Editorial

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The fluidity of modernity has surely reached the outskirts of the earth when even the new Pope Franciscus admonishes his cardinals that “our life is a journey and when we stop there is something wrong. [...] If one does not walk, one gets stuck.”¹ The current economic crisis has enhanced the fear of congestion and the interruption of flows: the circulation of capital in the first instance, but also of people and stuff, and of ideas and knowledge. It is time to rethink mobility.

The contributors to this issue could not agree more. Rethinking mobility starts with questioning the very foundation of our disciplines. Regine Buschauer’s plea, ushered in our previous issue, for a “shifted notion of mobility [...] distinct from its association with movement and speed”² resonates in this issue as well. Her article was part of a special section on Mobility and Media, guest-edited by Dorit Müller and Heike Weber after a call for papers. In this issue, both Brian Hanrahan’s “The Mobilization of Weimar Radio: Actuality, Microphone, Radio-film” and Franziska Torma’s “Frontiers of Visibility: On Diving Mobility in Underwater Films (1920s to 1970s)” are both offspring of that successful call. Hanrahan’s essay investigates the effects and new experiences that became virulent when early German radio moved out of the studio to transmit from public places. He argues that mobilized radio established complex constellations of time and space, inside and outside, reality and representation. He shows convincingly that a diverse set of material devices (microphones, portable sound mixers, cables) as well as “rhetorical figures, aesthetic devices, institutional contexts” established a truly new form of mobile media, which could also be called a form of transportation. Torma leads us to one of the most remote parts of the earth: the oceans. She analyzes the concepts, images, and requirements of the cinematic exploration of the oceans between the 1920s and 1970s. The divers’ films, made possible by new diving as well as new filming techniques, led the gaze of a global viewership deeper and deeper into the seas. The colonial perspective which at first guided this new kind of mobility, eventually gave way to a more ecological one: zooming into the details of the underwater world constructed oceans as parts of Planet Earth’s vulnerable ecosystem in the environmentally aware 1970s. Galit Wellner’s “No Longer a Phone: The Cellphone as an Enabler of Augmented Reality” provides an engaging meditation on the way that the navigation functions in cellphones change perceptions of travel at the same

time as the additional layers provided by augmented reality challenge spatial interpretations of sites and journeys. We hope that these articles, which further our thinking of the relationships between mobilities and communications, will generate a string of future submissions.

We are also interested in submissions from the field of transport studies proper, which so far has remained remarkably silent on the topic of communication media. And yet, analyzing the car as both a medium itself or as part of other media promises to be a fruitful trajectory of research, as testified by earlier publications in this journal, on movies³ and plastic art.⁴ In this issue, Michael Gott's "Cowboys, Icebergs and 'Outlaws': The Paradoxes and Possibilities of the Francophone Belgian Road Movie" argues that Belgian filmmakers tease out the ways in which questions of national identity mutate, particularly for women, when the American film genre of the road movie is transferred to Europe. But Gott's analysis comes from outside the transport (history) field and seems to beg, from our editorial point of view, for a counterpart from within. How about the influence of the new navigation systems on mobility cultures, whether by train, on a ship, on foot or bike? And how about the prediction stemming from this field about the claimed paradigm shift towards a youth culture of digital rather than physical mobility? What do transport historians have to say on these "revolutions"? Don't they too have a history?

Whereas this journal intends to publish more along these lines, we should not forget the importance of a critical close reading of existing transport paradigms. In his "Mobile Exceptionalism? Passenger Transport in Interwar Germany," Christopher Kopper differentiates between national mobility cultures to explain the weakness of German passenger road mobility. Kopper's plea for "German exceptionalism" should be read within the context of the so-called coordination debate, the discourse about the system struggle between rail and road that started in the 1920s and continues to this very day. It is here that mobility history can bear directly upon transport policy and planning, another cross-fertilization between mobility-related disciplines this journal intends to foster.

As usual, we also bring you our regular sections intended to tap into the more creative and lateral dimensions of mobility scholarship. Up to now our field has spent remarkably little energy on the morality of mobility and in our forum section, Ideas in Motion, philosopher Andreas Spahn reflects on ethical tensions within mobility technologies. He worries about "The Future of the Car" in which the "Persuasive Technologies" of computer systems give us moral orders to enhance safety and sustainability.

We also offer you our regular reviews of art, museum, film and books, which allow for a broader appreciation of varied ways of thinking about mobility creatively, multiculturally, and transnationally. From New Zealand a museum

curator reviews the show *Manawatū Journeys* at the Te Manawa: Museum of Art Science and History, in Palmerston North, which explores mobility and materiality in relation to the settlement of this region. Back in the Americas, a pair of Brazilian media artists and curators report on the project Labmovel/ Mobile Lab, a series of artist residencies in mobile labs that toured the Netherlands and Brazil. And a review of the U.S. documentary *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* reminds us that the mobility of American suburban drivers often came at the expense of African-American neighborhoods that were demolished to build highways. Each of these reviews raise topics that we imagine could be taken up in future articles, contributing to our call for critical mobility studies in a global perspective.

Notes

1. Marc Leijendekker, "Paus maant kardinalen tot actie en vraagt hen moed te tonen," *De Volkskrant* (15 March 2013), 2.
2. Regine Buschauer, "The 'Ambulant in-between': Media Histories of Mobile Communication," *Transfers* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2013), 96–118, here: 98.
3. Dorit Müller, "Transfers between Media and Mobility: Automobility, Early Cinema and Literature, 1900–1920," *Transfers* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2011), 53–75.
4. Charissa Terranova, "Mobile Perception and the Automotive Prosthetic: Photo-conceptualism, the Car, and the Posthuman Subject," *Transfers* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2011), 73–96.