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**Sonderforschungsbereich 536  
Reflexive Modernisierung**

**Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective**

A Workshop at the Munich Reflexive Modernization Research  
Centre (SFB 536)

29 - 30 January 2004, Munich

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## Introduction

Dear readers,

this documentation presents all contributions of the workshop on *Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective* in January 2004 in Munich. Supported by the Munich „Reflexive Modernization“ Research Centre, SFB 536 (see [www.sfb536.mwn.de](http://www.sfb536.mwn.de)) it was the first comprehensive public presentation of the mobility pioneers project at the SFB 536 and its work on mobility in the light of the theory of reflexive modernization.

It was an remarkable and stimulating experience. Due to many enormously committed participants we had a lot of fruitful and decisive discussions on mobility, social theory and future research perspectives on cosmopolitan mobilities. It became obvious that a social scientific cosmopolitanism needs mobility theory as a basic dimension for its further development. And beyond this fundamental perception and the huge intellectual profit of the meeting it was a major result that the workshop became the starting point for The Cosmobilities Network ([www.cosmobilities.net](http://www.cosmobilities.net); see page 91 in this documentation) and for further common research activities.

The first afternoon of the workshop was dedicated to conceptual and theoretical debate. The matter of discussion was the question how mobility can be conceptualized and channelled in modernized modernity. John Urry from Lancaster University, UK, started with a talk on „The New Mobilities Paradigm“. Ulrich Beck from LMU University Munich and London School of Economics who is head of our research centre replied with a paper on „Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective“.

The first day of the workshop concluded with my presentation of the crucial considerations which influenced our project on mobility pioneers concerning mobility and the theory of reflexive modernization (see Bonss and Kesselring on p. 6).

The second day focussed on a different set of aspects of mobility.

“Networks, scapes and flows between first and second modernity” (see Kesselring and Vogl on p.41) were discussed as well as the different possibilities of empirical mobility research. All the other contributions in this issue mostly refer to empirical experience and the papers of Bonss & Kesselring and Kesselring & Vogl. They present different approaches to mobility research and emphasize different points of critique to our conceptual setting in the mobility pioneers project.

Hopefully, the combination of the different approaches will prove to be fruitful and readers of this documentation will have an impression comparably stimulating to the one we had during the workshop and after. In the following I will give a short introduction into our thinking on mobility and reflexive modernization. My aim is to encourage you to go deeper into the documentation and make it easier to find the right path through the materials and their ideas:

In modernized modern societies, i.e. societies under the conditions of reflexive modernization structural change occurs in both society and mobility. These ongoing

changes force us as scientists to develop not only new concepts for mobility research, but also new forms of a mobile sociology.<sup>1</sup>

One can give different reasons for this thesis. In our perspective, the central reasons derive from the theory of reflexive modernization, which is the intellectual and conceptual fundament of the Munich 'Reflexive Modernization' Research Centre.<sup>2</sup>

In 1999 the centre was established as an interdisciplinary research group. The 15 projects of this group are funded by the „German Research Association“ (DFG) and form a so called Sonderforschungsbereich (Special Research Area or Special Research Programme). The aim of this interdisciplinary research group is to examine the hypothesis of a reflexive modernization of modern societies.

It cannot be the purpose of this introduction to explain that hypothesis in detail. But in general the theory of reflexive modernization claims a fundamental societal transformation within modernity. In contrast to postmodern theories we don't argue, that modernity vanishes. But the internal dynamics of modernity has unintended side-effects. That's why the perspective on modernity changes. While radical social change has always been part of modernity, the transition to a reflexive second modernity revolutionizes the very coordinates, categories and conceptions of change itself.

This 'meta-change' of modern society refers to mobility, too. We assume, that mobility is a basic principle of modernity besides others like individuality, rationality, equality, and globality. The assertion, that mobility is a general principle and a basic assumption for modern societal structuration has prominent predecessors in sociological tradition. Marx for instance emphasizes the breaking down and speeding up as central elements of capitalistic societies, and Georg Simmel (1920) elaborates his concept of modernity as a specific configuration of movement and mobility potential (motility).

Only in modern societies you can find a positive connotation of mobility and social change. Beforehand travelling was not a free choice but a duty and a must. Michel de Montaigne for instance reports in his „Journal de Voyage en Italie“ (1581) that only for him and in contrast to his aristocratic companions the travel was suspenseful and had an importance of its own. The new perspectives indicated by Montaigne were formulated in an explicit manner more than 200 years later by Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe. Goethe's famous formulation "travelling to Rome to become another" from the Italian Journey gives expression to the modern concept of mobility. It is the idea to use spatial movement as a „vehicle“ or an instrument for the transformation of social situations and in the end to realize certain projects and plans.

In the modern concept of mobility the imagination of a mouldable society and the idea of human beings as subjects on their way to perfection melt together with the idea of physical, i.e. spatial movement as the dynamic factor, the „vehicle“ or instrument for

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<sup>1</sup> See Urry, John. (2000). *Sociology beyond Societies. Mobilities of the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Beck, Ulrich, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash. (1994). *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Traditions and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Beck, Ulrich, Wolfgang Bonss and Christoph Lau. (2003). *The Theory of Reflexive Modernization: Problematic, Hypotheses and Research Programme*. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 20, No. 2, 1 - 34.

it. Under the conditions of radicalised modernity the assessments change at least in three ways:

- On the one hand the assumed intense *connection between social and geographical mobility breaks up*. It is true that the compulsion to be mobile increases. But the readiness for geographical mobility is not a prerequisite and guarantee for social mobility any longer.
- On the other hand we observe the emergence of *virtual mobility*. Forms of transnational social integration arise which are based not on physical contact and corporeal co-presence but on telepresence and global connectivity. Therefore we can identify mobility practices where people realize specific projects and plans without being physically on the move.
- Third, the *self-image* or *the modern mobility-project* gets transformed. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century societies conceived social and geographical mobility as „not yet realized“. Under the conditions of permanent congestion and increasing insecurity concerning social ascents and descents it becomes visible that the modern mobility of autonomous subjects through time and space is illusionary. „We have never been mobile“ we could say following Bruno Latour's considerations on modernity.<sup>3</sup> We realize mobility as imperfect and incomprehensive and as a project which cannot be produced in total. But we reconstruct it as an ambiguous phenomenon.

As a consequence of these developments we observe a paradox effect under the conditions of reflexive modernization: mobility is conceived as an illusion and the discourse on mobility tends to be disillusioning. Nevertheless the essence of mobility as a general principle of modernity remains stable and constant even though the institutional settings for its realization change. In other words: there is *continuity* on the level of *principles* but on the level of *institutional settings* there is *discontinuity* because people do not have to travel physically to be mobile.

It's a moot point whether this description and concept is fruitful and sound for the future. The workshop on Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective gave us the chance to dispute it, test it and to collect many important stimuli and encouragements to continue and go forward.

I would like to express our thanks to all workshop participants for the friendly and creative atmosphere! We hope to continue with this Cosmobilities-Culture. Thus let me point our to the readers of these pages once again: instant as well as future comments are very welcome!

Wolfgang Bonß  
SFB 536 and  
Universität der Bundeswehr, München

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<sup>3</sup> Latour, Bruno. (1995). Wir sind nie modern gewesen. Versuch einer symmetrischen Anthropologie. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.





# Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective

Wolfgang Bonss, Sven Kesselring

## Introduction

The mobility pioneers research project<sup>4</sup> at the SFB 536 identifies mobility patterns and forms of social integration beyond local belonging. These patterns follow a reticular logic of "being in the world". As Caren Kaplan puts it: for most of these pioneers

Social positioning in time and space is getting more differentiated. "travel has been a certainty rather than a question" (Kaplan 1996: VIII). Some of them practice a kind of de-centred mobility management while others do virtual mobility management which enables them to realize very specific and sometimes creative solutions for the "compulsion of mobility" (Kesselring & Vogl 2003). They live in "scapes" (Urry 2000) of global structuration where the sharing of resources sometimes functions through virtual spaces, and the necessities to meet and to travel loses its absolute dominance.<sup>5</sup> Telepresence is not a substitute for physical co-presence but it enlarges the mobility potential of actors (motility) and opens up new configurations and access to networks of cooperation, sharing of knowledge and solidarity (Wellman 1999).

We assume that these phenomena cannot be analysed appropriately with traditional categories and concepts of mobility research. There is a transformation of the modern concept and practice of mobility which is linked with the emergence of "network sociality" (Wittel 2001). Social positioning in time and space is getting more differentiated. Beyond the "classical" forms of integration and identity, which are based on locality, presence and face-to-face-interaction, connectivity (Tomlinson 1999, Taylor 2004) becomes an integrative moment of social life. Access to information, knowledge, cooperation and solidarity can decisively influence human relations as it is property and possession in localized social contexts. That means if we consider future mobility research we need to pay attention to structurations beyond class, social status and milieu. As Urry (2000) and Kaufmann (2002) put it mobility research has to integrate a network perspective on movement and motility which does not ignore the relevance of classes and milieus but which integrates a perspective on the disorganized character of modern economy and societies (Lash & Urry 1987, 1994, Urry 2003). In this way we do not focus on "societies beyond society" (Urry 2000) but on structuration beyond nation-state societies. In this way there are many links to the concept of cosmopolitanism (Vertovec & Cohen 2002). And it is Ulrich Beck's perception of cosmopolitanism in particular which we conceive as a methodologically fruitful approach to "globalized mobilities" (see Beck 2000, 2002).

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<sup>4</sup> see Bonss & Kesselring (1999, 2001), Kesselring & Vogl (2003) and Bonss, Kesselring & Weiss (2004) for an overview.

<sup>5</sup> For a critical discussion see Urry (2002), Boden & Molotch (1994), Miller & Slater (2000).

In the following we elaborate three argumentative steps to illustrate structural changes in mobility and the consequences. We systematically integrate perspectives from social theory as well as from methodology:

Our starting point is the assumption that mobility is a *general principle of modernity*. At first glance its institutional manifestation and realization seem to be linear. But in fact the development of mobility is a dialectical process of structural change. People were always on the move. Perhaps, nomads were much more in motion than people today. But for the first time and only under the conditions of modernity mobility today becomes an imperative with positive connotations. In modernity mobility became a positive aim which had to be actively realized and produced. The "moving masses" of people and things caused unintended consequences (positive as well as negative) and an ongoing structural change in mobility on the conceptual as well as on the practical level of societies.

We conceive mobility – against conventional concepts - as an inconsistent and as a contradictory principle of modernity. As a consequence we need a slightly differentiated terminology and new categories for the explanation and description of the mobility phenomena. One of our basic distinctions is between "Bewegung" (= movement) and "Beweglichkeit" (= motility or the mobility potentials of actors). Further we are working on a redefinition of the term movement under social and geographical perspectives and we want to link mobility research to concepts like networks, scapes and flows.

Against this background we conceive structural changes in mobility along the transition from first to second modernity as a shift from directional to non-directional mobility. In other words: in the transition from first to second modernity mobility as a social conception transforms itself from directionality to non-directionality. I.e. we do not only observe shifting boundaries between movement (Bewegung) and motility (Beweglichkeit). Instead, we recognize re-structuration and new concepts of mobility which focus on boundary management as an actively shaped project. We describe it as network mobility and horizontal-mobility.

These developments, which refer to a new "cosmopolitan perspective", as Ulrich Beck (2002) puts it, will transform mobility research on many levels. New transdisciplinary centres and foci in mobility research will emerge, because the "leitbilder" and models of (social, physical and virtual) mobility research are losing their validity. Mobility as mono-mobility seems to loose its dominance, and multi-mobility and the temporal use of mobility technologies are getting more and more important. This leads to a conceptual shift in mobility research as a whole and to a transgression of disciplinary boundaries. Under the conditions of reflexive modernization we realize mobility as a "multi-dimensional concept" (see Canzler & Knie 1998, Urry 2000), which cannot be analysed in a national perspective any longer.<sup>6</sup> As a grounding for future research we need multi-dimensional concepts and methods instead. This is the reason for both this workshop and our asking for the cosmopolitan perspective which has to be reformulated under the perspective of mobility theory and methodology (see chapter 5).

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<sup>6</sup> See Beck's critique on "methodological nationalism" in Beck (2002, 84 ff.).

## **Mobility as a general principle of modernity**

According to Rammler (2001) we conceive mobility as a general *principle* of modernity besides others like individuality, rationality, equality, and globality (see Bonss 2003). The assertion, that mobility is a general principle and a basic assumption for modern societal structuration has prominent predecessors in sociological tradition. Marx for instance emphasizes the breaking down and speeding up as central elements of capitalistic societies, and Simmel (1920) elaborates his concept of modernity as a specific configuration of movement and mobility potential (motility).<sup>7</sup> For Simmel the difference to premodern constellations is the contrast between mobility and stability as central reference points. In premodern societies mobility is not a positive value and not a principle which has any relevance for actions and individual and collective decision making. The aim of being on the move is to return to the place of origin. The notions of stability and unchangingness, respectively, immobility dominate social situations and contexts. The most important concept for social integration is local belonging and social status.

Modern societies have another comprehension of mobility which is not self-evident. The positive connotation of mobility and social change would not have been possible without a new assessment of unsafety and uncertainty, which can be studied in the history of the concept of risk (cp. Bonss 1995). Historically it was during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century that the concept of risk came up, and it is interesting that the perception of uncertainty as a risk was developed in seafaring and long-distance trade. In these contexts people at first identified spatial movement as an instrument for social change and individual progress. Beforehand travelling was not a free choice but a duty and a must. Michel de Montaigne for example reports in his "Journal de voyage en Italie" (1581) that only for him and in contrast to his aristocratic companions the travel was suspenseful and had an importance of its own. The new perspectives indicated by Montaigne were formulated in an explicit manner more than 200 years later by Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe. Goethe's famous formulation "travelling to Rome to become another" from the Italian Journey gives expression to the modern concept of mobility. It is the idea to use spatial movement as a vehicle (instrument) for the transformation of social situations and in the end to realize certain projects and plans.

In the modern concept of mobility the imagination of a mouldable society and the idea of human beings as subjects on their way to perfection melt together with the idea of physical, i.e. spatial movement as the dynamic factor, the "vehicle" or instrument for it.<sup>8</sup> You must have been on the site to understand what's happening. This is the idea behind the "tourist gaze" (Urry 1990), also if it is obvious that this is an illusion or even leitbild. Under the conditions of radicalised modernity the accents change at least in three ways:

On the one hand the assumed intense *connection between social and geographical mobility breaks up*. It is true that the compulsion to be mobile increases. But the

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<sup>7</sup> Simmel speaks about *Bewegung* and *Beweglichkeit* (movement and motility) as constitutive elements of modernity. See also Junge (2000: 85ff.).

<sup>8</sup> It is not a coincidence but an indicator for the relevance of mobility as a general principle that modernization theory deals with mobility as one of the key indicator for societal levels of modernity (Zorn 1977, Zapf 1993, 1998).

readiness for geographical mobility is not a prerequisite and guarantee for social mobility any longer.

On the other hand we observe the emergence of virtual mobility. We can identify mobility practices where people realize specific projects and plans without being physically on the move. That is so because forms of transnational social integration come up which are based not on physical contact and co-presence but on telepresence and global connectivity.

Third, the self-image of the modern mobility-project changes. During the 18th and 19th century and the first half of the 20th century societies conceived social and geographical mobility as "not yet realized". Under the conditions of permanent congestion and increasing insecurity concerning social ascents and descents it becomes visible that the modern mobility of autonomous subjects through time and space is illusory. "We have never been mobile" we could say following Latour's considerations on modernity (1995). We realize mobility as imperfect and incomprehensive and as a project which cannot be produced in total, but is an ambiguous phenomenon.

As a consequence of these developments we observe a paradox effect under the conditions of reflexive modernization: on the one hand mobility is conceived as an illusion and the discourse on mobility tends to be disillusioning. Nevertheless the essence of mobility as a general principle of modernity remains stable and constant even though the institutional settings for its realization change. In other words: there is *continuity* on the level of *principles* but on the level of *institutional settings* there is *discontinuity* because people do not have to travel physically to be mobile. For a theory of mobility in the context of reflexive modernization this analytical perspective is decisive. It opens up a perspective on *Vergesellschaftung* as a liquid and mobile process of configuring and re-configuring, i.e. structuration and re-structuration.

## **Modernity and Mobility. Terminological considerations.**

Mobility is not a consistent, clear cut phenomenon. It is a general principle of modernity and as such there is a set of discourses, institutions and practices which brings it into materiality and social reality. We suppose that it is neither possible to identify social mobility as an isolated dimension nor is it possible to identify spatial or geographical mobility as such. Instead, it makes sense to talk about "mobilities" (Urry 2000) or, as we propose, about different constitutive elements of mobility.

The dichotomy of movement and motility is constitutive for the mobility of individual and collective actors.

We define mobility as an actor's competence to realize certain projects and plans while being "on the move". We stress the modern notion of mobility with its

concentration on physical movement as a vehicle of creativity and self-fulfilment. But our hypothesis is that there is a conceptual change from the dominance of physical to virtual movement. It is this transformation in the modern understanding of mobility that we try to locate in actors' narrations by using Simmel's concept of modernity as the strained relationship (*Spannungsverhältnis* or *Wechselwirkung*) between *Bewegung* (i.e. movement) and *Beweglichkeit* (i.e. motility). Whereas *movement*

indicates the effective *mobility performance*, *motility* refers to the *mobility potentials*. The differentiation between *movement* and *motility* is necessary because in the age of the internet people can be mobile without physical movement. Against this background we conceptualise mobility as an ambivalent phenomenon with the two dimensions *movement* and *motility*.

We presume that the dichotomy of movement and motility is constitutive for the mobility of individual and collective actors. Therefore we developed a specific concept for the empirical work on mobility pioneers. The central theme of our empirical work is the following: if we want to understand how and why people are on the move we need to observe two dimensions. To reconstruct mobility we need to relate to each other empirical data on movement and on motility. Only if we know enough about the physical, social and virtual moves which shape a certain case and if we can judge and estimate the actors' mobility potentials we are able to talk legitimately about mobility. In other words: what we need to identify is the mobility performance (i.e. expressive and convincing data about it) and the mobility potential. The starting point in our empirical work is the subject with its performances and embodied potentials. In fact we can say a lot of things about networks, scapes and flows which get through the individual case. We can talk about mobility (in our understanding) when there is a match between movement and motility which allows people to realize their certain projects and plans.

Movements - socially, physically or in virtual reality - can be measured as effective data. In fact the literature on mobility is dominated by descriptions of movements of persons, groups, peoples, institutions, and artefacts from point A to point B in physical and/or social spaces. Academic libraries are full of reports about moving masses of people, goods, and information. And much of the time scientists talk about mobility they imagine flows of people and things. Of course, they do this with good reason because modern society is shaped by mighty flows which become more and more global and which produce tremendous complexities (Urry 2003).

Movements and flows depict the visible parts of mobility. That's why we make a supplementary distinction between mobility and flexibility.

Individuals are part of many flows, they live in structures, participate in networks and use scapes for the realization of plans and projects. Therefore we ask people about their typical mobility performance.

We collect data how people travel, how and how often they change jobs, how dynamic their social networks are, how they use the internet, how they communicate and which technologies they use (e-mail, mobile and other phones, etc.). Of course, we cannot make a comprehensive survey of travel behaviour, social positioning and virtual communication. But what we grasp with our qualitative approach is a specific part of mobility practice. We do not really know how they move, we do not know their effective performance in total. But we clearly identify its characteristic nature and we spotlight on the inner logic of mobility performance.<sup>9</sup> We collect data on the

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<sup>9</sup> In our approach we do not need to know in detail and comprehensively the mobility performance of people. What we need is selective data and information about typical and characteristic movements. Based on this data we develop a typology of mobility patterns (cp. Bonss & Kesselring 2004) and we use the term "mobility management" to characterize their practice (cp. Kesselring & Vogl 2003).

"compulsion of proximity" (Urry 2002) and on other modes of dealing with mobility pressures.

Movements and flows depict the visible parts of mobility. But in fact we do not know if actors travel by their own will or if they are forced to be on the move. That's why we make a supplementary distinction between mobility and flexibility. In some respects this differentiation is inspired by Richard Sennett (1998). In his essay on the "corrosion of character" he describes the flexible man who always obeys market pressure and who has lost tradition as well as autonomy. Flexible humans travel a lot, they frequently change social relations, but their decisions and activities indicate in the first place flexibility. They cannot be characterized as a sign of mobility, because there is a lack of independence and self-determination. It is often difficult to decide whether an actor is adjusted to the market and higher authorities or able to realize own projects and plans while being "on the move". We need to reconstruct this from material and that is the reason why we are searching for inconsistencies in mobility narrations. Interviewees produce themselves as "makers of their own mobility". But intense work with empirical materials reveals the limits of autonomy and shows mobility as something very scarce and full of constraints. This is the reason why we intensively ask interviewees why they socially, physically and virtually travel.

Motility as a set of capabilities and skills is the key to describe individual and collective actors' "optional spaces to mobility".

In the next step we concentrate on what enables people to do this? We try to identify sets of competence and skills which characterize their relationship to

mobility. At this point, the concept of motility becomes important. We use the term motility for the actors' mobility potential, and we mean the competence to move and a specific set of capabilities and skills which enables actors to realize specific plans and projects. Vincent Kaufmann points out that "motility refers to the system of mobility potential. At the individual level, it can be defined as the way in which an actor appropriates the field of possible action in the area of mobility, and uses it to develop individual projects" (Kaufmann 2002, 1). Motility as a set of capabilities and skills is the key to describe individual and collective actors' "optional spaces to mobility" (Canzler & Knie 1998).

Paul Virilio (1992, 1998) uses the concept of motility, too. He describes the decoupling of mobility potentials and movement and he points out the "raging standstill" of modern societies. But obviously our interest is quite different to Virilio's concept. We want to identify what enables people to be mobile and to understand themselves as mobile actors. We know that it is not the autonomous subject that moves but complex networks and configurations of material elements, capitals, power and dominance etc. which "produce" or restrict mobility. But we use individuals, e.g. single persons as hatches into complex networks. We start with the body and the embodied competence and skills we can identify. But through the body we recognize a mess of socio-, techno- and ethnoscares that we need to sort, to re-arrange and to systematize in a sensible and sociologically fruitful way. These scares are part of the motility because we reconstruct how people relate to systemic orders like the transport system or the organizational structure of their companies or the market for freelancers etc.

This means, in our work we talk a lot about movement and motility. But we are very careful when we use the term mobility. When movement and motility come together, go hand in hand and melt together into a social conception it makes sense to talk about mobility. Therefore mobility occurs when social, physical and/or virtual movement is an actor's instrument to fulfil specific plans and projects. Consequently this means that in the light of our subject oriented approach the reconstruction of mobility is based on the hermeneutic process of data interpretation. We want to describe if people imagine themselves as creators of their own lives, if they imagine themselves as those who influence the direction of their own moves or if they experience their moves as reactions to pressure and constraints. In other words: do these people in our sample *drive* or are they *driven*? *To drive or to be driven?* – that's the crucial point of our research.

## From directional to non-directional mobility

The theory of reflexive modernization (see Beck 1992, Beck, Giddens & Lash 1994, Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003) always deals with alternative futures, since one of its crucial

Reflexive modernization is conceived as a process of unexpected, unseen and unwanted transformations of the general conditions of modern societies.

theoretical thoughts is that modernity fundamentally transforms itself from first to second (or reflexive) modernity. Social change in the light of

reflexive modernization theory does not result from rational planning and directional optimisation (Beck 1992, Bonss 1995, Bauman 1992, Flyvbjerg 1998). Reflexive modernization is conceived as a process of unexpected, unseen and unwanted transformations of the general conditions of modern societies. It is provoked by the unintended consequences of successful and powerful modern principles like rationality, individuality, globality and mobility in practice. Consequently theory of reflexive modernization focuses on processes of hidden or subversive, e.g. subpolitical transformations of modern institutions and practices (see Beck, Hajer & Kesselring 1999 and Beck & Bonss 2001 for empirical examples). From this point of view the transformation of modernity and mobility as one of its general principles (see Rammler 2001, Kesselring 2001, Bonss, Kesselring & Weiss forthcoming) is non-directional. The interpretation of reflexive modernization breaks with sociological traditions like the Weberian and Durkheimian which anticipate the linear progress of modern capitalism and its institutional and normative settings. In contrast to theorists of linearity like Ritzer (1995) who argues in the tradition of Weber and Durkheim theorists of reflexivity identify a second or "another modernity" and a "different rationality" (Lash 1999).

The concept of first modernity is inextricably connected with the notion of nation-state and national identity. The reference point of theories of (first) modernity is the nation-state institutional and affirmative formation.<sup>10</sup>

This perspective is criticised as an inadequate explanation for the ambivalences of globalization (Beck 1997, Albrow 1996, Held et al. 1999, Grande 2001). Beck (2002)

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<sup>10</sup> As a paradigmatic position for theories of first modernity Bonss (1995) mentions Parsons (1972) and his functionalistic approach. For a critical discussion of nation state theories see Jessop (2002).



puts it as "methodological nationalism" and argues for a "cosmopolitan sociology" adequate to phenomena like networks, scapes and flows beyond the nation-state and its structurations. A new terminology with notions like (socio)spheres (Albrow 1996), scapes (Appadurai 1998, Urry 2000), transnational social spaces (Pries 1998), connectivity (Tomlinson 1999, Wellman 2000), interconnectedness (Held et al. 1999) liquidity (Bauman 2000), fluids (Mol and Law 1994) and *mobility* (Urry 2000) indicate another perception of society and its structures as mobile, transitory, transformative and liquid. In the end all these approaches of "mobile theorizing" (Albertsen & Diken 2001) suppose the social as such as new configuration and relation of stability and mobility. Ritzer and Murphy (2002) also talk about stable elements in a world of flows. In contrast the very modern sharp view of Max Weber would have identified the mobile in a world of (capitalist) order and stability. As a consequence Beck maintains that theorizing has to skip boundaries and to focus on structurations beyond the nation-state and beyond modern stabilities. Like Urry (2000) he is looking for "societies beyond society" and for re-structuring in a world of dis-embedding. Beck's theory of cosmopolitanism refers to the idea of reflexive or non-directional mobility. The metaphor "roots with wings" (Beck 2002, 408) expresses this thought and points to the empirical question whether social integration and cohesion is possible under conditions of increasing mobility, liquidity and disembedding.<sup>11</sup>

Liquid modernity refers to a social situation of permanent change and mobility.

The modern notion of society is connected with the idea of social and technological security and the calculation of risks (Beck 1992,

Bonss 1995). Modern thinking and modern social concepts concentrate on stability – and modern theorists assume that also after fundamental changes and transformations systems intend to restructure stability.<sup>12</sup> The "will to order" goes right through the classical modern social theories like Parsons' functionalism. The "reduction of complexity" is seen as a general principle of modernity. Heavy modernity (Bauman 2000) or hard capitalism (Thrift 1997) aim to reduce the fluidity of social structures which Simmel postulates as a general principle of life (Simmel 1920). With Bauman it is possible to say that (first) modernity intends the purification of all its elements. Ritzer (1995) reformulates the Weberian idea of modernization as standardization and conformation.

Modernity at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, however, cannot be described with classical "categories of order" any longer. Because second modernity goes hand in hand with liquidity and permanent transformation and is more oriented to contingency than to order. It is the acceptance of permanent change, unpredictability, contingency, disorder and the permanent restructuring of accepted realities. Key words like "networks, scapes and flows" (Urry 2000, Beck 2003), transnational connectivity, interdependency and the dominance of unintended side effects (mad cow disease, GM food, traffic congestion etc.) indicate that second modernity is an era of instability, insecurity and uncertainty. Liquid modernity refers to a social situation of continuous "boundary work" (Nippert-Eng 1996, 7) or rather "boundary management"

<sup>11</sup> In Richard Sennett's book *The Corrosion of Character* (1998) this idea is looked upon from a subjective perspective but as Urry (2000, 2003) shows the problem also exists from a systemic perspective on global flows.

<sup>12</sup> See the famous phrase in the *Communist Manifesto* "All that is solid melts into air...", which expresses the idea that the new just and stable order waits for its fulfilment after the downgrading and the destruction of traditional structures.

(Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003), a situation of permanent change and mobility. Under the conditions of reflexive modernization and global complexity the idea of linear modernization becomes obsolete and loses its touch of practicability and its explanative power. The notions of "meta-change" and the "meta-play of power" (Beck 2002) symbolize that social theory cannot identify the mighty actor who transforms society (e.g. the economy as the key actor in Marxist theories or the dialectics of culture and economy in Simmel's works). And on the other hand the term meta-change indicates that all actors are faced with the problem of identifying their own direction in a world of opaque flows.

The differentiation between simple and reflexive (or first and second) modernity is a heuristic one. The purpose of this differentiation is to identify different reference points for social structuration in modern societies, which are in principle uncertain and ambivalent societies. But in the beginning of modernity (approximately in the 18th century) were other dominant patterns to cope with uncertainty and ambivalence than at the beginning of the 21st century. In the following table, we summarize different reference points and patterns of structuration typical of the two modernities on the micro-, meso- and macro-level:

<b>Dominant reference points for and patterns of social structurations under the conditions of first and second modernity</b>	
Simple Modernity / First Modernity	Reflexive / Second Modernity
Critique of ambiguity → <i>purification</i>	acceptance of ambiguity → <i>pluralism</i>
structures, rules and firmness	networks, scapes and flows
safe / certainty	risky / uncertainty
Durability	Fluidity
(scientification and) <i>predictability</i>	(scientification and) <i>unpredictability</i>
growing stability	growing liquidity
continuity and evolution	discontinuity and change
target oriented	process oriented
(national) <i>order</i>	(cosmopolitan) <i>contingency</i>
stable connections	<i>connectivity</i> as problem and project
(national) structures in the long run	(transnational) structuration for time
Solid boundaries and <i>boundary keeping</i>	Flexible boundaries and <i>boundary management</i>

For sure, people can intensely debate on the systematic and historical meaning of the different reference points and patterns. But today and in our context this is less interesting than the question for the mobility patterns in first and second modernity. Here we have a specific supposition which indicates the main hypothesis of this paper: *along with the emergence of second modernity there are structural changes in mobility, too.*

How is it possible to characterize these structural changes? Let us start with an example and a metaphor. In the 1970s and 1980s motorways in Germany had an origin, a direction and a destination. It was the motorway from Nuremberg to Munich, from Wuerzburg to Ulm or from Cologne to Dortmund. Today it is the A9 and the A7

or it is the rhizomatic structure of relations around conurbations like the Cologne area or the Ruhrgebiet. Nobody talks about origin and destination. In the past each motorway had its history, its identity. It was something special to drive from A to B. Today the orientation is abstract, motorways are places of flow and not places of identification. People using the motorways participate in the TransEuropean Network (TEN) which spreads all over Europe and which makes the A7 to an "episode", a small "bridge", on the way from e.g. The Hague to Rome. People move in a scape, a material structure where they do not understand its constitution and all the relations and conditions shaping it. The scape represents a mobility potential for different individual, collective and societal purposes. It seems to be material but it is a constitutive element of the optional space around us which offers the chances to move and to act (motility). But we realize this system of motorways as just one element in a global network of relations with many crossing points to other modes of transport etc.

This example illustrates our general hypothesis: mobility as a social concept (and not as its reduction to spatial movement, traffic and travel) transforms itself from *directionality* to *non-directionality*. In other words: the social concept of first modern

Mobility as a social concept (and not as its reduction to spatial movement, traffic and travel) transforms itself from directionality to non-directionality.

mobility is *directional*, it emphasizes the necessity and the possibility to develop effective straightness and accuracy – in a spatial as well as in a social way.

Modern mobility in this sense is

conceived as movement with origin, direction and destination. The paradigmatic metaphor is the lightning career as a "meteoric rise" from the bottom to the top. In the concept of first modernity to be mobile means to move on routes, with time-tables and to move socially upwards. The paradigmatic example for a modern form of *spatial* movement since the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the *train*, which was not only incredibly fast, but at the same way it was able to move from one place to another in a direct line and in a calculable manner. In contrast to premodern societies the modern idea of *social* mobility was moulded to the concept of *class* mobility and *vertical career* mobility.

Contradictory, the reflexive concept of mobility is non-directional; it goes along with the experience that straightness is a fiction and the failure of directionality is likely. The striking example is the experience of traffic jam and the failure of the "Dream of Traffic Flow" (Schmucki 2001). In the dimension of social mobility there is the experience of unexpected blockades and the changing of clear cut criteria of inequality to mere differences. Be it long distance travelling, be it career mobility, or be it internet-surfing the experience of moving from one spot to another is often non-directional and actors are faced with disappointing situations of delay, waiting, and breakdown. Experiencing reflexive mobility is full of detours and misty, incomprehensible tracks.

Therefore the social concept of geographical and social mobility changes. In first modernity the dominant concept refers to its paradigmatic idea of unambiguous transport in the geographical dimension and to the idea of clear vertical class, respective, career-mobility. In both dimensions mobility meant moving from one place to another in a more or less direct line. In contrast, the concept of reflexive mobility is constructed in another way; it refers no longer to the paradigmatic idea of linear development, but on concepts of a reticular mobility. This switch seems necessary,

because there are many ways without a clear cut and unambiguous direction for the move, neither under geographical nor under social perspectives. That's why besides the *route-mobility* emerges the *network-mobility* and the dominant idea of *vertical career mobility* gets out of focus, and is replaced by a concept and practice of *horizontal scene mobility*, which calls a permanent and active boundary management. The following table summarizes the different aspects of the concepts of directional and non-directional mobility:

Directional and non-directional mobility	
First modernity: directional mobility	Second modernity: non-directional mobility
Clear origin, unequivocal direction and distinct destination	Muddled origin, ambivalent direction and indistinct destination
Certainty, predictability, planning	Uncertainty, unpredictability, shaping
<i>Route-mobility</i> : moving from one place to another in a direct line and/or with time table	<i>Network-mobility</i> ; rhizomatic moving in a net without direct lines and/or time tables
<i>Vertical mobility</i> : clear cut social ascents /descents according to dominant economic criteria;	<i>Horizontal mobility</i> : no clear criteria for social ascents or descents; unclearness and "new confusion"
<i>class mobility</i> and career mobility	Scene mobility and biographical mobility

## Approaching a systematic view on mobility research

The character of modernity is ambivalent (Beck 1986, Bauman 1992). Simmel points out that the nature of modernity is shaped by the dichotomy of movement and motility and Junge (2000) elaborates how this leads to fundamental ambivalences in the process of modernization. In contrast to premodern societies modern societies are "on the move" (Lash & Urry 1994). They are in a constant flux, always in transition and on the way into new configurations and temporal stabilities (Elias 1997, Urry 2000). The social concept of mobility is an expression for this basic assumption of modernization theory (Rammler 2001, Urry 2000) and it is a societal way of dealing with the ambivalence of modernity. Social, geographical and virtual movements (flows) produce instability and insecurity. The problem of channelling movements of people, goods, artefacts, information, waste etc. becomes evident in the course of western modernization (Thrift 1996). Because there are unintended consequences of spatial and social mobilization, which are inevitable and non-rejectable. Especially the unintended ecological effects of the development of a modern transport system show the problems of modernity with itself (Spitzner 1994, Jahn & Wehling 1999, Bergmann & Loose 1996, Whitelegg 1996). Sustainable mobility is one of the crucial topics which exemplify the reflexive modernization of mobility and mobility politics (Kesselring 2001). It demonstrates the "Wahlverwandtschaft" (Rammler 2001) of first modernity and spatial movements as a resource and a dynamic factor of progress and welfare. And it shows how difficult it is to regulate a deep going change of transport policy, the so called "Verkehrswende" (Hesse 1993). Today we know how risky a radical "Verkehrswende" is and we realize the limits of radical reverse. Concepts like Cash Car and Choice (Canzler & Franke 2000) do accept the "automobilism" (Burkart 1994, Heine, Mautz & Rosenbaum 2001) as a social fact which can be influenced but not substituted by other modes of transport.

Following Junge (2000) we assume different modes of dealing with the ambivalence of mobility and modernity. How to cope with uncertainty depends in principle on the basic perception of the structural ambiguity of modernity. We distinguish three versions:

- Ambivalences can be seen as *antinomies*, as incongruent and indissoluble "contradictory certainties" (Schwarz and Thompson 1990). This is the standard reading/interpretation in the context of first modernity.
- Ambivalences can be seen as *inconsistencies*. Inconsistencies are not contradictory certainties, on the contrary: they are incompatible at first glance, but may be integrated in the long run.
- Ambivalences can be interpreted as *pluralism*, i.e. as equally good possibilities, which are not contradictory but indifferent and perhaps paradox.

Each of these versions indicates specific strategies or modes to cope with ambivalence. If we conceive ambivalences as *antinomies* and contradictory certainties, the fitting strategy is to resolve the contradiction, i.e. to decide for one of the contradictory certainties and to fight for their realization. In this case the reaction to the problem of ambiguity is the search for clearness and unambiguity by purification. People operate with the supposition, that in principle there is only one best solution not only for technological, but also for social problems.

In the second case, the fitting strategy does not take aim at purification. If ambivalences are seen as *inconsistencies*, the incompatibilities cannot be abolished by decision and optimal solutions, but at most by time. How this functions can be studied at the educational novels since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which present their heroes as inconsistent, but developing persons who may be able to integrate highly different concepts and identities into their biography.

The third version characterizes the highest degree of the acceptance of ambivalence. Because for the supporters of the pluralistic reading there exist no one-best-way solutions, but only different solutions, which may be indifferent or paradox. In this perspective ambivalence is a normal phenomenon, and hence there is not necessarily the claim to integrate the different concepts and identities.

We suppose that the different concepts to cope with structural ambivalences correspond with specific principles and also with characteristics of societal structuration. If the structural ambivalences are interpreted as antinomies, social reality usually seems to be characterized by heteronomy; as already Marx noticed, the dominant principle of structuration in this case is property and the social conflicts are property induced class conflicts. Other accents can be noticed, if the structural ambivalencies are perceived as inconsistencies. Here the key-words are autonomy, possession and milieu. The third possibility is to interpret ambivalencies as pluralism. In this case the structure of social reality is characterized neither by heteronomy nor by autonomy but by relationality. Formative for societal structuration is therefore neither property nor possession but access, and the concrete social structure isn't a structure of classes or milieus but of networks.

It would be a topic of its own to discuss the connections between the different models coping with ambivalences and the concepts of societal structuration in detail. More interesting in the context of our workshop is the question, whether specific reactions to ambivalence correspond to specific concepts of mobility. It's difficult to answer this

question definitively, but there is no doubt, that there is a connection between the ambivalence and mobility concepts. We identify three general framings of the ambivalences and inconsistencies of mobility phenomena. We suppose them as sensible and useful for generating further research in the field of cosmopolitan mobilities:

We talk about the so called *moving masses perspective*. It is the predominant framing of mobility phenomena. No matter if it is the „Constant Flux“ (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992) of social mobility research or those who deal with traffic flows, passenger movements and the transport of goods. The problem is always to handle and aggregate mass data on movements and flows. Mobility is conceived here as movement. By looking on flows of humans, things, information, and waste etc. the flows appear to be quasi-natural and derived from nature not from society. Because of their quasi-character it seems that they could only be channeled but not influenced and reduced in depth. This seems to be valid especially in the field of transport research but it is also important for research on social mobility and migration.

In some research traditions (e.g. the Chicago school and some areas of social geographical research) the first perspective is interrelated to a second which we call the mobile subject perspective. This is for instance the case when mass data is going to be contrasted with questions of mobility motives, reasons and perceptions of migration, travel and tourism etc. (cp. Lassen 2004) and if researchers collect data on mobility diaries etc. (cp. Jahn & Wehling 1999, Götz & Schultz 1995). More precise we can illustrate this perspective of mobile subjects in qualitative research and methodology as it is used e.g. by Franke (2001), Hollstein (2003), and during the first phase of the mobility pioneers project (cp. Bonss et al. 2002, Pelizäus-Hoffmeister 2001, Kesselring 2003). These studies focus on the decision making of mobility practice. Individuals do not disappear among the masses but emerge as political subject able to construct mobility by using its motility (cp. Bonss & Kesselring 2001, Kaufmann 2001).

In contrast the motile hybrid perspective conceives society as relational and interdependent. The structure action dualism (Giddens 1995) emerges as a reflexive circular process through networks, scapes and flows (Jessop 2001). Individual and collective actors we understand as nodes in social as well as material global networks. The visible part of mobility occurs as effective movement in networks and along certain scapes (roads, tracks, cables and the social technologies which constitute them). Mobile subjects are conceived as contextualized. We interpret them as “quasi-subjects” (Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003), able to act, forced to decide and structured by powerful social as well as material network configurations (cp. Mol & Law 1994). In other words, the openness and mouldability of mobile subjects contrasts with the powerful constraints and the governing of institutional settings and contexts (e.g. work relations, family, social integration etc.).

From this point of view the movements and motilities of hybrids appear as something paradox, where actors interpret themselves as subjects with mobility politics, with individual decision making, freedom of movement etc. while being highly restricted and limited. Mobility politics and the boundary management between the construction of individuality and the adaptation to constraints from outside becomes something very ambiguous and it definitively loses its character as a clear cut phenomenon.

The following table once again presents the different concepts of dealing with modern ambivalences. They are linked to different versions of mobility research which should be understood as complementary not as competing concepts.

<b>Modern Ambiguity and Concepts of Mobility</b>			
<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Concept I (first-modernity- standard)</b>	<b>Concept II (first / second modernity)</b>	<b>Concept III (second modernity)</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>			
Interpretation of the structural ambiguity as ...	Antinomy	Inconsistency	Pluralism
Reaction to the problem of ambiguity	Searching for clearness and unambiguity by purification	Acceptance and Integration of inconsistencies	Ambivalence as normality
Solution type	Optimal solutions	Suboptimal solutions	Indifferent or paradox solutions
Principles and characteristics of	Class	Milieu	Network
societal structuration	Property	Possession	Access
	Heteronomy	Autonomy	Relationality
Structural trends and challenges	Liquidity	Boundary management	Politics of perspectives
Preferred concept of mobility	Mono-mobility	Multi-mobility	Temporalized use of mobility technologies
Models of mobility research	Moving masses	Mobile subjects	Motile hybrids
“Leitbild” / paradigmatic example	Train	Car	Internet
Scientific Aggregation	“User classes”	“User profiles”	“Fragmented mobilities”

The combination of these different perspectives on mobility will transform mobility research on many levels. New transdisciplinary centres and foci in mobility research will emerge, because the “leitbilder” and models of (social, physical and virtual) mobility research come into question. Mobility as mono-mobility seems to lose its dominance and multi-mobility and the temporal use of mobility technologies are getting more and more important. This leads to a conceptual shift in mobility research as a whole and to a transgression of disciplinary boundaries as well as to a new methodology.

Ulrich Beck describes a similar change of paradigms with his concept of a methodological “cosmopolitanism” (Beck 2002). According to Beck we observe the institutional and material structure of nation state societies in transformation. Subversively, subpolitically and unnoticed from science and politics there emerge structurations beyond classical concepts and beyond effective boundaries. The concentration on the territory and its supposed power for social and national integration for societies and cultures seem to be obsolete or at least in question. New categories and concepts are necessary for an appropriate description of “what

happens" in a mobile world. Beck underpins Urry's proposal for "networks, scapes and flows" as the adequate terminological triangle for an analysis of mobilities beyond the nation state (cp. Urry 2000 and

Beck underpins Urry's proposal for "networks, scapes and flows" as the adequate terminological triangle for an analysis of mobilities beyond the nation state.

Beck forthcoming, „Der kosmopolitische Blick“, Kap. III, S. 18). Beck refuses the still predominant structure paradigm of western sociology with its fixations on nation states as

reference points for social analysis and theory. Against this background taken for granted boundaries and concepts from the structure paradigm like national & international, citizen & foreigner, property & non-property and so on come into a state of flux. The question raises if theses concepts still refer to a certain practice of more or less cosmopolitan human beings. And we assume that under conditions of reflexive modernization they lose their explanative power.





## **The New Mobilities Paradigm**

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There is a 'mobility turn' spreading into and transforming the social sciences, transcending the dichotomy between transport research and social research, putting the social into travel and connecting different forms of transport with the complex patterns of social experience conducted through various communications at-a-distance. In other words, it seems that a new paradigm is being formed within the social sciences, the 'new mobilities' paradigm.

Recent contributions to the forming, establishing and stabilising of this new cross or post-disciplinary paradigm derive from cultural studies, geography, science studies, transport studies, sociology and so on. Other analyses have developed the new paradigm in relationship to specific leisure and travel practices. In this paper I seek to draw out some characteristics, properties and implications of this emergent paradigm, to extend and develop this 'mobility turn' within the social sciences.

### **Social science as static**

The significance of this paradigm is challenging the ways that much social science research has been 'a-mobile', ignoring or trivializing the systematic movements of people for work and family, leisure and pleasure. The social sciences have mostly failed to examine how social life presupposes both the actual and the imagined movement of people from place to place, person to person, event to event. Travel has been for the social sciences a black box, a neutral set of technologies and processes predominantly permitting forms of economic, social and political life that are explicable in terms of other, more causally powerful processes. And yet even apparently simple societies are connected elsewhere through complex trading and travel routes, as in the case of the Mediterranean.

The static nature of social science can be starkly seen in its analysis of the car in the twentieth century. Three social science 'disciplines' that ought to have examined its social implications are industrial sociology, consumption studies and urban studies. But within industrial sociology there has been little examination of how the much-analysed mass production of cars has extraordinarily transformed social life. It did not see how the huge number of cars produced through 'Fordist' methods were impacting upon the patterns of social life as car ownership became 'democratised', generalised and globalised (with 700m or so now roaming the earth).

Within the study of consumption there has not been much examination of the use-value of cars in permitting novel modes of mobility, new ways of dwelling in movement and a global car culture to develop. The main question for consumption analysis has concerned sign-values, with the ways that car ownership in general or the ownership of particular models does or does not enhance people's status position.

And it is the absence of the car in the analysis of the urban that is most striking. It was in the modern city that the founders of sociology first envisioned the contraction of social space, the density of transactions, and the compression of 'social distance' that comprised modernity. Yet sociology's view of urban life failed to consider the overwhelming impact of the automobile in transforming the time-space 'scapes' of the modern urban/suburban dweller. Indeed urban studies have at best concentrated upon the socio-spatial practice of *flânerie*. It has been presumed that the movement, noise, smell, visual intrusion and environmental hazards of the car are largely irrelevant to deciphering the nature of city-life. Urban analyses have been largely static, failing to consider how the car reconfigures urban life, with novel ways of dwelling, travelling and socialising in, and through, an automobilised time-space. Mobility is as constitutive of modernity as is urbanity, that civil societies of the west are societies of 'automobility'. Car-drivers dwelling-within-their-cars, and excluding those without cars or without the 'license' to drive such cars, produce the temporal and spatial geographies of cities as a function of motorised mobility. Pedestrians and cyclists are confined to small slivers of the urban public, while many public-transport users are relatively excluded from citizenship. Only those moving (however slowly) in cars, taxis and trucks are *public* within a system where public spaces have been seized, through notions of individual choice and personal flexibility, and then turned into the 'iron-cages' of modernity. Overall we might thus say that the social scientist has not noticed that he or she sees the city *through* the car windscreen.

Transport is mostly a means to certain socially patterned activities and not the point of such activities.

Transport researchers though have in turn taken the 'demand' for transport as largely given, as a black box not needing much further investigation, or as derived

from the level of a society's income. Also transport researchers tend to examine simple categories of travel, such as commuting, leisure, or business. This though presumes that social activities can be divided up and then explained through such 'transport' derived categories.

What is rare is instead to begin from the complex patterning of people's varied and changing social activities. The developing and fulfilling of such activities then means that travel is sometimes *necessary* for social life, enabling complex connections to be made between workmates or leisure groups or crime networks or professional associations or voluntary associations or family or friends. These connections are often a matter of social obligation. But understanding such connections should not begin with the types and forms of transport. Transport is mostly a means to certain socially patterned activities and not the point of such activities. The mobilities paradigm thus asserts that there is too much transport in transport research.

## Multiple mobilities

Mobilities need to be examined in their fluid interdependence and not in their separate spheres (such as driving, travelling virtually, writing letters, flying, walking and so on). Social science has been static in its theory and research. It has not sufficiently examined how enhanced by various technologies people move. But also it has not seen how images and communications are also intermittently on the move and how those actual and potential movements organise and structure social life. Mobilities in

this paradigm is thus used in a broad-ranging generic sense, embracing physical movement such as walking and climbing to movement enhanced by technologies,

Mobilities in this paradigm is used in a broad-ranging generic sense, embracing physical movement such as walking and climbing to movement enhanced by technologies, bikes and buses, cars and trains, ships and planes.

bikes and buses, cars and trains, ships and planes. It also includes movements of images and information on local, national and global media. The concept of mobilities embraces one-to-one communications such as the

telegraph, fax, telephone, mobile, as well as many-to-many communications effected through networked and increasingly embedded computers. The study of mobility also involves analysis of the immobile infrastructures that organise the intermittent flow of people, information and image, as well as the borders or 'gates' that limit, channel and regulate movement or anticipated movement. And it involves examining how the transporting of people *and* the communicating of messages, information and images increasingly converge and overlap through recent digitisation.

The significance of such fluid interdependence can be seen in Wittel's ethnography of 'network sociality'. This he says involves: 'cars, trains, buses and the underground, airplanes, taxis and hotels, and it is based on phones, faxes, answering machines, voicemail, video-conferencing, mobiles, email, chat rooms, discussion forums, mailing lists and web sites' (Wittel 2001: 69; he also notes the importance of old-fashioned business cards!). Somewhat analogously Axhausen (2002) notes the array of tools now necessary for successful 'networking': a car or the budget for taxis, budget and access for long distance travel, location free contact points (answering service, email, web site), and sufficient time or assistance to manage these components especially when one or other 'fails'. Indeed Axhausen maintains that the greater the proliferation of such 'tools' and hence the greater the networking the more that access to such tools is obligatory in order to participate fully in a 'networked society'. There is therefore a set of feedback mechanisms that extend the mobility-burden as the range of 'network tools' expands and heightens the range, extent and heterogeneity of networks.

Social life thus seems full of multiple and extended connections often across long distances, but these are organized through certain nodes. Mobilities thus entail distinct social spaces that orchestrate new forms of social life around such nodes, of stations, hotels, motorways, resorts, airports, leisure complexes, cosmopolitan cities, beaches, galleries and so on. These are places of intermittent movement.

The new mobilities paradigm posits that activities can occur while on the move.

Also *contra* much transport research the time spent traveling is not dead time that people

always seek to minimize. While the transport literature tends to distinguish travel from activities, the new mobilities paradigm posits that activities can occur while on the move, that being on the move can involve sets of 'occasioned' activities. Research within the new mobilities paradigm examines the embodied nature and experience of different modes of travel, seeing them in part as forms of material and sociable dwelling-in-motion, places of and for various activities (on cars, see Featherstone, Thrift, Urry 2004).

This paradigm thus emphasizes not so much the demand and supply of different modes of travel and communications but rather the complex patterning of people's varied and changing social activities. It is these social practices that are to be analysed as contingently enabled through the intermittent and interdependent use of diverse and intersecting forms of travel and communications. These practices involve distinct ways of organizing the combinations and experiences of presence *and* absence.

Furthermore a clear distinction is often drawn between destinations and those contingently travelling to such destination. The researcher typically examines those forces that from time to time propel people to travel to such destinations. These places are seen as pushing or pulling people to visit. Places are presumed to be relatively fixed, given and separate from those visiting. The new mobility paradigm argues against this ontology of qualitatively distinct 'places', on the one hand, and 'people', on the other. Rather there is a complex relationality of places and peoples connected through performances. Thus activities are not separate from the places that happen contingently to be visited. Indeed the places travelled to partly depend upon what is practised within them. Moreover, many such performances are intermittently mobile 'within' the destination place itself; travel is not just a question of travelling in order to get *to* that destination (two forthcoming books explore this: Sheller and Urry 2004; Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen, Urry 2004).

Places are like ships, moving around and not necessarily staying in one location. In the new mobilities paradigm places themselves are seen as travelling, slow or fast, greater or shorter distances, within networks of human and non-human agents.

The 'place' itself is not so much fixed but is itself implicated within complex networks by which 'hosts, guests, buildings, objects and machines' are contingently brought together so as to produce certain performances in certain places at certain times. They are (re)produced through systems of

performances, made possible and contingently stabilised through networked relationships with other organisations, buildings, objects and machines. Places are thus dynamic – 'places of movement'. Places are like ships, moving around and not necessarily staying in one location. In the new mobilities paradigm places themselves are seen as travelling, slow or fast, greater or shorter distances, within networks of human and non-human agents. Places are about relationships, about the placing of peoples, materials, images and the systems of difference that they perform. But at the same time as places are dynamic, they are also about proximities, about the bodily co-presence of people who happen to be in that place at that time, doing activities together, moments of physical proximity between people that make travel desirable or even obligatory.

## Theories

My proposal here is that there is an emergent mobilities paradigm and this problematises three kinds of extant theory. First, it undermines *sedentarist* theories present in many studies in geography, anthropology and sociology. Such sedentarism locates bounded and authentic places or regions or nations as the fundamental basis of human identity and experience. The new paradigm emphasises that all places are

tied into at least thin networks of connections that stretch beyond each such place and mean that nowhere can be an 'island'.

Also problematised by the new mobilities paradigm is *nomadic* theory that celebrates the opposite of sedentarism, namely, metaphors of mobility and flight. These metaphors celebrate mobilities that progressively move beyond both geographical borders and indeed beyond disciplinary boundaries. The new paradigm emphasises how all mobilities entail specific often highly embedded and immobile infrastructures.

Relatedly there is the rejection of the 'cultural critique of placelessness' associated with Augé's (1999: 110) analysis of non-places 'where people coexist or cohabit without living together'. But these analyses according to the new paradigm insufficiently document how there are hybrid systems that combine objects, technologies and socialities, and out of those socialities distinct kinds of places come to be produced and reproduced, even if they are places of 'movement'.

Places are not fixed and authentic. The new mobilities paradigm seeks to move beyond these notions, to view places as significant to those living or working in them but often to those visiting or passing through. It sees places as contingently stabilised sources of deeply held meanings and attachments but where these stem from networks that enable embodied and material performances to occur. So forms of transport do not determine places nor do nomads overwhelm them and nor do non-places of movement evade practices of place stabilisation and significance. In order to develop these notions further six bodies of contemporary theory need to be enrolled.

1. There is social theory that involves mobilising the 'spatial turn' in the social sciences. Theories of a 'liquid modernity' redirects research away from static structures of the modern world to see how social entities comprise people, machines and information/images in systems of movement. There is a shift from a heavy and solid modernity to one that is light and liquid and where speed of movement of people, money, images and information is paramount. Rifkin (2000: 191-3) notes that contemporary 'science' no longer sees anything 'as static, fixed and given'; rather apparent hard and fast entities are always comprised of rapid movement and there is no structure separate from process. Hardt and Negri suggest that nation-state sovereignty has been replaced by a single system of mobile power, of 'empire': a 'smooth world', de-territorialized and decentred, without a centre of power, with no fixed boundaries or barriers (Hardt and Negri 2000: 136). Such mobility analyses can be seen in examining migration, diasporas and more fluid senses of citizenship.

2. Drawing on theories from science and technology studies mobile socio-technical systems are analysed as hybrids. Networks are seen as on occasions tightly coupled with complex, enduring and predictable connections between peoples, objects and technologies across multiple and distant spaces and times. Relative distance is a function of the relations between the components comprising that network. The invariant outcome of a network is delivered in ways that often overcome regional boundaries. Things are made close through these networked relations. Humans are intricately networked with machines, software, texts, objects, databases and so on. Law (1994: 2) argues: 'the notion that social ordering is, indeed simply social also disappears. ...what we call the social is materially heterogeneous: talk, bodies, texts, machines, architectures, all of these and many more are implicated in and perform the social'. Mobilities involve complex hybrids of humans-and-machines that contingently

enable people and materials to move and to hold their shape as they move across various regions.

3. Means of travel are not only ways of getting as quickly as possible from A to B. Each means provides different experiences, performances and affordances. This can be seen in analyses of how the growth of the railway in the late nineteenth century provided new ways of moving, socialising and seeing. While various analyses show how the car is 'dwelt in' or corporeally inhabited and experienced through a combination of senses (Featherstone, Thrift, Urry 2004). There is no separation made between the traveller and the means of travel. There is a complex sensuous relationality between the two.

4. Patterns of mobility involve an intermittent face-to-face relationship with places, with events and with people. Mobilities especially involve occasioned, intermittent face-to-face conversations and meetings within certain places at certain moments that seem obligatory for the sustaining of families, friendship, workgroups, businesses and leisure organisations that simultaneously involve periods of distance and solitude. Thus it is necessary to draw upon interactional, conversational and biological analyses of reading and interpreting people face-to-face.

5. Since mobilities produce and develop extensive and far-flung social connections, so it is necessary to examine topologies of such social networks and especially the patterning of weak ties that generate 'small worlds' amongst those apparently unconnected (Buchanan 2002). The nature of extensive weak ties stretching across time and space are important for examining putative global connections, as social life appears to move to a more networked model and where there is less likelihood of chance meetings. More generally, Capra argues that networks are the key to late twentieth century advances in science concerned with investigating the 'web of life ... Whenever we look at life, we look at networks' (Capra 1996: 82).

6. Mobilities seem to produce and reproduce complex systems that are neither perfectly ordered nor anarchic. Dynamic systems possess emergent properties. There

Systems can rapidly change through reaching a 'tipping point' as with the explosive growth of mobile phone use or communications between offices using faxes.	is an 'orderly disorder' present within dynamic or complex adaptive systems as shown in many recent formulations (Urry 2003). Systems develop over time
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so that corporations and households are locked into stable 'path dependent' practices (such as the steel-and-petroleum car). But systems can rapidly change through reaching a 'tipping point' as with the explosive growth of mobile phone use or communications between offices using faxes. Elsewhere I have tried to establish what might be the small causes that could conceivably tip the car system into a post-car system (Urry 2004).

## Methods

The new paradigm will deploy some novel methods and exemplars of research. Research methods will need to be 'on the move', in effect to simulate intermittent mobility in various ways. I mention briefly some such newer more mobile methods.

1. There is the 'observation' of people's movement directly or by recording digital images, such as bodies strolling, driving, leaning, running, climbing, lying on the ground. This thus involves observing directly or in digitally enhanced forms mobile bodies undergoing various performances of travel, work, and play.
2. There is participation within certain sites and then interviewing; to participate in patterns of movement and then to interview people, individually or in focus groups, as to how their diverse mobilities constitute their patterning of everyday life. This method we can call 'participation-while-interviewing'.
3. There is the keeping of 'time-space diaries' so that people record for different periods what they were doing and where, and how they moved during those periods. This would enable the researcher to plot how the household, and indeed different household members, move through time-space and perform activities often on the move. The diary could be textual, pictorial or digital.
4. There is the method of what we might call 'co-present immersion'. This involves the researcher being co-present within modes of movement and then employing a range of observation, interviewing and recording techniques.
5. There is imaginative travel normally involving experiencing or anticipating in one's imagination the 'atmosphere of place'. This necessitates novel research since atmosphere is neither reducible to the material infrastructures nor to the discourses of representation. It would involve multi media methods.
6. Much travel and communication involve the active development and performances of 'memory'. This necessitates research methods that simulate the active employment of photographs, letters, images, souvenirs, objects. However, as much of this is familial or private there is a major challenge to get inside such private worlds and to excavate 'family secrets' especially about places of loss or desire.
7. There are multiple 'transfer points' 'places of in-between-ness' involved in being mobile (lounges, waiting rooms, cafés, amusement arcades, parks, hotels, airports, stations, motels, harbours). These 'places' necessitate a significant immobile network so that others can be on the move. Research of those temporarily immobilised needs to be developed.



## Airport spaces

Some methods and theories of the new mobilities paradigm can be briefly seen by examining the rather strange if iconic space of the new world order, the airport. The

The airport is a process of transmission of people into global relationships. The airport is a process of transmission of people into global relationships, what Gottdiener (2001: 10-11) calls a 'space of transition' that

facilitates the shrinkage of the globe and the transcendence of time and space. Air travel is one 'space of flows' that increasingly move people apparently seamlessly around the world especially connecting various hub airports located in major 'global' cities. This emphasises the *system* of airports that link together places, forming networks that bring connected places closer together, while distancing those places that are not so connected. This emphasises that the system of airports is key to the very constitution of many global processes, permitting travel to see face-to-face many people and places from around the world. This approach to airports emphasises their 'hub-like' system character.

Air terminals are becoming like cities, cities are becoming like airports.

Moreover, airports possess a specific contingent materiality; they are places of material organisation and considerable

social complexity. Airports are places of: 'the boring, everyday, routine, but essential operations, processes, systems, and technologies, that enable global mobility to occur' (Parker 2002: 16). Airports are places of work for often tens of thousands of workers located within airport-cities. Various non-human actants, combined with rule-following humans, enable, for example, air traffic control systems to effect high levels of safe take-off and landings. Certain airports like Schiphol are being redesigned to make them destinations in their own right: 'the implosive articulation of a many-purposed pedestrian crowd creates a critical mass of social density, much like the busy downtown district of a large central city. With enough interacting people, the scene itself emerges as a distinct feature of place' (Gottdiener 2001: 21-2). As a consequence there is increasing amounts of 'dwelltime' in places of transit. In such places: 'i[I]nstead of experiencing waiting time as wasted time...the urban traveller is invited to use transit time to accumulate useful experiences of leisure and work' (Lloyd 2003: 94).

And increasingly air terminals are becoming like cities but also in what has been called the frisk society, cities are becoming like airports. Mobilities have many consequences for different peoples and places that are located in the fast and slow lanes across the globe (as from Manhattan to Afghanistan). There are new places and technologies that enhance the mobility of some peoples and places *and* heighten the immobility of others. These new mobility places and technologies include detention centres, cosmopolitan cities, diasporas, GPS systems, ethnic restaurants, CCTV, congestion charges, inclusive resorts, airport lounges, distant families, internet cafés, motels, Chinatowns, iris recognition security, intermodal traffic interchanges and so on. These are trialed within airports before moving out as mundane characteristics of cities, places of fear and highly contingent ordering within the new world disorder.

## New mobilities

These last points lead on to consider what the new mobilities paradigm might say about recent changes in mobilities. I will briefly mention a number of complex system developments.

Pervasive computing produces a switching and mobility between different self-reproducing systems.

First, it seems that material changes seem to be 'de-materialising' connections, as people, machines, images, information, power, money, ideas

and dangers are 'on the move', making and remaking networks at increasingly rapid speed across the world. Social networks are thus underpinned by technologies based upon time-frames transcending human consciousness. Computers make decisions in nanosecond time, producing instantaneous and simultaneous effects. Pervasive computing produces a switching and mobility between different self-reproducing systems, such as the internet with its massive search engines, databases of information storage and retrieval, world money flows especially through the ubiquitous 'spreadsheet culture', intelligent transport systems, robotic vision machines under the oceans, and vision machines more generally.

There is no linear increase in fluidity without extensive systems of immobility.

But this is only possible because of how there are interdependent systems of 'immobile' material worlds and especially some exceptionally immobile platforms

(transmitters, roads, garages, stations, aerials, airports, docks). The *complex* character of such systems stems from the multiple fixities or moorings often on a substantial physical scale that enable the fluidities of liquid modernity. Thus 'mobile machines', such as mobile-phones, cars, aircraft, trains, and computer connections, all presume overlapping and varied time-space immobilities (Urry 2003: chap 7). There is no linear increase in fluidity without extensive systems of immobility. Such immobilities include wire and co-axial cable systems, the distribution of satellites for radio and television, the fibre-optic cabling carrying telephone, television and computer signals, the mobile phone masts that enable micro-wave channels to carry mobile phone messages (with new mobile phones now more common in the world than conventional land-line phones) and the massive infrastructures that organise the physical movement of people and goods. Thus the so-far most powerful mobile machine, the aeroplane, requires the largest and most extensive immobility, the airport-city with tens of thousands of workers helping to orchestrate the 4m airflights each day.

The twenty first century will be organised around new 'machines' enabling 'people' to be more mobile through space, forming small world connections 'on the go'. There are various self-organising systems, co-evolving and interdependent, that are extending and reorganising social networks in the contemporary era. This results in the dramatic bending of time and space, making networks more fluid, and this generates dynamic system characteristics. Such compression of time and space was graphically seen in the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Time-space was 'curved' into new complex configurations as the 'whole world' was brought dramatically closer. Systems of material worlds produce *new* moments of unintended and dangerous co-presence.

The 'gates' designed to prevent networks from colliding are less sustainable as flows of terrorists slip under, over and through various borders, eliminating invisibilities that kept networks apart.

Time-space is 'curved' into new complex configurations.

Thus the mobilities of money laundering, the drug trade, urban crime, asylum seeking, arms trading, people smuggling, slave

trading, and urban terrorism, all result in the chaotic juxtaposition of different spaces. And as Mann noted global diseases rapidly move: 'The world has rapidly become much more vulnerable to the eruption and, more critically, to the widespread and even global spread of both new and old infectious diseases...the dramatic increase in worldwide movement of people, goods and ideas is the driving force... A person harbouring a life-threatening microbe can easily board a jet plane and be on another continent when the symptoms of illness strike. The jet plane itself, and its cargo, can carry insects and infectious agents into new ecologic settings' (cited Buchanan 2002: 172). Time-space is thus 'curved' into new complex configurations. Only a few long-range transport connections are necessary to generate epidemics, such as SARs that occurred within the very mobile Chinese diaspora in 2003 (especially between south China, Hong Kong and Toronto).

'Persons' will occur as various nodes in multiple machines of inhabitation and mobility. The twenty first century will be the century of machines inhabited by individuals or very small groups of individuals. Through inhabiting such machines humans come to 'life'. Inhabited machines are miniaturised, privatised, digitised and mobilised; they include walkmans, mobile phones, the individual TV, the networked computer/internet, the individualised smart car/bike, virtual reality 'travel', tele-immersion sites, laptops, personal organisers, wireless connections, helicopters, smart small aircraft and other micro-mobiles yet to emerge. Such machines are closely interwoven with the corporeal. Steve Mann's 'wearable computing' indexes the development of various prototypes of inhabited machines (see [www.wearcam.org](http://www.wearcam.org)). There is therefore a convergence between transport and communication, 'mobilising' the requirements and characteristics of co-presence. Storage in such machines is digitised and hence is not only just-in-time but also just-in-space.

Such inhabiting machines entail a person-to-person connectivity. 'People', 'internet' and 'information' increasingly overlap and converge, generating irreversible changes that move social connections towards 'personalized networking'. There is a shift from place-to-place to person-to-person communities: 'personalization, portability, ubiquitous connectivity, and imminent wireless mobility of the Internet all facilitate networked individualism ... t[T]he person has become the portal' with the shift from little boxes to personal networks (Haythornthwaite and Wellman 2002: 34).

Such networking involves a 'society of the schedule' as each person's daily time-space patterns are desynchronised from community and place. Organising co-presence becomes more demanding, as there is a loss of collective coordination even within each day. The real or virtual appointments diary becomes more necessary as industrial time shifts to a much more variegated professional time in which meeting up becomes a matter of multiple techniques of effecting co-presence. But the use of such networking tools makes scheduling even more necessary as 'clusters' dissolve into

more personal forms of somewhat distinct personal networks, what has been described as the 'do-it-yourself' scheduling society of personalised networking.

Methods and theories will need to be ever more mobile.

Bogard (2000: 40) describes the importance of: 'the rapidly evolving symbiosis of bodies and computers, groups and

communications networks, societies and cybernetic systems'. As a result: Cyberspace communications, in a word, are strange – at the push of a button, territories dissolve, oppositions of distant and close, motion and stasis, inside and out, collapse; identities are marginalized and simulated, and collectivities lose their borders' (Bogard 2000: 28). Thus there are often 'strangers' in our midst. These 'strangers' appear on multiple screens in the workplace, home, car, airport, shopping centre, post office, bar, store, garage, train, aircraft and so on. There is the widespread growth of 'ambient television', as well as more generally ubiquitous computer screens.

This set of changes produces a 'flickering' combination of both presence *and* absence that the new mobilities paradigm will be struggling to keep up with as the new century chaotically unfolds. Methods and theories will need to be ever more mobile.



## **Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Society**

Ulrich Beck, Munich

This paper raises the following questions: what is new about mobility in the cosmopolitan perspective? How does the cosmopolitan gaze, or to be more precise, does "methodological cosmopolitanism", change the conceptual frame, the realities and relevance of mobility? I shall develop my argument in five steps:

First I would like to locate the cosmopolitan perspective in the discourse of globalization. Second I want to draw a distinction between philosophical cosmopolitanism and social scientific cosmopolitanism. My third part focuses on the opposition between methodological nationalism and methodological cosmopolitanism. The fourth step outlines the research programme of the cosmopolitan social science, especially related to mobility. Finally the fifth step discusses different ways of perceiving, analyzing and coping with the local-global nexus.

### **Cosmopolitan perspective and the discourse on globalization**

Globalization has exploded into the sociological agenda in the last ten to fifteen years. We can distinguish three reactions: first denial, second conceptual and empirical explorations, third epistemological turn. The first reaction was and is: nothing new. There has been quite a sophisticated defence of conventional economics, sociology, political science etc., which tries to demonstrate that the evidence, which has been brought up in favour of globalization is not really convincing.

But this strategy lost its credibility when a second reaction became prominent, that is a generation of globalization studies, which were concerned with how to define globalization; which aspects of globalization represented historical continuity and discontinuity; and how to theorize the relationship between globalization and modernity, postmodernity and post-colonialism. These studies primarily concentrated on understanding the character of globalization as a social phenomenon; there were important conceptual innovations, operationalizations and empirical studies, represented for example by David Held and his group ("Global Transformations") or, in Germany, Michael Zürn and his group ("Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung?"); Held used the basic term of "interconnectedness", Zürn the term of "denationalisation".

A paradigmatic shift from the dominant national gaze to a cosmopolitan perspective is enforced.

More recently, however, scholars started to ask what implications these socio-historical changes may have for social science itself: when fundamental dualisms - the national and the international, we

and the others, inside and outside - collapse, how does this effect the units of analysis in special fields of social science? In this "epistemological turn" globalization poses a

challenge to existing social scientific methods of inquiry. To be more radical: sociology, political science and ethnography rely on fixed and comparable units of analysis (like survey and comparative research), but they lose their subject of inquiry. They all face significant challenges in reconfiguring themselves for the global era. In order to do this one needs a new standpoint of observation and conceptualization of social relations and consequently a paradigmatic shift from the dominant national gaze to a cosmopolitan perspective is enforced.

## **Philosophical cosmopolitanism and social scientific cosmopolitanism**

As a first step on this way of change we have to distinguish between different versions of "cosmopolitanism": the first, most common sense meaning refers to a plea for cross-cultural and cross-national harmony; this is what I mean by "*normative cosmopolitanism*" or "*philosophical cosmopolitanism*". During the era of enlightenment, European intellectuals heatedly fought over what today would be called two "passwords": "citizen of the world" and "cosmopolitanism". Both terms were always discussed in relation to the then nascent nationalism. What we need to do now is what Walter Benjamin called a "saving critique" of the Enlightenment's distinction between nationalism and cosmopolitanism so we usefully can apply it to twenty-first century reality: the normative notion of cosmopolitanism has to be distinguished from the *descriptive-analytical social science* perspective, which is no longer consistent with thinking in national categories. This I call "analytical-empirical cosmopolitanization". From such a perspective we can observe the growing interdependence and interconnection of social actors across national boundaries, mostly as a side effect of actions that are not meant to be "cosmopolitan" in a normative sense; this is "*real existing cosmopolitanism*" or the "*cosmopolitanization of reality*". This last type of cosmopolitanization refers to the rise of global risks, global publics, global regimes dealing with transnational issues: "*institutionalized cosmopolitanism*".

The "cosmopolitanization of reality" is quite a different thing than imagining cosmopolitanism philosophically.

The philosophical debates on cosmopolitanism have tended to neglect actual existing cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanization. Let me give

you my favourite neglected Kant quote to demonstrate what I mean. It comes from his popular lectures on anthropology and is about the German character: "(The Germans) have no nation pride, and are too cosmopolitan to be deeply attached to the homeland." Is this only further evidence that philosophers know themselves least? Perhaps. But it also suggests that philosophy is of limited use in thinking about real existing cosmopolitanism, because the cosmopolitan challenges are not in theory, but in practice, and - even more important - the "cosmopolitanization of reality" is quite a different thing than imagining cosmopolitanism philosophically.

What are some actually existing cosmopolitanisms? Most of them – this is my main thesis – are not intended but unintended, not a matter of free choice but a matter of being forced. Cosmopolitanism may be an elite concept, cosmopolitanization is *not* an elite concept. Cosmopolitanization, for example, derives from the dynamics of global risks, of migration or from cultural consumption (music, dress styles, food), and the

media impact leads – as John Urry and others showed - to a shift of perspective, however fragile, and growing awareness of relativity of one's own social position and culture in a global arena. All of these actually existing cosmopolitanisms involve individuals with limited choices. The decision to enter a political realm larger than the local one may sometimes be made voluntarily, but it often results from the force of circumstances. More narrowly market-driven choices usually derive from the desire not to be poor, or simply not to die. Entertainment choices are based on a range of options frequently beyond the control of individual consumers. Such compulsions may explain in part why the mass of really existing cosmopolitanization doesn't enter into scholarly discussions of cosmopolitanism: to argue that the choice of cosmopolitanism is in some sense self-betraying and made under duress takes away much of its ethical attractiveness. If cosmopolitanization is both indeterminate and inescapable, it becomes difficult to conceptualize and theorize. Yet such is, I argue, normally the case in a world where the boundaries are deeply contested.

People live in a network of interdependencies, which are becoming tighter by everybody's active participation through production and consumption.

Conceptualizing these different types of cosmopolitanization raises many questions and objections. I want to pick up only one: what do the vastly different variants of "cosmopolitanization" have in common? To what point is it

meaningful to classify, for example "Kant's *Ewiger Friede*", the Rio conference on sustainable development, and white New York teenagers listening to the "black" Rap as variants of "cosmopolitanism"? There is a big difference between Kant's philosophical vision of a cosmopolitan order and the Rio conference, but through the backdoor of "side effects" – that is of the global perception and acceptance of the global risk dynamics - global problems offer options for cosmopolitan solutions and institutions Kant had in mind. And the New York teenager is, of course, not a cosmopolitan. Listening to "black" Rap doesn't make him a cosmopolitan, but an active part of a ever denser global interconnectedness and interpenetration of cultural symbols and flows. From Moscow to Paris, from Rome to Tokyo people live in a network of interdependencies, which are becoming tighter by everybody's active participation through production and consumption. At the same time we are all confronted with global risks – economically, environmentally and by the terrorist threat – which bind underdeveloped and highly developed nations together. One big difference between the classical philosophy debate on cosmopolitanism and sociological cosmopolitanization is: the cosmopolitan philosophy is about free choice, the cosmopolitan sociological perspective informs us about a *forced* cosmopolitanization, a passive cosmopolitanism produced by side effects from radicalised modernisation. And in this context the distinction between globalism and cosmopolitanization is very important.

Globalism involves the idea of the world market, of the virtues of neoliberal capitalist growth, and of the need to move capital, products and people across a relatively borderless world. Cosmopolitanization is a much more multidimensional process of change, that has irreversibly changed the very nature of the social world and the place of states within that world. Cosmopolitanization thus includes the proliferation of multiple cultures (as with cuisines from around the world), the growth of many transnational forms of life, the emergence of various non-state political actors (from Amnesty International to the World Trade Organisation), the paradox generation of global protest movements against globalization, the formation on international or



transnational states – like the European Union – and the general process of cosmopolitan interdependence and global risks. In terms of contemporary politics one might pose these as conflict between the USA and the UN: the USA represents globalism, the UN cosmopolitanization. These two visions of second modernity haunt contemporary life, each trying to control and regulate an increasingly turbulent new world.

## **Opposition between methodological nationalism and cosmopolitanization**

My third argument starts with making a distinction between normative and methodological nationalism. Normative nationalism is about the actor's perspective, methodological nationalism is about the social scientific observer's perspective. The conventional post-war social science regards the nation as a huge container, while international relations are assumed to account for all relations outside that national container. If I had more time I would like to focus in detail on the opposition between methodological nationalism and cosmopolitanization of reality. To some extent methodological nationalism gets historically falsified by cosmopolitanization: subsuming society under the nation-state; generalizing from one society to all others; deterritorialization of ideas about culture; assuming the cultural tightness of national societies and missing to see non-nationalized cultural flows.

Even in world-systems theory, the subunits of the system are almost always nations, whose relations to each other is ordered by capitalist development and interstate competition. Most political scientists and political theories still do equalize state with nation-state; political parties monopolize the representation of political conflicts and so on.

Anthropology, taking the local for the site of culture, which is often analyzed in terms of its relationship to the world of nations (colonialism, nation building etc.), often

“Mobility” stands for a fact and a positive value inside national societies. “Migration” stands for movements of actors across national borders, which is negatively valued and often criminalized.

takes the established hierarchies of the local, the national and the international for granted. This critique of methodological nationalism is only possible from a cosmopolitan point of view. It is the first step of methodological cosmopolitanism.

Critique of methodological nationalism includes reflecting and questioning the basic background assumptions and distinctions. Let me explain this very shortly in the field of mobility research, which often presupposes the distinction between *mobility* and *migration*.

Of course, on the level of the social actor (mainly the nation-state and its citizens) there is a big difference between mobility and migration. “Mobility” stands for a fact and a positive value inside national societies. “Migration” stands for movements of actors across national borders, which is negatively valued and often criminalized. In the national perspective it is both: legal and legitimate to stop or regulate “migration”

while at the same time “mobility” is to be enforced. But if this distinction becomes part of the social science vocabulary and theory, this is a clear case in consequence of methodological nationalism. The problem of this substantial treatment of “migration” and “mobility” is that it adopts categories of *political actors* as categories of *social scientific analysis*. It takes a conception inherent in the practice of nationalism and in the workings of the modern state and state system and makes this conception a centre for social theory, philosophy and research about mobility and migration (aliens and citizens).

Communication knows no borders.

In social and political theory and philosophy one has to ask: what justifies closed borders? What

justifies the use of force against many poor and depressed people, who wish to leave their countries of origin in the Third World to come to Western societies? Perhaps borders and guards can be justified as a way of keeping out criminals, subversives or armed invaders. But most of those trying to get in are not like that. They are ordinary, peaceful “mobile” people, seeking only the opportunity to build decent secure lives for themselves and their families. What gives anyone the right to point guns at them?

It was Niklas Luhmann who argued in his system theory that communication knows no borders. This is one of the main reasons why he criticises the conception of *many* national societies and argued for one and only one society, namely “world society”. There are three contemporary approaches to political theory – Rawls, Nozick and liberalism – to construct arguments to oppose the social scientific distinction between mobility and migration. It is, especially, the liberal tradition of Western societies which contradicts this distinction. Liberalism emerged with the modern state and presupposes it. Liberal theories are deeply rooted in methodological nationalism. They were not designed to deal with questions about migration. They assumed the context of the sovereign state. As a historical observation this is true. But liberal principles (like most principles) have implications that the original advocates of the principles did not entirely foresee. This is one of the reasons why radicalized liberalism can argue for a cosmopolitan perspective and become part of methodological cosmopolitanism.

## The cosmopolitan perspective on mobility

Methodological cosmopolitanism, therefore, is not only about new concepts but about a new *grammar of the social and political*. Methodological cosmopolitanism is *not* justified in itself; it only justifies itself by producing – as Imre Lakatosz calls it – a “positive problem shift”. It justifies it by opening up new fields for research, theoretical interpretation and political action. This shift of perspective from methodological nationalism to methodological cosmopolitanism allows to focus upon quite a lot of different theoretical and empirical landscapes:

- Global risk dynamics: the rise of a global public arena results from the reaction to non-intended side effects of modernization. More precisely, the risks of modern society – terrorism, environment etc. – are inherently trans-national and global in nature and attempts at controlling them lead to the creation of global fora of debate, if not necessarily to global solutions, too.

- Cosmopolitan perspective allows us to go beyond “international relations” and to analyze a multitude of interconnection not only between states, but also between other actors on different levels of aggregation. More than this: it opens up a new space for understanding trans- or post-international relations.
- Sociology of inequality: a denationalized social science can research into the global inequalities that were covered by the traditional focus on national inequality and its legitimation.
- Different forms of “banal cosmopolitanism”: finally, everyday cosmopolitanization on the level of cultural consumption (music, dress styles, food) and media representation leads to a shift of perspective, however fragile, in growing awareness of relativity of one's own social position and culture in a global arena.

But here I want to discuss the question: what kind of innovations derive from a cosmopolitan perspective on mobility?

My first argument relates to a *macro-perspective*: what is the “subject” of mobility?

What is the “subject” of mobility? Not only individuals or groups within or across borders, but also whole national societies and nation-states. This “society mobility” or “state-migration” is a kind of immobile mobility of a territorialized unit.

Not only individuals or groups within or across borders, but also whole national societies and nation-states. This “society mobility” or “state-migration” is a kind of *immobile mobility* of a territorialized unit. It can be studied in the case of the

European Union and relates to the mobility between membership and non-membership countries. Europe is not a static unit (like a national society), but a process of *Europeanization*. That means, one of the basic secrets of the European Union is the *dialectics of integration and expansion*. The mobility of whole societies is one of the main characteristics of Europeanization. The intensified integration within the European Union alters the communities’ external relationships. The affluent core becomes more and more directly involved in stabilizing political and economic conditions in the neighbouring regions. EU-integration intensifies and more inner-EU borders vanish, the common interest of EU states maintaining the patterns of concentric circles outside the communities’ borders become even more apparent.

Since the non-members of the EU have to adjust their structures and institutions to the EU norms (open markets, human rights, democratic values), the EU integration of variable geographies includes the excluded: the non-members but potential members. Thus this kind of macro-mobility, which is grounded on consensus and free choice of the non-member states, is not a product of war, imperialism, and colonialism – but it operates with a specific inside-outside nexus. Borders are at the same time there and not there; they do function and don't function, because the anticipated future of the EU membership becomes a real existing force for institutional reforms in the non-member state (e.g. Turkey).

Are there other conceptual innovations looking at mobility from a cosmopolitan perspective? Yes. And I would like to distinguish between the concept of a “*cosmopolitan place*” and the concept of “*cosmopolitanization of places*”. What I define as “cosmopolitan place” is pretty much related to “urban space” or “global city”,

but it has to be clearly distinguished from methodological nationalism. I suggest there are two aspects to what makes "being cosmopolitan" different from "being national".

First, one does not exist in the cosmopolitan place in the same way as one exists as part of the nation. If the nation is fundamentally about belonging to an abstract community, then the cosmopolitan place or space is about immersion in a world of multiplicity and implicates us in the dimension of embodied cultural experience. In cosmopolitan places cultural differences are experienced "*at ground level*" and involve *bodily-materialized engagement* with the complex realities of the "excluded others". The co-existence of cultural differences provokes questions like: *Who am I? What am I? Where am I? Why am I where I am?* – very different questions from the national questions: *Who are we?* and *What do we stand for?* The nation, we may say, is a space of identification and identity, whilst a cosmopolitan place is an existential and experimental space of difference. Here the concern is no longer with the culture as a binding mechanism – "what binds people together into a single body"; cosmopolitan places are regarded as a huge cultural reservoir and resource – valued for its complexity and its incalculability. While the nation is about stability and continuity, the cosmopolitan place offers important possibilities for cultural experimentation: how can strangers live together? It is a complex of specially distributed cultures, side-by-side, overlapping, hustling, negotiating, constantly moving and jostling – a physical and embodied co-existence that defies any abstract (national) schemes of integration and assimilation.

What characterizes cosmopolitan places is the de-composition of the first modern paradigm of citizenship.

This understanding of the cosmopolitan place has implications for the understanding of citizenship and vice versa. Again it undermines the distinction of

mobility and migration in relation to specific places. In the first nation-state centred modernity free distinct components of citizenship are being combined: citizenship as a political *principle of democracy*, citizenship as a *juridical status of legal personhood*, and citizenship as a form of *membership* in an exclusive social category. Republic or democratic theorists stress the active participatory dimension, liberals most concentrate on personal rights and methods of justice, and communitarian theorists are concerned with the dimension of collective identity and solidarity. What characterizes cosmopolitan places is the *de-composition* of the first modern paradigm of citizenship and the evolving of new as-well-as categories with a new set of choices and dangers.

Cosmopolitan places open spaces to invent and amalgamate the combination of human rights and citizenship, legal status, social identity and political-democratic participation

The clear cut dualisms between members and non-members of a (national) category or between humans and citizens collapses. This does have several implications. For example: the juridical dimension of citizenship -

in this approach the citizen - is not a political actor but a legal person, free to act by law and under the protection of law. It can be more "fluid" and potentially inclusive, since it is not tied to particular collective identities or a membership in a *demos*. Consequently the citizen does not need to be territorially bound. But consequences could be a loss of politicization and solidarity. Universalising legal personhood

undermines the will to political participation as well as the strong identification with the social solidarity that the democratic-republic concept presupposes. On the other hand cosmopolitan places open spaces to invent and amalgamate in crucial experimentation the combination of human rights and citizenship, legal status, social identity and political-democratic participation.

From a conceptual sociological point of view this experimentation combines elements which seem to be analytically exclusive (at least in a Weberian perspective): the principles of legality and legitimation or illegality and illegitimation. The border-crossing world of cosmopolitan places and spaces is, relative to specific perspectives, at the same time legal and non legal, legitimate and non legitimate, depending on a national or cosmopolitan perspective, methodological nationalism or methodological cosmopolitanism.

In reality, what characterizes cosmopolitan places, is their structural and topographical overlapping and their to some extent contrary frames of reference related to the position and the power of social and political actors. The first modern paradigm of citizenship was never normatively satisfactory. It promised to resolve the tensions between democracy, justice and identity if only it was institutionalized in the right way. Cosmopolitan places are an empirical falsification to this claim: the exclusive territoriality and sovereignty inherent in the nation-state model are being transformed due to the emergence of transnational economic practices in super-national legal regimes, post-national political bodies, which intersect in cosmopolitan places. Thus cosmopolitan places are an experimental space about a new paradigm of citizenship, that is both adequate to cultural diversity in cosmopolitan places and normatively justifiable.

## **Perceiving, analyzing and coping with the local-global nexus**

Main differences between a "*cosmopolitan place*" and the "*cosmopolitanization of places*" are: the first is reflexive, the second is latent, the first is fixed to urban space, the second is open to many different configurations of "place": the global context of *rural areas*, the global context of *regions*, the global context of *households* and so on. All of these different "politics of scale" involve the question about the activity of actors. In a second cosmopolitan modernity the social and the political has to be reimagined and redefined. But this is a challenge for quite different theoretical approaches: system theory (in its different versions from Wallerstein to Luhmann), symbolic interactionism or ethno-methodology (to name only a few). *Beyond* methodological nationalism the competition between theoretical positions and their framing of empirical research evolves anew.

I would like to make a distinction between a post-modern approach and a second-modern approach: very much simplified, the post-modernists to some extent welcome the fluidity of an increasingly borderless world. They argue (like John Urry) that this disembedded "social" and "political" is increasingly constituted by flows of people, information, goods and cultural symbols. From the point of view of second modernist theory and research they underestimate the importance and contradiction of "border management" in a world of flows and networks. This has to be studied both in

cosmopolitan places and the cosmopolitanization of places. A post-modern vocabulary of flows and networks, despite recognizing that networks can be exclusionary, provide little analysis of power relations within cosmopolitan places and networks. And therefore it finds it difficult to explain reproduction into change in cosmopolitan places. The question is: does thinking in "flows" and "networks" neglect the *agency* of the actors and their sense-making activities as forces in shaping the flows themselves?

Reflexive modernists see globalization as a repatterning of fluidities and mobilities on the one hand and stoppages and fixities on the other, rather than an all-encompassing world of fluidity and mobility.

In order to go beyond the false opposition between the space of flows versus the space of places (Manuel Castells) one has to develop an understanding of how cosmopolitan places (or the cosmopolitanization of places) constitute an *active relationship of*

*actors to space and place*. Thinking along this line reflexive modernists see globalization as a repatterning of fluidities and mobilities on the one hand and stoppages and fixities on the other, rather than an all-encompassing world of fluidity and mobility.

From the discussion of flows, we see the need to redefine places in the light of the multiple connections cutting across places. From the study of transnationalism, we see the critical importance of the emergence of a new politics of scales of social action and the reconfiguring of relationships among the multiple scales within which places are embedded. Finally, from the study of borders, we see the vital importance of seeing place as politically produced and contested. In a second-modern perspective we have to merge these various perspectives into a concept of the social as increasingly embroiled in place-making projects that seek to redefine the connection, scales, borders and character of particular places and particular social orders. What methodological cosmopolitanism looks for is to replace the national ontology by methodology, a methodology which helps to create a cosmopolitan observer-perspective to analyze the ongoing dialectics between cosmopolitanization and anti-cosmopolitanization of places.

These ongoing dialectics could be observed in so called "places of flows" where the ambivalences of the process of cosmopolitanization come together, interact and create new mobilities, stabilities and fixities. These places of flows like global cities, airports, train stations etc. are locally based but transnationally connected and linked with cosmopolitan networks and structures.



## **Mobility Pioneers. Networks, scapes and flows between first and second modernity**

Sven Kesselring & Gerlinde Vogl

The background of this paper<sup>13</sup> is a research project in the Reflexive Modernization Research Centre in Munich, Germany.<sup>14</sup> The project is titled "Pioneers of Mobility. Structural Changes in Mobility under Conditions of Reflexive Modernization" (see [www.sfb536.mwn.de](http://www.sfb536.mwn.de)). We started in 1999 and will finish in 2005. The primary research question is how so called mobility pioneers from the IT branch, the media industry and the German armed forces socially construct their mobility in relation to social, material and virtual worlds. What we want to know is how mobility pioneers are embedded or dis-embedded in or from social, material and virtual networks. We ask how these networks influence, support and limit the actors' mobility, i.e. their competence to realize own projects and plans while being on the move.

Mobility, we suppose, is a social concept in transformation. The modern notion of mobility is strongly entangled with the idea that spatial (e.g. physical) movement is a major dynamic factor of modernization (Zorn 1977, Zapf 1993, 1998). We want to investigate whether the importance of physical movement for the social construction of (modern) mobility is getting weaker. We ask: will virtual mobility be the paradigmatic and socially shaping concept for "Alternative Mobility Futures"?

In order to indicate some answer to these complex questions this paper shows the specific project approach to empirical data and interpretation. It gives a short introduction into the theoretical framework and demonstrates why a subtly differentiated terminology in mobility research is sensible, helpful and opens up new insights in non-directional mobility.

### **Mobility and reflexive modernization**

Theory of reflexive modernization (see Beck 1992, Beck, Giddens & Lash 1994, Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003) always deals with alternative futures, because one of its crucial theoretical thoughts is that modernity fundamentally transforms itself from first to second (or reflexive) modernity. Social change in the light of reflexive modernization theory does not result from rational planning and directional optimisation (Beck 1986, Bonss 1995, Bauman 1992, Flyvbjerg 1998). Reflexive modernization is conceived as a process of unexpected, unseen and unwanted transformations of the general conditions of modern societies. It is provoked by the unintended consequences of successful and powerful modern principles like rationality, individuality, globality and mobility in practice. Consequently the theory of reflexive modernization focuses on

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<sup>13</sup> The paper was first given at the Alternative Mobilities Future conference in Lancaster, UK, 9 – 11 January 2004.

<sup>14</sup> The research center is headed by Ulrich Beck and Wolfgang Bonss. For more information see [www.sfb536.mwn.de](http://www.sfb536.mwn.de).



processes of hidden or subversive, e.g. subpolitical transformations of modern institutions and practices (see Beck, Hajer & Kesselring 1999 and Beck, Bonss & Lau 2001 for empirical examples). In this view the transformation of modernity and mobility as one of its general principles (see Rammner 2001, Kesselring 2001, Bonss, Kesselring & Weiß 2004) is *non-directional*. The interpretation of reflexive modernization breaks with sociological traditions like the Weberian and Durkheimian which anticipate the linear progress of modern capitalism and its institutional and normative settings. In contrast to theorists of linearity like Ritzer (1995) who argues in the tradition of Weber and Durkheim theorists of reflexivity identify a second or "another modernity" and a "different rationality" (Lash 1999).

The concept of first modernity is inextricably connected with the notion of nation-state and national identity. The reference point of theories of (first) modernity is the nation-

In the end all these approaches of "mobile theorizing" understand the social as such as new configurations and relations of stability and mobility.

state institutional and affirmative formation.<sup>15</sup> This perspective is criticised as inadequate to the ambivalences of globalization (Beck 1997, Albrow 1996, Held et al. 1999, Grande 2001). Beck

(2002) puts it as "methodological nationalism" and argues for a "cosmopolitan sociology" adequate to phenomena like networks, scapes and flows beyond the nation-state and its structurations. A new terminology with notions like *(socio)spheres* (Albrow 1996), *scapes* (Appadurai 1998, Urry 2000), *transnational social spaces* (Pries 1998), *connectivity* (Tomlinson 1999), *interconnectedness* (Held et al. 1999) *liquidity* (Bauman 2000), *fluids* (Mol and Law 1994) and *mobility* (Urry 2000) indicate another perception of society and its structures as mobile, transitory, transformative and liquid. In the end all these approaches of "mobile theorizing" (Albertsen & Diken 2001) understand the social as such as a new configuration and relation of stability and mobility. Ritzer and Murphy (2002) also talk about stable elements in a world of flows. In contrast the very modern sharp view of Max Weber would have identified the mobile in a world of (capitalist) order and stability. As a consequence Beck maintains that theorizing has to skip boundaries and to focus on structurations beyond the nation-state and beyond modern stabilities. Like Urry (2000) he is looking for "societies beyond society" and for restructuring in a world of disembedding. Beck's theory of cosmopolitanism refers to the idea of reflexive or non-directional mobility. The metaphor "roots with wings" (2002, 408) expresses this thought and points to the empirical problem whether social integration and cohesion are possible under conditions of increasing mobility, liquidity and disembedding.<sup>16</sup>

The modern notion of society is connected with the idea of social and technological security and the calculation of risks (Beck 1986, Bonss 1995). Modern thinking and modern social concepts concentrate on stability – and modern theorists assume that also after fundamental changes and transformations systems intend to restructure

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<sup>15</sup> As a paradigmatic position for theories of first modernity Bonss (1995) mentions Parsons (1972) and his functionalistic approach. For a critical discussion of nation state theories see Jessop (2002).

<sup>16</sup> In Richard Sennett's book *The Corrosion of Character* (1998) this idea is pointed out from a subject perspective but as Urry (2000, 2003) shows the problem also exists from a systemic perspective on global flows.

stability.<sup>17</sup> The “will to order” goes right through the classical modern social theories like Parsons' functionalism. The “reduction of complexity” is seen as a general principle of modernity. Heavy modernity (Bauman 2000) or hard capitalism (Thrift 1997) aim to reduce the fluidity of social structures which Simmel postulates as a general principle of life (Simmel 1920). With Bauman it is possible to say that modernity intends the purification of all its elements. Ritzer (1995) re-formulates the Weberian idea of modernization as standardization and conformation.

But second modernity goes hand in hand with liquidity and permanent transformation. It is the acceptance of permanent change, disorder, unpredictability, and the permanent re-structuring of accepted realities. Catchwords like “networks, scapes and

<p>Second modernity is an era of instability, insecurity and uncertainty. Liquid modernity refers to a social situation of continuous “boundary management”.</p>	<p>flows” (Urry 2000, Beck 2003), transnational connectivity, interdependency and the dominance of unintended side effects (mad cow disease, GM food, traffic congestion etc.)</p>
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indicate that second modernity is an era of instability, insecurity and uncertainty. Liquid modernity refers to a social situation of continuous “boundary management” (Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003), of permanent change and mobility. Under the conditions of reflexive modernization and global complexity the idea of linear modernization becomes obsolete and loses its touch of practicability and its explanative power. The notions of “meta-change” and the “meta-play of power” (Beck 2002) symbolize that social theory cannot identify the mighty actor that transforms society (e.g. the economy as the key actor in Marxist theories or the dialectics of culture and economy in Simmel's works). And on the other hand the term meta-change indicates that all actors are faced with the problem of identifying their own direction in a world of opaque flows.

In this sense the main hypothesis of this paper is: along with the emergence of second modernity there are structural changes in mobility. Mobility as a social concept (and not as its reduction to spatial movement, traffic and travel) transforms itself from *directionality* to *non-directionality*. In other words: the social concept of first modern mobility is *directional*, it emphasizes the necessity and the possibility to develop effective straightness and aimfulness – in a spatial as well as in a social way. Modern mobility is conceived as movement with origin, direction and destination. The paradigmatic metaphor is the lightning career as a “meteoric rise” from the bottom to the top. To be mobile means in a modern concept to move upward. In contrast the reflexive concept of mobility is *non-directional*, it goes along with the experience that straightness is a fiction and the failure of directionality is likely. The striking example is the failure of the “Dream of Traffic Flow” (Schmucki 2001). Be it long distance travelling, be it career mobility, or be it internet surfing the experience of moving from one spot to another is often non-directional and actors are faced with disappointing situations of delay, waiting and breakdown. Experiencing reflexive mobility is full of detours and misty, incomprehensible tracks.

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<sup>17</sup> See the famous phrase in the Communist Manifesto “All that is solid melts into air...”, which expresses the idea that the new just and stable order waits for its fulfilment after the downgrading and the destruction of traditional structures.

In this sense the social concept of modern mobility refers to its paradigmatic idea of unambiguous and clear transport or class mobility and means to move from one place to another in a direct line. Reflexive mobility as non-directional mobility refers to the paradigmatic idea of network mobility. There is not a clear and unambiguous direction for the move but there are many ways – although nobody knows whether this leads to the intended effect or if there are unintended side effects which influence the direction.

## Mobility Pioneers

The idea of researching mobility pioneers comes from the 1995 book "Vom Risiko" (On Risk) by Wolfgang Bonss. New patterns of social innovation don't spread from the centres of societies but from the edges or even from outside. In his book Bonss develops the hypothesis that a new conception of risks can firstly be identified in the 12<sup>th</sup> century among Italian traders. They played a role of trendsetters for new social perceptions and practices. The modern risk conception is intensively connected to the idea of personal responsibility. The Italian traders started to calculate their own risks and chances. In the case of failure they accepted that it would be their own business and their own responsibility if they went bankrupt.

A mobility pioneer is a person who is able to deal with non-directionality and to move without clear destination

In this sense we understand mobility as a specific way of individual risk management under the conditions of liquidity and instability. We are looking for new

mobility patterns as modes of dealing with the structural liquidity and ambivalence of radicalised modernity. Sennett (1998: 99 ff.) describes how the structural openness of disorganised (flexible) capitalism leads to the necessity of risk management for individuals as well as organizations and institutions. The new social types of drifters and surfers he describes are nothing more but mobility types (see Bonss & Kesselring 1999). They represent specific modes of dealing with the mobile structures where classes and layers lose their stability and are getting substituted by structurations of networks of resources and power. In consequence individuals and groups do not move through time and space in an directional mode and with the idea of progress.

In this way we can provisionally formulate: a mobility pioneer is a person who is able to deal with non-directionality and to move without clear destination.

But what is a pioneer in general? Two short looks into the German Brockhaus encyclopaedia and the Encyclopaedia Britannica are instructive and offer the trace that Pioneers explore new (land)scapes (see the first settlers in the New World) and need to find solutions for new problems. In other words: they decide to move and they need to regulate the consequences of their own actions. For the Encyclopaedia Britannica pioneers are as different items as the Russian PIONERY which is the former Soviet organization for youth; the first series of unmanned U.S. deep-space probes designed chiefly for interplanetary study; Frederick W. Taylor and Henry Ford as pioneers of mass production; the band OASIS as Pioneers of Britpop; Soldiers and tanks and many more.

In other words, pioneers can be very different things. Be it a person, an artefact, an organization or a group pioneers always move into new mental or physical areas. They either deal with formerly unknown situations or (like the Russian Pionery) promote and propagate new ideas. They are trendsetters and in summary it may be said that the notion of pioneer represents new concepts and practices. Against this background it may be possible to concretise what a mobility pioneer might be and how he or she is identifiable? We will approach a conceptual definition of mobility pioneers from two sides: first, theoretically and second, methodologically:

Above we conceptually described the difference between directional and non-directional mobility. Our considerations went along with Bonss' theoretical assumptions on risks (Bonss 1995, Bonss, Hohl & Jakob 2001). Under the conditions of reflexive modernization with its indicators like radicalized insecurity, uncertainty and ambivalence people are woven into situations where they are forced to decide where they want to move to. Mobility in general means that actors want to influence the direction of their movements and transformations. It is a reflexive and paradox figure that under the conditions of disorganized capitalism nobody really knows where the flows run to. But everybody has to act as an individual and autonomous subject – although the limits of liberty are obvious. The motto of reflexive mobility means: "be on the move, although you do not know where the road ends!"<sup>18</sup> In the era of calculated risks – what means first modernity – people identified the chances of openness which derive from the fact that social structures became more flexible, more open and pervious. Outsiders like the Italian traders became trendsetters for a new social conception like "No risk, no progress". Mobility pioneers listen to the motto "Be mobile! Standstill could be death but don't expect success!".

As an *ex ante sampling* we choose people under high mobility pressure. Members of our sample must fit in two of the following criteria:

- They must work in *responsible positions*, endowed with power and „locked in“ in systems of *division of labour* (companies, public institutions, consultants etc.);
- Or they must be so called „*entrepreneurs of the own working force*“<sup>19</sup> in contexts of self-employment (on a high as well as on a low income level);
- And they all must be confronted with *mobility constraints* like social & spatial flexibility, physical and/or virtual travelling.

As an *ex post specification* we name those as Mobility Pioneers who create and practice specific *arrangements of time and space* to cope with the compulsion of mobility and to realize individual goals.

## The sample

The mobility pioneers project focuses mainly on so called trendsetter branches and particularly on the IT and media branch. Officers of the German Armed Forces are integrated into the sample as a "traditional" comparison group. The female house cleaners from Poland are also a group of comparison because they reveal specific

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<sup>18</sup> See Kerouac: "You boys going to get somewhere?` We didn't understand his question, and it was a damned good question" (Jack Kerouac in: On the Road, 1957: 22).

<sup>19</sup> See Voß & Pongratz (1998).

mobility patterns from the underclass whereas the media and IT sample imply a strong middle class bias. But nevertheless we expected the strongest pioneer patterns beneath media and IT workers.

<b>Branch/ economic sector</b>	<b>Professions</b>	<b>male/female</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
IT Branch	Key account managers, consultants, programmers	9 m 5 f	14
Media Branch	Journalists, musicians, web designers; mostly self-employed	13 m 11 f	24
Services	House cleaners (transmigrants from Poland working in Germany)	8 f	8
Army	Officers of the German armed forces	20 m	20
Altogether		42 m 24 f	66

## On Method

The socio-material network analysis approach we practice is influenced by Manuel Castells (1996, 1997, 2000), the work of Barry Wellman on social and virtual networks (Wellman & Haythornthwaite 2002, Wellman & Gulia 1999) and by some conceptual ideas from actor network theory (Latour 1996, Law & Mol 2001).<sup>20</sup> In our understanding networks consist of social relations, material (infra)structures and virtual relations. We pay attention to transport systems, artefacts like cars, bikes, trains, planes etc. and "virtual" structures because these elements are part of the mobility potential for individuals and collective actors. But we do not concentrate on networks and scapes as such but as representations of mobility potentials around actors. We conceive them as mobility resources in the sense of Giddens' structuration theory (1995). In the structure and action duality actors need to decide and to act as individuals although they are intensely structured by institutions, organizations, and by power and dominance.

Our approach derives from subject oriented sociology as it is practised in the context of theory of reflexive modernization and its protagonists. But we realize that subjects like mobility pioneers are just knots or gates within wide spread socio-material networks and we do not analyse them just as individuals but as components or elements of networks. Consequently we do not only reconstruct individual logics, politics or patterns but logics, politics and patterns of mobility as parts of network logics etc.

<sup>20</sup> We learned a lot from our colleagues in the B2 project at the Reflexive Modernization Research Centre and especially from Florian Straus' comprehensive introduction to network analysis (2002) and from Hollstein (1999).

In concrete we use five tools for the reconstruction of subject oriented networks:

- A small questionnaire for some statistical data.
- Extensive in-depth interviews as the main data source (1.5 hours at minimum).
- Two charts for social and material/geographical relations (social networks and important places, technologies etc.) as an additional interview stimulus for narratives.
- Two time lines for partnerships and the professional (life) course as additional interview stimulus and as an control instrument during and after the interview.
- Participating research (e.g. working with journalists, visiting workshop etc.).

All these tools we usually integrate by group discussions on single cases. Based on these discussions we developed a typology of mobility patterns.<sup>21</sup> This typology illustrates patterns which covers the total sample with its different groups.

## Mobility strategies

But this paper does not introduce the typology. It focuses on some conceptual thoughts in the background and illustrates their relevance for mobility research while using empirical material. We want to introduce into the conceptual approach of the

Mobility is often conceived as the emergence of liberty. But in fact mobility results from the dichotomy of autonomy and heteronomy, of production and adaptation. This is the reason why we conceptualize mobility in relation to flexibility as the competence of actors to adapt to the direction of flows.

Mobility Pioneers project. One of the crucial project aims is to investigate how mobile people orientate under the conditions of reflexive modernization and how they navigate in relations to social, material and virtual worlds. To identify different types of mobility pioneers we reconstruct the actors'

specific mobility strategies. Mobility strategies refer to the *inner logic of mobility practice*. The analytic reconstruction of these logics is based on empirical data and especially on in-depth interviews. Interpretative methods (like computer based analysis and group discussions) enable us to condense mobility strategies as ideal types of concepts and practices. By using interpretative methods it is possible to reveal mobility strategies which are usually hidden and unconscious to the subject. But they are reconstructable for the researcher. To describe these strategies in the following we use the term *management*, because we emphasize the subject oriented shares of acting. Although we are aware of the fact that mobility practice is structured by contextual situations, structural conditions, and power relations in general we underline the individual shares in mobility, because we want to illuminate the actors' abilities to influence their movements through time and space. This is one step of the project to describe mobility in its contextual restrictions. Mobility is often conceived as the emergence of liberty. But in fact mobility results from the dichotomy of autonomy and heteronomy, of production and adaptation. This is the reason why we conceptualize mobility in relation to flexibility as the competence of actors to adapt to the direction of flows (Vogl 2003).

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<sup>21</sup> The typology consists of four characteristic action types and mobility patterns: hypermobiles, mobile immobiles, immobile mobiles and immobiles (see Bonss, Kesselring & Weiß forthcoming). It is work in progress and will be elaborated through the next project phase.

## Theory based analytical tools

Mobility – directional as well as non-directional – is not a consistent phenomenon. It is a general principle of modernity (Bonss, Kesselring & Weiß 2004) and as such there is a set of discourses, institutions and practices which brings it into materiality and social reality. We suppose that it is neither possible to identify social mobility as an isolated dimension nor is it possible to identify spatial or geographical mobility as such. Instead, it makes sense to talk about “mobilities” (Urry 2000) or, as we propose, about different constitutive elements of mobility.

We define mobility as an actor's competence to realize specific projects and plans while being “on the move”. We stress the modern notion of mobility with its concentration on physical movement as a vehicle of creativity and self-fulfilment. But our hypothesis is that there is a conceptual change from the dominance of physical to virtual movement. This transformation in the modern understanding of mobility we try to locate in the actor's narrations by using Simmel's concept of modernity as the strained relationship (*Spannungsverhältnis* or *Wechselwirkung*) between *Bewegung* and *Beweglichkeit*. This means that mobility is an ambivalent concept with the two dimensions *movement* and *mobility potential* (motility). We presume that this fundamental dichotomy of movement and motility is constitutive for the mobility of individual and collective actors. Therefore we developed a three dimensional concept for the empirical work on mobility pioneers. The central theme of our empirical work is the following: if we want to understand how and why people are on the move we need to observe two dimensions. In order to reconstruct mobility we need to relate together empirical data on *movement* and on *motility*. Only if we know enough about the physical, social and virtual movements which shape a certain case and if we can judge and estimate the actors' mobility potentials we can talk legitimately about mobility. In other words: what we need to identify is the *mobility performance* (e.g. expressive and convincing data about it) and the *mobility potential*. Our starting point is the subject with its performances and embodied potentials. But in fact we can say a lot of things about networks, scapes and flows which can be generalized from the individual case. We can talk about mobility (in our understanding) when there is a match between movement and motility which allows people to realize specific projects and plans.

*Movements* - socially, physically or in virtual reality can be measured as effective data. In fact the literature on mobility is dominated by descriptions of movements of persons, groups, peoples, institutions and artefacts from one point A to another point B in physical and/or social spaces. Academic libraries are full of reports about *moving masses* of people, goods and information. And much of the time scientists talk about mobility they imagine flows of people and things. Of course, they do this with good reason since modern society is shaped by mighty flows which become more and more global and which produce tremendous complexities (Urry 2003).

Individuals are part of many flows, they live in structures, participate in networks and use scapes for the realization of plans and projects. Therefore we ask people about their typical mobility performance. We collect data on how people travel, how and how often they change jobs, how dynamic their social networks are, how they use the internet, they communicate, and which technologies they use (e-mail, mobile and other phones, etc.). Naturally we cannot make a comprehensive survey of travel behaviour, social positioning and virtual communication. But what we grasp with our

qualitative approach is a specific part of mobility practice. We do not really know how they move, we do not know their effective performance. But we clearly identify its characteristic nature and we spotlight on the inner logic of mobility performance.<sup>22</sup> We collect data on the "compulsion of proximity" (Urry 2002) and on other modes of dealing with mobility pressures.

Movements and flows depict the visible parts of mobility. But in fact we do not know if actors travel by their own will or if they are forced to be on the move. That's why we make a distinction between mobility and flexibility. We need to reconstruct this from material, and that is the reason why we are searching for inconsistencies in mobility narrations. Interviewees produce themselves as "makers of their own mobility". But intense work with empirical materials reveal the limits of autonomy and show that mobility is something very scarce and that mobility performance is full of constraints. This is the reason why we intensively ask our interviewees why they socially, physically and virtually travel.

In the next step we concentrate on what enables people to do this? We try to identify sets of competence and skills which characterize their relationship to mobility.

When movement and motility come together, go hand in hand and melt together into a social conception it makes sense to talk about mobility.

We use the term *motility* for the actors' *mobility potential*, and we mean the competence to move and a specific set of capabilities and skills which enables actors to realize specific plans and projects.

For Kaufmann (2002, 1) "motility regews to the system of mobility potential. At the individual level, it can be defined as the way in which an actor appropriates the field of possible action in the area of mobility, and uses it to develop individual projects" (Kaufmann 2002, 1). Motility as a set of capabilities and skills is the key to describe the "optional spaces of mobility" (Canzler & Knie 1998) of individual and collective actors.

The concept of motility is also used by Paul Virilio (1992, 1998) to describe the decoupling of mobility potentials and movement and to point out the "raging standstill" of modern societies. But it is obvious that our interest is quite different to Virilio's concept of motility. Instead, we want to identify what enables people to be mobile and to understand themselves as mobile actors. We know that it is not the autonomous subject that moves but complex networks and configurations of material elements, capitals, power and dominance etc. which "produce" or restrict mobility. But we use individuals, e.g. single persons as hatches into complex networks. We start with the body and the embodied competence and skills we can identify. But through the body we recognize a mess of socio-, techno- and ethnoscares that we need to sort, to rearrange and to systematize in a sensible and sociologically fruitful way. These scares are part of the motility because we reconstruct how people relate to systemic orders like the transport system or the organizational structure of their companies or the market for freelancers etc.

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<sup>22</sup> In our approach we do not need to know in detail and comprehensively the mobility performance of people. What we need is selective data and information about typical and characteristic movements. Based on this data we develop a typology of mobility patterns (see Bonss & Kesselring 2004).



This means, in our work we talk a lot about movement and motility. But we are very careful when we use the term mobility. When movement and motility come together, go hand in hand and melt together into a social conception it makes sense to talk about *mobility*. Therefore mobility occurs when social, physical and/or virtual movement is an actor's instrument to realize specific plans and projects. Consequently this means that in the light of our subject oriented approach the reconstruction of mobility is based on the hermeneutic process of data interpretation. We want to describe if people imagine themselves as creators of their own lives, whether they imagine themselves as those who influence the direction of the own moves or whether they experience their moves as reactions to pressure and constraints. In other words: do these people in our sample *drive* or are they *driven*? *To drive or to be driven?* – that's the point of our research.

## **Centred, de-centred and virtual mobility management**

Western modernization goes hand in hand with the development of a complex and powerful transport system (Zorn 1977). Insofar it makes sense that spatial mobility (physical movement) is one of the key indicators for modernity (Zapf 1993, 1998). Complex arrangements with statistical data on mobility, transport and tourism give information on modernization levels of nation-states and regions (ibid.). But we assume that this conceptual reduction of mobility to physical movement (of bodies and things) is inadequate for a description of mobility under the conditions of reflexive modernization. In first modernity it might have been helpful to reduce the complexity to this indicator because the welfare of nations was inextricably connected to transport and travel. In second modernity the dominance of spatial mobility does not vanish. But the realization of plans and projects is no more absolutely tied to spatial mobility. A more differentiated view on mobility is coming up and the sociological analysis of mobility needs instruments and tools to deconstruct the ambivalent character of reflexive mobility. The simple identification of physical movement and social change (e.g. professional success) seems to be losing its explanative strength. The idea of a directional relationship between physical movement and social change comes into question. On the large scale level it is to be seen as an attempt to find new categories and concepts for the meta-change of modern societies (Urry 2003, Beck 1997, 2002). It is the question of directional and non-directional social change and how to identify the relevant actors in a global play of power. It is the attempt to operate with new terms like the triangle of networks, scapes and flows to reformulate social structuration as a process in motion and as the permanent reconfiguring of different stable and mobile elements. Urry (2000, 2003) demonstrates how tremendously intricate "mobile theorizing" and the understanding of liquidity are. The imagination that these fundamental transformations find their representation on the subject level is quite naïve. Subjects do not react on liquidity. They produce stability and routine to cope with meta-change. And the problem is that we need to "dive" very deep into the matter to identify inconsistencies beyond the surface of control and decision making what one's own movement amounts to.

As an indicator for the hypothesis of directional versus non-directional mobility we conceive the fact that the equation "go abroad and you'll return successfully !" as a rule for the way to the top is losing its convincing power. People are uncertain if they should move or not and whether they want to pay the financial and social costs of a

People are uncertain if they should move or not and if they want to pay the financial and social costs of a “career by mobility”

“career by mobility” (Sennett 1998, Paulu 2001, Schneider et al. 2002). They do not trust that physical movement will realize their motility or if they should better stay and develop local and regional networks and resources.

In the following we will illustrate how people gradually decouple themselves from being forced to physical mobility. We use three characteristic cases of mobility pioneers to show the empirical fundament of the hypothesis that reflexive modernization is linked with the emergence of a non-directional mobility. We do not maintain that the whole “Alternative Mobility Future” will be non-directional and reflexive. But we say that there are “*Alternative Mobility Futures*”, that there is more than one future and they are directional as well as non-directional. To use one of our catchwords it is to say that there are different ways of mobility management which enable people to cope with the mobility pressure of disorganized capitalism. We talk about the *Centred*, the *De-centred* and the *Network Mobility Management*. For the presentation we use three cases from a sample of German freelancer journalists. It was a crucial finding of the first project phase from 1999 to 2001 that the more disorganized the contexts are in which the interviewees use to work the more probable it was that new patterns of mobility emerge in the empirical material. This is not a hard correlation but it is evident in our material and in this way a sensible hypothesis for further research is possible.

## **Centred mobility management**

Achim is at the age of 35, he is married and has three children with his wife from Israel. He is a trained social scientist. As a freelancer journalist he is autodidactic and made a career as an author for nation wide newspapers and a number of federal broadcasting companies. From time to time he also produces for TV stations. As a member of a cooperation of journalists and translators he is self-employed, and together with his family he lives in his own house in his small hometown. His office is one hour away from one of the most important German concentrations of media industry. He is a commuter, because he maintains many strong and weak ties to his home town and to people living there. Most members of his family live there, he is a member of a local political revue and he deals with local history (especially with local National Socialism) in both his private sphere I and on a professional level .

Achim estimates a medium mobility performance per year: for his daily travels to his office and for many of his professional appointments and meetings he uses public transport; all in all over the year 15.000 km. He travels 8.000 km by his own car (incl. family travels ) and 8.000 km by plane (incl. travels to Israel, his wife’s mother country of ). Although he works as a busy journalist his favourite mode of travelling is public transport. This is amazing insofar as most of his travellings are not long distance journeys but regional ones. This reveals one of his most striking competences; the ability to manage complex activity chains by public transport. He is well equipped with timetables and he is able to exploit waiting and travelling times as creative phases of professional activity. Most of the time a first draft for an article is finished before coming home from a meeting, press conference or interview. Even

when he travels over longer distances he tries to come home at night. As such all his movements circulate around a clearly defined centre of life: his family, house, friends and local belonging. His social networks are extremely dense, interactive, and multiplex. They are as well dynamic and actively structured. Many of them are local and regional networks but none of them are given or traditional. After having been away for his studies for years he returned to his home town and chose his contacts and forms of social integration.

His relation to virtual networks is very professional and selective. He uses the internet as an additional source of information but he avoids chat rooms and he does not practice extensive e-mail communication.

In this case we observe a socially deep rooted and strong potential for the shaping of mobilities. Achim Reichwald possesses a mobility potential which enables him to cope with the enormous mobility pressure of his job. On the other hand he has the potential to manage very complex and complicated situations and demands from family, job and private activities he is engaged in. His career as a journalist he developed over the last fifteen years and currently he is a valued author of the most important German newspapers, magazines and radio stations. He is an active (networking) member of different professional and private networks. As such he was the co-founder of an international federation of journalists, he is an active voluntary adviser for a big German trade union and he is intensively engaged in a German-Israeli Exchange programme. The strong compulsions of proximity in his job and the necessities to be on the spot do not hinder his concentration on the place and on local social networks. He combines world wide networking with local integration as a political citizen.

He is an expert in public transport and he is eager to figure out the best connections. Riding by bus or train is a way of recreation and concentration on current and future professional and private projects (it is time for work and time for himself).

This case study of Achim Reichwald exposes a specific concept of mobility which we call *centered mobility*. What we mean is that cases like this represent a specific constellation of mobility and immobility. There is a lot of movement and transition in this case. Reichwald actively shapes his professional and social networks and he uses them as a resource. But his individual plans and projects rest on centred elements: the active management of social and material networks, which function as mobility resources. *Centered Mobility Management* requires a high level of competence, discipline, organization and maintenance.

## **De-centred mobility management**

Before Wolfgang Sonnenberger became a freelancer journalist he was a successful editor and department manager in the economic section of a federal radio and TV station. His themes were "How to become a striking entrepreneur?" and other trendy stuff. He presented a well known TV magazine for young founders, people in start up companies etc. He was an internet specialist with nation-wide reputation. After his father's death there was a rupture in his life and professional self-concept. He quitted his job and looked for alternatives. He searched for a perfect logistic centre for his new life as a freelancer and trainer of his former colleagues in internet research and

data management. At the end he settled down on one of the Balearic Islands but he retained his small flat in Germany as a "base camp". Today it is his starting point for his expeditions into his new life as a self-employed person.

Sonnenberger puts up his life between the Balearic Islands, Germany, Italy and more and more the US and Russia. In the sun there is his home and favourite working place; from a German middle size city he manages his seminars and makes journalistic investigations; an Italian enclave is his favourite location for recreation and buddhist exercises. And during the last years he learned to know many places and people in the US and Russia. Through Sonnenberger's narrations we recognize a multiplex network of places, people, ideas, and cultures. At first glance Sonnenberger is what we call hypermobile, a person who is socially and physically in permanent motion. He is a frequent flyer and does not possess a car. He maintains a wide spread social network and all his professional activities are connected with private visits and contacts. There are many compulsions to proximity which he wants to regulate and he continuously gives priorities to those he wants to see or not. Through data analysis his life as a single person becomes visible as extremely dynamic. He is not married and has no children. In contrast to the first case there is no clear centre and direction in mobility practice. But Sonnenberger produces himself as the navigator of his life.

Sonnenberger is not a "drifter" (Sennett 1998), who runs where the flow goes to. He wants to drive. His experience of life makes sense to him and he formulates aims and goals. For example, he has a clear definition of success: to be on the top means to make enough money in two weeks for a pleasant life in another two months. This is completely different to the tips and hints he gave to his "striking entrepreneurs" a few years ago.

Sonnenberger is socially well integrated. On his favourite island he lives in a residential community without a partner and practices many contacts with locals. He is well integrated in a world wide network of communication with his family in Germany, old and new friends, colleagues and other like-minded people all over the world.

He says about himself: "I'm going to virtualize my life step by step. E-mail becomes my favourite mode of communication. I just use the phone if I really have to. Everybody can reach me via e-mail and over my homepage wherever I am. I do not write letters or postcards. It happens more and more in my working life that I don't see my customers. They know my work, they know my price, and so they do not need a physical contact. I'm astonished myself, but there is a lot of trust in the medium internet."

Wolfgang Sonnenberger's case illustrates *de-centred mobility management*. He lives the network, and he gives life to it. Switching between national territories and continents he resigns his former goal to marry and to start a family. Love, sex and friendship follow the idea of networking. He has a lot of contacts to women, but he distinguishes between different purposes: talk, intensity, sex, love, social, psychological, and technical support etc. He maintains a social network on a high level of multiplexity.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Pelizäus-Hoffmeister (2001) for the discussion of mobility and the multiplexity of social networks; see also Hollstein (1999).

What we discover is a hybrid concept of mobility and practice. On the one hand there is a lot of movement, travelling, and transnational commuting. He produces himself as the navigator of his own life course. But we also identify a tremendous pressure to be on the spot and to make enough money for his life. We do not emphasize these aspects in this paper but it is our current work to intensify the contextual analysis of mobility pioneers. It is necessary to describe the contextual settings of mobility practice in the media branch (see Vogl 2003) and to elaborate the influences of economic transformations and processes of dis-organization (Lash & Urry 1987) on the mobility and flexibility of actors.

In the Sonnenberger case we recognize mobility management on a high level of income, comfort, and competence. But behind the small talk on the "logistics of mobile lives" (citation from the interview) there is a must not a desire. The individual decision to leave the security of a stable job and to choose the freedom of self-employment produces unintended consequences. To live a life beyond local fixations and to develop an individual culture and practice of "uprooting and regrounding" (Ahmed et al. forthcoming) demands a lot of discipline, concentration, and mental strength. And the question is how it is possible to re-integrate all these different networks which support Sonnenberger's mobility concept.

Our interpretation is that it is the hybridity or plurality in his life what enables him to do so. He subliminally follows the idea of refusing movement. Physical travelling is his instrument to realize an independent life without the restrictions of a stable job. But in fact he conceives himself as *cyber creature*. His favourite mode of travelling is *virtual mobility*. Virtual networks enable him to spend much of his time on his Balearic island. These networks function as a resource for his world wide presence without being physically tangible. Technologies like internet, e-mail and mobile phones permit him to be away while being accessible. What he aims at is a maximum of connectivity and a minimum of co-presence. He temporarily decouples himself from the "compulsion of proximity" (Boden & Molotch 1994, Urry 2002). While being on his island and on the move he is accessible to those who are directly in contact with him. For all the others he is just "virtually" accessible, i.e. by communication.

Prerequisite for this complex juggling with different places, social belongings, identities and social, material, and virtual networks is a set of competence and skills. The decisive factors seem to be his technological competence and his ability to keep in touch with friends, colleagues, and clients. These two elements melt together in his competence to keep contacts and to realize social integration via internet. All the different levels of professional, private, and cultural activities come together in different identities which he exposes on different homepages. He produces himself as a private person interested in people, nature and ecology, beauty in general, music, food, cultural events etc. Beyond his quasi hedonistic performance he produces himself as a successful, effective, and reliable person. Over the time we observed the emergence of some of these identities. The integration – and in consequence the decisive instrument for his decentred mobility management – is a public time schedule on his homepages where everybody can see where he is and where he will be at a certain point of time. Clients can comprehend his bookings and free dates on his timetable, friends may inform themselves if they can meet etc. He is part of a wide spread network of contacts and places and he "functions" as node because others do arrange themselves by using his homepage as source of information for their own plannings.

In summary, the inner logic of mobility management we observe in this case is the network. The subject produces itself as an individual but at the same time it realizes its restrictions and constraints.

## **Virtual mobility management**

Johanna Rheingold is a well known freelancer journalist in Germany. And she is a high level specialist in internet and data security and information rights. She is married, has a little daughter of five and lives near a middle-sized city. She makes more than 5.000 € per month. This is a top income for freelancer journalists. She reports about secret services and German and European Law on data security. And in a certain sense she seems to be immobile. She does not travel. Her daughter's care is her job and her husband does not participate. This is one of the most important restrictions in her life and it forms the boundary of her professional life. In fact she has just five hours per day for her extremely busy and responsible job. It is a great challenge for her, because the participation in professional life is of great value to her. To be active as a political citizen and journalist is an important goal in her life. Consequently she has a problem: when physical movement is the absolute prerequisite for an actor's mobility and in her understanding for public presence, importance, and impact she must fail. Or there are other forms of mobility which function as a vehicle and enable people to realize their own projects and plans.

During the interview some years ago we asked Johanna about important "places" in her life. The result was quite surprising and at first glance amazing. Her distinct preferences were her e-mail program, computer, telephone, her desk, and her house. There was no home town, and the place where she spent her childhood didn't emerge. Only two cities where she lived for a few years came up and Turkey, the country where her husband stems from. On the same level as the two cities she mentioned are three homepages and she called them "important locations". In the morning when she starts to work it is her first action to visit these homepages for new information. All the things she does as a journalist and as a political citizen, who fights for the liberty of information flows and for the defence of private sphere, are documented on these homepages. There is no better platform for the public and expert discourse on data security and information rights than those. And she as an expert and a public voice is located in the middle of discourse. As such this homepage is an important mobility resource for her. It supports her by the realization of her plans and projects. It is one of the main reasons why she is one of the best paid authors all over Germany and why she is continuously asked for new articles and books. Beyond this virtual forum there is no better place to be present. From time to time she travels to a conference or a lecture. But she minimizes her travelling to about ten trips a year.

In her "former" life, however, she enjoyed touring around. Before she had had her daughter she kept travelling. Today, physical travel doesn't matter. Nevertheless she is a very motile person, she has a large mobility potential, and she maintains a multiplex social network.

Johanna Rheingold created her own individual *scape*, based on a specific constellation of hybrid technological, social and virtual components. We do not say that she built

her own streets, co-axial cables etc. That's nonsense. What we mean is she created her own configuration of scape elements and by this way her own optional space or mobility potential. There are many priorities to be seen: for her private life direct interaction and all the artefacts of direct interaction (bike, car, public transport etc.) are most relevant. But in her professional life virtual interaction and the technologies of virtuality (the scapes) are much more important than all the other "modes of transport". There are professional networks with their specific restrictions, options, risks and chances, with many nodes and relations where she plays an important role. She arranges them together with social networks which are localized and virtualized as well.

Of course, Johanna works in a niche. In this way she is definitively a mobility pioneer because we cannot generalize these observations and findings. Her journalistic issues permit this extreme form of immobile mobility. During her professional work she moves through the cyberspace but she doesn't need to contact the physical world. The world comes to her - channelled through her computer. Her field of journalistic research is based on the internet and e-mail with PGP – pretty good privacy -, a small program to code and decode information and hide them from misuse by others. Her communication with informants can be secret by this way. This works because members of a secret service do not want to be seen with an investigative journalist. In that way she works in a niche, where technology opens new ways of interaction. In other words: the compulsion of proximity is low for her. This was one of the main reasons why she explored the field of data security, secret services, global information rights etc. In a certain sense she drifted into this area of journalistic activity.

In fact, she is not a drifter. But her mobility is non-directional. Non-directionality does not mean that she has no criteria where the flow should run to. But it means that the concept of mobility does not follow the idea of meteoric rise or steep ascent. We cannot say whether Johanna is on top of social structuration or if she is downgrading at the moment. We assume her concept of virtual mobility management as a temporary solution for the problem of unintended immobility. But like the retrogressive pattern of social mobility which Sennett (1998) describes she configures and reconfigures her individual scapes for the certain situation in her life. At the moment she lives a virtual existence. But we do not know and we cannot predict her movements with her daughter being 16 or 18. We suppose that mobility configurations with all these elements like car use, public transport, internet practice, contacts with friends, colleagues etc. are just temporary and in permanent transformation. In this understanding of mobile methodology we need to conceive mobility patterns as configurations beyond individuals and subjects.

## **Directional and non-directional mobility**

The story line though all the three cases goes from directional to non-directional mobility. In the first case the "will to order" and the concept of regulating and navigating one's own mobility dominate. The second case shows how the modern mobility concept as a directional move from one point to another and from one stage of development to a higher level of perfection comes into doubt and question.

Wolfgang is a sceptic. He presents himself as a mobile person, self-confident, strong, impulsive, and creative, endowed with all the characteristics of an individualized reflexive subject. He is the maker of his own way. But this is just one side of the coin. On the other there is a desire for recreation and contemplation and he wants to realize this wish by using new technological scapes for being present. But this produces unintended consequences, because his internet presence provokes reactions and inquiries for new jobs. He wants to be absent and the effect is a continuous presence. This is a paradox leading to a form of mobility which we call non-directional. Wolfgang creates a gigantic individual scape or configuration of people, things, places, technologies, and social ties to make his own way. But in fact the network around himself is getting tighter and tighter. And the consequence is a new way of social positioning. At first glance Wolfgang seems to be a successful runaway from his former conditions of life into a pleasant milieu or environment (the Balearic island). But in order to realize his life in the sun he positions himself between different places, continents, living, and working places. And step by step he glides and slides into another configuration with other constraints and compulsions. It is to say: there is no way out of structuration! But the difference is that Wolfgang is now in a configuration of openness and fine tuning. Small changes of local and social positioning can provoke large consequences. Changing from the Balearic to the Canaric Islands is not necessarily a change of life style, travel behaviour, social networking etc. But it is possible that the network of clients and job offers could change because travelling time increases and the logistics there could be better or worse than on the Balearic Islands.

Mobility strategies		
Centred Mobility Management (cmm)	De-centred Mobility Management (dmm)	Virtual Mobility Management (vmm)
Physical movement as a vehicle to realize localized projects.	Physical movement as a vehicle to realize transnational projects and to maintain cosmopolitan social networks.	The importance of physical movement for the realization of individual projects is getting weaker .
Strong coupling of physical movement and motility, mobility based on physical movement.	Loose coupling of physical movement and motility.	Uncoupling of motility from physical movement.
<b>Directional</b>	<b>Non-directional</b>	<b>Non-directional</b>

The paradox in Wolfgang's case is that he is the one in our sample who fights the most for autonomy. But in fact he is the one with the most dependencies and with the most risks. His mobility management of transnational connections is utmost fragile and vulnerable. It is a one man show of a high complexity. If transport systems fail, if he falls ill, if contacts over distance become unreliable etc. he will be in trouble. And trouble shooting over long distance is very complicated and sometimes expensive, too. In this sense we assume that Wolfgang cannot decide and regulate where his own mobility leads to. He is entangled in a global network of relations and connections and thus depends on those networks. He is on the move but non-directionally, logged in in many networks and relations. This is conveyed by the fact that Wolfgang wants to be a cyber creature with much scope for development. But his career and existence is intensely coupled with physical movement. In this sense they are reflexive elements,



elements of ambivalence and of new modes of social positioning and belonging (e.g. new modes of risk management). But there are also many elements from first modernity like the will to order and the rational concepts of logistics and management.

In contrast Johanna's case undermines the modern compulsion of mobility. She is a non-mover, she limits her spatial mobility to the minimum. She reduces spatial activities and she stretches the virtual space to an optional space of professional and political commitment. Virtual networks function as mobility resources. For her professional advancement she does not need to be "in the world". The world comes to her, she watches those parts of the world important for her purposes through the screen.

Of course, Johanna's world is risky, too. She maintains quite a small but effective social network for her daily life. If something problematic like divorce, illness etc. took place she could rely only on the support of a limited number of friends. But on the other hand the configurations in her virtual networks are enormously dynamic and changeable. There are some strong relations over years which help her to resolve most of her problems. Many of them she has not ever seen before and she never will. They are just net contacts but nevertheless stable and efficient. And we could observe something like solidarity, friendship, and cohesion between members of virtual networks also in other cases. The difference is it is solidarity by connectivity and not by origin or by shared values.

## Discussion

**Ruth Limmer:** I am not convinced of the concept of nondirectional mobility. In my understanding nondirectional mobility refers to nondirectional social mobility, changes of the social status of a person, his or her network, which is nondirectively mobile. But when you talk about virtual mobility then it is not convincing that this should be nondirectional. For a person to phone in order to change meetings or a schedule this is directional. On the long run, on the level of social status, then I agree with nondirectional mobility.

**Sven Kesselring:** It's interesting. For German sociology it is very important to distinguish the social dimensions of mobility, the physical dimension, since nobody would talk about the virtual dimensions of mobility. Let me describe with an example: travelling to a conference for a scientist and giving a paper there - what is that? Is it just physical mobility, is it just social mobility, it's a small change in social status and the opportunity to make connections with other scientists and to relate oneself in a new network, to have new ideas and new connectivities to others. When he comes back he has numbers to write emails, to exchange papers, to make agreements and to cooperate. Is that just physical movement or just social movement? For me it doesn't make sense to distinguish in this stark way between social movement and physical movement. I don't have a convincing answer, it is still a construction site, a work in progress around these different dimensions of movement.

**Ruth Limmer:** When this is work in progress I have a question about the terms autonomy and relationality. You use the word autonomy in a very idealistic sense: a person all alone makes final decisions. As far as I know the debate about identity,

morality, moral entity and so on does not allow such a concept of autonomy, because every time it is a related autonomy. So in the sense of mobility there is fiction. I am not sure whether this is a good distinction.

**Sven Kesselring:** Well, we always think about the subject in context and autonomy is a fiction or a concept and it is always restricted by all these relations where somebody lives in families, in networks of friends, in professional contexts where autonomy is structured by strong constraints. But as an orientation for research and as a research question it was important in our project to identify what we call mobility politics. Usually mobility research concentrates on what we call the moving masses research, the dominance of flows, and on constraints and compulsions. We are looking for a counterpoint to this perspective. What emerges in the data when we are looking at autonomy or at the decision making of people, when we take it seriously that people in their narrations talk about themselves as autonomous subjects which decide and change their lives. It's a kind of ideal type. The learning history in our project is that we need much more to combine this moving masses perspective with the mobile subject perspective to develop a much more appropriate description of what happens in the dualism between action and structures. That's what we will call the relation of mobility.

**Claus J. Tully:** When you talk about mobility pioneers there is a hidden presence of technology you don't talk about. You don't talk about: is it appropriate? What technology can they use? Is there a difference in gender? Someone said there is a change from routes to networks with which I can explain these navigation systems. So I can use a route as a network or vice versa. You should talk about: what does the use of technology mean? What is the basis, the society, the development, and it should present the possibilities given by technology.

**Sven Kesselring:** Technology is an important dimension. We have always looked at it but were not specific on it today. The hidden dimensions, the structuration of mobility also through gender becomes more and more important in this motile hybrid. In airports e.g. all this surveillance. With regard to airports there is much discourse about airports as places of cosmopolitanism, of global identity and connectivity. But it is also necessary to look at how all these mobilities in these transfer points are channelled and controlled. The example I have made with the mobile phone - that's one phase we are working on: how do technologies like the mobile phone influence mobility? Do they structure mobility and movement in space? We try to describe the reconfiguration of movement by an artefact like the mobile phone. That's one of the hidden dimensions of mobility.

**John Urry:** I have two questions. One is: I thought that mobility politics ought to be examined in relationship to partners. Obviously some peoples' mobility is made up by the immobility of others. The other question is related to these terms directional and nondirectional. I wonder whether linear and nonlinear might be a better way of capturing this distinction? Linear does capture the significance of work space occupational structures and potential mobilities. Sometimes of course you have a mixture of social mobility and physical mobility, you move around with a company around a country, you become a mobile organisational man, a sort of model. Linearity doesn't presuppose having a sense of direction. Whereas nonlinearity is a more recent thing and refers to more theoretical combinations.

**Matthias Junge:** I have an idea how one can describe [directional and nondirectional] in another way: the difference between the centred mobility and the nondirectional mobility. The one is centred on locality or place and the second is centred on time use. So time use becomes a position of localism. And there is a pattern. Someone moves from the Balearic Islands to his flat in Munich and so on in a clearly ordered way. He develops a pattern one can use to describe his mobility. So one form of mobility is centred on place and the second is centred on time.

**Sven Kesselring:** A very important point. Weert Canzler and his team, they got very interesting things about optional space. They developed optional space for the realization of mobility. The optional space is structured by social and material dimensions. What we describe as a nondirectional concept of mobility has to do with the transformation of space into a very complex and contingent space. So it's possible to relate to many people, perspectives and opportunities, what is described as the "multi-option society". The nondirectional perspective doesn't mean that there is no sense or no direction in it. Every subject has an idea of what he or she wants to reach or where to go to, but it changes from clearly defined destinations to different options, the idea of a connectivity of options.

**Vincent Kaufmann:** You make a link between centred mobility management, decentred mobility management and virtual mobility management and the transition from first to second modernity. Your data on the journalists show that the types are strongly linked with the life course position, whether they have children or not and so on. That could be important within the type. Secondly, the types could be strongly linked with the occupational position. They have money, they have the full access to the network. So I ask myself: are we allowed under these circumstances to consider that they are mobility pioneers? In other terms: how and why can we say, these mobility patterns, especially decentred mobility and virtual mobility management, are a prefiguration of the future? What about the others who don't have the full access?

**Sven Kesselring:** That's the weak point. I think it was clever to say that this project deals with pioneers because we cannot say that it is representative what we do. Of course we have a complete middle class bias in this sample. We don't know anything about the others. The idea is to look much more at different forms of social capital. The third period of our project would be labelled as a "mobility pioneer" project, it would rather aim at how these patterns are identifiable and how they are spread in different layers of society. We are working especially on this point in our case study for the media industry. Second point, nondirectional mobility could be the mobility for the reflexive, for the second modernity. We wouldn't go as far to say so, but it is our hypothesis.

**Ruth Limmer:** I have a question about the conceptualisation of mobility. Have I got you right: mobility is based on two dimensions, movement and motility. So you can be person of high or low movement, and in the second dimension you operate with high skills and low skills to manage demands. You have two dimensions forming mobility?

**Wolfgang Bonß:** A short remark regarding directional and nondirectional mobility: it would be a misconception to interpret them as a differentiation between order and disorder. Instead they are two patterns or practices to create order. In the empirical work we have to decide: which type more apt to interpret our data. I call it the principle of type interpretation. You look at the case and ask: is it centred or

decentred? Centred mobility is structured by principles, decentred mobility is structured by opportunity. Research is a process of interpretation.



## The Vision of Mobility and Second Modernity

by Weert Canzler, WZB Project Group on Mobility

The WZB's Project Group on Mobility and the Mobility Pioneers Research Project have a host of conceptual elements in common. However, this paper focuses on the differences. They arise not least from the fact that we WZB researchers inquire into the sociological aspects of technology and therefore concentrate on the automobile (the artifact) and automobility (the vision). From our point of view, social science research on transport and mobility must address (a) mobility, the significance ascribed to it, and its function in complex social structures, (b) transport and communications technologies as the "material basis" of mobility, and (c) the actual use of those technologies. Technological artifacts of transport, especially the car, are a major factor shaping everyday life in modern societies and continually broadening the individual's optional spaces of mobility. The internet promotes this trend; intelligent transport services (ITS) chiefly serve automotive transport. Thus our main hypothesis is that the vision of automobility is dominant in the age of second modernity, too, and that the car as a privately available artifact serves and facilitates the flexible mobility demanded by society. The hybrid use of the car exceeds that of any other transport technology, reducing everyday complexity because it fosters routinization. Self-locomotion is the yardstick for all hybrid (intermodal) alternatives. I base this hypothesis on the following three points and the accompanying empirical observations.

### Optional Spaces of Mobility and their Topography

Although mobility and transport are often synonymous in everyday parlance and the language of policy-makers, it is helpful to distinguish clearly between the two terms. We define *mobility* as the ability to move from place to place independently of spatial or technical factors. This definition thus includes the ability to move intellectually as well. Individual competencies and skills, or what Bonss and Kesselring call "mobility potential" are crucial. *Transport*, by contrast, is the actual movement from place to place. It therefore cannot be divorced from specific spatial and technical conditions.

The individual's mobility is determined by the ability to move, which begins in the mind. It is there that the individual's optional space of mobility forms. The optional space of mobility is a concept that incorporates the idea that boundaries are crossed. Territorial, temporal, and hierarchical boundaries become obsolete as optional spaces of mobility expand.

For the individual in modern societies, that expansion is continual in all directions, not just one. Each person's arenas for action and optional spaces of mobility are growing through -

- access to and increases in the performance of transport technologies (especially the car),
- development of an ever more intricate infrastructure and reduction in the effort it takes to overcome a given distance, and

- rising competence and a clear orientation among transport users.

The final point indicates the individual's growing ability and experience in dealing with transport technologies and new spaces. It also suggests a tendency for the topography of optional spaces of mobility to flatten out. The user surfaces are assimilating more and more in the sense that the service elements in the car have been the same for decades. The traveler has just as little readjustment to make at airports as in global hotel chains, be they located in Munich, Bangkok, or Montreal.

## **Empirical Findings: The CashCar Project**

The expanded optional spaces of mobility were also the departure point for large-scale empirical research, the CashCar project (1998–2003). This work was primarily about the development and testing of new intermodal transport services and about the opportunities to recast the private car as a collectively used vehicle for which time, distance, or both are leased. As part of an overall, intermodal package, what chances are there for such full-service leasing with a temporary return option? Repeated, detailed panel surveys were used to interview users who piloted this new kind of arrangement.

In brief, the CashCar project showed that collective leasing of time and/or distance for cars is found to be attractive only under certain conditions. The private car is the standard against which CashCar and other alternatives are measured. This result can be interpreted in two ways. First, the individual's transport behaviour tends toward routinization. Second, the car has a peculiar dual character. It both reduces complexity and entails a considerable amount of extra work. On the one hand, the great advantage of the automobile is that one can "use it without having to think twice". Because it can serve nearly all transport purposes, it eliminates many decisions. Automotive monomodality thus helps simplify complex everyday life. More than that, the car adds to the variety of alternatives. The possession of a car is self-reinforcing, because the expansion of the individual's optional spaces of mobility enhances the attraction of the car's monomodal use.

On the other hand, the purchase and maintenance of a private car requires considerable expense and effort that usually goes into consumption work, which in consumer research is defined as the effort that the user has to expend to consume a commodity or service. The striking thing is that the effort and expense to drive a car is not usually perceived as either a burden or a transaction associated with any costs. Few people ever coldly weigh the expense of using a private car, much less estimate the discrete transaction costs of driving. Other rationales take priority, especially those of unrestricted availability and flexibility and the promise of freedom associated with one's "own car". These overriding motives are known from past studies on the sociology of household technology. Often, household appliances offer little measurable utility in terms of working time gained or financial savings accrued. Sometimes, the utility of these appliances is even negated altogether by new demands. Nevertheless, the use of household appliances, mostly by women working on several fronts at once, is rated positively because it is associated with increased flexibility and ability to manage one's time.

## The Special Role of the Car

The outcome of the CashCar project shows that the private car is the benchmark for all alternatives. The private car's strength is also the weakness of the past alternatives. It is certainly not losing its dominance. Integrated (i.e., hybrid) transport services can succeed only if they include the car - and the bicycle for that matter. The private car is the yardstick in every sense, such as convenience, availability, and comfort. Moreover, the car is also the reference point for costs. Whereas the alternatives to the car usually require a fare based on their full cost, only part of the costs of using a private car are usually perceived at all. In that case, the costs of fuel and sometimes the insurance premiums constitute the "subjective costs of a car". Rarely occurring costs such as taxes, oil changes, repairs, fines, and depreciation are items that people hardly ever figure in, much less break down for each journey. Surveys of drivers, both men and women, repeatedly come to the same result: the costs of a private car are dramatically underestimated, with only about half the actual costs being accounted for on average. Among users of private cars, there is therefore a systematically distorted perception of monetary costs. The purchase, maintenance, cleaning, regular fueling, periodic inspections, and other consumption work entailed by the private car, some of which is considerable, are not perceived as expenses at all.

The crucial point, however, is the car's potential utility. It best meets the needs of individualized ways of life and increased level of activity. The car is highly attractive because it permits flexible use at what seems to be one's own discretion, because it is still a place of protected privacy in public space, and because it continues to be a symbol of affluence and social status. We do not expect the monomodal automobile to give way to intermodal alternatives anytime soon. It is even less likely that the Internet will displace the car as a vision in the foreseeable future.

## Discussion

**Sven Kesselring:** We discussed very often the paradox that one is locked in in a car, but on the other side it is a symbol of freedom and individuality. So the symbolic capital of the car is important and its use value. But you also describe it as an artefact which enables people to be mobile in a nondirectional way. Could you describe that a little bit more? The second point: do you have any information on the gendering of mobility by the car? Third: there is a differentiation between first modern monomobility and second modern use of the car as an artefact. Would you say that there is a development or is it just a differentiation?

**Weert Canzler:** First: to come from A to B is only one purpose of the car and in the situation it is the main purpose. But with the leisure time use of the car you have this nondirectional and nondefining use of the car. It is a multipurpose situation. The car is more than a transport instrument. In German you could call it a "Reizschutzpanzer" (an armour shielding you against any sort of outside stimulus), it gives privacy, you can be isolated in a public situation, it is a retreat to relax after work on your way home and it gives you security. People pick their noses in their cars, they don't do it in a bus. You have to consider these aspects when you talk about the role of the car in combination of means of transport. Our aim was to combine the given transportation



modalities, to combine the car with public transport, the train with the bicycle and so on. When we test these in an experimental situation we can see that the car has its own value and more functions than just to be combined with other modes of traffic.

Second: of course we have huge differences now but there is a tendency to converge between the genders. The behaviour in car usage will converge, I think. We have had this phenomenon: with the registration of new cars in the last years there are two major increases: old people and women.

Third: these feature of using it as a multipurpose instrument, that's the secret, so you cannot distinguish between the usage in the first and the second modernity.

**Wolfgang Bonß:** Is it right that you concept of mobility equals our concept of motility, and your concept of transportation equals our concept of movement?

Weert Canzler: Yes.

**Wolfgang Bonß:** The car is a reference point for mobility in modernity, I agree, but how do you explain it? Is it only a multipurpose instrument or is it a deeply rooted norm comparable to protestant ethics? The multipurpose aspect argues only with the different possible uses of the car but it doesn't see the car in its context with the user, the infrastructure etc.

**John Urry:** One extra thing there, an extra point: the car in relationship to gifts, having to do with giving lifts, because a lift is a gift. There is a sociability within families, friendship groups and commuters. I totally agree that the private car is a sort of benchmark. If that is so how can we simulate the huge array of facilities, ambition and nose picking environments of the car in public transport? That is what we then will have to do if in any way the car is to be tamed.

**Weert Canzler:** To put it ironical: the best simulation of the car is the car. You cannot simulate the car in public transport, otherwise you would have little cars in a chain. You can simulate some characteristics of the car, but you cannot replace it totally. Lift giving is a good hint. We analysed car pooling and we see a tendency that what has existed over years is being destroyed by flexible working time, by project working and so on. So the common conditions for car pooling are getting lost. There is a complex situation in the families as well, you have different times and therefore problems in sharing a car similar to car pooling.

**Wolfgang Bonß** - I think the automobile is part of modern life, it's a part of thinking of how to organise my life, e.g. as an instrument to bring my children to a music school. We have the car in mind when we organise our lives. So the car is not only a technical commodity, it is a part of organising and thinking about your own life, of planning and decision making. It is a skill to plan and organise your life with the support of this technique.

**Claus J. Tully:** I would like to say something to the possible similarity between car and transport systems. An example: daily commuting. When you have to use the subway or a regional train or an express train or an express train first class from, say, Augsburg to Munich, it is not only a difference in comfort and time but also in privacy.

The privacy of a car is far more easily substituted by the first class express train than by the subway.

**Ruth Limmer:** I thought until today that under certain circumstances a car is used to reduce complexity and sometimes complexity is increased by it. My assumption was that in big cities the costs of having a car are extremely high. Do you have any evidence for this assumption?

**Weert Canzler:** Yes, but only when these constraints are very high, e.g. when you need more than 20 minutes to find a parking place.

**Gerlinde Vogl:** There was a research on how long it takes people to find a parking place. People said, "oh five minutes, eight minutes", but in fact it took them 20 minutes. So there is a tendency to underestimate this effort.

**Lena Selmer:** When you live outside a town or city you cannot decide between having a car or not because without a car you don't get anywhere. So when you live in a city you will mostly use your car for centred mobility.

**Weert Canzler:** You are right with this difference between urban and rural areas. Second: the car is unequal to centred mobility because the car can become a logistic centre. You can deposit things inside and so on. It can become a place of very decentred usage. Take the "soccer mums", they have a really decentred mobility.

**Vincent Kaufmann:** In the Paris area there is a huge public transport system. Families don't need a car there but only ten percent are without a car.

**Weert Canzler:** In Germany cars are described as the most beloved child of the family so maybe it's really a matter of family sociology.



## **Motility: a Key Notion to Analyse the Social Structure of Second Modernity ?**

Vincent Kaufmann, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Laboratoire de Sociologie Urbaine

### **Introduction**

Mobility is at the heart of the transformations currently experienced by contemporary Western societies. Prized in economic terms as a growth vector, stimulated by the profusion of technological systems that offer considerable speed potentials, the mobility of people, goods and information has been increasing steadily for several decades. The greater volume, speed and spatial impact of these flows inspire many questions: are they indicative of the disappearance of national societies? Do they mark the passage from the first to the second era of modernity? Do they indicate a change in the factors governing social differentiation?

Merely acknowledging the intensification of flows does not allow any theory to be set forth concerning the nature of the social phenomena underlying these flows. In other words, just observing and reporting the flows' omnipresence does not tell us what significance the phenomenon has for society or which logics of action underlie it. While it is interesting and important to note the great societal changes of our time such as the passage from a first, solid modernity to a second, liquid and reflexive modernity, sociology, if it is to be empirically more precise and progress in its analysis, requires new tools.

This paper is dedicated to proposing one of these tools, motility, and to testing its heuristic virtues on empirical data. It is divided into three parts: the proposal of the concept of motility, its contributions to analysis and the conclusions – albeit temporary – that can then be drawn with respect to reflexive modernity.

### **Motility**

The profusion of the ways in which we can think of mobility may be an advantage because it avoids a single connotation and, thus, permits alternative theoretical considerations. However, such wealth of possibilities complicates its study. How can we describe phenomena with precision with an imprecisely defined construct? The way in which mobility is conceptualised and operationally defined will effect its application and research findings, as research interests and empirical findings will effect definitions of mobility. This means that the epistemological basis of mobility is fundamentally linked with institutional research interests, practices, and habits.

Numerous researchers favour a more holistic concept of spatial mobility (e.g. Brulhardt & Bassand, 1981; Remy, 2000; Schuler et al., 1997). For example, Jacques Lévy (2000) proposes to incorporate three components: possibility, competence, and capital. To demonstrate the utility of this expansion, let us consider the four meanings

currently in use in the social sciences to describe the mobility of people (Schuler et al., 1997): residential mobility (including residential cycles), migration (international and interregional), travel (tourism and business travel), and day-to-day displacement (daily journeys such as commuting and running errands). Most studies of mobility are deficient in at least two ways:

Studies of spatial mobility tend to focus on movement in space-time rather than on the interaction between actors, structures, and context. Socio-structurally embedded actors are central to spatial mobility, as are specific contexts that delimit or make movement possible. The reasons, constraints, and effects upon larger societal processes will remain obscured, if the geography of flows is considered in isolation, i.e. if we fail to examine the *modus operandi* of societal and political logic of movements in geographic space.

In addition, many spatial and social mobility studies tend to limit their scope by merely describing actual and past fluidity. As with other themes in the social sciences, the empirical observation and description of actual mobility (past and present) is insufficient to understand the impact of a particular social phenomenon. A study of the *potential* of movement will reveal new aspects of the mobility of people with regard to possibilities and constraints of their manoeuvres, as well as the wider societal consequences of social and spatial mobility. For example, knowledge about the territorial constraints for the movement of goods or people, or the conditions of social

Motility can be defined as the capacity of entities to be mobile in social and geographic space. mobility within a particular regional context, may shed light on a field that has largely neglected contextual qualification.

The inclusion of the dimensions and context-specificity of action windows in spatial and social mobility studies would go a long way in explaining inconsistent findings or unaccounted variances (cf. Bergman, 2003).

Based on these considerations, we propose a theoretical concept that conceives of spatial and social mobility as indicants of a more comprehensive form of mobility that is not limited to actual or past flux. The name of this construct shall be "motility." Motility<sup>24</sup> can be defined as the capacity of entities (e.g. goods, information, or persons) to be mobile in social and geographic space, or as the way in which entities access and appropriate the capacity for socio-spatial mobility according to their circumstances.

The introduction of motility as a theoretical construct is justified in three ways. First, it describes previously unexamined phenomena that do not correspond to any existing definitions. Second, existing phenomena and their associations will be synthesised in an innovative way. Finally, the concept will help to clarify the limits of existing concepts, notably spatial and social mobility.

Motility incorporates structural and cultural dimensions of movement and action in which the actual or potential capacity for spatio-social mobility may be realised

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<sup>24</sup> The term motility is used in biology and medicine to refer to the capacity of an organism to move (such as the motility of a fish). In sociology, it has been used sporadically by Bauman in "Liquid Modernity" (2000) to describe the capacity to be mobile. It is also found in sociological analyses of the body (Mol & Law, 1999) to describe the body in motion.

differently or have different consequences across varying socio-cultural contexts. Empirical investigations will focus fundamentally on the temporal changes in the extent, reasons, and manner of motility. Generally, motility encompasses interdependent elements relating to *access* to different forms and degrees of mobility, *competence* to recognise and make use of access, and *appropriation* of a particular choice, including the option of non-action. More specifically,

- *Access* refers to the range of possible mobilities according to place, time, and other contextual constraints, and may be influenced by networks and dynamics within territories. Access is constrained by *options* and *conditions*. The options refer to the entire range of means of transportation and communication available, and the entire range of services and equipment accessible at a given time. The conditions refer to the accessibility of the options in terms of location-specific cost, logistics, and other constraints. Obviously, access depends on the spatial distribution of the population and infrastructure (e.g. towns and cities provide a different range of choices of goods and services), sedimentation of spatial policies (e.g. transportation and accessibility), and socio-economic position (e.g. purchasing power, position in a hierarchy or social network).
- *Competence* includes skills and abilities that may directly or indirectly relate to access and appropriation. Three aspects are central to the competence component of motility: physical ability, e.g. the ability to transfer an entity from one place to another within given constraints; acquired skills relating to rules and regulations of movement, e.g. licenses, permits, specific knowledge of the terrain or codes; and organisational skills, e.g. planning and synchronising activities including the acquisition of information, abilities, and skills. Competence is multifaceted and interdependent with access and appropriation.
- *Appropriation* refers to how agents (including individuals, groups, networks, or institutions) interpret and act upon perceived or real access and skills. Appropriation is shaped by needs, plans, aspirations, and understandings of agents, and it relates to strategies, motives, values, and habits. Appropriation describes how agents consider, deem appropriate, and select specific options. It is also the means by which skills and decisions are evaluated.

## Empirical Reviews of Motility

What new contribution does motility make? We have taken three data bases we have at our disposal on this concept: 50 in-depth interviews of Swiss railways users, a comparative survey on the logics of action underlying modal practice in six French and Swiss cities (3,000 respondents), and a survey of residential aspirations in four French cities (5,500 respondents).

### Motility Serves to Avoid Irreversibility

The in-depth interviews of Swiss railway users that dealt with the role of mobility in people's lives revealed that their juggling of different modes of travel (car, plane, walking, etc.) and forms of mobility (physical, virtual, telephone, SMS, etc.) constitutes a resource to counter the spatial-temporal incompatibilities these actors are confronted with. This juggling, often quite creative, implies having extended

accessibility to transport and telecommunications networks, organisational skills and an appropriation of transport times and places. For example, among couples in which both partners work, it is becoming commonplace to have two residences or to commute long distances while working in the train and at home via the Internet on certain days. Different behavioural logics were thus identified, each with some degree of weighing of options in which the actor seeks to optimise his or her mobility with respect to his or her different projects – particularly professional and family-related projects. And yet, the mobility solutions chosen are generally considered by these people to be less than perfect, but they are accepted because they leave a realm of possibility open. This apparent contradiction is the result of the fact that when weighing choices, mobility takes a back seat to the will to carry out activities or to residential roots. Indeed, in many cases, actors avoid choosing between alternatives and seek to combine alternative conditions with the means of mobility. For them, motility therefore serves the purpose of avoiding irreversibility.

### **Motility also Serves to Remain at the Stage of Potential**

The comparative survey of the logics of action underlying modal practice showed that the availability of quality public transportation is not enough of a reason for people to use it. Many respondents said that having access to the network allowed them to expand the realm of their potential mobility, even if they did not make use of this access; in other words, they seek to have good access to the public transport network "just in case". The comparative survey on residential mobility aspirations in four French cities moreover revealed that certain households prefer to live in spatially very accessible (i.e. by different means of transport) locations in order to avoid being forced to move should they change jobs – this is particularly true of people without a stable job or who intend to change jobs regularly. In all these cases, the strategy of motility is a form of risk insurance.

### **The Motility of Some Actors Reduces the Motility of Others**

The comparative survey on the residential and daily mobility in four French cities showed that some of the households' mobility projects were harder to realise than others. This is especially true of the residential projects of families who wish to remain in the city centre. Mobility opportunities thus appear to be unequal, not only concerning the aspects linked to the households' wealth, but also for reasons relating to the strategies of certain categories of the population to expand their mobility potential. The development of the new forms of mobility that we have just mentioned, such as multiple residences, reduces the opportunities for mobility of other categories of the population by reason of the effect these kinds of mobility have on the available housing supply. In sum, the victims of this situation see their motility reduced by their disadvantaged position in the networks in terms of accessibility. The survey notably showed that automobile dependence could come about as a result of this process. Motility therefore reveals the new socio-spatial inequalities that stem from networks.

The review of the results of these three surveys shows that motility is becoming an indispensable resource for the reconciliation of an increasing number of spheres of activity and projects that are spatially more scattered; it is a resource that partly remains at the potential stage as a type of risk insurance. These results also suggest that motility corresponds to the impossibility for actors to make long-term commitments. Indeed, many of them juggle the accessibility afforded by technological systems in order to avoid having to make a choice, and in so doing develop organisational skills and new appropriations of the transportation and communication

systems – appropriations that use these technological systems in ways for which they were not intended (one such example is long-distance commuting). What is more, these results show that motility is unequal in two ways: on one hand actors possess different amounts of it, and on the other some people's expression of their motility reduces the motility of other people. This gives rise to the following question: is motility not becoming a form of capital – a capital specific to a reflexive modernity composed of unpredictability and non-directionality?

## **Motility as Capital**

Arguments for or against using the term capital to describe assets other than economic capital have rekindled since social capital has established itself in the mainstream social science literature. The clearest arguments against the use of the term beyond its economic form relate to substantive and epistemological arguments.

Substantively, it could be argued that social inequality in most forms as studied by the social and political sciences has its root in the lack of financial capital. In other words, so the argument goes, financial capital can be exchanged for most other socially desirable resources, including education, health, safe and stable work, status, power, social integration, etc. More importantly, the relationship between economic capital and educational attainment or good health, for instance, is not reversible in the way that education or health will not necessarily lead to the acquisition of financial capital or other desirable social resources. For example, many students from less-advantaged backgrounds, if they complete a university degree, tend to select degrees or universities that lead to less financially and otherwise rewarding careers, compared to their counterparts. On the other hand, students from advantaged backgrounds are more likely to study medicine or law and are less likely to study sociology. Accordingly, the primacy of financial capital reflects its centrality in terms of the allocation of social position and reward distribution.

Epistemologically, financial capital is far easier to theorize, operationalize, measure, and interpret than many other social science constructs, such as human, cultural, or social capital (e.g. Bourdieu, 1983). Consequently, many proponents of this position believe that studies which go beyond the description of objective measures (e.g. income, household size, number of rooms in household) are based on conjecture and are, thus, unscientific. This position is frequently rooted in a rather simplistic interpretation of the Durkheimian proposition that the domain of sociology should be limited to the measurement and reporting of social facts. Another defence for objective measures links measurement and theory issues: a focus on economic capital reduces social exchanges to mercantile exchanges and, thus, facilitates the measurement and theorisation in some popular theories that presuppose self-interest and the pursuit of maximisation of positive rewards.

Motility forms theoretical and empirical links with, and can be exchanged for, other types of capital.

There are a number of counter-arguments against these two positions. First, it is extremely difficult to assess the economic value of a person's income derived

from work and other possessions. Beyond the valuation of goods or assets, the weighting of income and assets of family or household members complicates the



calculations, as does the geographic weighting due to spatial variations of costs and prices. Consequently, the assessment of the financial worth of a person will depend to a great extent on what limits and omissions the empirical researcher imposes on the measurement of the construct and thus fails to free us from theorisation and subjectivity. Second, social scientists are never interested in people's financial income *per se*, but rather what income represents in terms of constructs that are central to the social sciences, including poverty, social inequality, exclusion, etc. In other words, monetary income may be an excellent but incomplete indicator of social constructs that guide our interests more fundamentally. Third, many theorists have convincingly argued that financial capital is of interest insofar as it can be readily exchanged for other types of capital. Karl Marx, for example, studied the dynamic relations between labour, industrial, financial, and landed capital, which create sectional conflicts of interest in capitalistic societies. Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1983) went further by criticising the primacy of economic capital (i.e. capital that can be exchanged for money or property) and an overly narrow focus on markets. He suggested shifting the focus from economic capital to a more general examination of the societal distribution and maintenance of power in the form of economic, cultural, and social capital. More recently, Amartya Sen and Robert Putnam suggested that the relations and resource exchanges between that which is derived from membership in social networks and other forms of capital justifies the use of the term capital when applied to social capital.

In line with these arguments, we propose to consider motility as a form of capital. In other words, motility forms theoretical and empirical links with, and can be exchanged for, other types of capital. Beyond the vertical or hierarchical quality that all forms of capital share (i.e. a distribution from low to high), motility has an additional vertical quality in the way that spatial constraints and other contexts impose a more differentiated perspective on this form of capital. More specifically, spatial and social mobility can be considered as multifaceted social phenomena. Not only are certain components and features of a mobility model interdependent but, forming higher-order associations, they are likely to interact in a more complex, conditional way. Thus, the main virtue of a systemic approach to mobility is the recognition that movement can take many forms, that different forms of movement may be interchangeable, and that the potentiality of movement can be expressed as a form of "movement capital."

## Discussion

**Norbert Schneider:** Where does motility come from?

**Vincent Kaufmann:** It is a notion that comes from biology and it describes the ability of animals to move.

**Contribution** Movement improves motility and vice versa. An example: children of mobile parents have a higher motility than children of non mobile parents. Their problem is, that they have no successful models on which to orient for their problem solutions. In the other case there are solutions to chose from.

**Sven Kesselring:** We have the problem to operationalise motility as a potential. I'd be interested to know: do you have any tools, any instruments for measurement. You

made this link to the social capital research. It is a hard thing to operationalise social capital. It's a never ending story. It is a weak concept and also motility is a weak concept. It becomes a little bit more solid when you connect it with what you do, with the access to infrastructure, the appropriation of infrastructure with knowledge. So my question is: do you have any key items or key information on how to identify the mobility potential of actors? I think of course of the mobility pioneers, not of the structural level, but of the level of agency. My idea is: maybe it is not necessary to collect all this information and data on people's education and skills and so on, maybe we can reduce that for four, five, six key items to identify whether this is a person of high or low motility?

**Vincent Kaufmann:** A big question. That's work in progress. We developed a notion first theoretically and after I tested the data and presented them to you. It's only now we started empirical research to have a more precise idea of which are the elements in motility. I have a hypothesis but no results.

**Ruth Limmer:** Some traits of personality like openness for new experience on the individual level seem to play an important role. Not only personality characteristics but also individual experience of already successfully coped mobility. A third role is played by personal resources. It is this individual level that we think plays an important role to see mobility as something positive or as something you can deal with.

**Sven Kesselring:** When you say that children of mobile people have a higher mobility potential then the reference point is directional or nondirectional mobility and the idea of that. From example from the armed forces we know of people who have to move every two years. Their children may have this experience, so maybe the potentiality comes from that but these children don't want to move, they don't want to travel. They have only the potential, but we don't know how it is realized.

**Ruth Limmer:** It means that you have to have a successful experience with coping or with mobile situations, not only the event as itself, but also the experience that it is manageable.

**John Urry:** You used motility in the singular. Surely it should be motilities. Is it sensible to capture in one term the incredible diversity between the system of a hub airport and the pavement outside that may or may not enable us to walk safely back to the hotel. There are many others things in between that are about motility. You have to capture a great variety of scales, organisations etc. of different motility structural systems and that would be one way to differentiate. And then for any particular potential movements: is there on occasion a sort of combining different motility systems and then facilitate it or I'd rather term it forward: the realization of a set of movements.

**Wolfgang Bonß:** The question of the experience of moving will be connected to the question whether you are the driver or are driven. In the armed forces the soldiers are driven, they are forced to change their position every two years. There is a very easy answer to this problem.

The question what could be a tool to operationalise motility: one answer could be the access to various modes of transport (like length of way, different cars in the household and so on), which can be described very completely; second: the place of

residence, the place of work and the distance in between; third: children or no children; fourth: the attitude towards moving. I think these four aspects could be a first step towards operationalising motility.

**Vincent Kaufmann:** It is a question of competence. We saw in interviews people who move but when you look at the way they move you discover that they are sure to have e.g. chosen the quickest solution, but it is not the case. Such things are very difficult to measure. It depends also on the project of people, the competence they need for it etc. What you said referring to access: yes, I think we can measure the access to different means of transportation. But when you see that a family lives close to some means of public transportation, there can still be the hazard that they don't know anything about public transport. So actually they don't have the access. They don't integrate the system into their motility but the system is there.

**Sven Kesselring:** I would be happy, if it was so simple, but I think it is much more complicated, just think of education, think of origin, of country, of technical skills, tested knowledge just to describe the motility of a person to use a means of public transport or a car. Just that. I don't talk about career mobility, the use of social institutions and such things. If you conceive motility as a potential of being in the world or orientate oneself or living in a nondirectional mobility world or anything like that it's definitely a never ending story. The good message is: the reduction of all these many many factors to four or five could be a starting point. But there is still a lot of work to do. Just think of the attitude towards mobility - you have to do research on mobility experience of a group of people, of the milieu.

John, you have never been convinced of the concept of motility. This could have to do with the research question. Your point of view to these issues is a little bit different to ours. Your structural, systemic level is quite different to our perspective which focuses on the action of the single actor.

**John Urry:** If you talk about the groups of actors then certainly these groups of actors do things in relationship to systems that provide sorts of potentiality. I agree with lots of things about the potential but I wasn't convinced that a single term could capture these diverse potentials. And in fact, even when I think of an individual journey it is made up of a sort of hierarchy, a system that permits this journey, and of course a journey is not just a journey but also a lot of other things. It is reaffirming the relationship, the shuttling couple will be experiencing the worth of the copresence, the confidence of being seen. So I think motility is too transport pointed. What is important are the forms of social life where certain sorts of infrastructures prevent motility.

**Wolfgang Bonß:** To become mobile can mean the loss of something. The bigger the loss the lower is the openness to move. For example: when you are well socially integrated your openness to move is lower than the other way round. You have to look at the possible loss to measure motility.

## **Mobility and Motility. A Comment to Beck, Urry and Bonss/Kesselring**

by Matthias Junge, University of Leipzig, Institute for Cultural Studies

In the following, I will comment on the three interesting and to some extent pathbreaking papers and I will outline some possibilities for further research into the transformation from first to second modernity which are implicit in the paper of Bonss and Kesselring. A last remark concerns my point of view: I am not a mobility researcher. My work focuses on sociological theory. I try to develop sociological concepts which are able to catch the fluid and ambivalent character of the present. Therefore, in the following I deal mostly with theoretical issues of the presentations.

First there is one common point in the proposals: all of them try to develop a sociology and its methodology from a cosmopolitan point of view. I am sure that all share one common idea in the background: the assumptions about a new critical theory which redirects sociological attention to the emerging forms of sociation beyond nation states. However, all papers do not name their frame of reference for the critical dimension, the normative frame of reference. If it is not possible, as Beck suggests, to take the idea of cosmopolitanism as a frame of reference, what are possible conceptual alternatives? A proposal could be: one can try to explore in which way concepts like options, mobility, and motility imply normative criteria for a critical perspective within the research on "CosMobilities".

Social developments on a global scale can be understood as a consequence of an ongoing process of societal modernization leading to a second modernity which realizes what Marx once said: all that is solid melts into air. But at this point it is important to take the metaphor of this sentence seriously: air is not without a structure, a structure, however, of a different kind – it is structured by the relative forces of attraction and repulsion - Bauman would say: it is the fluidity, which structures.

Mobility is a consequence of motility.	The papers presented here want to grasp the structure of fluidity, the structure of being liquid. As a point of reference Bonss and Kesselring named Simmel's work . Yet there is a difference in the social consequences of motility in first and second modernity. In first modernity motility builds new structure by destroying old traditional structures. In second modernity motility is using these structures to change their very nature. A structure is no longer a stable and fixed entity, structure becomes a principle, a rule which can be taken to use given structures and, as Urry seems to say, to use a given infrastructure.
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Being fluid or liquid means to be in constant flux, constant movement and mobility. And the paper of Bonss and Kesselring seems to catch the principle behind movements of every kind: motility, the ability to move, to be mobile. At first glance motility seems to be a general condition of being mobile, but it is more: it seems to be the very structure of modernity itself. I do not think that mobility is the "general

principle of modernity” as Bonss and Kesselring stated. Mobility is a consequence of motility. Motility is a capacity (of actors and structures) generating, allowing, and demanding mobility. Some structures, like airports, as Urry suggested, enable mobility and also motility. *Motility is, to use a conceptual frame of linguistics, a competence whereas mobility is performance.* This analytical distinction does not catch the historical intentions of Bonss’ and Kesselring’s introduction of the term mobility., The analytical distinction, however, does not merge the dimensions of mobility, movement, flexibility, and motility.

When I take up the idea that it is motility and not mobility which is centre of modernity, then the proposal of Bonss and Kesselring shows a general scheme for the analysis of changes in second modernity. We underestimate the proposal of Bonss and Kesselring when we believe that it builds only a new ground for mobility research. It is more.

If we transform the second dimension of mobility, movement, into different forms of sociality or sociation – the way of establishing social integration, how we realize binding social relations – a table can be constructed between motility and the form of sociation, leading to the ways how central concepts of “being in a social world” are reconstructed by different groups of people. It is this reconstruction of the meaning and interpretation of “being in a social world” which generates new social structures – like flows and scapes – in second modernity. For the interpretation of the scheme we can use sociology of knowledge: in every of the four fields we find different groups with a specific kind of reconstruction of “being in a social world”. All reconstructions are simultaneously realized, taken together they establish a complex universe of “parallel social worlds”. It seems to be the interplay between the different worlds and actions they generate which establishes the social world of “reflexive modernization”.

<b>Motility and Sociality</b>		
	motility low	motility high
sociality/face-to-face	reconstruction of: time space/place use of structures use of resources mobility identity culture consumption/production	reconstruction of: time space/place use of structures use of resources mobility identity culture consumption/production
sociality/virtual/network	reconstruction of: time space/place use of structures use of resources mobility identity culture consumption/production	reconstruction of: time space/place use of structures use of resources mobility identity culture consumption/production

Mobility is in the middle of the fould here I agree with Bonss and Kesselring, since with this example one can study in pure form, which consequences a specific kind of mobility, understood as a result from the connection of motility and sociality, will have for the reconstruction of elementary concepts of "being in a social world". It seems to me that the change in these concepts generates the new ways of mobility, sketched in the presentation about mobility pioneers.

Let me give a rough sketch of what I mean with "reconstruction" of central concepts about "being in a social world". Let's take the example of the identity concept. What kind of identity is able to deal with motility as an organizing principle of daily life? I think of the three types of mobility pioneers: centred mobility management, de-centred mobility management and virtual mobility management. It seems to me that we can find there a change within the structure of identity: shifting from a strong localized identity to an identity with motility as its structure.

The mobility pioneers also change the nature or culture of time and space.

And then: what is the structure of motility? Some answers are frequent in the current discussion: the structure is flow, liquidity, de-

centred centers or as Urry suggested: orderly disorder. It seems to me that there is an underlying idea behind this metaphors: structure is a process. Structure is seen as a process. Following this idea the following question needs to find an answer: what is the structure of a process? The three types of mobility pioneers can be taken as examples: for centred mobility management the process is organized around a strong coupling of physical mobility and motility, here the structure lies within the coupling of the two dimensions of movement and motility, its directionality; for the de-centred mobility management the structure is given by loosely coupling the two dimensions, the non-directionality; and for virtual mobility management the structure of the process is an uncoupling of mobility and motility. The structure of the named processes is the special way of coping with the two dimensions, the way of coupling or uncoupling the dimensions. Social reality then is a consequence of connecting dimensions, it depends on how and why some knots in the network are used more often than others or are viewed as important. As such: the structure of a process opens a space of possibilities for coupling or decoupling dimensions of orientation.

The mobility pioneers also change the nature or culture of time and space. After the compression of time and space we find a shift towards the uncoupling of time and space, and in the consequence time will gain priority for social organization. Space loses its function to describe a social position or a social structure. What is needed is a language of time and timing to describe social positions and social relations. The right time (and timing) is central for organizing social relations.

Motility as a concept seems to have consequences also for the analysis of structures

I will mention a second point to avoid the interpretation of my contribution as being to much focused on the level of the individual. Bonss and Kesselring stated, I

guess, rightly, that the difference between motility and mobility, now in their usage of the terms, causes difficulties for empirical research. They describe two dimensions of mobility: movement and motility which can vary independently. Following their proposal: movements can be observed, motility can not be observed, we need to reconstruct the motility of an actor from his point of view.

Sure, but now we find a closing of the concept of motility, the meaning of motility seems to be restricted to the actors point of view. However, using the methodological idea of "double interpretation" the actors point of view is constituted by a "double interpretation" of his position and possibilities in relation to structures and alternative usage of structures.

Motility as a concept seems to have consequences also for the analysis of structures, motility should be understood as a two-sided concept: usable for the analysis of actors and structures. Using the concept of motility one question comes up: how can we describe the motility of structures? Or more focused: is motility a property of structure in second modernity? And, as Norbert Schneider stated in the discussion, how is the interrelation between actor, structure and the situation (understood as an interaction situation and also as an institutional setting).

To sum up after all: our usual way of thinking about social reality has reached its limits, and the presented research has shown this with its focus on, to borrow a term from psychoanalysis, borderline phenomena of social reality. Borderliners awake doubts about the usual way of constructing borders.

## Discussion

**Wolfgang Bonß:** On the one hand you say, motility is THE basic term. I would agree, we have also discussed competence and performance (movement is the performance and motility is the competence), but we have developed our argument in another way, the self reconstruction of the term of mobility, and we said: movement and motility have not been distinguished for a long time, but now they must be distinguished. So you are right to say that motility in general is a basic term.

The second point is motility and structures. Indeed, when we argue about motility in this paper, we argue about the motility of actors. They are no structures. On the other hand the autonomous subject vanishes, and we now have the subject-network structures or the subject in context, the motility hybrids. That points in your direction. But I see one difference. We say we have to change the difference between subject and structure. It may be that the category of structures disappears as we disappear. Then we have the necessity of new categories like motile hybrids. That points back to your scheme: reconstruction of time, space, place, that's okay. But what do you do with the problem that the categories for first and second modernity are changing? And do you have categories for the whole modernity or for modernity and premodernity.

**Matthias Junge:** What you lastly said is that the category of motility is one to describe modernity in general. It seems to me that there is a difference in the form, in the kind of motility between first and second modernity. In first modernity motility is used to build up structures, solid structures as we have known them all the time; in second modernity motility is used to motilise structures, to make them more motile than in first modernity. So the term of structure itself becomes the notion of motility.

When I differentiate between high and low motility this can also be read as first and second modernity.

I agree absolutely with your beginning remarks where you stated that your making the distinction between movement and motility goes back to your historical reconstruction of the use of the concept of mobility. My way to this concept of motility was only analytical, it was not made with respect to the historical development. It only looks at the capacity of the term.

**Wolfgang Bonß:** We should introduce a third term - situations - along with actors and structures. For when actors and structures are disappearing then what is left are situations. Motile actors, motile structures and nonmotile situations - what is the result: immobile actors I would say. Situations are changing. That's also the point with processes, the life course as a process coming from mobile, from motile to nonmotile situations. These changes can happen very fast.

**Matthias Junge:** That's a very good idea. For when we have three concepts - actors/actions, structures and situations - the idea of relating makes really sense because to relate only two is not enough. With a third variable like "situation" I think it makes the picture more round.

**Sven Kesselring:** I'd like to talk about another inspiration. Motile structures are highly ambivalent. On the one hand a specific mobility potential enables people to be mobile, but it also excludes. The mobile phone for example enables people to be accessible while being on the move but it's also means of control. It enables you to realize projects but you are not really away, you are disposable. This is important for our view from the theory of reflexive modernization and all these motility issues. It's a twofold phenomenon. There is always exclusion and inclusion. The airport is machinery that brings people up into the sky but it also binds mobility. There is a binding power in mobility. When people are on the move others have to stay.

**Matthias Junge:** Take the two extremes of making steel. Either it is too hard and then it breaks, or if it's not hard enough, then it is too motile.

**Sven Kesselring:** The problem with this kind of metaphor is that you think of a material which comes from fluidity into stability. That's the difference of structures. They are in motion, they are mostly mobile as such. That's the reference point to Simmel's work e.g. in his philosophy of money, you realize how things seem to be stable but they are in flux, in a move, in transformation. That's the idea. So the metaphor is convincing, it symbolizes, it illuminates the production of motility, the potential; the guess that there is a stable status at the end.





## Job Mobility and Living Arrangements

Ruth Limmer, State Institute of Family Research at the University of Bamberg

Before discussing lectures and papers, let me give you some information on my research background. Together with Norbert Schneider (University of Mainz, project coordinator) and Kerstin Ruckdeschel (BIB, Wiesbaden), I worked on the study "Job Mobility and Living Arrangements" (Schneider/Limmer/Ruckdeschel, 2002)<sup>25</sup>. Before presenting some implications of the results of our research, I will give a brief overview of the theoretical background, basic assumptions, research questions and the subject sample.

### Theoretical background and basic assumptions

Our project team shares the assumption that mobility, in the sense of human and structural agility and flexibility, has become a requirement. As a structural feature, mobility is demanded from every organisation. As a personality trait, mobility is increasingly expected from human beings. The mobile person is a modern ideal: flexible, independent, and highly efficient. The development of this ideal is perceptible in many domains of life, especially in employment. Modern economy demands quick adjustment to changes and new situations. Like others, we assume that this has consequences for employees: more and more people feel confronted with occupational demands to be mobile and have to co-ordinate and integrate these requirements with occupational and especially private life. In contrast to the study Bonss, Kesselring and Vogl are working on, our interest is not restricted to a mobile avantgarde, the so-called mobile pioneers. We are generally interested in the situation of people who deal with *job-related spatial mobility* and in the question of how they integrate mobility into their lives. In contrast to most studies, we assume that moving is only one form of being mobile. In our study, we differentiate five forms of so-called *mobile living arrangements* (see Table 1). In the given context, "mobile living arrangement" means that demands of being mobile have been integrated in daily life for more than a year, within a marital or non-marital relationship, with or without children. We could control these criteria for all mobile living arrangements except for movers. In the case of movers, based on other studies, we assumed that changes in living arrangements due to a decision to move last more than a year, including the preparation and adaptation phases. This assumption was confirmed by our results.

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<sup>25</sup> The study was financially supported by the Federal Ministry for family matters and the Bavarian Ministry for Work and Social Order.

Table 1: Mobile living-arrangements which were studied.

<b>Movers</b>	Partners or families who moved to a new place of residence (more than 100 km away) because of a new job.
<b>Long-distance relationships</b>	In the case of these couples, each of the partners has a household; they do not share a common main-household.
<b>Shuttles</b>	Persons who have a second household at the work-location and share the common main-household on weekends.
<b>Long-distance commuters</b>	Persons who drive more than two hours per day to their work-location and back.
<b>Persons with mobile jobs</b>	Persons who are mostly absent from home and return irregularly, whenever the job allows. Some occupational groups are characterised by some degree of mobility. The choice of such a career goes hand-in-hand with the choice of mobility.

We assume that the decision to become mobile and the specific type of mobility is influenced on a macro level by structural restraints like labour market conditions and other relevant features of the region of origin and the region where the new job is situated.

On a micro level, socio-demographic characteristics and the personal experiences of the individual are relevant variables (e.g. experience with mobility, or personal characteristics such as the need for security or the need for new experiences). In addition, the decision and the subjective significance of mobility are influenced by the family situation (e.g. number of children, job situation of the partner) and by the anticipated positive aspects associated with the new job.

## Research questions

Our main research questions are:

- Who is mobile?
- What are the characteristics of mobile people with respect to socio-demography, personality, family and job situation?
- What is the impact of spatial mobility on people?
- What are people's positions regarding job-related spatial mobility: are they willing to become mobile or do they reject this option?
- What are reasons for becoming mobile or for rejecting job-related mobility?
- How do people evaluate their own mobile living arrangement; was becoming mobile a mainly autonomous decision or a forced choice?

This critical question refers directly to the issue of whether mobile persons do drive or are rather driven, which was investigated by the project group Bonss/Kesselring/Vogl.

- How do people cope with mobility-related demands and how does mobility shape their job biography or family biography?

We are interested in the way mobile people try to create their own living situation. For example, we studied their plans for future living arrangements, their efforts to realize these plans, and the way they cope with stress caused by mobility. We also wanted to know the impact mobility has on people's family and job-related biography.

## **Sample and methods**

The sample population were working persons or those still in training, between the ages of 20 and 59 (with or without children), who lived in an intimate relationship at the time of the interview. Persons without a partner were excluded from the interview. The mobile persons were interviewed, as were some partners. Altogether, 1095 interviews were held: 551 with mobile persons and 350 with their partners, all of whom were in one of 5 mobile living arrangements. As a comparison group, we interviewed 117 non-mobile persons and 77 of their partners. Our methods were the analysis of existing mass-data and, within our own interrogation, a combination of fully standardized interviews and in-depth interviews.

## **Selected results and their implications for mobility research**

First, let me summarise the results for the question of how mobile people evaluate their own decision to become mobile. Are they driven by external circumstances, like an unpromising situation on the labour market or family-related reasons, or do they consider themselves as "drivers", who use mobility to reach their own job- or family-related goals? Based on qualitative analyses of in-depth interviews (N=180), we detected three types of decision:

- Autonomous decision: for about 48% of the mobile interviewees, becoming mobile was primarily an autonomous decision – in this respect, you could call them drivers.
- Heteronymous decision: for about 30% of mobile persons in our study, mobility was a forced choice. Because of job- or family-related reasons, they had no other choice.
- Ambivalent decision: about 22% of mobile persons describe their decision as highly ambivalent. It's a complex mixture of pros and cons deriving from their specific family- and/or job-related situation.

There was a group of mobile persons whose ambivalence came clearly to the fore. However, there was also a degree of ambiguity expressed by most of the persons allocated to the other "autonomous-" or "heteronymous-decision" groups. When interpreting these results, it is crucial to be aware that they refer only to the point in time when our interviewees decided to enter into a mobile living arrangement. During the period of mobility, things change: most mobile persons we interviewed had wanted to leave mobility long before or worried that they would not succeed in leaving mobility as they had initially intended. This development was due to various reasons, such as not finding another job, the hope for occupational advancement not

being fulfilled, or the partner not wanting to move so the mobile life as a shuttle or long-distance commuter had to continue. While being mobile, people who began their mobile lives as “drivers” became driven. However, we also observed developments in the opposite direction: some people who were initially driven by external pressure to become mobile took active measures, thereby becoming drivers, to change the mobile situation. For instance, they set themselves a deadline by which they intended to leave the mobile situation or they moved closer to the work site. For future research, these results highlight the need for longitudinal studies and a dynamic conception of the crucial question of whether people become drivers or whether they are driven while dealing with mobility.

## **Mobility – a question of gender**

Mobility has a different meaning for men and women and different consequences (...) mobile women are significantly more often childless than non-mobile women.

Our study points out that women are much less mobile than men. This is due to the fact that mobility has a different meaning for men and women and different consequences, especially with

respect to the marital or non-marital relationship and the family biography. To illustrate this result, I will present you some information concerning the family development of mobile men and women in our sample: via qualitative data analysis we can show that mobility often represses family development. This influence depends largely on the sex of the mobile person: 42 % of mobile men and 69 % of women reported that due to their mobile job situation they are childless or have no further children up to now. Further analyses of the fully standardized data show us that mobile men realize their wish for children as often as non-mobile men. The only difference between the two groups is that family development is delayed by mobility. They are able to realize their wish for children because their female partners agree with a traditional division of labour. As John Urry mentioned in his lecture, mobility requires immobility. For the mobile men we interviewed, we can confirm this hypothesis based on their intimate: in most cases, the female partners of mobile men provide a kind of service and recreation centre and if there are children, they often feel like single parents.

For mobile women the situation is very different: they are significantly more often childless than non-mobile women. At the time of the interview, the average age of the female shuttles, long-distance-commuters and women with mobile jobs was 36 years. Therefore, a high proportion will probably remain childless. The mobile women are not childless by choice, but because they want to combine family and job and believe this is not possible while being mobile. When interpreting this result, it is important to know that the women in our sample had higher qualifications than the average female working population. In the in-depth interviews we asked for the job biography and the biography of family development (including whether they had wanted children when they started to work and what had happened to the wish for children since then). In their descriptions, we could identify processes of effort justification. After they had finished their academic qualification they decided to become mobile to get an adequate job. So, step-by-step, they decided to invest in their career. These investments made it more and more difficult to give up job-related opportunities to realize the preliminary wish for children. While the fallback to a traditional division of

labour allows mobile men and their female partners to combine job, mobility and family, mobile women are hindered by sex-roles and the way parenthood is structurally embedded in our society.

## Discussion

**Contribution:** You spoke about five types of mobile persons. Do you have data about any transformation in their status?

**Ruth Limmer:** In the qualitative interviews we saw that there are real mobility careers, different forms of mobility, one after the other. Typically you first become a shuttle and then you move.

**Claus J. Tully:** Is there a socialisation towards mobility?

**Ruth Limmer:** Region plays a role in the way how people become mobile which mobile living arrangement they chose. People with a strong relation to their region have a high need for security and will become long distance commuters, they won't move.

**Sven Kesselring:** You mentioned this drive or to be driven matter. John speaks of this "compulsion of proximity" as a kind of driving force. How is it possible with your data to identify different perceptions of mobility, mobility constraints from outside or from inside?

**Ruth Limmer:** It's mainly the self appraisal . We first asked: why did you become mobile and how do you evaluate this decision? And then we have data on the question: how long do you want to be mobile? What's your perspective? When will you change your living arrangement? And it turned out that the periods were distinctly longer than they were meant to be.

**Sven Kesselring:** So there are different kinds of mobility, mobility as a concept in mind or mobility as a period, a passage necessary to reach a certain point or goal in one's life; and there may be the motile hybrid, a person meandering between different states of mobility.

**Norbert Schneider:** It's not meandering, it's more utilizing the different forms of mobility to optimise the tension between one's disposition and restrictions. Long distance relations mainly result from the job situation of the partner. This living arrangement is driven. Living apart together, however, is a living arrangement by free choice. Half of our samples of living apart together, their origin was job related. They adapted to this situation and after a certain period they said, okay, this is our preferred form of living. Many of the living arrangements have to do with a specific situation coming from the labour market. A growing number of persons have jobs with a time limit, then they get a new short term contract and so they become commuters although it was never planned.

**Sven Kesselring:** So the life form changes the attitude.

**Ruth Limmer:** Our question only aimed at the decision of becoming mobile. It was not: how do you feel while being mobile. At the beginning nearly 50 % felt to be drivers. But living in this living arrangement they become driven persons. Especially women, when they were asked if they want to have children it was very clear that their original job related goals hinder other goals in their biography.

**Norbert Schneider:** Around 70 % of the mobile persons say they are under stress and only 20 % of the nonmobile persons say so. Around two thirds of the partners of mobiles reported about disturbances in a similar way as their partners did.

**John Urry:** What about tele workers. I was a bit sceptical about your evidence of women saying: because of their mobility relationships they are not having children.

**Vincent Kaufmann:** Is there a relation between the decision to become mobile and the transportations system?

**Ruth Limmer:** The question of home working - we asked: what would help to cope with the burden of mobility? A lot of shuttles and long distance commuters wish to have more flexible working times and to get the permission to work at home. For most of them this wish is not fulfilled. We asked people between 20 and fifty nine, working people and people in training and their partners.

Women who were hindered to get children started their work with the wish to become a mother sooner or later. They were often highly qualified. When we follow the biography of job and family there is a shift in the evaluation of family biography. First there was the wish to become a mother, then they only want to have a family only under certain circumstances. Mobile women are strongly attached to their jobs. They have invested a lot into their career so they are tied to these goals. Asked: do you want to have children and lose your job at the age of 35 they answer: I will not give up my job, but I will look for another job perspective.

Regarding transportation systems - when the distance goes beyond 1000 kilometres then you will have to move. But we also have couples in long distance relationships with bigger distances than this. Using different kinds of transport is also a matter of personal disposition, e.g. one can regard a train ride as pleasure time, but it is also a matter of comfort and the time it takes.

**Vincent Kaufmann:** We have now a lot of commuters between Paris and the Provence because there is a high speed train between these two regions. So a certain transport system can form new mobility.

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## **The CosMobilities Network**

### **www.cosmobilities.net**

In January 2004 a number of mobility researchers from all over Europe met for a workshop in Munich. It was entitled "Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective", supported by the Reflexive Modernization Research Centre (SFB 536) and organized by the Mobility Pioneers Research group at the SFB (see [www.sfb536.mwn.de](http://www.sfb536.mwn.de)).

The first of the two days was in the light of theoretical perspectives for mobility research in a cosmopolitan perspective. Contributions from Ulrich Beck, Wolfgang Bonss and John Urry framed a creative and committed atmosphere for discussion and reflections on a new topic of social research. It became visible that substantial considerations on cosmopolitanism in social science need a theory of mobility as a conceptual fundament. The focus on "multiple mobilities" and the emergence of a "new mobility paradigm" (John Urry 2004) revealed how transnational, global and virtual interaction beyond time and space are possible and constitutive for all thinking on a cosmopolitan perspective of world society and globalization.

The second day focused on empirical research. Many participants from different research backgrounds and interests contributed to a discussion where many links between very different approaches became obvious. This workshop was a starting point for the CosMobilities Network and a hopeful inspiration for further cooperation and exchange.

### **The network idea**

The future the CosMobilities Network understands itself as a transnational connexion between people interested in many different aspects of mobilities research. It addresses social scientists, planners, engineers, researchers interested in questions of technology, knowledge and the philosophy of science (STS), journalists and other experts in questions of mobility. They all shall give shape to the network and its activities. The aim is to develop "weak ties" by communication between "mobile people" as a fundament for activities like common workshops, publications, projects etc. The website as an information platform will support exchange and meeting each other in virtual ([www.cosmobilities.net](http://www.cosmobilities.net)) and/or real space.

### **Further activities**

For the future we will develop this website as a content management system where everybody gets informed about the network and its members. [www.cosmobilities.net](http://www.cosmobilities.net) will be an *information platform* for all members. The internet site will help to inform each other about activities, research projects, results etc. It should be a good way for information research and to find cooperation partners or experts in the field of mobility research.

Along with these "virtual" activities the network will organize workshops, conferences, publications etc. to promote the idea of mobility research in a cosmopolitan and transnational perspective.

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