configurations of learning that become possible *whenever* young people undertake mobility programs, with particular attention to the European context. Within this space, despite a general risk of incurring additional hardship (Cairns et al., 2017; Cuzzocrea & Cairns, 2020), learning “on the move” is often reported as being faster (because it is “compacted”) and wide ranging (Samuk et al., 2021; Feyen & Krzaklewska, 2013) but also motivating further experiences relevant to young people (Cuzzocrea & Krzaklewska, 2023). Learning obviously happens throughout our lives: in any new situation we are forced to apprehend something new. However, it is equally obvious that learning is particularly salient during youth years, given that it is during this time that we intensively confront with new situations, which in turn we are supposed to have mastered by a certain timeframe. This can be deduced from classical texts which elaborated conceptualizations of youth. For instance, for Erikson the essence of youth is found in the fact that they are allowed to take time to make explorations around themselves – what he termed “psychosocial moratorium,” namely a “niche” in which “a young person can find his or her place through self-experimentation” (1968: 156). Erikson also underlined that the psychosocial moratorium implies “playing” with new roles, each of which, we can think, opens new perspectives and new possibilities. In a similar line also Côté and Allahar (1994), but also Arnett (2004), who talks about “deferral of obligations” that leaves time for exploration; these are implicitly linked to wide processes of learning, or even more explicitly as in Bohnsack and Nohl’s work, where moratorium is about “Bildung” (2003: 373). Notably, in the current post-pandemic scenario, the new limits on mobility that have emerged in the aftermath of social distancing are a major matter of concern because they impose new caveats. These limits are exacerbated by the fact that nobody really knows how long they will last, nor if recent restrictions may ever return with the same intensity.

Learning in Mobility

We owe some clarifications about the characteristics of this transnational space. That learning happens also outside of educational settings is a notion that has inspired a lot of debates on the inevitability of blurring the boundaries between formal and so-called informal education (Livingstone, 2006). The latter may happen in a variety of circumstances that are not easy to list exhaustively. This chapter purposively discusses learning that happens in occasions of one (or more) experience of structured mobility; namely, the focus is on organized programs of

mobility by a formally recognized institution or organization. Such opportunities fall under the umbrella of “informal education.” While, as we have argued, the fact that learning also happens outside of education is now widely recognized, we here add a layer of complexity to this notion by approaching it through the lens of the “experience” of mobility, also referred to in Europe, by youth policy makers and stakeholders in the field of youth, as “learning mobility” (Friesenhahn et al., [2013](#); Devlin et al., [2017](#)). In Kristensen’s words ([2013](#): 99): “we have several other studies and evaluations as well as masses of anecdotal evidence that all point in the same direction – enough to allow us to conclude that a structured stay abroad can be a very powerful tool for learning and personal development. [...] Learning mobility is a pedagogical intervention.”

From this specific vantage point, learning is an outcome of mobility which can be formalized as such (Kristensen [2019](#)). There also exists a group of experts converging in the “European platform of learning mobility,” which looks at how learning functions across Europe. Within this context, such recognition has recently grown so widely that another debate has been instigated in the mobility field. Namely, whether learning mobility should receive recognition in young people’s curricula, a debate followed by discussions on quality in learning mobility (Kristensen [2019](#); Cairns et al. [2018](#)). A lot of work conducted around “youth work” – a wide umbrella which embraces the many activities designed to prevent the disengagement of young people – has in fact been motivated by the same need; namely, to recognize the variety of circumstances in which young people learn or, in fact, experience an acceleration in the pace of learning (see Verschelden et al., [2009](#); Schild et al., [2017](#)).

When mobility is organized for educational purposes, such as the “European Voluntary Service” or exchanges under “Erasmus +,” it is acknowledged that “learning mobility is a powerful learning experience, where an individual moves from his/her everyday context, and has to open up and adapt” (See: <https://lllplatform.eu/policy-areas/skills-and-qualifications/learning-mobility-for-all>). Experience is here related to what mobility programs and mobility policies indicate as a crucial possibility, that of leaving one’s “comfort zone” behind (as evident in the European Solidarity Corps’ terminology). As such, learning mobility becomes an important element in the transition to adulthood, precisely because it creates an interstitial space where young people can experiment and therefore make decisions regarding the kind of adult they want to become. The necessary “defamiliarization” (in C. W. Mills terms) that occurs through mobility takes the form of a detachment from familiar environments, whilst embracing new ones. This feeds into what Robertson et al. ([2018](#)) call “mobile transitions,” a framework which suggests looking at transitions into adulthood by paying attention to how being mobile may actually make this passage easier, or even make it possible at all (see also Cairns, [2014](#); Cuzzocrea & Mandich, [2016](#); Thomson & Taylor, [2005](#)). We will return to the question of how mobility affects young people’s learning experiences. First, we expand on the specific notions of experience that we propose here with the aim of disentangling the concept of learning mobility.

Nuances of Experience

The term “experience” is widely used in sociology. In the phenomenological tradition, the concept of *lived experience* is used to stress the importance of exploring a focused topic in depth, looking at how people live, perceive, feel, and are touched by the situation in which they are in. From this perspective, one may experience not merely a place, an event or a practice, but also any atmospheres that underlie any given phenomena, such as time acceleration, flexibilization, etc. While being at the core of acclaimed approaches such as phenomenology and ethnomethodology – but essentially all qualitative and interpretative sociological approaches – the term “experience” is rarely defined, not even in textbooks. We found a definition in the *Cambridge English Dictionary* (Cambridge English Dictionary: Meanings & Definitions), where experience is stated as, “the process of getting knowledge or skill from doing, seeing, or feeling things... something that happens to you that affects how you feel.” This definition already contains two aspects that are of major interest in unpacking learning mobility: a cognitive one (corresponding to acquiring knowledge); and a more affective one (stressing the idea that experience is based on feelings and at the same time affects how you feel). An emphasis on feelings is also at the core of a recent “affective turn” in sociology (Massumi, 2005, Anderson, 2009, more recently Coleman, 2022).

With the aim of disentangling and better understanding these two aspects of the concept, we elaborate upon the work of the Italian sociologist Paolo Jedlowski (1994) – who in turn borrows from German philosophy. While *Erfahrung* was already part of the German language and widely used in philosophy, Dilthey (1985) “invented” the term *Erlebnis* to introduce a view of experience as “living something,” within a debate which emphasized the differences between the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) and the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*). Later, the debate shifted towards *Erfahrung*, and in this direction, *Erlebnis* became the way to express a less significant form of experience. Benjamin (2011), in his early essay entitled “Erfahrung” (1910–1917), and later Koselleck (2004) shared the understanding of *Erfahrung* as a superior form of experience and put forward the impossibility of its realization in contemporary society.

In Jedlowski’s book, the focus is on general mechanisms of transformation of experience in contemporary society. We focus on the distinction Jedlowski makes between “Erfahrung” and “Erlebnis,” both translatable into “experience” in English, and we take on the analytical power of these categories without sharing his same broad goal; instead, we expand upon his work to discuss varieties of learning on the move. In this direction, Dilthey (cfr Jedlowsky 1994, p. 73–75) first used *Erlebnis* to introduce the idea of experience; from then on, the term has been generally used in social sciences as “lived experience,” that is to say, the immediate presence of a perception in the individual consciousness. *Erlebnis* is related to the immediacy of the experience and derives from the verb *Erleben*, meaning “being in life (leben) while something happens.” While *Erlebnis* can be felt in everyday life, it can also more generally refer to the way we perceive an affective atmosphere in an unfamiliar situation. *Erlebnis* is “unreflexively” feeling a place (but also a concert, a situation, and so on).

The term *Erfahrung*, on the other hand, has to do with the capacity to build upon past experience. By *Erfahrung* we mean the cultivation of experience based on active engagement and the knowledge that is derived from it. *Erfahrung* derives from *Erfahren* (going through).

The historian Koselleck defines *Erfahrung* as a “present past whose events are consolidated and can be remembered” (2004, p. 304). It implies the incorporation of the past. Experience is, in this sense, a synthesis of the past to be used in the present. Today, we would use the term “reflexivity” instead. Notably, in the field of youth mobility, David Cairns has elaborated an interpretative framework called “spatial reflexivity” (2014). Here, dealing with these two categories allows us to draw a distinction in the analysis of learning experience, of an affective experience based on the immersion in a situation (which can later be remembered but not analyzed), which in our material emerged strongly from the photos provided, as we shall explain; and a cognitive (or reflective) experience, namely, the way we attribute meaning to our experiences and learn from them. What Jedlowski defines as “the wisdom of experience,” which largely corresponds to “*Erfahrung*,” implies a distance from the spontaneity of everyday life, which in turn leads to an understanding of everyday life itself. Conversely, “the wisdom of common sense” is knowledge without a distance from that in which we are immersed.

As we will see more clearly in next section, mobility calls one’s “common sense” assumptions into question, exposing individuals to novel environments (local culture and customs, partially different rules and mechanisms). This creates space for reflexivity and, therefore, for learning – specifically, a necessarily accelerated type of learning because of the need to begin and complete new procedures within a finite time (that of a university exchange program, a traineeship, and so on). At the same time, this sense of “being out of place” is a lived experience “in itself” (i.e., *Erlebnis*), something that we feel and that will affect us in the very moment in which it happens.

In the gap between subjectivity and common sense, it is possible to envisage the horizon of what is possible. This space creates the possibility for experience. When in mobility, young people are forced to ask themselves how to do things. For instance, they know the teaching style in their country of origin, where they usually attend university. But this will never correspond entirely to the teaching style of another country. Inevitably, they will draw comparisons between the host country and their own, making up their own opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of each. They will learn about differences, possibilities of adjustments, and so on.

For our purposes, it is important to recognize both the cognitive (what you learn from being in a place) and affective (how seeing or feeling things affects us) components of experience. Both forms are equally important in learning mobility. However, it is important to note that, in youth studies looking at mobility, the cognitive side often prevails, both as a component of the motivation to move (for instance, the concept of motility in Kaufmann’s work – see Kaufmann et al., 2004) and as what is produced by mobility (as in the idea of spatial reflexivity suggested by Cairns (2014, 2021)). We now turn to describe the research context in which we suggest that this theoretical frame can be applied.

Research Context

The need to reflect on the kinds of learning that happens “on the move” hit us repeatedly, in various research projects regarding youth. Mobility was not necessarily planned as a key theme. Yet, it became evident that in order to think about their transitions to adulthood, the young people object of our studies needed to take mobility into consideration, in terms of aspirations, plans, or unavoidable destinies (Cuzzocrea & Mandich, 2016). Based on this, we have more recently wanted to consider young people who have had experience of structured mobility as a specific sample. This could allow us to discuss forms of agency within ways of playing with the future. The project “Mapping Youth Futures” was funded by the Italian Government (PRIN 2017) to identify and analyze young people’s views of the future in Italy. The aim of which was to better understand the variety of configurations these take, and the ways they inform young people’s current lives, strategies, and multiple transitions. A total of 40 interviews were conducted with mobile young people from Italy who had visited various destinations, predominantly within Europe. Through interviews, we explored how mobility interacts with young people’s capacity to deal with the future and to produce narratives of the future. We also used visual elicitation to facilitate the production of narratives. In general, visual methodologies can be situated within a host of approaches that are sympathetic to detecting affective and intangible dimensions of the future (Lyon and Carabelli 2016). Interviews were conducted in person (wherever possible) or online, immediately before the pandemic and during 2020 and 2021. In such conditions, introducing a visual element proved pivotal in unfolding the research themes. For the purpose of this chapter, we have chosen one profile to illustrate the interplay between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, which we argue forges the experience of mobility in a transnational space as a specific site of learning.

Reflecting on a Case Study

For this chapter, we concentrate on one in-depth interview. The rationale behind selecting just one case out of the 40 interviews is to render fully the complexity of the experience of learning mobility across different spaces. In what follows, we will illustrate the case of D., a young entrepreneur who talked extensively about how the experiences of mobility had had a major role in his life.

It is interesting to note that D.’s path begins with an expression of dissatisfaction towards formal education. Not that he was a dropout or had otherwise experienced problems with education. Notably, our research has revealed that, for several interviewees, mobility through European Voluntary Service (EVS) allowed individuals to adjust to previous failures in their educational path (European Voluntary Service is a program of mobility later called European Solidarity Corps that was a focus of our project). However, in D.’s experience, it worked as a nice, functional complement whilst pursuing further education. D. has a secondary diploma, as well as a Bachelor’s degree and a Master’s degree in subjects that are coherent with the interest pursued throughout working in the mobility field as an entrepreneur; a trajectory he developed consistently and he emerges as being clearly motivated in the interview. Yet, formal education did not seem to have transmitted any drive or inspiration that may last:

I have always been a good student, always got good marks at school. However, I was not carried away by the university, and at the beginning of that period, as the university

left me a lot of space, I started to wonder how to fill that space, as I was not very satisfied with the university experience. I was already actively involved in social initiatives such as [specific area at the margin of Naples] ‘Youth Council Forum’. This experience lasted for five years and has been a sort of springboard that put me in contact with a variety of situations, also with EU programs... actually it has been the fuse that activated a path upon which I still build my professionalism.

D. starts talking about his life from when he was about 20 years old. His is a story where mobility has offered the kinds of opportunities that education does not bring and that he clearly considers important: opportunities for encounters, inspiration, meeting interesting people (and his non-Italian wife, though he barely mentions her in the interview). In a long interview encounter, he talks about many different experiences of mobility, and these vary a great deal in their characteristics (e.g., from very short to long ones). If Leitmotiv can be traced, this is the fact that the narrative concentrates on what mobility has brought him. More specifically, how it has pointed him in the direction to further pursue his interests and passions. We will now unpack these highlights.

Firstly, mobility emerges as being deeply intertwined with travelling. The two together, namely, structured mobility (in this case, undertaken via several programs) and free movement that characterizes travelling, are the backbone of D.’s development as a young man. This is not new in the literature (Salazar, *2010*). Writing on a specific form of structured mobility (i.e., the Erasmus experience), Altieri (*2008*) analyzes travelling as a moment in which the individual is able to revisit his/her own experiences. Regarding Erasmus students, Cicchelli talked about “Bildung” as an ultimate moment of growth (2011), again recalling an established tradition of romances dealing with young people growing up and achieving this through travelling experiences.

Interestingly, as an ex-water polo player, D. compares structured mobility to swimming in a pool and likened travelling to swimming in the sea. Both offer great opportunities to learn whilst simultaneously enjoying the experience. However, the water of the swimming pool is purposively controlled and monitored; nothing dangerous can really happen. You have a lot of technical expertise and support throughout the experience, especially should a problem arise. The water of the swimming pool is there so that you can train and become a master of the water. Expanding upon the metaphor offered by D., in this case the swimming pool is there to help you to become an adult. In contrast, the sea does not have, in itself, any mechanism of support; it can be cold; it can be windy and take you far away; you can lose your peers and find yourself alone. However, it offers more captivating experiences and encounters which you might not have even imagined beforehand. It implies bigger risks but also, perhaps, bigger gains. It is an adventure:

Swimming in a pool is a structured context, I wouldn’t say ‘cocoon like’, still it’s secure. The sea recalls the mobility experience in the Balkans, a romantic experience, as you go swimming and try to point yourself towards the infinite and you can go on as long as you want but the horizon never gets closer.

In this quotation, swimming in the pool and in the sea are described as two different experiences, the common part being conducive to *Erlebnis*: in one case the feeling of being

safe; in the other, a romantic experience (compared to the mobility of the Balkans' experience). Inspired from feeling of the immensity of the sea, the horizon you can never reach. At the same time, the pool is a learning experience, in this highly controlled and organized context the purpose is to improve swimming.

Later in the interview, D. reflects on some encounters he would never have experienced had he been on a different mobility route. Telling about a road trip with some friends, he recalls:

We had been to Albania and Kosovo, where there were no highways but dirt tracks, pigs walked at your side as you traveled through some villages, and the mud, when it rained and it was summer, after some summer thunderstorm... streets were filled with mud, road signs did not help, we got lost several times in the Albanese National Park and then we found ourselves, accidentally, at the borders with Kosovo and so we said, "Ok, maybe this is the moment to explore Kosovo." We met exceptional people there that we could never have met in our everyday life.

Erlebnis also means that they took the opportunity to enjoy the moment, and especially when travelling this is very evident. One of the pictures he showed us was that of a group of friends, just about to enter a lake, pictured from the back, naked, and clearly having fun. The goliardic atmosphere which permeates the scene is evident. But D. clearly explains why the picture signifies a longer intake:

The picture is black and white, but it is the most amazing lake in Romania. The water was yellowish, not such a nice color, nevertheless, it fitted with the mood of the journey... Every time you found a water spot we had to... it was one of the rules of this enjoyment. We should take advantage of it... experience the water, get wet.

Traveling equates to a search for experience in the sense of *Erlebnis* and expresses a need for exploration, culminating in enjoying new moments. Yet not only is this enjoyment that matters, but also the fact that it represents the closing of a circle or producing meaning that makes a lot of sense for the entire group of peers. In another part of the interview where he ponders his experiences, D. attributes a practical sense to swimming in the unclear water of the lake, explicating the logic of the journey. He starts telling the year spent intensively hosting couch surfers in his house, which had become for a year "the center of the world," and the decision taken at the end of that year of "of living together, working together," to actually go to Romania for the sake of collecting a printer in person:

In the association, we decided to buy a bigger printer, a more professional one, and B. says: "Let's buy it in Romania; it would cost us a third," and so we bought it in Romania. The delivery address was B.'s parents' house in Bucharest and so comes the idea of going on trip to collect the printer that actually occupied half of the trunk. 40 days to collect a printer. So many hours travelling by car, can you imagine in 2014... By choice, we did not have GPS [Global Positioning System], we had no smartphones, nor maps, we made an orienteering trip of the journey. Arriving in Bucharest was all orienteering. We often went off the road for an entire day, but our idea of time in this trip was, "We take all the time we need to do this." The only limit was the 4th September, when R. had a wedding he was supposed to attend... otherwise I have no idea how much we could get going.

As a second highlight, *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis* are intertwined. D. appreciates both the structured and the unstructured mobility and the associated learning. However, as he is a

person that is open to discoveries, he finds bigger risks more captivating. This may also be in part because of the distance that has subsequently developed since working in the field. This suggests viewing *Erfahrung* as a rationalization of a moment that was epochal when he had it:

It was my first approach with non-formal education, and I had not even the idea that it 'was' non formal education, because it was all so new, and I enjoyed the experience without analyzing it. It was 6–7 days' experience and the last day, when the facilitators asked us, "Lets' try and look back at this week," I remember I couldn't recall anything of what we had done, so fully I had lived the experience, I had no time to internalize it or analyze what we had done or ask why we had done it. What I found relevant after 15 years is that I lived that experience as I should: with very little thinking and total involvement and trust in the older people that were guiding us.

These comments are not mere speculations about the meaning of the experience. They also emerge from the practicalities of dealing, in everyday life, with the experience itself, for instance, with food habits (or, as in this case, with the quantity of food provided that was not sufficient for his habits). For D., the interview encounter was also an occasion to thoughtfully compare his achievements with those of his parents and parents' generations. He stressed, for instance, how they could afford goods like holiday homes that his generation will never be able to buy. Mobility offers a perspective here too because it makes the difference in availability of resources very clear: In his generation's case, it is evident that longer studies and at times extensive and articulated experience in the labor market do not entail financial security of any sort.

More generally, and here we come to the third highlight, we want to emphasize how D. tells that he has learnt how to embark productively in new situations and to take chances. This is particularly evident from how he recalls his first mobility experience:

One of the four selected people quit, so one position became available, and I could depart on this experience that... I cannot say changed my life... because I take experiences one at the time... and let's say I build on it... let's say from one experience I try to steer the route... but it has been a very important experience because it infused me with a set of values and principles that were new in my life experience.

Speaking about his first opportunity of mobility, which emerged during a seminar in Spain, he recalls that he first knew of the possibility to collaborate with the running of an art gallery in Holland, located on the ground floor of a building, in which the volunteers lived on the first floor. He liked this organization so much that he proposed a collaboration over the coffee break, "without thinking about it so much," following which he received abrupt feedback: "[The person responsible] looked at me... from head to toe, he was Dutch, and said 'for an Italian you look like a decent person, send me your curriculum.'"

Therefore, we see how the reflexivity that characterizes this young man is enhanced, or even made possible in the first place, by learning how to take the first step without feeling insecure or incapable and, consequently, to then feel open to tackling an unexpected situation, something that in the field of youth mobility is called leaving one's "comfort zone." At the end of his experience in Holland, summarizing his overall experience, he states:

What I did not find? I found everything I could possibly think of, even though I never actually thought about it, I didn't miss anything, not at the beginning, not all the way through, particularly not at the end.

He likes using the expression “steering the route,” which has also become his philosophy during the pandemic. He summarizes by saying that “the most fascinating side of mobility lies in that this is the mobility of the unexpected, of what you could not expect or foreseen and you can only find when you are ‘on the route’.” And then, he concludes,

My flexibility is my force, as I can adapt to future scenarios, even if unstable, in a way... How do I say? Without too many repercussions in my life, as I have to change the way of ... who I am, what I do.

With these few sentences, he also testifies how the process of learning encompasses wide areas of experience, to ultimately build his identity as an adult person.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we examined a form of learning that occurs outside of formal education. Namely, those that take place through experiences of (structured) mobility. In order to reflect on what kinds of learning that emerge on such occasions, we borrow the distinction made between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* – both translatable into “experience.” We purposively detach this distinction from the original discussion it referred to; in fact, we use it here to disentangle what is defined as “learning mobility” in youth policies (2019). The choice of this category stems from the appreciation that even the most convivial aspects of mobility programs bring with them significant learning. This notion has been put forward perhaps most clearly for one of the most studied groups of mobile young, namely Erasmus, students (Cairns et al. 2018), for which the excitement of the experience often brings cumulative advantages within more generally mobile careers (Cuzzocrea & Krzaklewska, 2023). These studies have pointed to the need to dismantle a clear-cut distinction between having fun and learning: The timings of mobile experiences are so packed and intense that learning, and doing that quickly, becomes a *sine qua non* condition. This intrinsic experience of mobility characterizes sites of learning that are transeunt and transnational within a European context.

In this chapter we go deeper in this acknowledgment. Instead of seeing, on the one hand, the wisdom of *Erfahrung* and, on the other, the levity of *Erlebnis*, our analysis demonstrates how they are intertwined in real experiences. This can be combined with an appreciation of the similarities between travelling and mobilities in terms of the learning that occurs. As a further highlight, we have pointed towards seeing mobility as a general capacity to embark on new experiences. To understand how a transnational space works as a site of learning, we have emphasized the importance of the feelings that this transnational space is able to generate – also called “affective atmospheres” (Anderson, 2009) – and this connotes, above all, such experiences as a kind of learning. Finally, engaging in conviviality does not mean losing reflexivity. Quite the contrary, in fact, as the theoretical framework of spatial reflexivity suggested by Cairns (2014). In unwrapping our task, we found that since D. is no longer an adolescent (he is 35), this has given him sufficient time to exercise reflexivity on his

experience, re-evaluate some of the things learned on the initial part of his path, and in turn gives us the possibility to see the dynamics between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* that may be less distinguishable within a shorter time frame.

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