

that the vast majority of accounts of “Adolf Hitler’s roads” were positive in this era of propagandist political performance. Indeed, the challenge is to find what we might call (for want of a better phrase) honest and balanced assessments of these new motorways which were not overshadowed by the fear of criticizing the Führer’s grand project. Chapter 22 is important and illuminating, but unfortunately it is only six pages long, and I was left wanting to know more about the public’s reaction to these new roads. Did motoring journalists remark on the new experiences evoked or the new skills required? Did the government, motoring journalists or others express concerns about how drivers would behave on these new dual-carriageway roads?

The German Autobahn 1920–1945: Hafraba Visions and Mega Projects is a welcome addition to the rather sparse English-language literature on the history of the German Autobahnen. My only criticism would be the rather large number of chapters included. While this clearly allows Vahrenkamp to cover an impressive range of topics, from discussions of the Autobahn workforce, driving experiences, changing levels of vehicle ownership, and the implementation of particular schemes, it does have some downsides. Quite a few of the chapters were rather too short for my liking. Chapters 2, 6 and 7 were just two and a half pages each, Chapter 5 just two pages, and so on. Some key chapters were considerably longer, but I would have preferred a more in-depth discussion of many of the topics covered. Putting that concern aside, this is a welcome book on an important and very interesting topic. It is very well illustrated, containing seventy-four black-and-white images and thirteen tables, and it will be of interest to mobility and transport history scholars from a range of disciplines.

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Alexandra Boutros and Will Straw, eds., *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture* (Montreal and Kingston; London and Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010), 320 pp., US\$32.95

For several weeks, the Parisian business district La Defense hosted one of the last camps of the worldwide Occupy movement that started in the cities of Spain and near Wall Street in New York. In the eyes of the occupiers, La Defense is a symbol of the massive circulation and exchange

of money in a globalized capitalist system. The French riot police CRS regularly attacked the camp with the aim of evicting the occupants from the square. "Circulez!" onlookers heard from the police. But to circulate is also a basic right, that of free movement. The protestors started to circulate their messages with loud speeches in the nearby metro, interrupting the everyday routines of the daily commuters. This example demonstrates that circulation in the city is highly ambiguous. On the one hand it is used with the aim to control, govern, and restrict movement, on the other hand it means freedom of movement and the dissolution of control structures.

Globalization is "most deeply felt" and "most strongly resisted" in the city, according to *Circulation and the City*. The eleven essays of the compendium present results of the Canadian research program "Culture of Cities," which has examined the urban cultures of Montreal, Dublin, Toronto, and Berlin. Starting primarily from the focus of communication studies and urban cultural studies, it examines the ambiguous position of the contemporary city as a fixed territorial entity that is simultaneously highly fluid and mobile.

One of the most interesting contributions of the first section on the "Mobile City" is from Jennifer Gabrys. She examines microscopic wireless signal transmitting sensors, the "smart" dust originally developed by the U.S. military. Wireless clouds of machine-to-machine communication are forming the "invisible background" of the city, operating like a "nervous system" (50). Gabrys argues that the city itself now circulates and migrates through the data it generates. Cyberspace and material infrastructure are getting more and more intertwined.

The second section concentrates on "City Traffic" and includes an article from Jenny Burman, who traces the movements of immigrants who were deported by force from Canadian cities like Montreal and Toronto. The circulation of these people in the city was stopped by the government, but their names continue to circulate as graffiti in the streets. Like Zygmunt Bauman she emphasizes the growing divide between the access of groups like tourists and the removal of other groups, notably immigrants, from circulation in the city.

In the third section, "City Circuits," the highlight is an article by Will Straw, who promotes the rhythm analysis of Henri Lefèbvre for exploring the dynamics between mobility and stasis by focusing on the circulation of second-hand goods in the city.

One of the advantageous qualities and at the same time one of the difficulties of the book is that the term "circulation" opens a large field of possible research topics. It "serves to describe everything" linked with movement, claims the introduction (5). The editors invite us to explore the "multiple ways that mobilities shape the city" (9). These include very different agents like daily commuters, tourists, members of diasporic

communities, mobile communication technologies, and the movement of commodities through the city. As in other cultural studies compendiums, the historical dimension of these highly heterogeneous research objects is not included. The book's introduction mentions only briefly the historical background of the concept of circulation; Western conceptions were born with the work of William Harvey on the circulation of blood. Later, circulation became a powerful metaphor for the description of other processes like newspaper distribution. It would have been productive to integrate these historical perspectives further in the anthology. Another example is the case of Marx, whose name is surprisingly almost never mentioned. His use of the term in the analysis of the "sphere of circulation" is worthy of consideration, especially as the editors declare their pursuit a materialist approach.

In summary, the book is a great contribution, one that pushes the study of mobility beyond traditional approaches. First, it helps us to rethink the notion of mobility in social terms. Poverty and racism (see p. 15) for example are factors that stop free circulation in the city. This opposite side of mobility deserves more scholarly attention. Second, the concept of circulation takes us beyond the traditional focus on production and consumption; circulation means to look at the intermediary phase in between the beginning and the end of an object. For instance, consider the worldwide network of circulating container ships, which are connecting cities like Los Angeles and Shanghai. This example shows that cities are functioning as nodes in "a global circulatory system through which capital, signifiers, commodities, and human bodies move in a seemingly unending stream" (9). For reasons such as these, circulation can become a key concept in the project of rethinking mobility.

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Ted Conover, *Routes of Man: How Roads Are Changing the World and the Way We Live Today* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 333 pp., US\$15.95 (paperback)

To be clear from the outset: this is an adventure travel book and not a scholarly disquisition on the worldwide social consequences of roads and the vehicles traveling on them. But at the same time it provides many insights into the ways in which humans have used roads for their own