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Editorial for Section Mobilities and Geographies

1. Introduction

Urban and transport developments are very much connected. How we plan our cities has a high impact on peoples' mobility and if we can develop a sustainable transport system (Koglin, 2017; Koglin & Pettersson, 2017). Since Urry first developed the idea that mobilities and not societies should be the focus of sociologists. The mobilities paradigm has been shown to be a very useful theoretical and analytical direction in terms of social, transport, urban and planning research (Bærenholdt, 2013; Freudendal-Pedersen & Kesselring, 2016; Sheller, 2014; Urry, 2000).

Moreover, several scholars, such as Tim Cresswell (Cresswell, 2011; Cresswell & Merriman, 2011), Spinney, 2021, Stehlin (Stehlin et al., 2020; Stehlin & Payne, 2023) or Adey, 2017 have shown that mobilities are also geographical and connected to space, not least in an urban context. Thus, space, planning and mobilities can be seen as intertwined and important when it comes to understanding mobilities on different geographical scales. Peoples' mobility, mobility system and planning processes cannot be fully understood without a spatial or geographical perspective. People, as Lefebvre (1974/1991) pointed out, are bound to how space and spatial relations effect the social relation and vice versa. In order to understand the power dynamics that influence our mobilities and how cities and societies are planned and developed, we need to address issues that concern geographies and mobilities. The movements of people are always affected by the geographies and spatial dynamics where the movements are happening. How we plan our transport systems is of course highly affected by the power relations, culture, traditions, and habits in which the planning takes place.

Historically, mobility, movement and transport have been connected to ideas about freedom and rationality, depending on what focus scholars or practitioners had (Freudendal-Pedersen et al., 2016). This focus has also led to the dominance of motorised transport that promised freedom and focused, in terms of planning, on rationality and engineering. Since the first transport planners also had a background in water engineering, the rational way of planning became focusing on flow (Koglin & Rye, 2014; Norton, 2011). This shift also led to redefine travel from the street as a public space to a realm of transport that has to be seen as a technical issue, as Norton explains:

... traffic engineers did not question the prevailing social construction of city streets as public space. [...] they first redefined their problem as a technical matter for experts. [...] streets as [overburdened] public utility. ... They attacked inefficiency [...] the answer to other, less

fundamental problems. [...] ‘efficiency’ [...] as the fundamental principle justifying their work, and as a pursuit for trained experts. (Norton, 2011:105)

The focus on efficiency and transport rationality has been questioned not least by Koglin (2017 & 2020) or Te Brömmelstroet (2020) among others. One needs to understand that the social construction of mobilities, planning, transport and geographies also affect how we develop our cities and how that affects our thinking about this. Thus, this new section in Urban, Planning and Transport Research will cover the complexity of peoples’ movements, mobilities and how that is affected by geographies.

2. Mobilities and Geographies

The section Mobilities and Geographies has been developed to cover a field that is yet to be addressed by a scientific journal. Although, journals cover parts of mobilities or geographies, no journal or journal section covers the complexity of geographical and mobilities research in combination. The aim of this section is to shed light on how geographies affect mobilities and planning and vice versa. With a strong focus on both theoretical development and empirical research, the section wants to develop a deeper and more comprehensive understanding on issues within mobilities and geographical research that might have an impact on planning and peoples’ movements in urban areas. Political, economic, environmental, and cultural processes effect the complexity of mobilities and geographies, especially in an urban context.

The field is also interdisciplinary and thus, this section seeks to reach both practical, empirical, and theoretical researchers. In order to contribute to the development of a more sustainable mobility system. This also means that this section is directed to different scientific perspectives and research from different fields that stretch beyond mobilities and geographies as such. Moreover, this includes the development of new methodological approaches to the field of mobilities and geographies in connection to urban space and planning. Here, the spatial and/or geographical perspectives also play an important role in deepening our understanding of urban and transport planning and urban mobilities.

This section seeks to combine research on sustainable mobility, transport and/or urban planning and space for creating sustainable transport and mobility systems. The aim of this paper is also to visualise how power relations are embedded in the urban and transport planning and decision-making processes in cities, as well as in the transport and mobility systems. Further, the intention is to make a connection to space and spatial aspects and to the materialities, which affect peoples’ movements in an urban context and do or do not create more sustainable transport systems. The idea is also to show that materialities, mobilities planning and urban geography have a relatively large impact on how people move and what effects are created that might or might not prevent the development of a sustainable transport and mobility system. This is also something Jensen (Jensen, 2016; Jensen et al., 2016) takes up in his research.

Since the upcoming of the new mobilities paradigm, launched by Urry and Sheller in 2006 (Sheller & Urry, 2006), the focus area has increased from sociology to include also other areas of social science and humanities, such as human geography (see Cresswell et al., 2016 or Pinder, 2011a, 2011b) and planning or cultural studies (see Koglin, 2020; Merriman & Pearce, 2017). Pinder’s work could also be situated in the humanities.

Through this, new methodological considerations have emerged in the mobilities field. Not the least Spinney (2015) contributed to the methodological development by introducing mobile methods. However, as of now, few journals gather spatial and mobilities research in connection to planning and urban research. Thus, in this section, the research the idea is to build a bridge between mobilities studies, geographical research, and urban and transport planning and created new knowledge about the factors that influence planning, politics, policies decision-making, peoples' mobilities and the infrastructure in cities. This, together with the theoretical underpinning, leads to a new analysis of transformations of the urban transport and mobility systems, their conditions, risks, and opportunities to develop a more sustainable mobile future. The mobilities perspective can offer new insights into urban planning. Of the global population, circa 57% live in urban areas (<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/WLD/world/urban-population>). This means urban planning has an important role to play in our cities. Since people also need to be mobile an urban mobilities perspective is important to uncover issues of peoples' movements in urban areas. Issues of injustice and unsustainable movements are especially important in urban contexts. Here, connections can also be made not only to transport justice issues elaborated by Lucas and Martens (Lukas, 2012; Martens, 2016; Martens & Lucas, 2018), but also mobility justice, a new concept introduced by Sheller (2018). Sheller argues beyond transport justice in terms of, e.g., accessibility to the transport system. Instead of questioning the idea of who can and cannot be mobile, which also includes refugees and how they are excluded from mobility systems through limitations in their motility, a concept developed by Kaufmann to research peoples' capabilities of being mobile (Kaufmann, 2011). In these economic structures, personal capabilities, colonial structures, etc., influence if people can or cannot be mobile (Sheller, 2018). This often becomes most obvious in urban contexts. This is also why such perspectives are needed in urban planning in order to develop fair and just mobility systems, which at the same time are sustainable. With this new section, it is the aim to develop such perspectives both theoretically and empirically.

3. Concluding remarks

Research in the fields of mobilities and geographies is highly connected and intertwined with each other. Research on sustainable mobility has generally focused on urban settings and urban transport systems. Since more and more people are moving into cities this will also in the future be a very important geographical focus. However, that does not mean that a regional perspective has no room in this section. The regional perspective can be an additional geographical scale that has a bearing on urban mobilities and urban transport and mobility systems. Also, the historical aspects of planning, mobilities and geographies can be part of this section. Thus, this section spans over the interdisciplinary areas of urban geography, transport, and urban planning, mobilities studies, planning history, and so on. Therefore, the section Mobilities and Geographies in Urban, Planning and Transport Research wishes to contribute an interdisciplinary perspective to the field of mobilities, geographical and planning research. The research published in this section hopefully offers a deeper understanding of the processes that have an impact on planning for a sustainable transport and mobility system in an urban and/or regional geographical

setting. Moreover, this section also has ambitions to contribute to the theoretical development of the areas of mobilities and geographies field of research.

Against this background and the current climate crisis that affect all people and where the transport sector is one contributor research on mobilities, and geographies are more important than in previous decades. Nevertheless, when it comes to transitioning from an unsustainable transport and mobility system to a sustainable one, research is of utter importance to make a contribution to these transitions in many aspects, not least in terms of theoretical underpinnings or such transitions in order to make proper scientific grounded transitions. Although there are some scientific journals that publish research on mobilities, such as the *Journal of Applied Mobilities* and *Mobilities* and some journals that publish research on the geography of transport, such as the *Journal of Transport Geography*, few bring planning, geographies and mobilities together in a scientific journal. This is why this section offers a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary scholars to publish research on these topics and make a contribution to the transition of transport and mobility systems for a more sustainable future.

As of now, the journal and many other scientific journals on urban and transport planning lack this kind of perspective. By offering publications in the new section, the mobilities and geographical perspectives will have a well-established place in the journal. As seen above, when dealing with issues of transport and planning in an urban context, one needs to incorporate the complexity of peoples' movements and how that is distributed in urban space, which is why this new section was developed to offer a place for these perspectives in transport, urban and planning research. The contribution of this section would also offer an area to place research on planning and space within the new mobilities paradigm. The geographies of mobilities have thus far not had a common place for publishing, which hopefully this section can give geographical and planning scholars doing research about peoples' mobilities.

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