

Introduction to Special Issue on ‘Mobilities and Foucault’

Editorial introduction

Foucault and Mobilities: past, potential and prospects

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Introduction

The past few years have witnessed an increased interest in the work of Michel Foucault among mobilities researchers. For instance, taking this journal as the key representative of research trends in the field, 2013 saw the publication of eight articles referring to Foucault, as against ten in the previous four years combined. Moreover, after being sorted by ‘relevance’ on the journal’s website, six of the top 20 articles discussing Foucault appeared in 2013. Based on the number of downloads and citation scores at least two of these are being read or at least looked at widely (Bærenholdt 2013; Salter 2013). The increasing interest in exploring questions of mobility from a Foucauldian perspective also became evident during the organisation of a workshop on ‘Mobilities and Foucault’ at the University of Lucerne in January 2013. It is from that workshop that this Special Issue hails.

Interaction between the Foucauldian and mobilities traditions may appear, *prima facie*, unlikely, at least on a particular (and common) reading of both ‘Foucault’ and ‘mobilities’ that stresses the focus of the former on institutions of spatial *immobility* (the lunatic asylum, prison) as against the latter’s supposed fascination with movement, fluidity and flux. Indeed, turning to seminal statements of the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ we see no mention of Foucault (e.g., Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2004; Cresswell 2010; Featherstone, Thrift and Urry 2004). Similarly, mobility has not been a major point of discussion amongst scholars of Foucault, even though Foucault’s work has proven fruitful for analysing (urban) space, spatial practices and territoriality (e.g., Philo 1992; Crompton and Elden 2007; Elden 2009).

Yet both 'Foucault' and 'mobilities' refer to diverse and wide-ranging literatures that present multiple possible points of intersection. As discussed further below, Foucault's writings covered many themes, introduced and redefined a wide range of concepts, and focused on different scales of analysis, including – but not limited to – the subject, the institution, the city and the state. Likewise, mobilities refers not only to a specific approach on issues of concrete movement and mobility (e.g., automobility, aeromobility), but also a broader social condition and imperative (e.g., globalisation or cosmopolitisation) and an ontological-cum-epistemological approach of 'mobilized' social science tackling dynamic complex socio-cultural systems and their emergence.

It is no surprise, then, that there has already been varied, more or less systematic interaction between the two traditions. As far as the Anglophone literature is concerned, this interaction is evidenced by published work on automobility (Böhm et al. 2006; Merriman 2007; Paterson 2007; Huijbens and Benediktsson 2007; Dodge and Kitchin 2008, Seiler 2008), tourism (Molz 2006; Ek and Hultman 2008; Newmeyer 2008), cycling (Stehlin 2014; Bonham and Cox 2010), aeromobility (Adey 2007; Salter 2007), children's mobility (Barker 2009; Barker et al. 2009) and international migration (Shamir 2005; Fortier and Lewis 2006; Gray 2006; Nowicka 2006; Frello 2008; Buscema 2011; Hammond 2011; Bærenholdt 2013; Salter 2013). Also relevant in this context is recent research on the production of physical spaces of movement through planning practices (Jensen and Richardson 2003; Huxley 2006; Jensen 2013), bodily movement (Turnbull 2002; Jensen 2011) and new media practices (Brighenti 2012), as well as the production of mobile bodies and subjects (Bonham 2006; D'Andrea 2006; Seiler 2008; Jensen 2009; Haverig 2010; Manderscheid 2014) and issues of state politics, borders, surveillance, security and terror (Packer 2006; Amoore 2006; Molz 2006; Walters 2006; De Goede 2012; Moran, Piacentini and Pallot 2013).

Engagement with this literature, however, reveals not just significant points of common interest but also key aspects of methodological and theoretical overlap. In their cross-disciplinary ambition and vision, their relational ontology, their broadly critical but post-structural projects and attention to concrete multiplicity, governance and power, it is clear that there are strong bridges between the two traditions. Nonetheless, there is room for engaging more systematically with Foucault's work among mobilities scholars – particularly in areas that would be illuminated by his concerns – despite well-known blind spots and weaknesses in Foucault's thought. For instance, as John Law (1994) has suggested in a sympathetic critique, 'much of Foucault's writing is synchronic' meaning that the ways in which discourses reshape and renew themselves is insufficiently clear from his original text. Harsher criticism is exemplified by Thrift's (2007) observations that Foucault offers little that advances our understanding of (human) sensation and perception, emotion/affect, space and technological artefacts.

Clearly, then, a Foucauldian perspective on mobilities is anything but sacrosanct. It is nonetheless capable of offering distinctive insights, even with regard to the more abstract conceptualisation of 'mobility' itself. Consider, for instance, Cresswell's (2006, 3; 2010, 27) discussion of mobility as: the entanglement of *movement*, or 'mobility as a brute fact – something that is potentially observable, a thing in the world, an empirical reality'; *representation*, or 'ideas about mobility that are conveyed through a diverse array of representational strategies'; and *practice* – mobility as practiced, experienced and embodied. Yet, drawing on Foucault's discursive production of objects of knowledge, Frello (2008, 31) has argued that

'not just 'mobility' but also 'movement' is discursively constituted. [...] Certain conventions govern the conditions of possibility for speaking about mobility but

neither materiality nor convention determine exactly what, whether and how an activity is given meaning in terms of ‘mobility’.

The (Foucauldian) point to be made here is that labelling something as mobile or movement is not only a performative act that co-constitutes what it claims to portray but also a technique of power for making that something knowable and governable.

Nevertheless, the question still presents itself: bearing in mind its limitations, what is to be gained by a more concerted engagement with his work? Or, more succinctly, why use Foucault in mobilities research? And why now? Moreover, given that a Foucauldian approach is characterised by ‘how’ questions, *how* are (or should) these traditions (be) brought together? The task of this Introduction is to tackle these three questions in turn.

Why Foucault?

Foucault’s oeuvre has offered a range of new concepts and ideas regarding discourse, knowledge, power, government and subjectivity; covering even those with the greatest relevance to mobilities research is beyond this editorial piece. Suffice to say that Foucault’s thinking and many of his concepts changed over time and *moved* along with his thinking, meaning that any attempt at creating closure about their meaning or definition is bound to fail. Consider one of his neologisms – governmentality. If what is commonly known as the governmentality lecture from 1978 (Foucault 2007) had already offered three different descriptions¹ that all pertain to a particular style of governing populations and states, then later understandings exhibited a clear shift in focus and scale of analysis. For instance, in another well-known lecture on technologies of the self at the University of Vermont in 1982 governmentality was defined as the ‘encounter between the technologies of domination and those of the self’ (Foucault 1997, 225). Perhaps this is not surprising given that Foucault considered himself an ‘experimenter’ who wrote in order to change his own thinking:

‘I’m perfectly aware of always being on the move in relation to the things I’m interested in and to what I’ve already thought. What I think is never quite the same, because for me my books are experiences, in a sense, that I would like to be as full as possible. An experience is something that one comes out transformed. If I had to write a book to communicate what I’m already thinking before I begin to write, I would never have the courage to begin’ (Faubion 2000, 238).

Not only in this sense, mobility, understood as ‘a relational concept characterized by ... the transgression of a state or condition’ (Frello 2008, 32), is at the heart of Foucault’s approach and methodology.

For commentators, a common way to reduce the complexity and mobility of Foucault’s thought is to identify phases in his career and interests. Narratives of phases typically revolve around the – often exaggerated – difference between an earlier archaeological and later genealogic method (e.g., Foucault 1980), and around the shift in research topic from madness (Foucault 1965) via the clinic (Foucault 1973) and human sciences (Foucault 1970) to criminality and punishment (Foucault 1977) and finally sexuality (Foucault 1978, 1985, 1986). The idea of a linear sequence of phases has, however, been disrupted by the translation into English and subsequent publication of Foucault’s lectures series at the *Collège de France* between 1970 and 1984. For instance, while the 1972-1973 series anticipated *Discipline and Punish* (henceforth *D&P*), the subsequent series harked back to his 1960s work on madness, albeit through a *D&P* lens.

The lectures series not only fill in many of the gaps between Foucault’s major books, they also offer a new and ‘vital Foucault’ (Philo 2012, 498) – a thinker who was not simply focused on words, discourse and institutions but rather on how the forces of life become

(temporarily) canalised and tamed through discourse-based and other techniques and procedures (see also Philo, this issue). Together with the texts bundled as *Essential Works* (Faubion 1997, 1998, 2000) and some other publications (Rabinow 1984; Deleuze 1988), the lectures have opened up an understanding of Foucault as one of Nietzsche's greatest heirs in recent times, only rivalled by his friend Deleuze.

At the beginning of the 1982-1983 lecture series at the *Collège de France*, Foucault himself (2010, 2-3) suggested that his intellectual project was to create a 'history of thought' through which dynamics over time in the 'focal points of experience' become understandable. He defined three such mutually implicated focal points, the first of which comprises the *formation of different forms of knowledge* that follow from and constitute something like madness or sexuality. Rather than studying the evolution of particular bodies of knowledge over time, he sought to elucidate the rules and practices through which certain claims could become meaningful and – especially – truthful. *The Order of Things* (Foucault 1970) arguably epitomises Foucault's achievements regarding the first focal point, while *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1972) explains in detail how the multiplicity of discursive formations is to be analysed. But later work keeps demonstrating a keen interest in knowledge formation, as is clear from writings on criminology (Foucault 1977), statistics (Foucault 2007), *homo oeconomicus* (Foucault 2008), and techniques of the self and *parrhēsia* (or risky, critical truth-telling) (Foucault 2005, 2010).

Some studies in the mobilities literature have drawn on Foucault's thinking and writings regarding knowledge formation (e.g., Bonham 2006; Merriman 2007; Frello 2008; Jensen 2011). Applying this perspective to pressing issues, such as climate change mitigation or the perceived need to increase the share of forms of mobility construed as sustainable – walking, cycling, public transport, high speed rail –, could bring to the fore why these continue to be

framed and understood predominantly through the language and reasoning from economics, engineering and psychology (Schwanen et al. 2011). Such a perspective can also help scholars understand why it is so difficult for other forms of knowledge – not least mobilities scholarship (Manderscheid 2014) – to travel beyond academia and really have significant ‘impact’ on the governmental actions of national and local authorities or transport service providers. Nonetheless, in applying Foucault’s thinking on knowledge formation mobility scholars should bear in mind Law’s (1994) aforementioned criticism and carefully consider how knowledges as discursive formations ‘*reshape* themselves in new embodiments or instantiations’ (22, emphasis in original)

Foucault’s second focal point concerned the normative frameworks for behaviour, to be studied through analyses of the ‘*micro-physics*’ (*D&P*) and *wider-ranging technologies of power* – the multiplicity of forces that is both constraining and productive and that exists only in action. One of his characteristic insights is that different modalities of power – that is, different ensembles of knowledge, mechanism and technique – produced different sorts and intensities of norms. Where the modality of sovereignty worked with ‘the binary opposition of the permitted and the forbidden’ (Foucault 1977, 183) and not infrequently brute force, discipline created ‘normative norms’ (Waldschmidt 2005, 193) that both compare the individual with and differentiate him/her from the group or whole, in order to create conformity with externally imposed social rules and sanction abnormality. This again contrasts with the modality of security and its ‘normalistic norms’ (*ibid.*). These refer to regular rather than rule-conforming behaviour and are often constructed with the help of the techniques and procedures of statistics. Here, norms are not (predominantly) set *a priori* and embedded in the design of spaces – be they panoptic prisons, schools, hospitals or squares in city-centres under neoliberal urbanism, or rather roads, airports and border crossings – but created by many people acting in similar ways.

It might be tempting to think of sovereignty, discipline and security as historically sequential and as corresponding to the archaic (Middle Ages and onwards), modern (from the 18th century) and contemporary (20th century). Foucault (2008, 6) nonetheless maintained that older modalities already contain ‘those that appear as newer’, and this offers another parallel with the mobilities tradition, which – at least at the onset – has sought to disrupt linear understandings of temporality (Callon and Law 2004; Sheller and Urry 2006). Either way, the analysis of the normative frameworks sensitises mobility scholars to differentiations between mobility and immobility, as well as legitimate and illegitimate ‘movers’, free and forced mobility, good and bad movements, and so forth. Such differentiations have in turn led mobility researchers to examine the processes through which such figures as the illegal migrant, high status expats, gypsies, leisure travellers and creative nomads come into being (Endres, Manderscheid and Mincke forthcoming). The constitution and effects of normative and normalistic norms in relation to mobilities may be also traced in relation to the recent emergence of ‘big data’ collected – often by private companies – via web browsers, mobile phones and integrated public transport cards. This development not only raises difficult questions over privacy and surveillance; it also enables new normalistic norms of unprecedented levels of detail to proliferate, and hence new techniques of social sorting and forms of constructing and governing ‘risky’ mobilities (e.g. Lyon 2013).

Foucault’s final focal point concerned the *potential modes of being for subjects*, and has already been touched upon above. His analyses of subjectification, or practices through which people are governed by others, in such institutions as the prison (Foucault 1977) or under neoliberalism (Foucault 2008) have proven influential, also within the mobility literature (Paterson 2007; Seiler 2008; Manderscheid this issue; Mincke and Lemonne this issue; Philo this issue). A recent rise in interest across the social sciences notwithstanding (e.g., Paterson and Stripple 2010; Macmillan 2011; Skinner 2012; Little 2013), less attention has been paid

to Foucault's later work on subjectivation – the practices of self-fashioning through which individuals govern themselves. In the 1980s Foucault's histories of the present moved beyond a focus on institutions and populations to critical reflection on the relation one has with the self (ethics). This shift reflected Foucault's argument that techniques through which selves are (re)constituted in the present – think of self-tracking one's behaviour and CO₂ emissions, dieting, going to the gym, using Viagra, taking a gap year, or engaging in positive thinking, yoga, eco-tourism and 'active' travel (or cycling and walking), to name but a few – produce a mode of subjectivity that is both objectifying and conducive to domination. For Foucault, such techniques were ultimately rooted in obedience and self-renunciation, preventing individuals from becoming truly free and autonomous. In his final years he therefore examined alternative techniques of the self from Greek antiquity, such as *parrhēsia*, that did produce genuinely autonomous subjects (Foucault 2005, 2010).

The extent to which such 'techniques' as gap year travel, eco-tourism or cycling to work for health reasons are objectifying subjectivity and producing domination is up for debate. If those practices are analysed using theoretical and methodological lenses that are particularly sensitive to such processes as sensation and perception, embodied experience and affect/emotion, it becomes readily apparent that different forms of mobility also generate a holistic sense of well-being, self-worth and authentically positive emotions (e.g., Bissell 2010; Middleton 2010; Schwanen et al. 2012). Moreover, mobility practices also offer myriad opportunities to resist or re-appropriate the social codes written into contemporary techniques of the self (e.g., Cresswell 2006). Nonetheless, considering mobility as an intricate mixture of domination and self-fashioning, of governing by others and the self, and trying to ascertain the relative importance of each for different forms of movement by different individuals in different times and places makes for a fertile area of mobilities research. Despite the lack of attention for sensation and perception, emotion/affect and materiality in

Foucault's original texts on subjectivation, a theoretical approach on mobility practice and experience that is inspired by Foucauldian ethics can offer researchers committed to the study of individuals and their everyday lives a useful alternative to the voluntaristic conceptions of behaviour in psychology, the neurochemical reductionism of most neuroscience, and social theorising that 'decentres' agency and the individual too far.

Why now?

Multiple reasons as to why a more systematic engagement of mobilities research with Foucauldian concepts is happening now can be derived from the above reflections on Foucault's legacy. Primary among these is the simple temporal coincidence of the emergence and now embedding of Anglophone mobilities research with the continuing translation of Foucault's lecture series at the *Collège de France* into English. Many of the issues discussed therein regarding subjectivity, government and circulation have also come to feature centrally in the mobilities paradigm. The hubbub of interest in Foucault's lectures has thus affected mobilities research no less than countless other areas of social science. What is more, 'Foucault' allows the *dispositifs* of mobility – the ensembles of knowledges, scientific truth regimes, technologies of power, classifications, hierarchies, normative and normative norms and subjectifications – to be analysed, and his later work on ethics and subjectivation can be used to place issues of power and governance more systematically at the heart of ongoing research into mobile lives and individual embodied experiences of im/mobility (Cf Adey and Bissell 2010; D'Andrea et al. 2011). Where previously mobilities researchers have tended to gravitate towards Foucault's work on discourse, power, discipline, governmentality and subjectification, the mobilities tradition could be enriched by engaging with other elements of his thought as well.

There are at least three additional aspects to the timeliness of further engagement. First, there is a sense amongst many mobilities researchers that the present is a moment of major challenges and concomitant profound social transformation, with mobilities of key importance, both in terms of substantive issues and as theoretical and methodological lens. In this period of turbulence and uncertainty, when the ‘world’ itself seems to be at stake and when the productive nature of power is everywhere exposed, it seems fruitful, at least, to conceive of the present conjuncture as a discontinuity of common-senses equivalent to that of the emergence of novel logics of power, as *per* the genealogical histories of sovereignty, discipline and biopolitics traced by Foucault.

Here, more specifically, we refer not just to the (interlinked) themes of climate change/environment and Anthropocene, surveillance and the securitisation of politics, cosmopolitization and a continuing global mobilization and acceleration, or our transformation into an urban species; but also to the rethinking of concepts seemingly far from ‘mobilities’ but which these developments seem to demand, noticeably ‘nature’ and the ‘geo’ (e.g. Dalby 2011, 2013; Clark 2013). As Dalby notes (2011, 16) ‘the future of the planetary system is in the hands of those who decide large-scale energy systems that power globalization’. Hence issues central to mobilities research – whether regarding the systematic global political economic imperative of accelerating mobility (Paterson this issue), mobility as a key arena for modern government (Baerenholdt 2013) or the ecological destruction that is being accelerated, not mitigated, by the ongoing rapid expansion of a fossil fuel-based system of automobility (Tyfield this issue) – take us directly to issues of the power-saturated reconstruction of entire constellations of material-discursive common-sense which can be conceptualised productively using a Foucauldian lens.

Secondly, it is clear that the present makes specific demands regarding the forms of (social theoretical) knowledge capable of understanding and – in Foucauldian vein – *forming* its own trajectory and outcomes. In other words, the present is also a moment in which societal demands for new forms of social self-understanding are particularly intense, so that the forms of (what counts as) ‘*social science*’ are *themselves* unusually challenged and open. The mobilities paradigm seems well equipped to respond to this predicament and opportunity as a programme of research that has explicitly set out, in its founding statements, to reconstruct the social sciences. Yet this potential seems even greater for mobilities work engaged with Foucault: a common theme running through such work, and especially research explicitly responding to the present exigencies, is the potential for such interaction to address gaps and lacunae in both approaches with the assistance of the other one. As such, the present seems to behold a rethinking of key Foucauldian concepts to which mobilities research could also make active contributions.

For instance, on the one hand, as Dalby (2011) again has shown, attention to contemporary global structures and imperatives of (auto)mobility opens up an updating or development of Foucault’s insightful discussion regarding biopolitics. No longer just concerned with securing the bodily health of the population as a precondition for a ‘functional’ system of liberal government and free circulation, the increased intensity of the importance of (global) mobility alongside its increasingly problematic (from its own perspective) ecological repercussions introduces issues of global environment into the heart of contemporary ‘biopolitics’, now reframed as a new and redefined ‘*geopolitics*’. The recent work by Kathryn Yusoff (2013) and Nigel Clark (2013) on rethinking the ‘geo’ of geopolitics in terms of a greater attention to the material reality of the Earth itself is another key example here.

Conversely, regarding development of mobilities research, engagement with key Foucauldian themes such as the irreducibility of power and an inseparable 'dark side' to any emergence of a new productive social system can offer useful conceptual resources to go beyond what several scholars have identified as an overly systemic and/or autopoietic analysis of mobility systems (Böhm et al. 2006; Goodwin 2010; Salter 2013; see also the papers by Manderscheid; Mincke and Lemonne; and Tyfield in this issue), as well as a 'flavour of technophilia and the love of the new' that is often in evidence in mobilities work (Cresswell 2010: 28).

Finally, in addition to opening up specific research themes, theories and methodologies, the mutually enriching cross-reading of mobilities and Foucauldian scholarship induces epistemic-political reflexivity on the very purpose and form of mobilities research *as* this new social science. The imperative for such philosophical enquiry becomes clear, for instance, when we turn to almost any of the mobility issues just mentioned. Faced with potentially catastrophic continued expansion of (auto)mobility, a new global surveillance society or the re-emergence and entrenching of structural inequalities supposedly addressed (in the global North, at least) in the mid-20th century, it is transparently inadequate – a counsel of despair – simply to chart their construction and declaim the 'end of the world' (Dalby 2011; *Cf* Žižek 2010). The standard forms of critical social science thus stand in perfect symmetry with the seeming impotence around the world today of critical progressive political discourse and imagination, despite the supposed 'opportunities' of systemic crisis. A Foucauldian conception of mobilities research as a self-consciously strategic intervention in games of power-knowledge, by contrast, seems to offer a more productive and positive starting place for formulating the task of social research. To be sure, this Foucauldian concept, of 'criticism' as opposed to 'critique', itself seems in demand of some updating. What exactly is

needed, however, depends on how mobilities and Foucault are brought together, to which we finally turn.

How?

As discussed above, with both mobilities and Foucault being such diverse bodies of thought, there are evidently multiple ways that the two may be brought into dialogue. Analytically, one can work in either of two directions, studying Foucault's writings for discussion of mobilities or working on issues of mobility with the assistance of Foucauldian themes and concepts. Similarly, in either case, the goal of such research may be primarily aimed to be a contribution to either tradition – that is, developing Foucauldian thought or elucidating mobilities. This suggests a continuum of approaches, which is evident, for instance, in the papers of this Special Issue.

This variety of approaches leads to a similar diversity of insights, which is a significant strength – not weakness – of a programme of concerted dialogue between the two traditions. For this leads not only to insights from a hugely rich set of issues and perspectives, but also to work that is mutually informing and that displays significant convergence and resonances. Consider first the diversity, proceeding across this rough 'spectrum'.

In the opening paper, Philo shows how even the seemingly least promising of Foucault's texts on institutions of immobility helps substantially to illuminate *mobility* as a social phenomenon – imperative, condition, form of politics – by showing that certain (anatomopolitical) interventions brought about *immobility* precisely for the purpose of training and managing 'positive' mobility. Here, then, is an archetype of the insights available to mobilities research from a programme of Foucauldian exegesis and scholarship.

Shifting from the socially immobilized to what society demands should be maximally mobile, O'Grady then sets out the importance of the Foucauldian concept of 'milieu' in illuminating a political geography of emergency services. He thereby brings attention to this understudied concept, while also showing how it needs development from its original Foucauldian formulation to accommodate an explanation of contemporary empirical changes in the technology-assisted decisions on where to site fire stations in the UK.

Mincke and Lemonne take us back to the prison, but not to conduct a Foucauldian exegesis. Instead, they demonstrate how contemporary Western governments (specifically Belgium) are grappling with the abstract impossibility of constructing a water-tight normative case for prison as an institution alongside the exhaustion of the current patchwork discourses of legitimation in terms of punishment and/or rehabilitation. Instead, the prisoner is being reconstructed as deficient precisely in their capacity for responsible mobility, yielding insights both into a 'militaristic' regime of contemporary social policy and the necessary development of Foucauldian concepts in order to be able to understand this process.

Usher takes a further step away from a Foucauldian starting point, instead deploying Foucauldian concepts and arguments to reveal the importance of material flows and the 'government of nature', specifically of water, in characterising the 'nature of government'. A connection is thus drawn, mediated by Foucault's description of the centrality of urban circulation to modern government, between mobilities and political ecology, invoking a material turn in the former that attends to government of, by and through materialities, including energy (Cf Urry 2013; Tyfield and Urry forthcoming).

Again working from a mobilities starting point, Paterson tackles an even more unfamiliar form of mobility, namely of a bizarrely non-material material, fetishized carbon. Noting that 'climate change politics has been precisely organised around the generation of newly mobile

objects – specifically of rights to generate carbon emissions’ (p.[]) he shows how ‘this reinforces the importance of [a Foucauldian-inspired] cultural political economy to mobilities research’ while simultaneously highlighting the centrality of mobilities to contemporary global political economy. As a central precondition of ever-expanding accumulation, mobility is fundamental to the ongoing formation of carbon markets that attempt to square continuation of this political economic order with the energetic and environmental costs that accelerating mobility of people and freight entails. Here, then, bringing mobilities and Foucault together shows starkly how responses to the ecological emergency must be understood in terms of how ‘capital needs to find other ways of realising its mobility-related accumulation imperative’ (p.[]).

Staying with climate change, Tyfield focuses on ongoing attempts to decarbonize automobility itself in the geographical site of arguably greatest significance in this project – a ‘rising’ China. Again part of a cultural political economy perspective, Foucault is used specifically to broach two key challenges for theorizing transitions in socio-technical systems. These pertain to the concept of power and the capacity to think through qualitative socio-technical system change.

Finally, Manderscheid again uses Foucault in conjunction with culture-attentive post-structural political economy, specifically the Regulation Approach, to illustrate the value of the concept of *dispositif* for thinking through the system of automobility and the increasingly deep inequalities it systematically (re)produces. This key Foucauldian concept thus ‘allows for a multidimensional view on [...] different manifestations of mobile socialities, bringing patterns of power structuration to the fore which otherwise remain hidden’ (p[]).

Here, then, we have substantive issues ranging from the paradigmatically mobile to the archetypically immobile, regarding key contemporary issues including inequality, climate

change, urbanisation, emergency/disaster services and carceral security, and tackled from perspectives that use mobilities to read Foucault and Foucault to disclose mobilities. There is no reason to expect, therefore, much in the way of dialogue emergent across the papers. Yet there are indeed such resonances and even emerging themes. We note only four.

First, several of the papers speak to an emerging securitisation and complexification of power/knowledge technologies in regimes of anticipation or preparedness of the specific (possibly 'black swan') instance, not just generalized management of aggregate risk probabilities (*Cf* Lentzos and Rose 2009; Adey and Anderson 2012; Oels 2014). This marks a shift in political logic, from neoliberal governmentality and its emphasis on the individual entrepreneurial self to a seemingly paradoxical conjunction between emergent imperatives of system-level responsibility and a revived moral discourse of inviolate personal autonomy (see also the papers in this issue by O'Grady, Mincke and Lemonne, Usher, Paterson, and Tyfield).

Secondly, circulation (conceived in individualist liberal terms) is confirmed as a key aspect of contemporary politics with respect to global political economy (papers by Paterson, Tyfield, and Manderscheid), the environment (Usher, Paterson, and Tyfield), and social policy and 'law and order' (Philo, O'Grady, and Mincke and Lemonne).

Thirdly, that this heterogeneous collection of issues and perspectives does indeed speak to each other hinges on the clear sense – both in the papers themselves and, we anticipate, in the minds of their readers, as discussed above – of the profound conceptual transformation at play today, which thereby reaches across supposed conceptual 'boundaries'. In short, it is precisely the breadth of issues brought together by a generalized interest in issues of mobility and the power involved in, and itself constituted through, their construction that makes the ongoing engagement of these two schools of thought so promising in this moment of

profound social restructuring. Only a project that can encompass the car, the border and the hotel; the prison, the canal and the carbon market; the atmosphere and the fire station can hope to witness, and intervene in, systemic social transformation and thereby make good on the mobilities paradigm's promise of remodelling the social sciences.

Fourthly, by working with the concept of the *dispositif*, several contributions foreground the links between different elements of mobilities – knowledge/discourses, materialisations/objectifications, practices of movement, governmentalities, and subjectifications (O'Grady, Mincke and Lemmone, and Manderscheid). Thus, rather than understanding mobility as a monolithic entity, this focus highlights, against a background of wider socio-political processes, the continuities and contradictions, autopoietic forces and ambivalences that collectively reinforce existing mobility regimes and constitute the seeds of their transformation.

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