

Reimagining Mobilities across the Humanities

Volume 1: Theories, Methods and Ideas

Edited by **Lucio Biasiori, Federico Mazzini
and Chiara Rabbiosi**

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2023
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2023 selection and editorial matter, Lucio Biasiori, Federico Mazzini and Chiara Rabbiosi; individual chapters, the contributors

The right of Lucio Biasiori, Federico Mazzini and Chiara Rabbiosi to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors of their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-1-032-24454-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-24448-8 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-27866-5 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003278665

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Newgen Publishing UK

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	xi
<i>List of tables</i>	xii
Introduction to Volume 1: Theories, methods and ideas LUCIO BIASIORI, FEDERICO MAZZINI AND CHIARA RABBIOSI	1
SECTION 1	
Theories and methods	5
1 “Moving textuality” in early modern Europe PAOLA MOLINO	7
2 The challenge of mobility for commodity chains: time, actors, and value from an historical perspective MARCO BERTILORENZI, ANDREA CARACAUSI, CARLO FUMIAN AND BENOÎT MARÉCHAUX	22
3 Mobilizing pictures: the history of science through the lens of mobility ELENA CANADELLI	38
4 Gendered mobilities: spaces, images, and power across the Mediterranean (16th–20th centuries) TERESA BERNARDI AND SILVIA BRUZZI	53
5 Handling distances as a key factor in social power dynamics MARINA BERTONCIN AND ANDREA PASE	73

x	<i>Contents</i>	
6	Map-mobilities: expanding the field LAURA LO PRESTI AND TANIA ROSSETTO	88
7	Narrative mobilities: moving texts from representation to practice GIADA PETERLE	102
	Afterword PETER MERRIMAN	117
SECTION 2		
	Ideas	125
8	Mobility: the word and the thing LUCIO BIASIORI	127
9	Tyrannical mobility, dictatorial mobility FRANCESCA CAVAGGIONI, LUCA FEZZI AND FLAVIO RAVIOLA	142
10	The Anglo-Venetian moment: political and legal representations between the Republic of Venice and England in the early modern age MICHELE BASSO, MARIO PICCININI AND ALFREDO VIGGIANO	159
11	Mechanics, scholars and objects: the spread of Aristotle's philosophy and its exponents in early modern Europe FERDINANDO FAVA AND ANDREA SAVIO	175
12	Synchronic development or diffusion? The temporal mobility of violent practices before and after WWI GIULIA ALBANESE AND MATTEO MILLAN	187
	Afterword ARISTOTLE KALLIS	201
	<i>Index</i>	209

Introduction to Volume 1

Theories, methods and ideas

Lucio Biasiori, Federico Mazzini and Chiara Rabbiosi

Technological and societal advancement have moved toward an increased interest in mobility—or rather, mobilities—and their complexity. While this phenomenon has seen major involvement of the ‘hard’ and social sciences, these two volumes argue that the humanities can play an equally important role in understanding mobility from a diachronic and spatial perspective. This conviction led to the need to reimagine mobilities through a humanistic lens, finding new analytical momentum in the cross-fertilisation of studies in past and present mobility phenomena, practices and meanings. The books apply this approach to a range of historical and present questions, developing new insights that will shape this nascent humanistic take on mobilities.

Drawing on the recent theorisation of a humanistic turn in mobilities studies (Merriman and Pearce, 2017), this two-volume book investigates the potential of an emerging ‘mobilities and humanities’ perspective by showcasing several exemplary reflections, research subjects and case studies focused on mobilities in past and present times, connecting antiquity to contemporaneity and humanities to social sciences, design research and the interdisciplinary mobilities paradigm.

Through a series of short chapters, this edited collection gives the sense of how mobilities are employed (and should be even more so) as a very elastic and inclusive concept that allows for the emergence of unexpected research variations resulting from the proximity of different disciplines, thus positioning the concept of mobilities as a powerful catalyst for inventive research insights and claims.

While including contributions from key figures who have in different ways committed their research to mobilities, both volumes are edited and written by members of the Centre for Advanced Studies in Mobility & Humanities (MoHu) established in the Department of Historical and Geographic Sciences and the Ancient World (DiSSGeA) of the University of Padova. DiSSGeA was selected by ANVUR, the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research Systems, as Department of Excellence for the period 2018–2022. Thanks to this achievement, the department has strengthened research activities, developing excellent teaching methods and enhancing its international profile. The department combines mobilities

DOI: 10.4324/9781003278665-1

studies and research in the humanities, and has become a research hub for the humanistic study of mobilities thanks to the research commitment of its staff, who are active in the fields of history, human geography, anthropology, the antiquities and other humanities, as well as the development of two new research infrastructures: the aforementioned MoHu and the Digital Laboratory for Mobility Research in the Humanities (MobiLab). The project has also included a series of initiatives fostering excellence in education: a new curriculum in Mobility Studies within the already existing Historical Sciences master's programme, scholarships and study prizes for students with an outstanding academic record, additional funding for Erasmus+ outgoing mobility, PhD and post-doc research grants supporting research on mobilities and an invitation to world-renowned visiting scholars. Such initiatives are contributing to the training of a new generation of humanists who know how to manage mobility-related topics with a high degree of awareness of their complexities.

The structure of this two-volume book mirrors the thematic research clusters of the Centre: Theories, Methods and Ideas; and Objects, People and Texts. Taking advantage of a rich and unique mix of disciplines, with a distinctive reference to the connections between past and present times (from antiquity to contemporaneity), both volumes contribute to the emerging area of mobilities studies through the humanities, which is increasingly pursued by other research hubs worldwide. This inclusive and pluralistic approach helps in overcoming the traditional paradigm that reads past and present as static entities developing independently one from the other. The combination of historiographical, philological, geographic and anthropological methods, with a reference also to economic and legal aspects, allows better understanding of the dynamism of human societies and nonhuman entities, and to reconstruct in critical ways the related contexts, practices and experiences at different scales.

At the same time, the volumes seek a dialogue with renowned international scholars in the field of mobilities studies. These scholars had closely interacted with authors and editors and have critically discussed the research outcomes of the books by writing an Afterword for each section, with a critical reflection on its main themes. Readers who may feel disoriented by the multiplicity of themes explored and the diversity of approaches followed in the volume can start from the Afterwords to each section to find an Ariadne's thread to help them find their way through the book.

Let us now turn from the spirit of the project behind this publication to the content of this first volume, which is organised in two sections: Theories and Methods, and Ideas.

As Hannam, Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 15) have noted, the new mobilities paradigm was conceived as 'an approach that offers both theoretical and methodological purchase on a wide range of urgent contemporary issues, as well as new perspectives on certain historical questions'. Based on this premise, the Theories and Methods section promotes a theoretical and

methodological reflection on the most innovative component of the book, namely the combination of mobilities studies and the humanities. The main purpose of this section is to feed a broad theoretical vision on the topic (e.g., varied conceptions of mobilities; development of innovative interpretations; terminological experimentations), on the one hand, and to think in a comparative and transversal way about quantitative, qualitative and creative methodologies, on the other.

This section also aims to explore theories and methods as a basis for stimulating an interdisciplinary dialogue between mobilities studies and the humanities. Hence, there is a need to investigate the implications of this innovative formulation from an epistemological point of view, and through a discussion of methodological possibilities which have already been implemented or are to be experimented. Maintaining the ability to constantly reimagine the relations between mobilities and the humanities, this section also intends to provide theoretical and application tools that are productive for more specific research areas, such as the mobilities of people, objects, ideas and texts.

As highlighted by Peter Merriman in his Afterword, the chapters of this section 'demonstrate how a broad range of arts and humanities approaches and methods can be useful for understanding movement and mobility, from archival research to experimental Geohumanities approaches to narratives and texts'. Furthermore, they cover a very broad time period (from the 15th to the 21st century), which is rather unusual for transport and mobility history, which mainly focuses on 19th and 20th century transport technologies.

The Ideas section reflects on the processes related to the mobilities of ideas through time and space. It also aims at understanding the forms and reasons for the affirmation and development of some ideas in a context in which they are not the only ones available, as well as how ideas change in time and space. In this context, ideas have been thought jointly with the practices they convey, researching the conditions for their affirmation, reproduction and appropriation in geographical and historical contexts, even very distant.

In his Afterword to the section, Aristotle Kallis has observed that the field of ideas has so far remained the perennial child prodigy in the realm of mobilities studies: 'Full of potential yet young and disobling, it remains somewhat ill-fitting and thus peripheral to the mainstream of mobilities research'. This happens because the mobilities of ideas are mostly discussed either through a diffusionist scheme or without making any distinction between mobility and circulation. In this section, however, the mobility of ideas has been interpreted in a sense that is closer to reception rather than circulation. The process of reception always involves one subject emitting and another receiving, but both are changed by this exchange. Treating mobility as reception, and vice versa, helps us overcome a view according to which ideas move in a purely abstract way, i.e. without moving on the legs of the human subjects who create them and the support of the means that allow them to proliferate. From this point of view, the ideas section can be considered as a sort of bridge between the first and second volume, which instead deals with

4 *Biasiori, Mazzini and Rabbiosi*

the mobilities of objects, people and texts, guaranteeing the profound unity of the project that animated this book and of which the pages you will read are the final product.

References

- Hannam K., Sheller M., and Urry J. (2006). *Mobilities*, Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings, 1(1), pp. 1–22.
- Merriman P. and Pierce L. (2017). Mobility and the humanities. *Mobilities*, 12(4), pp. 493–508.

PROOF