

Research on the Development of Mobility in the Philosophy of the 20th Century: from the Philosophy of Life to Globalization

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Abstract

This article investigates the development of the idea of mobility in 20th-century philosophy. It examines publications by various philosophical authors such as H. Bergson, M. Merleau-Ponty, G. Deleuze, A. Whitehead, T. Veblen, Z. Bauman, G. Simmel, and M. Castells, who have explored mobility in relation to movement, displacement, or state change. While not all of these authors explicitly used the term "mobility" (or "immobility") or "mobile", they addressed the concept using terms like "motion" and "movement." The goal was to examine their perspectives on mobility and to pay attention to the terminology they employed.

The article highlights the extensive contribution of British sociologist John Urry in the realm of mobility, as he comprehensively described and conceptualized this idea. It compares Urry's understanding of mobility with the views of other philosophers during that era. It is important to note that, at the time, the term "mobility" was not extensively studied in philosophy and had diverse meanings. Therefore, the article aims to establish connections between Urry's concept of mobility and the philosophical inquiries into movement by other 20th-century authors.

The study presents an exploration of mobility and its related processes within the philosophical domain. It demonstrates that the idea of mobility had already been contemplated in philosophy prior to John Urry's theory. By delving into this topic, the research lays the groundwork for further investigations and stimulates future studies in the field of mobility, particularly within philosophy but also extending beyond the realm of social science. Consequently, mobility emerges as a philosophical category that offers possibilities for interdisciplinary research in the future.

Keywords: history of philosophy, history of mobility, XX century, John Urry, mobility, movement, mobile world, mobility turn

Дослідження розвитку мобільності в філософії XX століття: від філософії життя до глобалізації

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Анотація

У цій статті досліджується розвиток ідеї мобільності у філософії 20-го століття. У ньому розглядаються публікації різних філософських авторів, таких як Г. Бергсон, М. Мерло-Понті, Г. Дельоз, А. Уайтхед, Т. Веблен, З. Бауман, Г. Зіммель і М. Кастельс, які досліджували мобільність у відношенні до руху, переміщення або зміни стану. Хоча не всі з цих авторів чітко використовували термін «мобільність» (або «не-мобільність») або «мобільний», вони зверталися до цього поняття, використовуючи такі терміни, як «рух» і «рухливість». Метою статті було вивчити їхні погляди на мобільність і звернути увагу на термінологію, яку вони використовували.

У статті висвітлюється значний внесок британського соціолога Джона Урі в сферу мобільності, оскільки він всебічно описав і концептуалізував цю ідею. Порівнюється розуміння мобільності Урі з поглядами інших філософів XX століття. Важливо зазначити, що на той час термін «мобільність» не був широко вивченим у філософії і мав різне значення. Тому стаття має на меті встановити зв'язки між концепцією мобільності Урі та філософськими дослідженнями руху інших філософів обраної епохи.

Дана робота вивчає становлення мобільності та пов'язаних з нею процесів у філософській сфері. Це дозволяє підтвердити, що ідея мобільності вже розглядалася у філософії ще до теорії Джона Урі. Заглиблюючись у цю тему, стаття закладає основу для подальших наукових розвідок і стимулює майбутні дослідження в галузі мобільності, зокрема в рамках філософії, а не лише в сфері соціальних наук. Отже, мобільність постає як філософська категорія, яка пропонує можливості для міждисциплінарних досліджень у майбутньому.

Ключові слова: історія філософії, історія мобільності, XX століття, Джон Урі, мобільність, рух, мобільний поворот, поворот мобільності, мобільний світ

Introduction.

Mobility and mobile processes begin to be studied in philosophy only in the previous century. However, certain ideas that can be considered as ideas of mobility can be found in earlier studies - despite not using the term «mobility» directly, philosophers of the previous century created a discourse on its various aspects.

Mobility is not solely defined as the ability to move, although the term is predominantly used in this context. It is closely associated with the research conducted by the British sociologist John Urry, who comprehensively outlined the overarching global processes of active changes and movements within the mobility system. These encompass physical movements of subjects and objects, as well as the movement of ideas, money, and internet communication, among others (Lobanova, 2023). The study of mobility also relates to the philosophical examination of movement, revitalizing ancient Greek philosophies concerning the nature of mobility and making them more relevant in contemporary times. While it may not be considered a fully developed scientific discipline, the philosophy of movement has long been a subject of inquiry since the times of Ancient Greece, with philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno attempting to comprehend the essence, purpose, and properties of movement. Thus, the study of mobility represents the modern culmination of philosophical investigations into the concept of movement, mobility, and progress.

In general, the concept of development and its active manifestation over time emerged relatively recently. For instance, the earliest recorded usage of the term «progress» in the English language dates back to the 1590s (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2023). Similarly, the initial appearances of the term "mobility" can be traced to around the same period (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2023). It can be hypothesized that the use of these terms began shortly before the onset of the Age of Enlightenment, which brought about significant transformations in the approach to science. Interestingly, it was during the period of the Scientific Revolution in the Early Modern era that words denoting movement, development, and evolutionary processes came into existence. This indicates a gradual shift in the worldview of that era.

Problem setting.

This study offers a unique perspective on the evolution of the concept of «mobility» by examining its development from the philosophy of life to more contemporary philosophical studies. It demonstrates that the proponents of the philosophy of life have had a significant impact on the advancement of the idea of mobility and have made the initial research endeavors in this philosophical realm.

It is these philosophers who actively reflect on the idea of life as a constant and ever-changing flow. The philosophy of life, in an irrational and intuitive manner, inherently contemplates the process of dynamic changes

that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As mentioned earlier in the article, the advancement of mobile processes, driven by technological progress, received significant impetus in the previous century (Lobanova, 2023). Within this context, philosophers such as G. Simmel, A. Bergson, J. Deleuze, M. Merleau-Ponty, and others began to actively explore the notions of movement and active changes. Through the lenses of the philosophy of life, physicality, cinema, historical movement, and the phenomena of globalization, a philosophical interpretation of the idea of dynamic changes, their potential, and possibilities emerged. This interpretation is closely connected to the development and examination of John Urry's system of mobilities. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the concept of mobility in 20th-century philosophy, thereby expanding the conventional framework for interpreting mobility within the philosophical tradition.

Results.

One of the challenges in studying the term «mobility» lies in the analysis of its references within the scientific discourse of the recent past. This difficulty arises primarily because 'mobility' is often used interchangeably with «movement» or «the ability to move», without explicitly considering mobility as a comprehensive system within the context of John Urry's sociology. While certain forms of mobility are mentioned, they are typically discussed in relation to specific domains such as social mobility, migratory mobility, or personnel mobility. However, as previously mentioned, the interpretation of mobility should encompass a broader scope, ranging from migration and transportation to global trade and the emergence of transnational corporations.

It may be mistakenly assumed that mobility is an exclusively recent phenomenon. Within contemporary studies on migration, for instance, there is sometimes a sense of panic that large waves of modern migrants may destabilize society. However, this reaction to migration is not new. Similar ideas about migration causing transformative change can be found in studies of ancient migration processes (Lucassen, Lucassen, & Manning, 2010, p. 4-5). In reality, migration processes have always existed and continue to be a normal occurrence. There is even a growing tendency to avoid terms like 'migration crisis' or 'refugee crisis' for the events of 2015, as migrants are not to blame for the wars that necessitate their movement. Instead, it would be more accurate to frame it as a «crisis of tolerance» (Çaglar, & Schiller, 2018). Therefore, migration, as a manifestation of mobility, is not a new phenomenon that has suddenly 'flooded' Europe. Large waves of migration have occurred in previous eras as well (for example, during World War II, around 40 million people were forcibly displaced in Europe (UNHCR, 2000), so the arrival of several million Syrian or Ukrainian refugees is not unprecedented in quantitative terms for Europe.

Similarly, it would be overly optimistic to claim that mobility and mobile processes solely consist of new, unique phenomena exclusive to our time. In reality, what John Urry presents as examples of mobility systems (Urry, 2007) have existed for a long time: labor migration, refugees, pension mobility, movement of military equipment, and more. However, it is in the modern and postmodern world that we witness a significant increase in opportunities for movement, both physical and virtual. This proliferation of possibilities has led to a "mobile turn" and a shift in scientific research from static to dynamic phenomena. While society has never been static, the method of studying phenomena in a mobile state is indeed new in modern times.

The usage of the term «progress» mentioned earlier allows us to perceive the historical process in a different light, transforming the understanding of history as a science. Philosophical comprehension of progress, as well as historical processes in general, emerges. This, in turn, catalyzes changes in historical-philosophical and historical research. For instance, it prompted Voltaire to create the philosophy of history, and influenced the development of the history of philosophy and the philosophy of history by Hegel and Windelband. Subsequently, it contributed to the emergence of the «Annals» school, which introduced a novel approach to historical science and influenced the evolution of the concept of «world history».

The inclination to study mobility gained popularity in the second half of the 20th century, coinciding with another shift in the scientific paradigm. It became crucial not only to examine the object of research but also to consider the researchers themselves (as seen in the study of laboratories by Bruno Latour) and the methods employed (i.e., the research process itself). While the 19th century witnessed the classification of sciences to systematize knowledge, the late 20th century saw the rise of inter-, trans-, and multidisciplinary studies. This shift emerged from the desire to study society and other phenomena not in a static but in a dynamic state.

Subsequently, more studies necessitated increasingly complex systemic approaches, such as examining money flows, epidemiological infections, and the diffusion of terms. Science recognized that not only physical objects or living beings exhibit movement. This realization led to the idea of employing methodologies and tools from various scientific domains to explore phenomena, thereby facilitating common research. Examples of such studies include the functioning of smart cities, investigations into pandemics, and analyses of global migration.

Simultaneously, John Urry observes that the world, starting from the 19th century, has been steadily moving towards increased complexity. Consequently, there arose a need for greater systematization of processes and accumulated knowledge. This led to various initiatives, ranging from the establishment of schedules and time zones to the subsequent study of epidemics and viruses,

the creation of the Oxford dictionary, and the development of the first digital encyclopedias.

Hence, the notion of complexity, as described by Urry, is intricately connected to the phenomena of mobility. We refer to the 20th century as a period of mobility's development precisely because the previous century witnessed the active establishment of new scientific disciplines and significant technological advancements, particularly in the realm of information sciences and technologies. Consequently, there was a proliferation of dynamic changes and transformations, not only within the realm of science but also in politics, society, culture, and beyond. Even at its inception, the 20th century saw the emergence of philosophical concepts concerning transformative changes in the world, as evident in the works of philosophers associated with the philosophy of life.

In general, the study of movement falls within a particular branch of philosophy known as the philosophy of process, sometimes referred to as the "philosophy of the organism" as created by Alfred Whitehead (Whitehead, 1978). Whitehead, in addition to exploring essences and ontology, sought to develop philosophical ideas on movement by offering his own interpretation of previous thinkers such as Newton, Descartes, and Leibniz. According to Whitehead, reality is inherently dynamic, and recognizing the significance of active changes becomes crucial for comprehending the world: *"The fundamental meaning of the notion of 'change' is 'the difference between actual occasions comprised in some determinate event.'"* (Whitehead, 1978, p. 73). While he does not employ the term "mobility," he utilizes the term "motion" in the context of Zeno's paradoxes and reflections on relative and absolute motion.

Thorstein Veblen uses the term 'mobility' in the context of population and labor mobility (Veblen, 2009, p. 61, p. 63), particularly associating mobility with his "leisure class" — the social class of affluent Americans who have the means to be mobile, travel, abstain from work, and focus solely on leisure and consumption. Veblen views mobility as a privilege rather than a right. It serves as a distinguishing factor between the wealthy and the poor, representing a form of social superiority. When Urry mentions Veblen in the context of consumer society, it highlights the shift in emphasis in modern times: now, everyone has the right to both mobility and regular (even extended) leisure (Urry, 1995, p. 130). Structured leisure time has become not only a social norm but also a societal necessity. It may be challenging to imagine, but familiar «mobile» aspects that enable vacation trips emerged relatively recently in society: annual paid vacations (introduced in 1936), two weekends (established in 1879), traffic lights (introduced in 1868), train schedules (dating back to 1839), and so on.

Georg Simmel made an important contribution to the foundation of mobility research, greatly influencing Urry and the development of the mobility system

(Lobanova, 2023). Urry and Simmel share common research interests, such as the study of large cities, travel, the concept of 'routes,' and displacement, among others. In his numerous essays, Simmel examines the transformation of cultural forms as vital movement, reflects on contemporary societal changes (such as the emergence of a distinct 'women's culture'), and explores history and its laws. These aspects collectively make his publications significant contributions to the early studies of mobility.

Henri Bergson considered the concept of evolution using the concept of movement as its active force. For Bergson, mobility represents both the ability to move and the capacity for development. He criticizes Zeno's paradoxes and dismisses the absurd idea that *«movement is made of immobilities»* (Bergson, 2005, p. 335). According to Bergson, mobility is indivisible, as the state of movement itself fundamentally differs from a state of rest. Therefore, it is incorrect to divide this process into 'stops' or 'segments.' Bergson's mentioned criticism can be compared with Rorty's error of rational reconstruction, when we try to reconstruct the views of scientists of the past through the prism of modern discourse: static methods are not suitable for the study of mobile phenomena. Thus, dividing the 'motion arrow' into segments is an attempt to impose static elements on a process that is inherently dynamic, contradicting its original nature. Additionally, in this fragment, Bergson grapples with the perennial philosophical problem of the whole and its parts. He sees movement, both in terms of progress and spatial change, as more akin to a 'stretching' of the original state of things into the next, rather than a composition of individual static segments. Movement is not merely a measure of length but encompasses something greater than a mere collection of separate traversed segments. Bergson explains: *“But the possibility of applying the movement to the line traversed exists only for an observer who, keeping outside the movement and seeing at every instant the possibility of a stop, tries to reconstruct the real movement with these possible immobilities”* (Bergson, 2005, p. 337).

Accordingly, in the context of mobility, we should consider movement not as a change of states, but as a continuity or continuous transition, which cannot be divided into fixed segments, since the set of possible states during movement is much larger than in static states (Bergson, 2005, p. 341). During the transition state, it is impossible to precisely determine the moment when the subject or object transforms into another state since this transformation occurs gradually, and not by the rapid loss of previously acquired properties and the acquisition of new ones. Consequently, Bergson raises another classic philosophical question about the problem of identity and change in the context of mobility: Where is the fixed moment in time when a child becomes a man, for example? In general, Bergson considers the problem of mobility through the prism of the study of evolution,

where mobility represents both movement and progress or change in the state of being. In other words, movement is akin to evolution, and evolution is akin to movement. Bergson actively employs the concept of "mobility" to describe growth and development, contrasting it not so much with immobility but with fixity.

As later in Urry, Bergson mentions the idea of complexity, but only in the context of evolution - the more developed an organism is, the more complex its system becomes, and it has more choices for movement (Bergson, 2005, p. 122). In Urry, complexity is considered as a global phenomenon and as the close interconnection of social relations and systems. Urry emphasizes the study of the global as a system or interconnected systems (Urry, 2002, p. 7). That is, as independent, developing structures rather than chaotic accumulations. Urry's interpretation of the term links complexity to mobility and globalization.

A unique contribution to the development of the idea of mobility is made by M. Merleau-Ponty, who also examines movement through the philosophy of corporeality. Movement for him is «displacement or change of position, even if it cannot be defined as such» (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 311). For him, movement is the ability of living or non-living things, but only when interacting with the surrounding world - movement requires a body that will be in it (and will be preserved during the entire time of movement) and a certain external reference point. Merleau-Ponty shares Bergson's opinion about the difficulty of defining the nature of movement as such - because it is still difficult to understand the effect of transition or change in a moving body. That is, due to the practically infinite set of potential "stops" and «transitions» between point A and B, we cannot divide the movement into parts. In addition, we are able to perceive all these intermediate states. Motion, thus, is transformed from a straight line into an active force that the object possesses. Absolute motion does not exist; it is only a property of the body that resides in it. Movement is not separated from the body that resides in it (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 317). The author considered movement as the movement of the body and its ability to move. Merleau-Ponty does not use the direct term «mobility» (except in some cases in the opposite sense - as immobility), but he uses the term «movement». That is, unlike Whitehead, we are talking about the ability to move from one point to another (movement), rather than the state of mobility itself (that is, the state of movement - motion).

J. Deleuze, like Bergson, mentions cinema in the context of movement. However, while the latter criticizes cinema for supposedly dividing time into intervals, Deleuze considers it as different types of images that are reproduced in motion in cinema (Deleuze, 1986, p. 69). But an even more significant contribution of Deleuze to the idea of mobility is the concepts of rhizome and nomadism, which, like mobility, provide an alternative to everything static. The states of mobility and nomadism

share similarities: the refusal to settle down, a dynamic process that develops independently, the rejection of fixed divisions and classifications, stable identity, and a state of constant transformation (Deleuze, & Guattari, 1987). Similar to Simmel's description of the changing cultural forms, Deleuze and Guattari describe a constant state of change, a state of mobility of both the subject and the surrounding environment. Regarding the term itself, the authors actively and casually use «mobility» and «mobile», but rather as auxiliary words rather than the main concepts under study. The authors' research allows us to examine mobility through the prism of nomadism, not only as physical movement but also as a philosophical concept.

The publications of the globalization researcher Z. Bauman can also be considered in the context of mobility. For example, his vision of «liquid modernity»: *«If orthodox sociology, born and developed under the aegis of solid modernity, was preoccupied with the conditions of human obedience and conformity, the prime concern of sociology made to the measure of liquid modernity needs to be the promotion of autonomy and freedom...»* (Bauman, 2000, p. 213). Sociology, as a phenomenon that reflects modernity, requires a change in its approach and methodology. The contrast between «solid» and «liquid» modernity depicts the development of mobility and mobile processes: *«the era of unconditional superiority of sedentarism over nomadism and the dominance of the settled over the mobile is on the whole grinding fast to a halt. We are witnessing the revenge of nomadism over the principle of territoriality and settlement. In the fluid stage of modernity, the settled majority is ruled by the nomadic and extraterritorial elite»* (Bauman, 2000, p. 13). Bauman indirectly mentions mobility in the context of identification, movement in space and bodily mobility, labor mobility, and so on. In general, Bauman's studies on globalization and the society of fluid modernity, which is dynamic and constantly changing, trace stable trends in mobility.

More modern philosophers, such as Erin Manning (2012) and Thomas Nail (2018), consider movement as the primary aspect of social, economic, and other processes. For E. Manning, movement is more than just physical movement in space. Like Deleuze and Bergson, she examines movement through the aesthetic prism of cinema and other arts. T. Nail, on the other hand, focuses on the ontology of movement and its unique history.

In the context of mobility, it is important to mention Manuel Castells and his «network society» - *«... a society whose social structure is made of networks powered by microelectronics-based information and communication technologies»* (Castells, 2004, p. 3). Such a society is built thanks to the active movement of goods, information, and people - that is, a mobile society is a network society. And such a society is not only a product of mobilities but also depends on them and their functioning. The author also actively studies the impact of technology on society,

the interaction of communication and progress (Castells, 2007). Also, in the Castells collection, the author I. Tubella, like Simmel, also considers society through the prism of the «growth of cultural forms», and similarly, like Urry clearly calls globalization a process that is associated with the active mobility of various categories: *«Globalization is about growing mobility across frontiers, mobility of goods, information, and people. Will this mobility affect collective identities? In this chapter, I will focus on the global diffusion of cultural forms through communication media, the local appropriation of these forms, and the impact of this process of globalization and localization of meanings on collective identity»* (Castells, 2007, p. 385). Thus, Castells' research makes a significant contribution to contemporary scholarship, bringing together the study of mobility, society, and globalization as interconnected factors of the 21st century.

In general, as can be seen, Zeno's aporias have still not lost their relevance, especially in modern studies of mobility and movement. Mobility studies are changing research methods themselves, and not only in a scientific format. Thanks to technical progress and mobile methods, modern content analysis is taking place in the marketing field (analysis of publications in social networks, tracking the mention of certain persons, events and phenomena), modern research on propaganda, research on the emergence of new terms and trends (especially "viral" videos and information), automation of data collection and analysis during a sociological survey of public opinion, etc.

Conclusions.

The concept of mobility is not widespread in modern historical and philosophical research in Ukraine. Despite the active research on the topics of globalization, the information world and society, mobility quite often still remains within the narrow framework of sociology, and is also widely used only as a separate name for such processes as «social mobility», «academic mobility», etc. But since the concept is quite broad and is actively used in modern Western research, it requires partial corrections of historical and philosophical vectors: as the article proves, ideas of mobility are present in many philosophers of the 20th century, which opens a separate field for new scientific research even in an interdisciplinary context.

Active use of the term "mobility" occurs only from the second half of the previous century, however, ideas that can be called mobile can be found in the works of earlier researchers - from the philosophers of life to Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze. Also, the philosophy of mobility is partially related to the philosophy of movement and the philosophy of progress, but the very idea of mobility is broader and includes concepts from both directions: both progress and physical movement but is not limited to them. Thus, the philosophy of mobility examines phenomena, events, and changes as a whole as active and dynamic processes of modernity, which are closely intertwined in global systems. Mobility acts as the ability

to move, grow and progress, but not only in a physical context, which allows you to explore the history of the development of phenomena, ideas, concepts, etc.

The conducted research is an attempt to understand the development of mobility in a historical-philosophical context and lays the foundations for further study of the evolution of mobile ideas in the history of philosophy. This allows us to consider mobility as a philosophical

concept, and not only as a sociological term, and to expand the boundaries of mobility research as a phenomenon. Thus, mobility can be further studied both in the history of philosophy, that is, to find and explore the development of mobile ideas in various philosophers of previous eras, and in philosophical studies of modern phenomena, which are not only within the scope of the study of humanities.

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