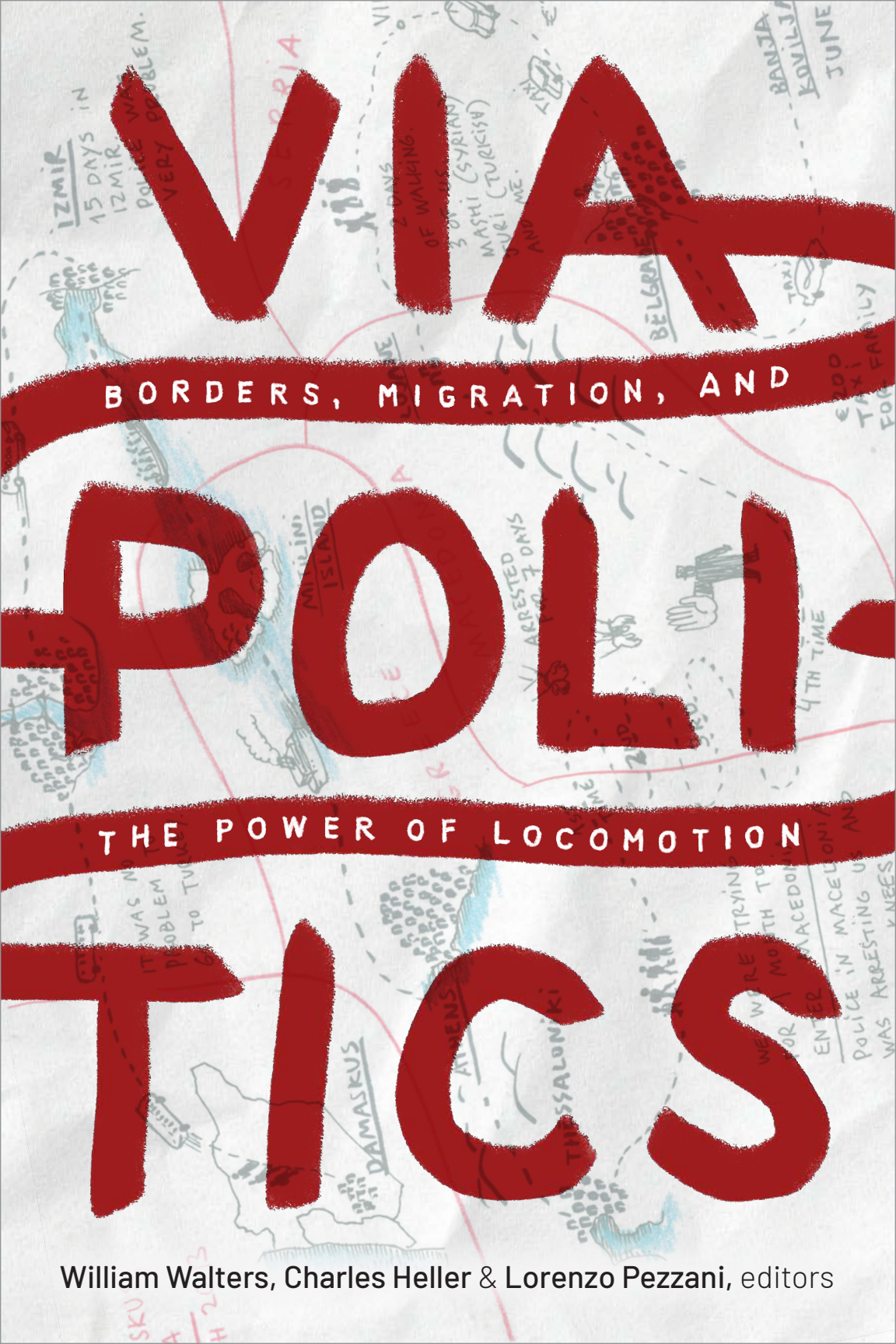

William Walters, Charles Heller & Lorenzo Pezzani, editors

VIAPOLITICS

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Borders, Migration, and the Power of Locomotion

Edited by

WILLIAM WALTERS, CHARLES HELLER,

AND LORENZO PEZZANI

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Part III: The Geophysics of Migration

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The road to *Viapolitics* has been long and winding, and we have incurred many debts along the way. William Walters began reflecting on the absence of vehicles and routes in migration and border studies, and forging the concept of viapolitics to draw attention to them, in a series of lectures and articles starting in 2011. Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani first encountered this concept in 2013, which helped them capture the ambivalent role of boats both as the means illegalized migrants use to contest exclusionary border policies by crossing the sea and as the object of border control. From then on, we began a dialogue around viapolitics and embarked on a voyage through which we expanded our understanding of this concept and its dimensions in different directions. Mat Coleman was engaged in early discussions about this book idea. We thank him for his insights and encouragement.

Because we felt viapolitics offered us a lens that allowed us to see new things in the world, we decided to invite a group of scholars we admire—and whose work already exemplified the attention to vehicles and routes we sought to foster—to travel with us and try this approach out collectively. We are profoundly grateful to all our contributors for their enthusiasm and readiness to explore this viapolitical gaze with us, which has led to inspiring chapters. We thank them for the commitment and patience they have shown throughout this book project.

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Our thinking has been deeply inspired by the political imagination of those who are constantly forging new infrastructures of movement in the face of restrictive migration policies and violent borders. Their obstinacy and inventiveness, often exercised at the cost of their own lives, has shown us that viapolitics is not only an analytical category: for many, it is a daily practice of making and remaking the world, of drawing new connections where there only appeared to be walls.

Viapolitics: An Introduction

William Walters, Charles Heller, and Lorenzo Pezzani

A Tale of Two Ships

What is a vehicle? What is a route? This book accords the vehicle, its infrastructure, and the material geographies it navigates a central place in the study of contemporary migration and borders. We argue that these elements afford us a privileged vantage point from which to interrogate today's highly contentious migration politics, while at the same time cutting through some of the conceptual boundaries that have come to structure migration studies. Scholars, activists, and publics have come to recognize that the border and the camp are not just elements in the infrastructure of controlling (mobile) populations but key concepts, symbols, and points of view. We argue it is time to grant the vehicle a similar status and recognize it as a key site of knowledge and struggle in migratory processes. We call this the moment of *viapolitics*. This book assembles a remarkable, transdisciplinary group of scholars with whom we explore this concept, developing it through empirically rich and diverse cases and in connection with a range of methods that includes archival research, critical cartography, ethnography, and forensic architecture. But we think concepts are better approached in context and from the ground up. So, we begin this book with a tale of two ships.

On February 21, 2011, Canada's then prime minister, Stephen Harper, was photographed alongside his minister for citizenship and immigration, Jason Kenney, standing on board a rusty freighter, the MV *Ocean Lady* (see figure 1.1). The

FIGURE 1.1 · Prime Minister Stephen Harper (center), Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney (right), and Canadian Border Services Agency official Ivan Peterson (left) stand on board the MV *Ocean Lady* for a photo opportunity in Delta, British Columbia, February 21, 2011. Source: Canadian Press/Jonathan Hayward.

photograph is somewhat peculiar for the fact that the two politicians are positioned at the stern of the ship, looking backward, and not at its bow. After all, ancient political thought gave us the political metaphor of the ruler as helmsman of the ship of state (Winner 1980, 129; Foucault 2007): we are accustomed to thinking of our leaders as navigating a forward path. Why are Harper and Kenney gazing backward, as though transfixed by the wake of the ship?

Their unusual positioning only makes sense once we learn that this was a carefully staged photo opportunity. In fact, it was only the first of several occasions in which the *Ocean Lady* would be used by government ministers as a backdrop for migration-related media events. The ship is not at sea but firmly anchored in port. In all probability the two politicians were standing at the stern so that the frame could include the name *Ocean Lady*, which is emblazoned across its rusty hull. The *Ocean Lady* had come to prominence in Canadian and international media two years earlier, in October 2009, when it arrived off the coast of Victoria, British Columbia, carrying seventy-six Sri Lankan refugees seeking asylum in Canada. The passengers had fled renewed violent conflict between the Sri Lankan state and the Tamil Tigers, and decided to attempt to seek refuge in Canada, where there is a large ethnic Tamil Sri Lankan population (*National Post* 2012). However, because such travel has been made increasingly difficult by unattainable visa requirements and carrier sanctions that bar the majority of the

populations of the Global South from accessing safe means of transport to and legally entering states of the Global North, they had to rely on a smuggling network to which, according to the testimony of journalist Maran Nagarasa (who was among the travelers), each paid $40,000 (Brosnahan 2014). The rusty cargo ship allowed the passengers to cross thousands of kilometers of the ocean's liquid expanse, blending in with global maritime traffic that connects the world map. In this way, the *Ocean Lady* reminds us of the capacity of shipping to effectively transform the world's oceans into a global border line, through which all coastal states are potentially in contact with each other. It also reminds us of the capacity of the cramped and often difficult conditions on board a ship to transform people: Nagarasa reports that on some days he felt such despair that he considered jumping overboard, yet he took strength from helping fellow travelers, and that over time a bond developed among the travelers (*Toronto Star* 2014). After journeying forty-five days in often stormy weather, the passengers saw a plane with a Canadian maple leaf flying overhead. Many waved with joy, taking this as a sign they were heading to Canada and safe haven (*Toronto Star* 2014). "That night we all slept peacefully" reported Nagarasa, despite the grim conditions on board. The aircraft, however, signaled less the safe arrival the passengers longed for than the opening act in a state-crafted process of violent reception that starkly materialized the following morning: "When we opened our eyes the next morning, there were people boarding the ship and pointing guns at us." It transpired that Canadian authorities had been tipped off by foreign intelligence services and had tracked the ship for three days. On October 17, the *Ocean Lady* was stopped by the Canadian Navy and boarded by an RCMP emergency response team off the west coast of Vancouver Island (*National Post* 2012). While claiming asylum following a highly militarized disembarkation, the migrants were subjected to a lengthy detention process and a heightened level of scrutiny that seemed purposefully designed to send a deterrent message with regard to any future ship arrivals (*National Post* 2012).

Media coverage of the ship incident in Canada was intense and was typically framed in terms of themes of illegality and the suspect identities and motives of the migrants. In the hands of many in the press, the rust on the hull of the *Ocean Lady* was not innocent but conferred a stain on the motives and identity of its passengers (Mountz 2010). The fact that the original ship's name had been painted over and hidden only heightened its mystery (Bradimore and Bauder 2011, 653). Speculation about connections to terrorism was rife. The negative tone of the coverage was strengthened by government ministers who repeated claims about the abuse of Canada's asylum process and sought to frame the

incident in terms of a problem of human smuggling and organized crime (Bradimore and Bauder 2011). After having enabled its passengers to cross the oceans, the *Ocean Lady* served as both stage and prop in the political theater in terms of which the Conservative government had moved to dramatize questions of migration and asylum in recent years. The images, like the ship they portray, traveled far and wide, accompanying stories about the incident but also the wider field of policies and laws to which the incident was quickly attached. As Stephanie Silverman (2014) explains, this and other similar ship incidents provided fuel for the government to boost its campaign to make the deterrence of unwanted migrants a key political issue and to formalize its use of mandatory immigration detention for a one-year period.

Yet as prominent as it became, this incident was far from being the only way in which boats and migrants were appearing before the Canadian public. Less than three years before the arrival of the *Ocean Lady* on the Pacific coast, by a twist of fate, a not dissimilar boat incident was being commemorated by the very same prime minister who stood on its deck. In this case, however, it was a story of nonarrival. The ship in question, the *Komagata Maru*, was a Japanese steamship that had been chartered in 1914 by Gurdit Singh, a Sikh of Punjabi origins and a sympathizer of the anticolonial Ghadar Party. Renisa Mawani discusses the ship's trajectory at length in her chapter as well as her book, *Across Oceans of Law*. We evoke it here briefly to illustrate the very different ways in which vessels can become vehicles of politics within the migration field.

The *Komagata Maru* left Hong Kong with 376 passengers on board, mostly Sikhs, and after stops in China and Japan finally reached the port of Vancouver. There, its passengers were denied entry on the basis of the "continuous journey regulation," which prohibited immigration to those who had not reached Canadian shores with a direct trip. This was one of many legal tools forged by white colonies—particularly within the British Empire—to impose a differential access to mobility for racialized populations at the turn of the nineteenth century (McKeown 2008). Since steamship companies, under pressure from the Canadian government, did not operate a direct transit from India to Canada (Johnston 1989), this regulation de facto banned legal entry to Indians, who at the time were British subjects as much as Canadians. It was precisely this differential access to mobility with which the British Empire was endowing its subjects that Gurdit Singh and his fellow passengers had set out to challenge with their trip, but without success (Mongia 1999). Eventually the ship was forced to return to Calcutta where, following a violent struggle with the British colonial administration, nineteen passengers were killed and 210 were imprisoned

(Balachandran 2016, 190–91; Mawani 2016). The experience of the journey was transformative for those who survived, and many subsequently became radical anticolonial and left-wing activists (Balachandran 2016, 194–95).

Almost a century afterward, in August 2008, Harper offered an apology "on behalf of the Government of Canada" for the "hardship" caused to its passengers by the "detention and turning away of the *Komagata Maru*," and six years later his ministers unveiled a commemorative stamp on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of the event (see figure 1.2), which has been since remembered as a black mark on Canadian history. It is truly remarkable that the same government could seek to commemorate and even atone for a wrong committed in 1914 while taking steps that appeared to be repeating that wrong once again—it is remarkable as well that media coverage rarely managed to connect these two worlds. It would seem that a particular conceptual border was being reinforced, one that allowed the exclusionary racism in operation against the *Komagata Maru* and its passengers to be relegated to an aberrant past with no connection to present-day events. Partha Chatterjee (1993) has called this tactic

FIGURE 1.2 · At an event in Toronto on May 6, 2014, a stamp is unveiled commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the *Komagata Maru* incident. Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney is second from the right, accompanied by other cabinet ministers, politicians, and the CEO of Canada Post, Deepak Chopra (far left).

the "rule of colonial difference," an expression with which he refers to how colonial modes of governance are often conveniently consigned to the museum of past horrors, and simply thought of as a temporary aberration from the universally valid—and now supposedly fully realized—principle of the modern state.

Will some future Canadian government offer official apologies for the treatment accorded to the passengers of the *Ocean Lady*? Will their case and that vessel also appear on stamps and in museums of immigration? Will their stories serve as salutary lessons in tolerance and atonement? We can't say. What we can say with some confidence is that in both these cases, past and present, there existed an antiship of state: the ship as political danger, the ship as disorder, and even as the signifier of a sovereignty under threat, while eventually becoming, after many decades, neutralized and reappropriated within official narratives as a symbol of atonement. What we can also say is that placing *Ocean Lady* and *Komagata Maru* on the same timeline, one on which these vessels appear conceptually side by side despite the temporal distance and different historical context that separates them, allows us to interrogate these cases in a different light.

Viapolitics

We introduce this collection of essays with this tale of two ships because it illustrates in microcosm the three dimensions we seek to bring into conversation when we speak of viapolitics. As we use it, "via" has a threefold field of reference.

First, "via" foregrounds vehicles of migration ("I am traveling via ship"). These ships are first of all vehicles, adapted for locomotion across the liquid territory of the ocean, which their passengers use to reach a distant land. Access to these vehicles, however, is distributed unequally and contested—policing access to means of transportation is one of the privileged ways in which countries of the Global North seek to bar access to their territories to populations of the Global South. At sea, the ships become the moving location of a collective experience, where new bonds and identities are forged, as Mawani shows for the *Komagata Maru*, but where land-based social hierarchies might also have been in part reproduced or even intensified. The vehicle and its journey is a space-time of hope and fear, a compression chamber for the transformation of self, but in which the self that will come out on the other shore is undetermined. Note also that once these ships get caught in the spotlight of media attention, they become sites of political controversy and dissensus, public forums that often

crystallize wider tensions and disputes concerning migration (Latour 2005a, 2005b; Callon, Lascoumes, and Barthe 2009; Weizman 2010; Venturini 2010).

Second, "via" highlights routes and the infrastructures that underpin them ("We are traveling to Vancouver via Shanghai"). Indeed, we note that the etymology of "via" comes from the Latin word for road or way. As Elisabeth Povinelli (2011) aptly puts it, routes "are the condition of previous circulatory matrixes and become part of the matrix that decides which other kinds of things can pass through and be made sense of within this figured space." The case of the *Komagata Maru* demonstrates how routes can become sites of politics in their own right: the "continuous journey" regulation made the route into a tool of exclusion in the hands of the Canadian state, which the Indian passengers sought to contest. Vehicles and routes, however, do not exist in isolation but are inseparable from broader "mobility systems" within which they are embedded (Urry 2007). They are dependent, in other words, on networked infrastructures of migration (Xiang and Lindquist 2014). In the case of our two ships, these infrastructures include ports, logistical standards, and administrative procedures that allowed (or hindered) their navigation, but also the smuggling networks and the migrants' collective knowledge of circulation that is forged en route.

Third, "via" speaks to the geophysical environments ("They arrived via sea") across which vehicles, routes, and infrastructures extend, and which, despite easily fading into the background of our attention, profoundly shape viapolitics. The ship stories described above epitomize the ambivalent role of oceans, which at once connect and divide (McKeown 2011). Ships, like all means of locomotion, involve a taming and mobilizing of the earth's forces to enable movement (Law 1984), in this case the "mobile forces in the air and water" (Semple 1911, 292). But states also seek to harness the "geopower" (Grosz 2012) of the oceans to turn them into an extensive border zone. The form of power states exercise over this liquid terrain (Elden 2010) is both constrained and enabled by the element of water.

These ship stories, then, exemplify the lively and at times violent interaction between people on the move and the vehicles, networked infrastructures, and geophysical environments across which they travel. To this contested entanglement we give the name *viapolitics*. Foucault (1990) famously invented the concept of biopolitics to identify the historical threshold when vital life comes to be constituted as an object of power/knowledge and a site of political calculation and intervention. By a similar logic, we propose viapolitics to name those situations when the space-time of travel and the vehicles enabling it become objects of

contention and transformation, simultaneously a means through which people seek to move and a means through which their movement is governed. Viapolitics, then, for us is by definition located in a field of tension and conflict involving states and migrants but also many other actors, such as transport companies, who play an ambivalent role. Through viapolitics, it is precisely these conflictual encounters and the friction (Tsing 2005) they generate that we seek to bring to the fore.

To be sure, we are not the first to observe that vehicles, infrastructures and routes, and geophysical environments matter for the study of struggles over borders and migration, or that human movement is never unassisted but always mediated by particular body/machine interactions that affect culture and politics. Rather than claim absolute novelty, we envisage viapolitics as a concept and approach that may serve as a point of convergence for critical and innovative research in the fields of migration and border studies and enhance dialogue with many others. Among the many strands of research that have explored these issues and have shaped our thinking, the interdisciplinary field of mobilities studies is the one we are probably most indebted to (Sheller and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2006; Urry 2007; Adey 2017).[1] This approach has been crucial in challenging the sedentarist assumptions embedded in much social thought, interrogating mobility as an accomplishment that is always contextual, embodied, and enacted by means of specific assemblages of systems, devices, and practices. While the concept of mobility is at times employed in a neutral and descriptive way that risks homogenizing the many different conditions and statuses under which people move (McNevin 2019), we have been drawn to the work of scholars who have foregrounded inequality and unevenness in how people move, and who moves, where and when (Cresswell 2010; Sheller 2018; Merriman 2019). It is therefore fair to say that a great deal of our thinking in framing this book has been inspired by this mobilities turn, which has generated important work also within migration studies.[2]

Yet there are at least two reasons why we have not framed this intervention as a study of mobilities, but insist on the specificity of viapolitics. First, a question of language and normativity. Few terms are more laden with positive connotations today than "mobility" (Walters 2015a; McNevin 2019). While scholars have criticized liberal ideologies that simplistically equate mobility with freedom and liberty (Adey 2017, 112), there can be no doubting that, like "flexibility" or "resilience," mobility has become a keyword of what Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant (2001) call neoliberalism's "planetary vulgate." In proposing the concept of viapolitics, we want to induce a stutter; we want a term that moves critical thought "to the

outside" (Foucault 2007, 116–18). Second, in speaking of viapolitics we emphasize not migratory mobilities per se, but something more specific: all those situations where movement and its mediations are called into question and become a focus of struggle and politics. This "contentious mobility" (Sodero and Scott 2016) is what via-*politics* is made of. Methodologically, this means that while we share with mobility studies an interest in "what happens on the move" (Cresswell and Merriman 2011), viapolitics is further drawn to events, ruptures, and controversies where the black box of migration is opened up.[3]

If we are both inspired by and distinct from mobility studies, we do not locate viapolitics comfortably within the existing boundaries of migration and border studies. Quite the contrary. We use the term "locomotion" in our title, a term that—as far as we are aware—has no theoretical status within either migration or mobility studies. The etymology of locomotion derives from "loco," meaning place, and "motion." The *Oxford English Dictionary* clarifies that it applies equally to the "action or *power* of movement" between places of humans and animals as much as vehicles. Locomotion then, like mobility, connotes a movement between places without carrying the baggage associated rightly or wrongly with migration (e.g., that occurs between countries). At the same time, more than terms like mobility or migration, it suggests an intimate connection between moving and the physical mechanisms—including bodily practices—that sustain movement. In some uses, a locomotive is, after all, another word for a railway train.[4]

Our claim is that many aspects of the politics of migration will look quite different when we enter the migration assemblage along the gangplank or through the cabin door. Our hope is that by attending to spaces, experiences, and machineries that have been at once vital but at the same time relegated to scenery or backdrops or entirely neglected in the study of human migration, some of the limits of migration and border studies will be challenged. One of the challenges we have in mind concerns the regulation of knowledge about migration. We are certainly not alone if we note that in recent years, with the burgeoning rise of studies and analyses dedicated to human mobility, migration and borders have become institutionalized objects of study, with constantly expanding but clearly defined boundaries. While this "becoming discipline" of migration and border studies has allowed for the proliferation of research dedicated to those topics, it has also had a "disciplining effect" (Garelli and Tazzioli 2013) on our way of understanding all the phenomena we now designate as migration, instituting and naturalizing a number of conceptual boundaries. Oppositions like free versus forced, internal versus international, and citizen versus alien have

come to structure our thinking in the same way as disciplinary demarcations, geographical frames of analysis, and historical compartmentalizations have. As a result, forms of human mobility that have occurred in different temporal and geographical contexts (such as the slave trade across the Black Atlantic, Indian and Chinese indentured migration, transatlantic migration from Europe to the "New World," post–World War II boat-people "crises") are treated as distinct and rarely connecting fields of inquiry, as the myopia of the Canadian discourse that allowed politicians and journalists to compartmentalize two boat arrivals with eerie similarities reveals in our opening ship stories. Viapolitics prompts the contributions in this book to trace paths across these conceptual walls, debordering the study of migration and borders from that of the wider world, and offering thick cuts through time and space as we follow means of transport and the way they have been used, perceived, and governed.

Two crucial boundaries that we seek to transgress through viapolitics and in assembling the chapters in this volume are precisely those of time and space. Temporally, viapolitics is a powerful antidote to the divide that marks research on migration and borders between, on the one hand, various social sciences focusing on the present and, on the other, historiographies focusing on the distant past. This split makes it extremely difficult to connect the present to broader trajectories of change in terms of human mobility and its government. By starting from the vehicles used for movement, instead, our contributors—who range across the historian/social science divide—are able to offer genealogies of movement and its control that connect these different temporalities and challenge the presentism of much migration, border, and mobility studies. Spatially, and building very much on the mobilities as well as transnationalism turns in the social sciences, we seek to challenge the methodological nationalism that still characterizes certain areas of migration studies and that takes for granted the historical political technology of territorial borders while retaining an excessive Euro-American focus. While Europe and North America figure prominently in this book as well, the focus of several contributions outside of Europe—Indonesia, for example, in chapter 5—on migratory processes between continents (chapters 2, 3, and 4), within countries (chapter 1), or across several states located along particular migration routes (chapters 6 and 7) begins to trouble the map of migration and border studies in important ways. While a prevalent focus on South-North migrations betrays some of the limits of our own endeavor, Ranabir Samaddar's afterword to the volume starts sketching potential scenarios of what a viapolitical lens might offer when applied to forms of mobility that are more firmly centered in the Global South.

By cutting across different temporalities and geographical scales, viapolitics allows us to demonstrate that if immigration as a category and object of power only emerged with the consolidation of the territorial nation-state, the control of the movement of some bodies and vehicles—always determined along the conflictual lines of class, race, and gender—long predates it (chapters 1 and 2). Furthermore, while as Darshan Vigneswaran (2019) has demonstrated, the dominant narrative in the fields of migration and border studies is a linear one that focuses on the progressive consolidation of the nation-state in Europe and the concomitant passage from the policing of mobility from the local scale to the external rim of national borders and more recently to a tendentially global level (for examples of such as narrative, see Torpey 1999; Cresswell 2006, 2010), viapolitics allows our contributors to explore the emergence of forms of policing of mobility in many different places and underline the way they have operated across varying scales that have not followed a linear evolution. Following the fragmented developments and shifts of what, inspired by Saskia Sassen (2008), we might call "mobility control capabilities" across land, air, and sea, the chapters in this book chart a story of multidirectional transformation and constant reassemblage that often connects with the history and tensions of empire (Cooper 2005). In all these different ways, viapolitics operates as an epistemic device that allows one to question and unravel the whole edifice of scholarly analyses, governmental practices, and policy discourses that has been built around the phenomenon that we call migration and borders.

Once we begin to think about the history of human movement and the constraints imposed on it not in linear or epochal terms nor in geographical compartments such as the nation-state but in terms of events, setups, and constellations, it becomes apparent that the place that the movement of bodies and vehicles across space occupies in those different setups is actually quite variable. While it is a truism to say that migration involves journeys (even if, as the famous slogan "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us" indicates, it is sometimes borders themselves that do the journeying, and a mere change in legal status is sufficient to turn certain people into migrants without any physical movement needed), not all such movements are equal in the way they are made visible, memorable, grievable, or governable. Viapolitics marks the point at which these practices, questions, and mediations of movement move into and out of the foreground of governmental, public, and scholarly attention according to what Jacques Rancière (2006) has called a "partition of the sensible"; it signals the threshold at which the mobility of peoples becomes a stake in social and political struggles, and a field of power/knowledge. Some of these

vehicles, routes, and infrastructures have grown to occupy a spectacular prominence in contemporary struggles surrounding migration, in policy discourse, and in media representations, as was the case during the so-called migrant crisis that reached its peak in summer 2015 in Europe. From the trucks inside which the dead bodies of migrants seeking to reach northern Europe were found along an Austrian highway in August 2015 (*New York Times* 2015); to the trains alternately prevented from traveling and greeted by local populations as they arrived in German train stations; to the Macedonian train tracks and motorways along which migrants have often been forced to bike or walk (chapter 7, this volume); to the overcrowded wooden and rubber boats used by illegalized migrants (chapter 8, this volume; Ellebrecht 2020), these vehicles, routes, infrastructures, and the terrains across which they extend have once again reached center stage. And yet insufficient effort has been made to attend to them seriously, and as a result they remain all but hidden in plain sight.

The task we undertake here is to bring these aspects to the foreground. In the remainder of this introduction, we discuss further the three main dimensions of viapolitics we have alluded to above—vehicles, routes and infrastructures, and geophysical environments—which structure the three main parts of this book and outline the way our chapters contribute to their understanding. However, we should note at the outset that these three themes do not form a rigid analytical triangle with equal weight across all the studies that follow. Instead, chapters are organized in terms of which of these themes they tend to emphasize.

Vehicles of Migration

Part I of this book focuses on the vehicles of migration. Our call for a reckoning with the vehicular might provoke a degree of unease in some readers. Migration is about humans, not ships or planes. Is it not a form of detached aestheticism or dispassionate scholasticism to train one's focus on vehicles at the very time when people are drowning while crossing borders, while the rise of xenophobic social movements is generating enhanced risk, and predatory employers creating ever greater precarity for migrants in so many countries? Let us be quite clear. We are not interested in fetishizing vehicles or a narrowly technological view of the sort that is quite common in some versions of transportation history. If we call for research to engage migration from the angle of vehicles and their infrastructures, it is precisely because of the complex ways in which the vehicular

mediates and illuminates very human struggles over borders and belongings, life and death, security and insecurity, here and there, and much else.

How do vehicles come to participate in these broader sociopolitical controversies? Let's take ships again. One of the things that interests us is the way in which ships represent simultaneously a space of alterity and a microcosm of existing social hierarchies. On the one hand, Foucault's (1986) oft-quoted vision of ships as "heterotopic spaces" emphasizes key ways in which the ship has long summoned a different world, set apart from the land. At the same time, we take the view that in many respects the vessel does not so much diverge from as operate as an index and spatial diagram of wider power relations, reproducing and reinforcing "existing land-based social hierarchies" (Cusack 2014). For instance, during the "age of mass migration," the different traveling classes of the transatlantic liners reproduced and entrenched class divisions. In the context of today's Mediterranean crossings (see, e.g., Squire et al. 2017), a macabre political economy in which race, gender, and class intersect determines the position of the different people on board the unseaworthy boats that leave Libya, with the poorer migrants able to afford only a place in the boat's hold and thus exposed to the greatest risk of dying en route. As these examples show, reading the spatial micropolitics of these vessels can reveal class and racial hierarchies. In chapter 1, Ethan Blue shows how analyzing the contested design of the deportation trains that in the 1920s channeled migrants toward the ports from which they were to be expelled from the United States can reveal contradictory rationales concerning economy, hygiene, space, and criminality, as well as racialized and gendered identities.

And yet vehicles are not only a locus of (re)production of oppressive categories and violence but also the place where new solidarities and bonds were and continue to be created in the least likely circumstances. In Markus Rediker, Cassandra Pybus, and Emma Christopher's (2007, 4) account of the eighteenth-century slave ship, they underline that: "Amid all the violence, suffering, and death on the lower deck of the *Brookes* and on countless other slavers, new means of communication and new solidarities were being formed among the enslaved, through the language of resistance in action (hunger strikes, leaps overboard, and insurrection) and through new patterns of speech." Drawing on insights from studies of transatlantic slavery, Renisa Mawani's essay (chapter 2) explores the archive of testimonies of passengers who traveled on board the *Komagata Maru* to "take a closer look at the decks of the ship, the tensions, solidarities, and identities that passengers formed with one another, especially across religious lines," and shows

how important these ties were in forging forms of resistance to empire, both during the transgressive voyage itself and later in Indian independence movements. In the process, she reminds us that "racial and colonial histories were not produced on terra firma" alone but were also "shaped by forced and transgressive voyages" that changed conceptions of freedom and coercion.

While certainly not lying outside of the grasp of power, ships, as well as planes, have historically been a locus of distinctive and unique authority systems. Captains, for instance, are vested with a particular power grounded in the problems of governing microsocieties that float or fly at great remove from systems of terrestrial rule; they exercise a "necessity of authority" that even an avowed communist like Engels affirmed (Winner 1980, 128–29). Chapter 3 focuses on stowaways who embark on cargo ships off the coasts of Africa and the way they are governed. Amaha Senu underlines the complex and competing rationales between captains and their crews at sea, and insurance companies and their many representatives dispersed across many ports. While he demonstrates that thanks to digital technologies, cargo ships remain far more connected to firm land than in the past, he underlines the considerable autonomy that captains retain on board in managing the presence of stowaways. Facing the knowledge and practices deployed to mitigate the risk that stowaways constitute for shipping companies and which effectively enlist cargo ships into a mobile and privatized management of borders, Senu also underlines the "rival knowledge" forged by stowaways to navigate the multiple risks that they encounter during their travel. While migrants' use of overcrowded boats to cross fault lines such as the Mediterranean is a widely studied phenomenon, and one that is spectacularized in the media (chapter 8, this volume), Senu offers a rare glimpse into these much less covered fringes of the maritime world.

Although we focus on the materiality of the vehicles themselves, the socialities and forms of governance they come to be embedded in and generate, we hesitate at the prospect of casting the vehicle as merely one more material object to be added to the growing encyclopedia of new materialist studies (Salter 2015; Braun and Whatmore 2010; Latour and Weibel 2005), as we also highlight the role of vehicles in discourses, representations, and imaginaries. Vehicles, as well as roads and journeys for that matter, have a very special and distinctive place in the cultural imaginary of many societies. Consider, again, the repeated ways in which political thought and public imagination have mobilized the ship as an image for governance (Foucault 2007; Walters 2015b). Likewise, from Odysseus to the *Wizard of Oz*, we are struck by the extraordinarily different yet recurrent ways in which the journey features in fiction, poetry, religion, and

song as a figure of life, chance, change, discovery, and so on. There is, in short, an entire mythopoetics of the road (Lehari 2000). In this book we bring both a material and an aesthetic sensitivity to the vehicle's place in migration struggles, asking how the vehicle becomes mobilized not only on land, sea, and air but in the imagination, and in the mobilization of publics toward various political aims. Chapter 4 builds on Julie Y. Chu's anthropological fieldwork with Chinese transmigrants to North America, made infamous in international media as victims as well as perpetrators of particular human smuggling disasters. Chu explores the way in which a specific sociotechnics of "dis/comfort" have come to mediate our ideas of in/civility and racialized identity, and how the cramped environs of a long line of vehicles—from the slave ship to the container ship to the budget airline—have served as the objects and public forums where these struggles have played out. Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani (chapter 8) seek to contest the spectacularization of migrants' overcrowded boats crossing the Mediterranean by foregrounding instead all the other boats they interact with—or precisely don't, because the latter decide to stay away. They underline the contested logistics of border control and rescue at sea that have been at the center of the shifting policies and practices of different actors at the EU's maritime frontier, and have shaped in decisive ways what they call "liquid violence." Heller and Pezzani also remind us that in addition to sharpening its focus on the vehicles of migration, scholarship needs to attend to all the other vehicles that populate the securitized borders and routes of today's migration world.

Trajectories, Routes, and Infrastructures

Were we to confine our attention to vehicles only, we would risk reifying an array of objects much in the way that media coverage did when it fixated on the *Ocean Lady* as a "mystery ship." For the fact is that ships, trains, planes, and other vessels achieve their functions only when they operate in connection with wider networks and infrastructures of other people and things. Bruno Latour puts it well when he insists that it is misleading to think that a plane or a pilot flies. "Flying is a property of the whole association of entities that includes airports and planes, launch pads and ticket counters. B-52s do not fly, the US Air Force flies" (Latour 1999, 182; cited in Chu 2010, 109). Chapters in part II of this collection embrace the invitation of mobilities scholars to consider mobilities "in their fluid interdependence and not in their separate spheres" (Sheller and

Urry 2006, 212), and focus more specifically on situations in which routes and infrastructures become entangled in politics.

Calling for migration studies to move beyond a rather fetishizing gaze at the behavior of migrants, Biao Xiang and Johan Lindquist argue that scholars should shift their attention from migration understood as the movement of people across borders to migration infrastructures—"the systematically interlinked technologies, institutions, and actors that facilitate and condition mobility" (2014, S124; see also Hui 2016, 74–76). It is a point we share in this book. Johan Lindquist's contribution to this volume (chapter 5), in which he focuses on the power relations that invest low-skilled, documented migration from rural Indonesia to various other Asian countries and the Middle East, is exemplary of the insights afforded by such a move. By focusing on processes of recruitment, documentation, transport, temporary housing, reception, and "physical encapsulation centered on the 'protection' (*perlindungan*) of the migrant," Lindquist foregrounds how normal it is for migrant workers to be escorted, sometimes to their most rural villages. Through vivid descriptions of the minivans employed by these escorts, Lindquist shows they are used to create channeled forms of mobility that he likens to corridors. In the process, the chapter challenges our assumptions that migration under modernity can be modeled as the movement of free individuals.

Our approach to the infrastructural dimension of viapolitics is informed by critical discussions of logistics (Cowen 2014; Grappi 2015; Chua et al. 2018) and the way they have recently been brought to bear on migration and borders (Martin 2012; Mezzadra 2016). This logistical gaze is essential in several ways. First, it allows us to examine how different modalities of transport are connected to one another, not only in terms of what could be called in logistic jargon "intermodality"—the seamless passage from one transport infrastructure to another—but also in terms of their historical and conceptual entanglements. These connections are apparent, to start with, at the level of migrants' biographies. Studies of migrant journeys reveal their stop/start, discontinuous character, and the fact that a given migrant's trajectory might include crossing mountains on a donkey and oceans on a passenger jet (Mainwaring and Brigden 2016; Yildiz 2019), or by train and on foot, as chapter 9 (Garelli and Tazzioli) describes, focusing on the Alpine border between Italy and France, underscores this. But it is not only at the level of personal experience that these entanglements between and across different mobility systems are evident. They are equally significant at the level of whole territories and in shaping entire trajectories of migration history. This point can be briefly illustrated if we consider how aviation

transformed the temporality and the landscape of migration in the second half of the twentieth century (chapter 10, this volume). It is almost a staple of commentary on globalization and migration to observe that aviation, much like digital technologies, has shrunk the world. It has brought people and places much closer together, compressing long journey times of ocean crossing into a matter of hours. One might have imagined that the rise of commercial aviation would have consigned migration by sea to history, and together with it the whole iconography of ships, ports of embarkation and disembarkation, and journeys of hope and despair. Yet in the aftermath of the tightening of visa regimes, the sanctions preventing airlines from embarking passengers without authorization and ever more sophisticated practices of airport security have combined to make access to aviation extremely difficult for many—particularly citizens of the Global South. As a result, just when a technological determinism might have predicted that the sea was no longer a space of migration, the very opposite has happened: oceanic crossings by boat have returned with a spectacular and tragic vengeance (chapter 8, this volume). This exemplifies the way the procedures and technologies of logistics that have been designed to enable the smooth flow of people and goods across global transportation systems also generate a form of antilogistics—the production of discontinuities for specific categories of people who are barred from accessing certain transport infrastructures. In turn, we might say that migrants engage in a form of alter-logistics—the forging of alternative transport infrastructures that are inextricably made of actual vehicles as much as of their shared knowledge of circulation (what Papadopoulos and Tsianos [2013] call "mobile commons") and professional smugglers' networks. These tensions surrounding transport infrastructures and competing logistical perspectives are foregrounded in several chapters (see in particular chapter 3).

Finally, a strong focus of several chapters is on the ways these networked infrastructures of movement have become objects of governance, and on the politics of knowledge involved in naming and analyzing these infrastructures so as to make them governable. "Trajectories" is the term that, we suggest, might most accurately designate illegalized migrants' precarious connections: difficult to plan in advance as a travel route, trajectories are the embodied paths of movement traced in space that emerge from the clash between migrants' movement and the friction they encounter (see Schapendonk 2011). "Routes" instead is the term widely used within policy fields to objectify migrants' bifurcated paths and turn them into a space of governance. Maribel Casas-Cortes and Sebastian Cobarrubias (chapter 6), as well as Sabine Hess and Bernd Kasparek (chapter 7) offer different genealogies of "routes thinking" and management, the first largely

centered on Spain in relation to Africa, the second focused on the Balkans. Both demonstrate how the route has become a key mediator in the way in which states seek to apprehend—we use the term in its double sense—the turbulence of migratory movements. Crucially, these chapters reveal how the concept and object of the route bind together in new ways a multiplicity of actors across a transnational space and are thus generative of new governmental practices. Casas-Cortes and Cobarrubias seek to denaturalize what they call "routes thinking" by describing the way a collective of *sans papiers* in Spain returned the gaze onto one of the maps of "migrant routes," resubjectifying with their own embodied experiences the lines that had been abstracted from the friction of the real world. Hess and Kasparek further draw our attention to other spatial concepts, such as the corridor as a form of channeling movement, this time in connection with humanitarian and security logics that intensified in Europe during the so-called summer of migration of 2015. In a different context, Renisa Mawani (chapter 2) foregrounds the idea of passage, which, following Rediker, Pybus, and Christopher (2007, 2), she suggests is more than one part of an oceanic voyage; it is also a concept that can map distributions of violence and expropriation over time and space. In sum, variable geometries are at stake and nothing is straightforward about routes. Different ways of conceptualizing pathways and movements merit our attention. Routes, passages, corridors, and trajectories are just some of the ways this book grapples with these geometries and their power effects.

In addition to vehicles, then, transport and migration infrastructures, migrants' actual trajectories and their solidification into routes by those who seek to govern them are themes that figure prominently across this book and are central to our approach. Viapolitics allows us to bring together and push further different perspectives outlined above, which, in their emphasis on movement, transversal connections, and networks, have challenged classical migration studies' focus on the conditions that drive migration in countries of origin or the experiences and the dynamics of immigrants when they settle in cities and countries of destination. Here, rather than beginning and end points in a migration journey—which have become ever more elusive—what is foregrounded is the space-time of passage, the policies, transport, and human infrastructures that shape it, and the way it has become an object of government and public discourse in its own right. In the process, our very understanding of borders—too often predicated on a neat division of inside/outside marked by a territorial boundary—is challenged by an attention to multiple bordering practices that cut across space and operate at multiple scales in the aim of shaping migrants' entire trajectories.

The Geophysics of Migration and Borders

In part III of this book, we turn to the geophysical characteristics of the spaces across which both vehicles of migration and their infrastructures operate. In this final part, we seek to foster a much deeper connection between mobility and the earth, to reconnect migration and borders with the world in all its elemental, geological, atmospheric, tempestuous force. In this endeavor, we draw on and contribute to a recent "environmental turn" in the field of (political) geography and the humanities more generally (Usher 2019, 16; Braun 2008). Some of the most inspiring work here has crystalized around the concept of "geopower" and the specific inflection Elisabeth Grosz (2012) has given to it.[5] Geopower refers to "forces contained in matter that precede, enable, facilitate, provoke and restrict 'life'" (Depledge 2013, 1). Geopower shapes human and state practices, and in turn political practices shape the way this geopower operates, namely, who is empowered or restricted by it. The concept of geopower is useful in reconnecting the geophysical and the social in nondeterministic and nonbinary ways (Yusoff 2018), and in rethinking the environment not simply as the "environs of humans" (that which is around and outside of us) but rather as a "relational practice" embedded in social and political matrixes of power/knowledge (Braun 2008; Youatt 2016). This concept helps attune us to the way the geophysical characteristics of environments such as arid deserts, choppy seas, or rugged mountain chains are perceived, experienced, and strategized by migrants and state actors alike, shaping the vehicles and infrastructures migrants resort to, and the legislations and bordering practices they encounter. There are at least three interrelated ways in which the geophysics of migration and borders are analyzed in this book: the harnessing of geopower toward and against border control; migrants' embodied experience of environments that are made hostile to them; and the volume of the terrains across which migration and borders operate.

The role of the geophysical in relation to border enforcement has been perhaps most fully theorized in the frame of the Mexico-US border, where the notion of "prevention through deterrence" was adopted by US border guards as early as 1993 (De Leon 2015; Boyce, Chambers, and Launius 2019). This enforcement strategy calls for the deployment of massive numbers of agents along the sections of the border that are easiest to cross, usually around urban areas. These concentrations, in turn, lead migrants to attempt to cross in areas such as the Sonoran Desert that are much more inhospitable and, therefore, more difficult to traverse, often leading to death (Squire 2015). In this strategy, we

can clearly see the way the geophysical environment becomes embedded in strategies of migration deterrence, to the extent that Juanita Sundberg (2011) argues that "nonhuman actors—plants, animals, and biophysical processes—are *constitutive of* boundary making" in the same ways in which border guards, national and international institutions, legal frameworks, and surveillance systems are.[6] Bringing these actants to the fore offers a powerful antidote against what Sundberg (2014) calls the "methodological humanism" of borders research. Heller and Pezzani continue this strand of thought in their chapter on the Mediterranean frontier, where, they argue, most migrants die not only at but also through the sea, victims of ever-changing forms of "liquid violence." The shifting modalities of this violence are shaped by the design of operational zones and the strategic mobilization of legal geographies and surveillance technologies, as well as by the changing practices of state and nonstate actors. Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli similarly contest the image of environments such as the Alps as naturally deadly, demonstrating instead that it is state intervention that turns them into deathscapes by making the harsh geophysical conditions of the mountains all the more dangerous and unpredictable (chapter 9). In all of these cases, the inhospitable and hazardous areas migrants are funneled into can be understood as terrains, a term that, according to Stuart Elden (2010, 804), describes "a relation of power, with a heritage in geology and the military, the control of which allows the establishment and maintenance of order." It is the imposition of complex legal norms and technologies of power onto these terrains, adapting to and harnessing their geopower, that turn them into territories. In our understanding of terrains and territories, we are also inspired by feminist research (Jackman et al. 2020) that has highlighted the Eurocentric and statist bias of much theorization on these topics, emphasizing instead the multiple perspectives, understandings, and embodied experiences beyond the calculative grasp of the state. Contributions to this volume follow this perspective by emphasizing the ambivalence of geopower and underlining that states have no monopoly over strategizing the geophysical (see also Gordillo 2018; Boyce 2016). For instance, earlier in this introduction we already alluded to the role of the oceans in shaping not only practices of power and control, but also the capacity of migrants to connect distant continents by "appropriating the mobile forces in the air and water to increase [their] powers of locomotion" (Semple 1911, 292).

Several of our contributors also emphasize migrants' embodied experience of environments that have been made hostile to them as a result of state policies and practices. In their contribution on the crossing of the Alpine borders between Italy and France, Garelli and Tazzioli show how as a result of increasing state

control of roads and rail transport, illegalized migrants have resorted to trying to cross mountainous areas on foot. Their discussion of "the migrant walker" challenges the "romantic ambulatory culture that has dominated different disciplinary conversations surrounding walking." Rather than a free and adventurous hero or flaneur, migrants are forced to walk, on rocky paths, at times covered in snow, and surrounded by thick forests in which one may lose one's orientation. Likewise, in his genealogy of "the coercive racial viapolitics" of US settler colonialism, Blue emphasizes the embodied encounter of slaves and Indigenous peoples with the harsh elements during their forced treks on foot across the United States (chapter 1). The "coffles" formed by groups of slaves, whose movement "was powered by slaves' muscle and whatever food the drivers allowed them," as Blue writes, had to march regardless of heat or freezing cold. The forced removal of Indigenous peoples on the Trail of Tears "involved trudging across muddy roads and paths westward, through cold and rain, pain and suffering, deprivation, sickness and death." These contributions bring into sharp relief the ways in which, for those excluded from privileged mobility regimes that aim to offer seamless travel, the body violently rubs up against the material world (Pallister-Wilkins 2019).[7]

Finally, while geographic thought has tended to focus on the world of solid surface (*terra*) in its flat two dimensionality, we follow recent research in seeking to understand terrains and territories "as voluminous, elemental, fluid, and indeterminate" (Peters, Steinberg, and Stratford 2018, 5), attending as well to the territorialities of the oceans and the skies.[8] There is now growing attention to questions of volume (Weizman 2007; Elden 2013; Billé 2020), airspace (Neocleous 2013), and aeriality (Adey 2010) with regard to space and power. In chapter 10, Clara Lecadet and Walters bring these emerging 3D geographies of power into a productive conversation with the study of deportation by air. They focus on the network of airports that contributes to making the skies navigable. Specifically, they explore some of the diverse ways airports interact with deportation practices, whether as zones of departure, transit, or arrival, whether used by states to produce politically useful deportation spectacle or by migrants and activists, for whom airports can become zones of interruption. Lecadet and Walters pay special attention to Bamako-Sénou airport in Mali, where ex-deportees have managed, through organized efforts, to make the airport a site of struggle, solidarity, civic identity, and political voice regarding those who experienced forcible return. In this way, their chapter sketches fragments of an aerial geography of deportation whose existence has been largely overlooked by state-centric approaches to expulsion.

The epic stories of exile and exodus told by poets and religious books feature peoples crossing seas or, like Icarus and Daedalus, taking flight from island imprisonment. In an age when masses of people once again have to negotiate mountain ranges, deserts, oceans, and skies, as well as highways, railways, towns, and villages, it is high time we took the geophysics of migration and borders more seriously.

Viapolitics: The Road Ahead

Without a doubt, the essays gathered in this volume cannot—nor, for that matter, intend to—exhaust the various facets and analytical angles that a viapolitical gaze might afford. Rather, they should be read as a primer, gathering preliminary explorations that we see developing in the areas of research that are closer to us, while at the same inviting future research that will necessarily need to enlarge and diversify its spatial and temporal focus beyond what we have managed to do here.

Each of the chapters in this book cuts across the three dimensions of viapolitics (vehicles, infrastructures, and geophysics) that we have just discussed here in isolation from each other, even as they may bring a sharper focus on one dimension or another. Each chapter focuses in fact on a particular type of vehicle that, thanks to a certain infrastructure, enables travel across a corresponding terrain—land, air, and sea. After all, one of the most powerful advantages of the lens of viapolitics is precisely that it cuts through scalar divisions so as to keep in play the specificity of the analysis of practices of power and their inscription within broader political and economic transformations, past and present. It is only if one understands the jurisdictional distributions of the airspace that one can fully grasp, for example, the significance and politics of the minute gesture of passengers standing up to prevent a deportation flight from taking off. This articulation between politics on the scale of global space and at that of the "microphysical" is precisely one of the analytical moves that the concept of viapolitics allows.

Most importantly, however, we hope that after having explored viapolitics' manifold facets, it will become hardly possible to keep holding the two ship stories with which we have opened this book in separation from each other. For many years, the work of scholars, artists, and activists has denounced and attempted to expose the "imperial durabilities" (Stoler 2016) that link the events of the *Komagata Maru* to more recent stories of exclusion, such as those involving

the MV *Ocean Lady*. Think of Ali Kazimi's documentary *Continuous Journey*, which traces the connection between the policies that led to the interdiction of the *Komagata Maru* and the 2014 Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement; or Ken Lum's sculptural installation *Four Boats Stranded: Red and Yellow, Black and White* (2001), which "connects the historical legacy of the *Komagata Maru* and the colonization of First Nations to contemporary practices of racialized exclusion in Canadian immigration" through the miniaturized replicas of four boats that relate in different ways to the history of empire (Hameed and Vukov 2007, 93).[9] All these projects seek to confront the violence of what Ariella Aïcha Azoulay (2019, 2) has called the "imperial shutter": all of the ways in which, like a camera shutter separating a photograph from the context in which it was produced, the imperial enterprise has "distanced, bracketed, removed, forgotten, suppressed, ignored, overcome, and made irrelevant" different histories. We would like our contribution to sit in continuity with these attempts. While we certainly cannot claim that it will be our intervention that will change the perception of the two ship stories in the public debate, we do hope that it will provide fresh tools to "actualis[e] their . . . suppressed legacies and continuities" (Hameed and Vukov 2007, 93) and to think practices of mobility and systems of control in their deeper history and wider geographical connections.

Notes

1 Many examples could be offered, but we can mention in particular transport sociologies and histories (Mom 2003; Schivelbusch 1986; Gigliotti 2009), postcolonial cultural studies and radical histories of the Atlantic and other mobile worlds (Gilroy 1993; Linebaugh and Rediker 2000; Bhimull 2017); geographies of humanitarianism and refugees (Hyndman 2000; Mountz 2010); communication studies that take transport seriously (Morley 2011; Carey 2009); geographies and cultural histories of landscape, highway, and route (Lehari 2000; Hvattum et al. 2016); and philosophically attuned studies of everyday travel and spatiality (Thrift 2004; de Certeau 1984). Further research that has been important for our thinking of the different dimensions of viapolitics is mentioned in the following sections of this introduction.

2 There has been a lively and generative dialogue between mobilities and migration scholars, particularly in such areas as forced or clandestine migration (Gill, Caletrío, and Mason 2011; Mainwaring and Brigden 2016; Martin 2012; Schapendonk et al. 2018) and border crossing and immigration enforcement (Stuesse and Coleman 2014;

Mountz 2010; Loyd and Mountz 2018; Dijstelbloem, van Reekum, and Schinkel 2017). Nevertheless, and to echo one recent survey of these interdisciplinary fields (Hui 2016, 70), this traffic has been somewhat uneven and asymmetrical. The sharper focus mobilities approaches have brought onto how migratory movement is actually practiced, experienced, and mediated is still far from being the norm in migration and border studies.

3 Put differently, viapolitics starts in the midst of things. Here we have in mind the provocation that Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 25) directed toward social thought nearly forty years ago when they called for a philosophy that begins "in the middle, between things, . . . *intermezzo*." As mediators of movement, vehicles, routes, terrains, oceans, and skies are very much in the middle.

4 We also invoke locomotion because it offers some intriguing connections between movement and power. These have recently been explored by Hagar Kotef (2015, 80–83) in her important genealogy of the liberal governance of mobility (but see also Cresswell 2010; Adey 2017, esp. ch. 5; Sheller 2018). Kotef highlights in particular how the jurist William Blackstone saw a "clear bond between liberty and movement," such that liberty could, in his words, be understood as "the power of locomotion, of changing situation or removing one's person to whatsoever place one's own inclination may direct; without imprisonment or restraint, unless by due course of law" (2015, 81, emphasis added). While we do not subscribe to this particular image of liberty, in *Viapolitics* we examine various ways in which the power of movement intersects with the distribution of freedoms and unfreedoms.

5 For a more extensive genealogy of the concept, see Luisetti (2019).

6 Here we see clearly how insufficient is the common understanding of the "environment" as that which is around, the background to, and clearly differentiated from the actions of humans (Youatt 2016), and what becomes apparent instead is a form of environmentality—a notion that builds upon Foucault's (2008) late work on biopolitics and governmentality, in which he described the then-budding forms of neoliberalism as "an environmental type of intervention," rather than a subject-based or population-based distribution of governance. The term was mostly taken up in the context of environmental studies (Luisetti 2018) but has then been usefully reconceptualized by Jennifer Gabrys (2016, 191) as the multiple ways in which "environments, technologies, and ways of life [are] governed through . . . particular environmental distributions." As a result of what one may call border environmentality, borderscapes are turned into "hostile environments" for migrants (Pezzani and Heller 2019; Pezzani 2020).

7 This "politics of exhaustion" (Welander and Ansems de Vries 2016) operates by subtracting life-sustaining resources such as water, food, and health care provisions, and exposing people on the move to harsh socio-natural conditions along—and often also after—the journey: extreme heat or cold, as well as chronic sleep deprivation. Here the violence of borders expresses itself also as access to radically unequal levels of energy consumption and the ensuing differential speed of travel they produce: on

the one hand, the slow-paced walking across rugged terrains fueled by metabolic processes and, on the other, the high-consuming, fossil fuel–powered policing apparatus that unauthorized migrants have to confront (Nevins 2018, 2019).

8 Important research has also highlighted how, in an age of intensifying climate change and environmental crisis, the earth itself cannot be assumed to be the immutable backdrop over which perennially stable borders are drawn but needs to be understood as being in constant motion at speeds not usually associated with geophysical and geological processes. See, for instance, Ferrari, Pasqual, and Bagnato (2019) and Nyers (2012).

9 Lum's installation includes small replicas of a First Nations longboat, the first of four unnamed cargo ships that brought a total of 599 Fujian Chinese migrants to the shores of British Columbia in the summer of 1999, the *Komagata Maru*, and British colonial explorer Captain Vancouver's ship.

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