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Book review

Automated and Autonomous Spatial Mobilities, Aharon Kellerman. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham (2018). ISBN: 978-1-78643-848-5

It is natural for most transport geographers to get intrigued by the title of this book: *Automated and Autonomous Mobilities*. Given the significant rise of the use of the term autonomous vehicles (AV) among academics and practitioners, Kellerman manages to attract attention about a contemporary issue. Increasing funding directed towards automated and autonomous mobility over the past decade is proof of the contemporary nature of this book. Additionally, the book fits perfectly well within the respective book series i.e. Transport, Mobilities and Spatial Change published by TGRG of RGS-IBG.

A range of contributions are made by this book, which collates existing information about diverse transport modes in a single source. It nicely outlines key issues regarding the implications of automated and autonomous spatial mobilities, leaning on historical, geographical and sociological approaches. It contains a good blend of past and contemporary literature to offer an overview of relevant developments. As with other books nowadays, the literature could have been more up to date given the fast pace of progress within this field. By referring to recent relevant literature (e.g. Clark et al., 2016; Kyriakidis et al., 2017; Meyer et al., 2017; Milakis et al., 2017; Thomopoulos and Givoni, 2015; Zmud et al., 2017) additional sources could have been offered, highlighting the links with broader transport issues and ICT developments such as Web 3.0 and social media for example. Nevertheless, this book covers a range of literature in an attempt to address such concerns and what certainly is a Sisyphean task. Therefore, a question arising is whether such books are the most appropriate channels of communicating key challenges to diverse audiences in the contemporary fast paced world.

A key distinction made by Kellerman is between automated technologies, users and spaces. This is valuable given the narrow perspective about relevant issues within certain fields. For example, automotive engineers unavoidably focus primaliry on the vehicle itself i.e. technology, whereas software engineers focus mostly on algorithms i.e. technology and users. Equally, urban planners and geographers focus largely on spatial issues surpassing immediate technological barriers which need to be imminently overcome. Essentially, what is currently missing is an integrated approach given the wider and long-term effects of automated and autonomous transport.

Looking into the contents of this book, the concern stressed through a comprehensive overview in Chapter 1 regarding employment implications is related with an emerging topic of wider interest and is in line with relevant policy discussions within Europe (Alonso Raposo et al., 2018). Another crucial point is that it highlights the challenges to be faced during the transition period, since this could be a decisive factor when moving from automated to fully autonomous mobility. One of the most groundbreaking notions of this book is introduced in that part (p.118): *"AVs will have to be smarter in this transitional period than those which will be introduced later on"*. Indisputably, this is a laudable example of the notions and issues raised by the author.

Further contributions in Chapter 6 include the reference to UTAUT (unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology) used within CityMobil2 which offers theoretical background about technology acceptance, as well as the identification of a lack of reference to AV in most US metropolitan urban plans. The latter is aligned with ongoing efforts in Europe focusing on SUMP 2.0 (Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans), hence this book may be also of interest to urban policy makers. Chapter 8 summarises key arguments and provides some indications for the future research agenda. Despite making no explicit reference to MaaS (Mobility as a Service), a key contemporary development in the field, Kellerman draws attention indirectly to such a vital matter by highlighting the need for a balanced mix of private and public transport.

Nonetheless, this book includes various parts which could have been reduced in length to focus on other underdeveloped arguments and contribute more to existing literature. For example, the extensive historical overview of automation (e.g. traffic lights) in various transport modes (Chapters 3 and 4) could have been significantly reduced given that the book is targetting mobility and transport experts who possess relevant background. Moreover, the detailed review of communication technology, namely telephones (Chapters 3–6), could similarly have been condensed. Instead, it would have been valuable to explain in more detail the links between physical (corporeal) and information mobility (e.g. through ICT). By drawing attention to related data, privacy and security issues, this book could have delved into underexplored areas of widespread interest by stakeholders.

Acknowledging the skill of Kellerman to bring together diverse disciplines and literature through this immense task, it could have been beneficial for readers to be offered an overview of the context or assumptions used to make predictions e.g. a relevant table within each chapter. Such an overview would certainly be beneficial by including definitions of key notions mentioned. Interesting terms used in the book include automaticity along with the distinction between freedom and autonomy, which is relevant to the automation levels. Furthermore, due to the mostly developed country perspective taken, it remains open for discussion what the socio-economic implications (e.g. accessibility, equity) will be for countries and cities in the Global South.

Undoubtedly, what comes out of the dense writing in this book about automated and autonomous mobilities is that it opens up new avenues for future research and debate about such an exciting topic of our times. Transport geographers are well equipped to further the required interdisciplinary research. However, Kellerman competently reflects the essential depth of historical insight and breadth of expertise needed to fulfil such a challenge.

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