Mobile Futures
Lancaster University
5th Sept., 2013

Mobile scientists, migrant workers. The politics of mobility in European research policy

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Challenging the current framework

- Mobility has a relevant and consolidated role within the European Union discourse on research and innovation

- Main assumptions:
  a) the dichotomy movement-stasis
  b) the focus on the nation state
  c) the stylized description of the mobile academic
  d) the focus on the driving forces and substantial obstacles
  e) the normative orientation toward mobility

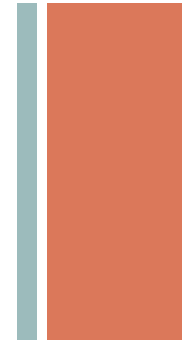# Proposing an alternative framework inspired to the *mobility turn*

- Sheller and Urry, 2006
  - social sciences have largely approached movement (of ideas, peoples, things) as a black box, a neutral set of technologies and processes permitting forms of economic, social, and political life that are seen as explicable in terms of other, more causally powerful processes (p. 208)
  - tracking the power of discourses and practices of mobility (p. 211)

- Cresswell, 2010
  - movement, is "the fact of physical movement getting from one place to another; the representations of movement that give it shared meaning; and, finally, the experienced and embodied practice of movement." (p. 19)
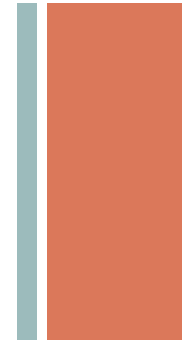
Socio-technical imaginaries

- Defined by Jasanoff and Kim (2009) as "collectively imagined forms of social life and social order reflected in the design and fulfilment of nation-specific scientific and/or technological projects."

- Socio-technical imaginaries about research and innovation in European Union:

a) perception of position and role in the global panorama

b) memory, history and future

c) players and interactions in policymaking

d) examples of "good" and "bad" practice

- general political documents defining the overall political and economical agenda

- texts that reports on the policies with respect to science, technology and innovation

- governance of EU research policies

Technology of the self

- Defined by Foucault (p.18, 1988) as "operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being that people make either by themselves or with the help of others in order to transform themselves to reach a state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality"

- Exploring the experience of mobility in:

  a) Professional terms: how is built the academic community to which you belong, which the professional standards, norms and conducts (and what their source) you follow, what's the role of mobility in career's choices and in researchers' evaluation…

  b) Social terms: development of connections of solidarity and friendship, lifestyles…

  c) Political terms: exercise of citizenship rights, access to welfare and social services, forms of political participation…

Unpacking scientific mobility

Level/dimensions	Physical movement of researchers from one place to another	Representation of mobility in the ERA	Experience of being a mobile researcher
questions (ispired by Cresswell 2010)	Who goes where? Who moves furthest? Who moves fastest? Who moves most often?	How is mobility discursively and materially constituted? What narratives have been constructed about mobility? How are mobilities represented?	How is mobility embodied? How comfortable is it? Is it forced or free?
key concepts/frames	push and pull factors, brain drain/brain gain	socio-technical imaginaries of S&T [Jasanoff and Kim 2009]	technologies of the self [Foucault 1979]
empirical objects	Fluxes of "movers" and their features (age, gender, nationality, stage of career, disciplines…)	Policies, funding, public debate, actors, programmes, discourses of scientific mobility	Professional, social and political practices related with being a mobile researcher
Methodologies/ approach	Statistics, policy evaluation, mostly quantitative, cross-national, cross-temporal	Interpretive policy analysis, quali-quantitative analysis of a corpus of documents, historical, comparative	Situated, historical, ethnographical

Mobile scientists, migrant workers

I don't think that our case should be called "mobility". In my opinion, this is pure and simple "migration" (...) I am an immigrant in France, not a researcher in mobility; the only difference compared to other kind of migrants is my privileged passport and status, that allows me to move without any problem.

[interview to an Italian researcher in France; in Carrozza and Minucci, forthcoming 2014]