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Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe

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Mobility studies emerged from a postmodern moment in which global 'flows' of capital, people and objects were increasingly noted and celebrated. Within this new scholarship, categories of migrancy are all seen through the same analytical lens. This article and Regimes of Mobility: Imaginaries and Relationalities of Power, *the special issue of* JEMS *it introduces, build on, as well as critique, past and present studies of mobility. In so doing, this issue challenges conceptual orientations built on binaries of difference that have impeded analyses of the interrelationship between mobility and stasis. These include methodological nationalism, which counterpoises concepts of internal and international movement and native and foreigner, and consequently normalises stasis. Instead, the issue offers a regimes of mobility framework that addresses the relationships between mobility and immobility, localisation and transnational connection, experiences and imaginaries of migration, and rootedness and cosmopolitan openness. The introduction highlights how, within this framework and its emphasis on social fields of differential power, the contributors to this collection ethnographically explore the disparities, inequalities, racialised representations and national mythscapes that facilitate and legitimate differential mobility and fixity. Although the authors examine nation-state building processes, their analysis is not confined by national boundaries.*

Keywords: Regimes of Mobility; Immobility; Transnationalism; Migration; Methodological Nationalism; Ethnography

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Introduction

Anthropology, the social sciences and the policy and business world recently experienced a period of interest in and even celebration of mobility. In discussions of mobility over the past two decades, all those who travelled within a country or circled the globe—whether they were seeking refuge or were students, consultants,

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volunteers, tourists, labour or return migrants—came to be studied through the same analytical lens (Frändberg 2008; Lindquist 2009; Salazar 2011a; Urry 2000). As research on tourism, exchange students, retirement, labour contracting and forms of professional work-related travel developed, scholars questioned the division between categories such as international migrants and temporary travellers (Bell and Ward 2000; Hall and Williams 2002; Kesselring 2006; King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003; King *et al.* 1998; Nowicka 2007; Nyíri 2010). Some writers began to insist that all forms of movement, from walking across the room to the flowing of water downstream, be addressed within the same 'new mobilities' research paradigm (Hannam *et al.* 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007). The new emphasis on mobility as an inclusive category echoed and renewed concerns expressed in 1980s migration research, such as that on population mobility in developing countries (Chapman and Prothero 1985; Prothero and Chapman 1985; Skeldon 1990). Recent work in the study of mobility recognises that 'mobilities create an integrated system, which can be observed at a range of scales: family/household, community, national, and the constellation of countries linked by migration flows' (King and Skeldon 2010: 1640).

However, the current global economic crisis seems to be accompanied by a normalisation—once again—of national borders and ethnic boundaries, even as the crisis itself reveals the degree to which the world is intricately networked and interdependent. National sovereignty once more becomes a topic of concern in the domains of economics, control of labour, debt, culture and identity. Demagogues and national security experts now look askance at many of those who move, defining mobility as dangerous and threatening, while immobility is seen as normal and necessary for political and personal security (Isotalo 2009; Turner 2007). How are scholars of migration, travel, tourism and refuge to understand the rapid glamorisation and then demonisation of categories of mobile people?[1]

Given the rise, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, of new 'mobilities studies', followed by a growing repudiation of the celebration of mobility, the time is ripe for an assessment of the analytical category of mobility and its relationship to social theory and global transformation. This assessment gives rise to several questions that previous cohorts of mobility scholars did not fully address. First, how do we theorise mobility as basic to human social life in ways that normalise neither mobility nor stasis? Secondly, how do particular developments in the global political economy of a specific era shape and/or become reflected in the dominant social theory? That is to say, what is the global context that produces first the development and then the repudiation of mobilities studies? Third, why, despite the recent inclusive moment of migration studies that was able to encompass forms of movement from international tourism to labour migration, were some kinds of human mobility sidelined? For example, as Russell King and Ronald Skeldon (2010) have pointed out, migration studies retained a division between internal and international migration though, since the 1990s, internal migration has been generally ignored.

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This special issue addresses all three questions by bringing together a seemingly disparate set of case studies that allows us to assess what is gained and what is lost through a perspective that normalises various forms of movement within a single category. The articles ask whether speaking of 'mobilities' adds anything to past scholarship on forms of human migration and mobility. Is speaking of 'mobilities' just part of the passing fads and fashions of the academic world, as it is of the policy and business world, or are there crucial questions of social theory and political action at stake? In various ways that are in dialogue with each other, all seven authors respond to these questions not only by providing ethnographic descriptions of the everyday activities and communications that link people transnationally, to each other and to specific places, but also by contributing to an emerging theory of society as globally but unequally relational. In this modelling of society, various circuits of interconnection are part of the ordinary structuring of human sociability.

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Moving Beyond Recent Mobilities Studies

If we think historically about the human condition, it might seem that we should really have a *stasis* studies rather than migration or mobilities studies. After all, in the long view, mobility is the norm of our species and it is stasis that should be regarded as something to be queried (Maryanski and Turner 1992). Across the millennia, migration or seasonal movements of people have been a significant aspect of the human experience of space and time. The academic disciplines of geography and demography began by focusing on human movement from one place to another rather than movement across borders. However, as various fields of research became differentiated and consolidated within the twentieth century, they not only ceased to look at the world as a whole but also fostered the growth of national scholarships and a legitimisation of methodological nationalism. Methodological nationalism is an ideological orientation that approaches the study of social and historical processes as if they were contained within the borders of individual nation-states. In a parallel development in the anthropological imagination, where diffusion studies initially had been important, the territorial fixity of cultures became a common-place (Salazar 2012a). Some contemporary anthropology and much of ethnic studies have continued to approach cultures as discrete webs of signification (Geertz 1973). From such a perspective, transnational processes are novel and transgressive, occurring in response to dramatic changes in communication technology and global capitalism (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). As they frame outcomes of transnational processes as hybridity, scholars of such 'mixity' have often implied that previous stages of cultural production were unblemished by diffusion.

As is the case with the broader metaphor of 'flow' and the globalisation studies that engendered its popularity (Rockefeller 2011), the recent field of mobilities studies emerged as a critique of the academic tendency to ignore either past or present histories of human movement and interconnection. Mobilities studies called attention to the myriad ways in which people and their cultural practices are not

confined to a fixed territory but are parts of multiple spatial networks and temporal linkages (Greenblatt 2009; Salazar 2010b). They encouraged scholars to work against the narrative of stasis and sedentarism as normative (Malkki 1992). Identities and loyalties could be understood as products of social relations rather than of fixed relationships to territory.

Yet narratives of movement can actually endorse the normality or historicity of stasis. As the scholarship critical of globalisation studies has noted (Freitag and von Oppen 2010; Glick Schiller 1999, 2003; Held *et al.* 1999), those who have spoken of 'flows' of people, capital and ideas—such as Arjun Appadurai (1996), Manuel Castells (1996) and Zygmunt Bauman (2000, 2002, 2007)—imagined these flows as novel and exceptional, disrupting previous fixed relationships between culture, territory and identity. Moreover, the language of flows has been strangely agentless and frictionless (Rockefeller 2011; Tsing 2005). When binaries of difference—or, in Rockefeller's (2011) words, 'covert dualisms'—are constructed between fixity and motion, social life cannot be seen as processes in which both fixity and motion are relative and interrelated. Unless grounded in a broad historical perspective that moves beyond binary logics, including that of then and now, the study of mobility can obliterate the understanding that movement and interconnection are fundamental to the human condition—past, present and future.

Moreover, those caught up in the initial exuberance of the new 'mobilities studies' not only understated the degree to which the poor and disempowered find themselves contained but they also projected movement itself as liberating, valuable and the basis of a new contemporary cosmopolitanism (Canzler *et al.* 2008). In some iterations of this perspective, only the mobility of 'elite travellers' was recognised, and their ability to consume difference in various settings around the world was defined as cosmopolitan (Hannerz 1990). By serving as the connecting points for immobile 'locals', these 'cosmopolitans' were said to be building a 'world culture', marked by diversity rather than homogeneity.

Diversity, mobility and the differential ability to travel were thus linked and positively valued. Craig Calhoun's (2002) subsequent critique of the 'class consciousness of frequent travellers' questioned the bias of this positive valuation and its taking for granted of differential power but did not sufficiently query whether non-elite travellers could also be cosmopolitan and what that word would imply when linked to those who were impoverished and undocumented. Soon a number of scholars were changing the terms of the debate by linking cosmopolitanism to mobility, regardless of the class positioning and relative power and status of travellers (Vertovec and Cohen 2002; Werbner 2006). For example, Ulrich Beck has argued that 'in the struggles over belonging, the actions of migrants and minorities provide examples of dialogic imaginative ways of life and everyday cosmopolitanism' (2002: 30). Steven Vertovec (2009) has outlined a 'habitual concept' of cosmopolitanism by considering culture as a kind of 'toolkit' that migrants take on their journeys. Much of this literature, despite attributing the cosmopolitan stance to poor as well as to rich and empowered travellers, maintained a binary of difference by defining cosmopolitanism as a

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rejection of ethnic separateness and an openness to difference. Some scholars, however, have taken a further step by not only discarding the binary between sameness and difference but also refusing to see rootedness in territory and culture, and cosmopolitan openness as oppositional (Appiah 2006; Glick Schiller forthcoming; Salazar 2010a; Werbner 2008).

Reconciling Rootedness and Cosmopolitanism

As the new mobilities studies emerged, the challenges became clear. How could researchers reject the theorisation of mobility as problematic and asocial, cast mobility in all its dimensions as an aspect of the human experience, overcome binary thinking and yet not minimise the differential barriers to movement? As they address the dynamics between mobility and stasis within unequal fields of globe-spanning power, the authors in this special issue respond directly to these challenges. Several contributors address the question of unequal fields of power by illustrating the simultaneity of rootedness and cosmopolitanism.

In his article, 'Jembe Hero: West African Drummers, Global Mobility and Cosmopolitanism as Status', **Pascal Gaudette** illustrates the way in which broader identities, aspirations and mobility strategies are linked to, rather than separated from, local cultural roots. Local knowledge becomes part of mobility strategies (Canzler *et al.* 2008). Gaudette examines how, against significantly increasing barriers, young musicians in Guinea are leveraging the commoditisation of their roots to follow their elders into global mobility. Through the establishment of crucial strategic alliances, many *jembefolas* attempt to escape a considerable apparatus of exclusion. The successes and failures of these Mande drummers 'are not only illustrative of the commodifying effects of globalisation on culture, but also of the great desirability and empowered nature of the cosmopolitan status' (Gaudette, this issue).

Cosmopolitanism in this instance is neither about being mobile *per se* nor a consumption of the other. Rather it is by becoming the 'other' and marketing an African musical persona that these men seek to enter the uneven global musical playing-field and achieve a 'cosmopolitan status' (Salazar 2010a). Similarly, **Rebecca Peters**, in this issue, offers the concept of 'development cosmopolitans' to critique concepts and representations of mobilities. She notes that, in recent discussions, being cosmopolitan means having experience and engagement with the foreign or cultural other (e.g. Nowicka and Rovisco 2009). Yet, as her work illustrates, there are not only different ways in which the cosmopolitan mobile other is constructed within transnational flows of knowledge, professionals and resources, but also different 'foreigns' with which to engage.

To move away from binary thinking and create a study of mobilities in which migration and stasis are seen as interconnected aspects of the human condition, the temptation is to build on those social theorists who use terms such as 'deterritor-ialisation' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) or 'actor-network' (Latour 2005) to speak of

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relationality and connectivity. These theorists *do* challenge binaries that deny simultaneity of connection and differentiation. However, they do so in ways that provide no theoretical framework within which to address differential and multiple forms of power. And yet a study of mobilities must be able to simultaneously normalise an array of forms of mobility but not minimalise the ways in which legal status, as well as global racialising categories, can make a world of difference in terms of the ease of travel, the repercussions of trying to move, and whether or not the traveller gains or loses status from being from elsewhere. In this article we deploy the term 'regimes of mobility' rather than mobility studies to explore the relationships between the privileged movements of some and the co-dependent but stigmatised and forbidden movement, migration and interconnection of the poor, powerless and exploited (Franquesa 2011). It is the labour of those whose movements are declared illicit and subversive that makes possible the easy mobility of those who seem to live in a borderless world of wealth and power (Cunningham and Heyman 2004; Rees and Smart 2001; Shamir 2005). It is for this reason that Gaudette (this issue) traces a 'diagnostics of power', noting that these 'global power dynamics have a direct influence on the relations between the various actors . . . and on the microdynamics of power in social relations'.

By recognising the on-going dynamic between situations of settlement and those of mobility within situations of unequal power, the authors in this special issue move beyond categorical opposites such as fixity and motion, self and other, and communalism and cosmopolitanism (Chan 2006; Sandercock 2003). In so doing, they further advance social theory by developing contemporary discussions of simultaneity (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004), relationality (Anthias 1998), and the mutual constitution of mobility, place and subjectivity (Massey 2005). This relational perspective allows our contributors to provide new insights into processes that have often been documented by scholars of migration and travel but have been under-theorised or misrepresented. Their theoretical framework for the study of both stasis and mobility offers more than the fluctuating preference of one or the other which has marked much of previous social theory. The interrelationship between and interdependency of mobility and stasis were denied by classic social theorists such as Ferdinand Tönnies (1957 [1887]), who modelled a *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* distinction, Robert Park and Ernest Burgess (1967 [1925]), and Robert Redfield (1965 [1953]), who postulated a rural–urban dichotomy, or Emile Durkheim (1982 [1895]), who approached population as a fixed territorialised social fact. This binary opposition was then challenged by migration researchers of colonised regions (Epstein 1967; Mitchell 1974; Prothero and Chapman 1985; Roberts 1989; Skeldon 1990). More-recent migration and mobility scholarship has tended to restore the binary by either focusing on immigrant settlement and assimilation or prioritising the study of global flows of circular migration, tourism and business travel.

In contrast, the theoretical orientation of *Regimes of Mobility: Imaginaries and Relationalities of Power* neither normalises fixed relationships between people and territory nor naturalises movement, a position that can obscure the human costs of

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life without rights vested somewhere. The issue contributes to a historical view of the past and on-going relationship between agricultural societies and the growth and transformations of industrial capitalism. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, movement to cities—or urbanisation—was part of a rural–urban interdependency both in industrialising states and in colonialised territories. Then and now these connections have been marked by ever-changing relationships between mobility and immobility, as people from different localities market, trade, harvest, fish, build cities, manufacture goods, intermarry, join or flee armies and seek land, security, work and a future.

Regimes of Mobility

The insights provided by the contributors to this special issue lead us to argue that there are *regimes* of mobility that confront both the theorist and the traveller. The term 'regime' calls attention to the role both of individual states and of changing international regulatory and surveillance administrations that affect individual mobility. At the same time, the term reflects a notion of governmentality and hegemony in which there are constant struggles to understand, query, embody, celebrate and transform categories of similarity, difference, belonging and strangeness (Burchel 1991; Foucault 2000; Hall 1997). Shamir (2000: 199) sees the emergence of a 'single global mobility regime':

> Oriented to closure and to the blocking of access, premised not only on 'old' national or local grounds but on a principle of perceived universal dangerous personhoods ... [T]he mobility regime is constructed to maintain high levels of inequality in a relatively normatively homogenized world. In practice, this means that local, national, and regional boundaries are now being rebuilt and consolidated under the increased normative pressure of, and as a counterbalance to, the universal human rights regime ... [P]rocesses of globalization are also concerned with the prevention of movement and the blocking of access. ... [S]uch processes should neither be theorized as a systemic malfunction nor as the unintended consequences of globalization.

The case studies in this issue lead us to join Shamir in questioning the scholarship that celebrated the 'death of distance' (Cairncross 1997), mobility as freedom and a 'mobility turn' (Urry 2007). However, we postulate that there are several different intersecting regimes of mobility that normalise the movements of some travellers while criminalising and entrapping the ventures of others. Whether globalisation is theorised solely in terms of 'processes of closure, entrapment, and containment' (Shamir 2005: 199) or pluralised as mobility regimes, the concept of regime addresses the varying ways in which human stasis and mobility have been approached in social theory.

The authors in this collection deploy a regimes-of-mobility approach to redirect the attention of mobility researchers back to the dynamic between sedentariness and

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movement, and explicitly critique the dichotomy between mobility and immobility that has characterised recent scholarship. **Michaela Pelican**, in her paper 'International Migration: Virtue or Vice? Perspectives from Cameroon', discusses diverse imaginaries of migration among youths in two Cameroonian cities. Public discourse and imaginaries of international migration vary considerably in these two localities. This is reflected in differences in envisioned destinations as well as in terminologies and concepts. In recent years, the generally positive consideration of international migration has given way to more critical perspectives, with a subsequent rethinking of the local as well as the migratory life. International migration is thus viewed in a broad discursive spectrum from virtue to vice, and perceptions of both mobility and immobility are influenced by regional, national and international political discourse (cf. Salazar 2011b). As Paolo Gaibazzi points out in his paper here, we need conceptual tools broad enough not only to encompass imaginaries and relationalities of migration, but also of sedentariness and the right to settlement.

As the articles demonstrate, a regimes-of-mobility approach must move beyond the ready equation of mobility with freedom by examining not only movement as connection but also as an aspect of new confinements and modes of exploitation (Salazar and Smart 2011). Refugees and asylum-seekers are forced to flee and yet, when granted some form of legal status, may find themselves restricted to settling in specific cities, towns or rural areas (Lubkemann 2008). Meanwhile 'illegals', who live or work without documents, may have to move from residence to residence, their mobility compelled by their need to avoid surveillance (Bloch *et al.* 2009). In this situation, mobility produces entrapments (see Barak Kalir's paper in this issue) since, at each stop in their furtive journeys, these migrants may spend any non-working time confined to their living spaces, afraid to venture forth. Meanwhile, a growing cohort of the global workforce, including domestic workers and computer technicians, migrate with fixed work contracts that confine them to a specific employer and perhaps residence as a condition of their 'mobility' (Anderson 2000; Biao 2007). However, it is not only the current moment of neoliberal global capital that has produced precarious labour. Rather, each historic restructuring of modes and spaces of accumulation creates new and dynamic relationships between mobility and immobility that empower the few and create conditions of spatialised but connected contestation among the many (Massey 2005; Sassen 1999; Wolf 1982).

As can be seen, the perceptions of the connections between stasis and mobility offered by *Regimes of Mobility: Imaginaries and Relationalities of Power* are more than an iteration of past insights into the construction of locality through migration. The various contributors examine the subjectivities and reflective sensibilities within which local people reflect upon and incorporate migratory experiences into their sense of the fixity of place and the concept of 'home'. For example, in his article 'Cultivating Hustlers: The Agrarian Ethos of Soninke Migration', **Paolo Gaibazzi** offers an ethnography that documents the life path and outlook of rural young men in The Gambia who are aware of their location within both agrarian ethos and ongoing circuits of exploitative labour migration. He notes that 'an agrarian ethos

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pervades and actually sustains Soninke migration'; the villagers invest in the agrarian upbringing of young men, the most mobile section of society, to instil particular dispositions, skills and ethical orientations in them in view of sedentary as well as migratory livelihoods. That is to say, rural Soninke, in educating their next generation of young men, have stepped beyond the various regimes of mobility with their competing narratives about the virtues or evils of migration. Similarly, in her article in this collection—'The Great Departure: Rethinking National(ist) Common Sense'—**Dace Dzenovska** argues that, through their recent collective experience of mobile practices and transversals, which they refer to as 'the great departure', Latvians have developed a collective reappraisal of a dichotomous value system that linked the good life with home territory and cast mobility in negative terms. A regimes-of-mobility approach will allow researchers to identify forms of sociability that create both forms of commonness extending across space and difference, and shared identities of place (Glick Schiller *et al.* 2011).

At the same time, as Dzenovska argues, such an approach moves past the 'blind spot' that allows us to misperceive what we observe, think beyond the descriptive tracing of 'flows and relations' and build on Massey's (2005) approach to the mutual constitution of place and subject. This 'double articulation' results in a coherent narrative of place and of self in relation to it (Dzenovska, this issue). To analyse the changing dynamics of mobility and immobility, the contributors in this special issue theorise power within multiple intersecting geographic scales. They make it clear that, when we speak of mobility and interconnection, we cannot dismiss the significance of territory nor of governmental powers that are based in territory. As Pelican argues, both global and national power differences play a crucial role in shaping migration and its imaginaries. The challenge therefore in a regimes-of-mobility approach is the same one faced by all scholars who research social processes: how to take into account forms of organised relations of power, many of which are territorially based if not bounded and, at the same time, do not deploy a container theory of society. How can we develop a theory of society in which mobility is normalised and seen as integral, rather than in opposition, to territorially based social relationships?

Some work has been done in this direction by those who have critiqued methodological nationalism and its bounded approaches to social science (Amelina *et al.* 2012). A growing number of social theorists have argued that methodological nationalism has been central to much of Western social science (Beck 2000; Martins 1974; Smith 1983; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 2003). Methodological nationalists confine the concept of society to the boundaries of nation-states and the members of those states are assumed to share a common history and set of values, norms, social customs and institutions. Some writers label this orientation the 'container' theory of society to highlight that most social theorists, including Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, have contained their concept of society within the territorial and institutional boundaries of the nation-state (Basch *et al.* 1994; Urry 2000; Wolf 1982).

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There are a number of reasons why methodological nationalism came to be so pervasive in migration scholarship, a topic addressed at length elsewhere by Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller (2002, 2003). Migration scholars in the US and in Europe have been strongly influenced by periods of intense concern for national security, national economy and the national social fabric. Their scholarship often reflects funding streams that stress national priorities, with nation-states used as units of analysis. Statistics about migration are organised by, and in the interests of, national governments. Recent iterations of a methodological nationalist perspective in migration scholarship has led to the separation of internal and international migration, which ignores many similarities in the migration process, whether or not the migrant crosses national borders. It has also meant the negation of the previous body of migration scholarship that was influenced by global and regional perspectives on issues of underdevelopment, colonialism, urbanisation, the centrality of mobility in different cultural contexts, and issues of mobility and power in pre-capitalist contexts (Kosinski and Prothero 1975; McGee 1973, 1982; Prothero and Chapman 1985; Skeldon 1986).[2] Methodological nationalism has also led to the curious inability of migration scholars to sufficiently address instances in which states such as China inhibit internal migration. As Glick Schiller (2010) has noted, studies of transnational migration and diasporic nationalism have generally retained as the unit of analysis a national, ethnic or ethno-religious community that is thought to share history, culture and language

To reject methodological nationalism requires migration scholars to recover an approach to migration that does not use nation-states as units of analysis but rather studies the movement of people across space in relationship to forces that structure political economy. These forces include, but are not confined to, states and their policies. Furthermore, national and international policies are considered within the same analytical framework. It is the methodological nationalism of contemporary migration scholarship, reflecting the tendency of researchers to think like a nation-state, which led them to only study movement that crosses borders and to label as mobile only those who move to or settle in another state (Glick Schiller 2010).

It is important to note that to critique methodological nationalism is not to discount the nation-state as an actor in questions of international migration or to endorse the contemporary silences about internal migration. Nation-states *do* participate in the formation and legitimation of globe-spanning regimes of mobility by imposing barriers on the emigration and immigration of some individuals and facilitating the movement of others and by using national identities and nationalist ideologies to justify the exclusion or inclusion of those who cross state borders. As this special issue illustrates, to adequately theorise mobility, scholars must examine the role of nation-states and the influence of national identities in shaping the experience of migrants without confining their study and analysis within the parameters of the nation-state. Dzenovska's contribution here furthers this perspective by arguing that the . . .

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> . . . practices of mobility are shaped by the material reality of the national order of things and that the national order of things also lends meaning to mobility in collective and individual narratives. At the same time, the experiences of mobility—and the associated emplacement and displacement—exceed their co-optation by national(ist) common sense. I suggest that identifying national(ist) common sense as an animating discourse about mobility often overlooks this excess. To unleash the analytical and political potential of this excess, one needs to undertake the work of excavation. This, in turn, requires the bracketing of facile diagnoses of nationalism.

The critique of methodological nationalism and discussions of the limits of nation-states as units of study and analysis highlight the current challenge within the growth of 'mobilities studies', a challenge taken on by the presenters of the articles in this special issue. The challenge is as follows: What do we see if we do not think about mobility like a nation-state? The conceptual terrain we can envision when we think beyond the lens of the nation-state allows us to build a regimes-of-mobility approach that sees movement and settlement in constant and reconstituting interrelationships.

In her contribution, 'Development Mobilities: Identity and Authority in an Angolan Development Programme', **Rebecca Peters** offers just such an analysis. She describes globe-circulating narratives that differentially construct, evaluate and empower local, national and global identities. Peters focuses on international NGO workers to illustrate ethnographically the production and negotiation of locality and internationality. These imaginaries are produced within efforts to position Angolans who work in international development organisations. They become a point of contention as they simultaneously appear to be 'locals' in development and transnational, cosmopolitan professionals. Peters joins Gaudette and Vasantkumar (all in this issue) in making it clear that stepping out of methodological nationalism allows us to better understand the way in which the global, national and local are simultaneously and differentially constructed. At the same time, Vasantkumar, deploying the term 'methodological belongingism', uses the case of 'proliferating varieties of post-1959 Tibetan imagined communities' to emphasise that methodological nationalism 'obscured how others have thought of the nation beyond the nation-state'.

As they critique methodological nationalist perspectives, the authors also make clear that this critique cannot be equated with the position that all mobility is equal. Mobility clearly benefits different sets of actors in very different ways. This point is forcibly made by **Barak Kalir** in his article 'Moving Subjects, Stagnant Paradigms: Can the "Mobilities Paradigm" Transcend Methodological Nationalism?'. Kalir also makes clear that the narrative of migration as physical mobility has been integrally linked with the promise of social mobility. His interest in mobility is not only geographic—from small home village in China to village with more employment and opportunity, to Tel Aviv, to Shanghai—but also across class lines. Pelican makes a very similar point in her article here about the complex and, importantly, changing interrelations of physical and social mobility. These two kinds of mobility have often

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come together in US immigrant rags-to-riches tales. In US and contemporary global migration narratives, the unspoken, unacknowledged underpinnings of migrant success are the processes of capitalist accumulation, which are always emplaced. Taken together, Kalir's and Pelican's articles make clear that the two forms of mobility are linked because the structures of capital accumulation are always situated in time and space.

As Kalir shows, the exploitation of Chinese workers in Israel and in China should not be dismissed within a rhetoric of global flows of people and ideas. There are a few winners and many losers. This is not to validate stasis but to argue for a regimes-of-mobility approach that constantly theorises the relationships of unequal power within which relative stasis and different forms of mobility are constructed and negotiated. To move beyond methodological nationalism, we need a global perspective on mobility—physical and social, upward and downward (Glick Schiller 2010). David Harvey's (2006) theorisation of the movement, flexible accumulation and destruction of capital within globe-spanning but emplaced networks of power is more useful here than Appadurai's (1996) talk of flows. It is not that it would have been better to focus on internal rather than cross-border migration. Rather, it is important to look at how the relative backwardness of China made it a prime competitor globally and provided opportunities for a handful in new emplacements of wealth.

By defining movement and stasis within social and economic relationships rather than in relation to geographic borders, a regimes-of-mobility approach can facilitate a scholarship that is neither confined by nor ignores nation and territory (Jansen and Löfving 2009). Whilst not seeing like a nation-state, we must be aware of the role of national mythscapes that confine our ability to analyse the dynamic relationship between stasis and movement. Bell defines the concept of mythscape as: 'the discursive realm, constituted by and through temporal and spatial dimensions, in which the myths of the nation are forgotten, transmitted, reconstructed and negotiated constantly' (2003: 75).[3] Mythscapes tend to be rooted in constructions of 'an idealized bounded territory, for example... pastoral English villages, [or] rugged American frontiers or bucolic German forests' (Bell 2003: 76). These are the mythscapes that propel a constant sense of the inauthenticity of the present and a search for the scapegoat that has destroyed the sanctity of the homeland. In contrast, as the papers in this special issue so clearly illustrate, there is actually no place like the imagined home. These papers share a critical perspective on the narrative and romance of the nation-state by querying its mythscapes.

The imaginaries of mobility that complement national mythscapes (Carling and Åkesson 2009; Ferro 2006; Salazar 2011b) are also a subject in *Regimes of Mobility across the Globe*. In the cultural logics of migration, imaginaries play a predominant role in envisioning both the (often-mythologised) green pastures of the new land and the nostalgic memories of the homeland (Jackson 2008). Migration is about these imaginaries as well as about actual physical movement from one locality to another and back (Salazar 2012b). The images and ideas of other (read as better) possible places to live—often misrepresented through popular media—circulate in a very

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unequal global space (Englund 2002) and are ultimately filtered through migrants' personal aspirations. Migration thus always presupposes some knowledge or, at least, rumours of 'the other side'. Imaginaries of such movements play out in uneven and even contradictory ways.

Finally, in his article 'Tibetan Peregri-nations: Mobility, Incommensurable Nationalisms and (Un)belonging Athwart the Himalayas', **Christopher Vasantkumar** provides an illustration of the dynamic tensions between migration and the national imaginary. His research indicates that those Tibetans who fled to India from China see the life of the refugee Tibetan community as inauthentic, degraded, commercialised Tibetan culture, even as they gain skills and education through migration. Meanwhile, those who stay in Tibet see national culture as degraded, feeling that the best Tibetans have fled. They, too, experience a sense of loss. It is important to note that Vasantkumar describes a plurality of national forms at play, one of which reflects the global modernist narrative of the nation as it is played out and replayed within the constitution of a space of refuge. The mythscape of the nation (and of what is seen as 'home') is one of the romance of nostalgia—a longing for a lost past and a projection of a restored future purity, which plays off the binaries of past and future and here or there, without acknowledging global connectivity. Vasantkumar, in his querying of nationalism through an optic of mobility, faces the challenge of speaking about and locating the contingencies of differential power that mark all mobility experiences and practices.

Although their ethnographies are situated in disparate geographic locations ranging from Africa (Gaudette, Peters, Gaibazzi and Pelican), Asia (Kalir and Vasantkumar) and Europe (Dzenovska), each author contributes to a relational approach to the study of mobility that theorises place-making, spatiality and borders as part of networks of social relationships and circuits of movement (King 1996; Massey 2005). Each author also illustrates the conceptual and political dilemmas of the people amongst whom they worked.

Conclusions

As more people are on the move, states attempt to maintain their authority, not only over mobilities but also over their meaning (Nyíri 2010). In a world that is perceived to be in constant flux, control over people's movement and mobility potential, sometimes termed *motility* (Kaufmann *et al.* 2004), has become a central concern for projects of biopolitics and governmentality. The papers in *Regimes of Mobility: Imaginaries and Relationalities of Power* make important contributions to the formulation of six key ideas that can set the direction for mobility studies. First, the relationship between mobility and immobility, which always define each other, must be highlighted. Secondly, to understand the relative and changing definition of mobility and immobility, we need to place these concepts within a theory of unequal globe-spanning relationships of power. In the third place, within the contemporary moment, these unequal relationalities are shaped by the social, political, cultural and

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economic relations of capital production as they play out within specific local contexts. Fourth, rather than a mobility studies that speaks of the general category of travelling or movement, we need a regimes-of-mobility approach that addresses the range of actors within specific situations, including, but not exclusively, state actors. Such state actors define key categories such as legal, undocumented, territory, space and border, which shape the ways in which we conceptualise mobility and stasis. We need to interrogate the situations in which certain kinds of mobility, or certain types of mobile individuals, become the subjects of praise or condemnation, desire, suppression or fear. The fifth point continues the discussion about categories to contest our received notions of class. A long-standing definition of class in historical anthropology spoke of class differences being based on differential access to a range of resources. A regimes-of-mobility approach can challenge us to expand this understanding so that the ability and legal right to travel become one of the criteria by which class is defined and class privilege upheld. The sixth and final point is about history. The discussion of mobility and immobility reflects and shapes our understanding of time as well as space.

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Notes

[1] There is an interesting parallel during colonial times when pastoralists such as the Maasai in East Africa were revered but also demonised. Colonial migrants were sometimes similarly sought as a key to modernisation and urbanisation and feared as deculturated (Epstein 1967). Today, the glamorisation and criminalisation of those who move may also happen at the same time, so that temporary tourists are sought while those who come to work or settle more permanently are rejected.

[2] In making this point, we acknowledge and thank an anonymous *JEMS* reviewer.

[3] Bell's concept of mythscape has been applied to migration studies by anthropologist Garbi Schmidt (2012).

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