

Editorial

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Fostering conversations (and even better, interdisciplinary collaborations) between mobility historians and media historians is a high priority for this journal. Three years ago in *Transfers* 3, no. 1 (spring 2013), Dorit Müller and Heike Weber, as editors of this journal and guest editors of a Special Section on Media and Mobility, made a plea to study “the intense correlations between media and transport technologies,” which had been fatefully split at the end of the nineteenth century.¹ On that occasion, we also announced a “portfolio” on Media and Mobility (for more details, see this journal’s website), which was designed to stimulate the writing and publication of such crossover scholarship. We wait in hope for a courageous and curious historian who ventures an analysis of the car as a medium of communication, to name just one possible example. So far, however, the focus has been on scholarship from the other side, so to speak: scholars not well versed in the intricacies of mobility studies and mobility history, who increasingly feel an urge to deal with the mobility aspects of their specialty, a development we eagerly embrace. The current issue is a case in point and contains a special section on the relationship between interwar print culture in the Pacific and mobility. Our guest editors, Victoria Kuttainen and Susann Liebich, have gathered four contributions, which they introduce and place in their theoretical, geographical, and historical context at the beginning of the section. Frances Steel, herself a specialist on the Pacific sea-bound mobility, has provided a concluding overview.

In addition, this issue includes one individual contribution. Christopher Howard and Wendelin Küpers, in “Interplaced Mobility in the Age of ‘Digital *Gestell*,’” utilize rich Heideggerian philosophical concepts of “enframing” and “interplacedness” and draw on these concepts’ deep phenomenological implications to argue how science and technological gadgets not only determine the ways in which order and reality are constituted, but also how they mediate human existence and enable human beings to disclose their very nature or being-in-the-world. All contributions further our journal’s mission to “rethink mobility,” either by expanding its vision beyond the car and the West or by deepening and expanding the theoretical perspectives available to mobility history.

Cristina Temenos, Anna Nikolaeva, Tim Schwanen, Tim Cresswell, Frans Sengers, Matt Watson, and Mimi Sheller further develop that brief in our forum section, Ideas in Motion. “Theorizing Mobility Transitions: An Interdisci-



plinary Conversation” provides a new way for us to take stock of our field and hear where some key thinkers’ energies are currently directed. The so-called multilevel approach is one of these directions, a form of activist scholarship that not only studies but often also aims to foster a transition toward a sustainable future society. We call upon our readers to continue this conversation, through our columns (either in our forum section or as fully peer-reviewed contributions) or elsewhere. If we, as editors, may start this ongoing discussion here: we believe we really need more thorough reflection on the role of history (writing) in this transitional thinking, a conviction we know is shared by several of the authors of this conversation piece. After all, transition is another term for change (with a twist, in this case: with an intended goal), and change is the alpha and omega of history writing. The authors of the Ideas in Motion contribution, for the most part, have not foregrounded a historical dimension in their theorizing. This journal, however, intends to foster just that: to bring a long-term perspective to transitions, to transfers, indeed, to *Transfers*.

The journal’s brief is to offer a platform for such conversations. But to what extent have we been successful? Looking back at the nearly five hundred pages of last year’s volume, one can observe that the majority of the articles published were from and on the West, a weakness we still wish to repair. So please help us with that. The majority of the topics were approached from a historical perspective, but the number of nonhistorical articles was clearly higher than the year before, partly as a result of two special sections (on Travel Writing and African Mobility). Four articles dealt explicitly with literature, and can be considered to be a part of the media and mobility portfolio.

None of the articles we published last year take a traditional approach to transport history. In terms of modes of mobilities, the variation was great. We had articles on road vehicles (bus, truck, motorcycle, pre-automobile road transport), sea (including one dealing with containers), aviation, and general transport. Articles on railways, walking, and bicycling were not represented last year. But what is most important is that we had four articles (nearly a quarter of all published) dealing with “mobility writ large,” articles either not on any specific mode, or with a non-traditional-transport focus, such as the special section on Mobility and Race and the special section on Africa (including one on the tsetse fly). In short: after six years, we can declare that we are achieving our aim of moving beyond traditional transport history. We find ourselves in a transition phase (indeed: a transition!) toward new mobility studies, as we intended and as defined in several of our editorial team’s programmatic texts in previous volumes.

The new year also brings personal changes. Our book review editor for the last two years, Sunny Stalter-Pace, is leaving us, but not without our big thank you to her for the excellent job she has done, and not without her putting a last signature as our book review editor by writing this issue’s novel review. Together with the other review editors, Deborah Breen and Chia-ling

Lai (exhibits), Fernanda Duarte (art), and Dorit Müller (film), Sunny has been instrumental in making our journal much more than a luxuriously stapled bundle of traditional scholarly articles. This journal is independent, not linked to an association, and the audience we intend to serve is multifaceted, in many ways quite elusive and coming from many different academic and nonacademic disciplines. Our publisher's analysis of online hits suggests that our readers appreciate the strong review character of each issue, and we are proud to have built a team of editors during the last six years that have delivered our aims in such a high-quality form. We welcome Liz Montegary and Steven Spalding (the latter responsible for our novel reviews) as Sunny Stalter-Pace's replacement. Liz's recent work on sexuality, mobility justice, and social movements in the United States draws upon her training as a queer cultural studies scholar. Coming from a background in French and Francophone cultural studies, Steve writes about representations of mobility and speed in fiction and film, and is eager to hear your suggestions for novel reviews for future issues of *Transfers*.

Note

1. Dorit Müller and Heike Weber, "'Traffic'—On the Historical Alignment of Media and Mobility," *Transfers* 3, no. 1 (2013): 65–74, here 65.