

# Introduction

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On September 11, 2001 four airplanes were weaponized against three civilian targets. The shocking pictures crossed the world. Dramatically, while the fourth airplane was forcefully landed before hitting its target, CNN portrayed how people jumped into a void in the World Trade Center. The world undoubtedly changed and this event was considered as the worst terrorist strike in the history of US. Henceforth there was consensus among academicians to point out that 9/11 was a founding traumatic event that reconfigured the international affairs as well as the relations among nations in the planet. This is not a book dedicated to terrorism in the strict sense of the word, but discusses the role of (mediatized) fear as the epistemological border that prevents the real interaction with the alterity. This opens the doors toward a paradox simple because at time of moving, in a culture that exacerbates mobilities as a positive aspect of progress, fear undermines not only the freedom of speech and choice but also gives a biased image of the others beyond the symbolic wall of security (Korstanje 2017).

Returning to the discussion around 9/11, the discourse of terror, which was instilled by terrorists, rested not only in the cruelty of these strikes but also in the fact that the bulwarks of Western civilization were vulnerated with impunity. For instance, a second reading assumes that the industries of tourism and the higher levels of mobilities reached over the recent decades were employed by terrorists against the West. Is this a clash of civilizations (Huntington 1993) or barbarianisms (Achcar 2015)?

Whatever the answer may be, what is clear is that mobilities and terrorism are inevitably entwined. It is important to remind that this book does not represent an attack on the mobilities paradigm nor a criticism against John Urry in particular. Rather, it complements the contributions of cultural theorists who made a rigorist diagnosis on the hyper-connected and globalized and risky world. With focus on the discrepancies between culturalism (in scholars like Urry or Sheller) with Marxists, we build a bridge between materialism and mobilities paradigm which would be helpful to understand the contemporary society.

As this backdrop, one of the main dilemmas at the time of approaching the theory of mobilities seems to be associated with the position

globalization takes as point of entry in the discussion, or at least its effects in day-to-day life. No less true is that Marxists exaggerate in their diagnosis the effects of globalization embracing a one-sided discourse which sometimes obscures more than it clarifies. But equally important, in the opposite angle, cultural theorists developed a wrong definition of the phenomenon. As McMichael (2011) noted, the theory of globalization cannot be dissociated from the failures of development which produced a gap between the industrialized north and a global south. Although capitalism was at the brink of collapse several times in its history, it was not until 2008 that the system experienced one of the most troubling crises. The productive capitalist system went forward in a climate of fragmentation while the spirit of globalization falls in some radical contradictions. At a first glimpse, although some nations reached an economic maturation which is historical in regards to other epochs, others have been debarred to a peripheral role in the international labor division. The ebbs and flows of globalization have been brilliantly assessed by British sociologist Luke Martell in his work which is entitled *The Sociology of Globalization*. Martell (2017) contends that sociology has fleshed out an all-encompassing model to understand globalization in comparison with other disciplines which conserves a more micro-interactive perspective. At some extent, popular parlance precludes that globalization is based on a material or economic background. Nonetheless, far from being limited to the economy, globalization interrogates on the mobilization of social and cultural resources which are orchestrated into a multicultural landscape. In this vein, Martell says:

Culture has heavily shaped globalization, and globalization has a lot to do with the trans-nationalization and intermingling of cultures and local cultural responses to global cultures. (Martell 2017, p. 4)

In order to discuss the nature of globalization, it is necessary to imagine its epistemological contours, most likely toying with the idea that mankind experienced similarly minded types of globalization in its history. The discrepancy given between “transformationalists” and skeptics is open to date, but here some clarifications should be done. While the former allude to a climate of negotiation to agree consensus in regards to universal values as democracy, human rights, or trade, the latter defines “globalization” as an instrument that combines interests of many nations, corporations and activists. States entered in a climate of extreme competition as never before with other states for the monopoly of economic and non-renewable resources. Hence far from disappearance, the global order places the nation-state pitted against other states to

monopolize the produced wealth. For instance, globalization created some philosophical paradoxes. Although the nation-state played a vital role in delineating the first steps of a liberal market, now capital flourished beyond the control of states and politics. Far from what exegetes of mobilities think this does not mean that this exhibits the end of the nation-state but it works in a new unknown role. One of the contradictions of capitalism evinces how urban cities geographically situated in the global south should be seen as global cities while others in the First World are not. On one hand, although economy is not the touchstone of globalization, it plays a leading role in orchestrating a new labor organization that enlarges the existing gap between have and have-nots. On the other hand, globalization, although it is very important, seems not to be limited to developed nations. It is important not to lose sight that some global cities such as Bombay, Buenos Aires or Sao Paulo correspond to developing countries.

To what extent, following Martell's definition, mobilities go beyond connection and consumption, rather, mobile globalization, denotes a regular system and intersections which forge interdependency among involved parts. There are not reasons to assume that the present stage of hybridization, which is proper of global capitalism, extends to vast territories dominating the entire world as Marxists insisted. Instead, our British sociologist suggests the opposite; globalization shows contradictory evidence and effects, which are conducive to accelerate further material asymmetries between a nomad elite with good taste and technical training, concerned by cultural consumption and the exploited and relegated workforce which is debarred from the global benefits. As Martell contends, one of the most polemic aspects of globalization seems to be that the circulation of goods is encouraged through the channels of the privileged richest nations, insofar as migrants are considered as "undesired guests". The question whether globalization paves the pathways for the rise of a more open atmosphere, where the alterity is tolerated, in other circumstances, some counter-forces such as xenophobia, ethnic supremacism, nativism and any other sign of intolerance surface. With this in mind, the political agenda of Western governments has included the problem of migration without any practical result to date (Martell 2017). This begs the question, what is the place given to mobilities within social sciences?

Historically Marxian thought devoted considerable attention to studying the nature and effects of ideology, which remains inexpugnable for being grasped by lay citizens. To put this in other terms, ideology works subtly by dissuading citizens in a certain direction through what is silenced or covered instead of what can be overtly said or written

(Žižek 2012). The theory of mobilities forgets that a great portion of human beings are inhibited to travel toward developed nations. The world of hyper-consumption is something prohibited by this underclass. In this vein, it is important not to lose sight that the introduction of fear enlarges the gap between “the exemplary center” and its periphery. Professor G. Skoll (2016) anticipates this, confirming that one of the aspects of a capitalist system consists in covering up the real reasons behind workers’ exploitation. At the time capitalism expands, the state of exploitation is tightened.

Discussing the main limitations of Marxism, Geoffrey Skoll (2016), who is Professor Emeritus at Suny Buffalo, argues that the introduction of a new radical fear is conducive to the changes in daily politics. In his book, *Globalization of American Fear Culture*, Skoll writes that the ideological success of capitalism consists in dissuading workers that they live in the best possible world has been the ideological platform from where capitalism historically operated. The best not only can be achieved by means of hard work but by extreme competition with others. In retrospect, the capitalist system and theories of economy showed widely that accumulation only is feasible if we introduce exploitation as a key factor to produce and distribute wealth in a few hands. The monopolization of surplus value, as Marx puts it, resulted not only from human creativity but from the means of the elite to commoditize labor into exchangeable goods. The number of rank-and-file workers involved in a process of production affects directly the profits of capital owners. From that moment on, capital reproduction seems to be always to the detriment of the workforce. Not surprisingly, from its inception the United States has developed an uncanny obsession and fear for the otherness. At the time the inter- and intra-class conflict arises, fear undermines the possibilities of claimers and protesters to impose their views. Two major instruments were used by privileged classes to keep control: ideology and repression. While the latter appealed to surveillance to exert violence against the pathological agents, the latter one was enrooted in a process of fear-mongering that limited the negotiation of worker unions. After 9/11, capitalism unfolded total forms of control, which were established in private life by subordinating individual rights to the collective well-being, which means a more secure society. Leisure industries were witness to obstructive methods of surveillance over lay citizens; it was unfortunate that this trend makes the US a fascist state. Skoll discusses to what extent the elite in America devoted their resources to forge a culture of fear which passed from communism toward terrorism. The organization of labor, adjoined to profit maximization, was prone to the manipulation of fear. Likewise, terrorism activates a long dormant

discourse which shows the limitations of Americans to understand the otherness. Although the two total world wars involved the US, it is none the less true that in these events the US played the role of an empire inspiring a model that situates the United States as the “administrator” of capitalism. The management of exploitation centers on a genocidal campaign by disciplining communists.

As the previous argument given, Skoll suggests that the period 1968–1973 not only encouraged a liberalization of the human relationship, it also induced substantial changes in the underdeveloped economies of the global south. During this age the exegetes of capitalism precaritized the power of workers paving the pathways for the rise of neoliberalism during the 1990s. With this backdrop, the expansion of the US as the unique imperial power was possible after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but without the legacy of the UK in financial leadership, it would have never taken place. One mantle passed from one power to another, as the US enthralled as the center of manufacturing and trade. The direct intervention or full-scale led wars are ideologically legitimized by the needs of bringing the ideals of American democracy, liberty, freedom and mobility. However, at the bottom of this globalized culture of fear are hidden dark interests associated with exploitation (Skoll 2016). In consonance with Skoll one of the main goals of this book resides not only in discussing the ideological core of globalization and capitalism, but also giving a fresh alternative to the limitations of mobilities paradigm to be applied to other cultural contexts than United States and Europe.

The first chapter, where part of the specialized literature is reviewed, discusses the legacy left by Urry, who has contributed to the understanding of a new world his sensitivity captivated. The rivalry of the Lancaster School with Marxist circles is glossed over in Urry’s analysis. In this chapter, we set forward the thesis that the mobility paradigm serves as an ideological discourse to confer further liberty to First World travelers but constrains the concrete horizons of daily life where the self moves. While the process of feudalization made from tradition and immobility are the main hallmarks, the introduction of mobilities in post black-death contexts paved the way for the rise and expansion of capitalism, which not only reorganized social ties, but induced consumers to the idea that the world is ruled by liberty and self-determination. The upsurge of nation-states paradoxically homogenized some ethnic groups by restricting their possibilities to move beyond the borders of nationhood, while endorsing to the citizens the rights of leisure travel which symbolizes a partial mobility.

In his seminal work, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* Dutch historian Johan Huizinga (1993) describes the social discourses of medieval violence subordinating the imagination and autonomy of peasants. In the same way mobilities influences modern citizens so that they are really free, chivalry served as an ideological message for peasants not to defy the status quo. To be more precise, Huizinga recognizes that calamities and indigenes were more present in the Middle Ages than in industrial times. This state of pauperism was contrasted with the luxury and comfort of nobility. Although nobility made its decisions in view of selfish interests which aggravated the conditions of peasantry, no less true is that “the archetype of chivalry” carefully designed by the Catholic Church to keep exploited people under control was based on the exacerbation of some cultural values linked to bravery, the sense of justice and the needs of protecting the poor. Nothing of this existed in the Middle Ages, Huizinga adheres:

At the end of the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the fifteenth, the political stage of the kingdoms of Europe was so crowded with fierce and tragic conflicts that the peoples could not help seeing all that regards royalty as a succession of sanguinary and romantic events. (Huizinga 1993, p. 249)

People followed their respective lords without knowing their real unshakable sentiment of greed. The cruelty and the perversity of nobility were masked by typical ideals of chivalry and mutual responsibility where the weaker were protected. The daily frustration not only came from mechanisms of escapement that helped strengthen the Christian Faith but history and historians paid little attention to the role of ideology in Medieval Times. Huizinga goes on to admit that:

Still, the richest flower of beautiful forms was reserved for three other elements of life – courage, honour and love ... God created the common people to till the earth and to procure by trade the commodities necessary for life. He created the clergy for the works of religion: the nobles that they should cultivate virtue and maintain justice, so that the deeds, and the morals of these fine personages might be a pattern to others. (Huizinga 1993, pp. 266–267)

To wit, Huizinga’s account is of significant importance to our own argumentation because of two main reasons. First, ideology as Marxists said, is not emerging from the rise of capital or industrial revolutions. From time immemorial, societies have fleshed out their own ways of dissuasion to mitigate or undermine riots and rebellions. Second, the immediacy of ideology places lay people in a difficult position to

decipher the reasons of exploitation, but at the same time, it lays the foundations for resentment, which should be rechanneled to create a climate of social change. In the same way that nobles constructed an archetype of chivalry to cover their ambitions, the mobilities paradigm is the peak of the iceberg that ushers us into a state of immobility. In line with Huizinga, the second chapter discusses the ways capital owners appeal to the manipulation of emotions, fear above all, from where the capitalist elite exerts its hegemony over other subdued classes. Living in a world fraught with risks, emotions are previously programmed to keep the audience captivated. The politics of simulations as it was widely discussed by Jean Baudrillard explains that governments allude to the manipulation of emotions in order to impose a new climate of governance structured around the nature of controlled risk. Following the contributions of Norbert Elias, who prefigured how capitalism fostered the mannered or controlled emotions in order to monitor citizens and an ever-frustrating workforce. It is important to mention that capitalism operates in the mechanization of an emotional world, while there is an unnoticed dichotomy in the way the United States – following the British archetype – conducts its civilizatory process.

The third chapter centers on the problems of Western civilization in constructing the figure of alterity, giving a conditioned hospitality that is granted only for those who can pay for it. We continue here earlier discussions to confirm how terrorism undermines the basis of hospitality which still is the main pillar of Occident and capitalism. The industries of travel and tourism were oriented to colonize the alterity, focusing on mobilities and freedom as one of the mainstream cultural values of the good Empire, while native people were framed as victims, who should be helped, from progress. In this vein, society alluded to tourism and leisure as mechanisms of escapement to revitalize the psychological frustrations which occurred during labor time. The notions of mobilities were discursively introduced to reaffirm the proper rational values of the West, which ideologically and efficiently has domesticated the citizen. The world of nomadism, which really characterized the ancient world of Anglo Saxons and other German tribes, sets the pace to more refined versions of those ancient tribes, where mobilities cemented the epistemological borders of a sedentary culture. Instead of what proponents of mobilities preclude, we live in a sedentary culture fraught with medical problems because of the predominance of a sedentary lifestyle (Zimmet 2000; Prentice 2006). Marshal McLuhan was correct in confirming that humans constructed machines to potentiate their power, which not only was rechanneled to more productive work, but also replaced the natural performance of muscles. As a result of this,

machines have globalized the world but run the risk costs for the health of sedentary workers (McLuhan et al. 2011). The human senses and derived emotion are being replaced by an increasing number of technologies which merit discussion. As Jacques Ellul observed some time ago, the instrumentalization of humans corresponds to the ideological core of capitalism. The further technology monopolized by the hands of capital-owners should be equated to major oppression for the workforce (Ellul and Merton 1964). Here a more than interesting question arises: what is the role of mobilities in the process of alienation?

In consonance with the above noted question, the fourth chapter, as the alma mater of this book, ignites a hot debate revolving around the plot of the film *The Island* starring Scarlett Johansson and Ewan McGregor. Undoubtedly, the world of clones in the Complex reveals one of the philosophical paradoxes of the theory of mobilities. Clones are educated to think they are the unique survivors after the rise of a nuclear catastrophe. The world as they knew it not only remains inhabitable by the radioactivity but also the fear draws the boundaries between a secure base, Merrick's Complex and the surrounding environment. Using a random lot where the prize is a trip to a paradisiacal island, clones are convinced that they live in the best of possible worlds. The sense of this imposed mobility not only seems to provide clones with a climate of false security but also is a fake that covers a sinister lie. These clones are designed to provide their organs to original citizens when they are sick. Indeed, they are cloned according to an original that bought the services of Dr Bernard Merrick. It is not surprising that what the viewers see in *The Island* applies to the mobile world, where only 20 percent of the population is legalized to travel while the rest are kept in a sinister immobility. The fifth chapter deals with the problems of heritage and heritage consumption since beyond the interest for consuming culture or heritage, there are selfish and egoist tendencies which are aimed at commoditizing the non-Western other. *Leashing the dogs of war*, the title of this chapter, is where we reasonably mediate on the dichotomies of the modern world where heritage destruction in the hands of ISIS is condemned and where the lives of martyrs and victims of terrorism are ignored. Like mobilities, heritage plays a vital role as an ideological instrument of control to strengthen the submission of workers. The sixth chapter portrays the biographies and experiences of Mary and Roger, an elderly couple with residency in Bragado, Provincia de Buenos Aires, Argentina. They enthusiastically embraced the promises of globalization and mobilities prompting the important decision of buying a vehicle. However, their decision leads us to a difficult economic position because the car's costs cannot be covered in the course of the years. The paradigm

of mobilities not only applies for some conditions and classes, but also needs from risk to be replicated. Both risk and mobilities are the pillars of capitalism. Last but not least, with collaboration of Adrian Scribano, a good friend and colleague, we confront the division of emotions and reason, which was historically conducive to the colonial order. An epistemology from the southern hemisphere invites us to not only reimagine globalization as a continuance of colonialism, but also mobilities. Last but not least, it is vital to understand that the figure of reason was associated with European culture and intelligence while emotionality and emotions were assigned to aboriginal minds. Following the promise of an ethnocentric paternalism, colonialism envisaged that aborigines should be equated with children who not only are unfamiliar with their needs but also with the benefits of rational planning. Such a dichotomy reinforced the center–periphery dependency that launched capitalism to the indexation of non-Western economies. The final chapter summarizes part of the discussion with the theory of non-places, originally coined by French ethnographer Marc Augé. Following our own ethnographies and fieldworks at some international airports, we held the thesis that far from being non-places, airports represent spaces of discipline where the travelers are checked and scrutinized as the previous stage toward a conditioned hospitality.

Last but not least, we would like to express our thanks to Edward Elgar for the opportunity to publish this book with them, as well as my family for the patience in the hours this text was written. Hence this book is fully dedicated to Maria Rosa Troncoso, my wife and my children Ciro, Olivia and Benjamin.