



Special Issue: Cultures of (Im)mobile Entanglements

Cultures of (im)mobile entanglements

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Abstract

What does the increased reliance on digital communication technologies by migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, migrant communities, governments and researchers reveal about the benefits, limits and politics of everyday mobile and immobile experiences during the pandemic? This introduction to the special issue on cultures of (im)mobile entanglements addresses this inquiry, alongside ten articles covering themes of governance and surveillance, agency and negotiated subjectivities, translocal and transnational solidarity, as well as doing research in pandemic times. Critically engaging with both mobility and immobility in the intersecting field of mobilities and migration research, the special issue centres a multidimensional and multi-scalar perspective on the deep interlinking of various modes of mobilities and stasis in and beyond spatial and temporal conditions mediated by politically and culturally structured digitalization. It endeavours to create a vantage point to critically examine the mobility–immobility continuum as informed by power relations, hierarchies and inequalities in a networked and global society.

Keywords

digital exclusion, digital media, immobility, mobility, migration, pandemic

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The late British sociologist John Urry (2007) argued that the conduct of personal, familial and social relations has been stretched across vast distances as a result of rapid political, economic, social, and technological transformations in the 21st century. Many kinds of mobile subjects (Adey et al., 2013), such as international students, tourists, global elites, business people, labour migrants, asylum seekers and refugees perform and sustain their everyday lives and relationships through multiple flows of objects, people, information, finances and technologies (Elliott and Urry, 2010). These articulations surrounding various forms of small- and large-scale mobilities are central in the key focus of the *new mobilities* paradigm (Sheller and Urry, 2006). However, Urry (2007) contended that the movements of these individuals in different scales, rhythms and intensities are informed by the uneven distribution of and access to diverse resources and capitals in contemporary society, and are also marked by classed, gendered and racialized dimensions. In relation to this, Cresswell (2010) conceptualizes the politics of mobility as produced through the entanglements of physical movement, representations and practices. Here, the way individuals experience, embody and negotiate movements are constructed by discursive mechanisms laden with the operation of power and relations of domination. In this regard, this critical conception of mobility opens an important site to determine and inquire about inequalities, abuse, control and exclusion in a global society. Noting this, the work by Mimi Sheller (2018) on *mobility justice* productively captures a portrait of uneven movements as mediated by historically situated and global economic and political structures. In this regard, movements become an important site to interrogate privileges, inequalities, abuse, control and exclusion in a global and interconnected world (Sheller, 2018; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007).

At the core of the new mobilities paradigm is addressing 'sedentarism' in investigating an increasingly mobile society as informed by flows of ideas, objects, people, finances and systems (Sheller and Urry, 2006). As a mode of inquiry, the mobilities lens focuses on the roots and consequences of movements as shaped by larger relations of power, inequalities and hierarchies. Through mobile methodologies (Büscher and Urry, 2009), differential mobilities of different individuals, communities and institutions are captured and examined. However, despite its articulation of the relational dimension of mobility (Adey, 2006; Cresswell, 2006), the mobilities perspective lacks engagement with the production of immobility as well as the various and intersecting factors that engender it. In the first instance, much attention is given to the disparity of movements between the people in the West (Elliott and Urry, 2010) and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Bauman, 2000; Cresswell, 2006). Yet, immobilities, as a practice and condition, are as crucial in understanding the impacts of historically entrenched structural inequalities and power dynamics (2005). As a result, scholars have begun to counter the grand narrative of flux (Carling, 2002; Shamir, 2005; Turner, 2007). These scholars highlight how a range of regimes, mechanisms and restraining technologies inform the immobilities of individuals attempting to navigate places, regions and countries. Notably, as pinpointed by Kerilyn Schewel (2019: 5), the 'framing of immobility remains one-sided' or involuntary. Hence she emphasizes how uneven non-movements are mediated by structural constraints as well as the aspiration to stay.

It was only during the global Covid-19 health pandemic from 2020 onwards – when subjects in the global North, who had the luxury to take mobility for granted for years, became immobilized – that engagement with *immobility* became more pronounced across fields. A distinction between ‘mobility’ and ‘immobility’ is observable in the social sciences and humanities, with a bias favouring mobility as a prominent agential condition and concept (Hage, 2009; Smets, 2019). The privileging of mobility stems from the fascination of scholars, often from Western middle-class backgrounds, with the experiences of elites who can freely cross borders (Elliott and Urry, 2010). This preference for mobility over immobility is particularly noticeable in the field of globalization studies, where mobility has been assumed as a universal narrative template, while immobility and those who experience it have historically been disregarded and considered marginal. While the acknowledgement of these biases has existed, recent factors such as the pandemic, alongside growing critical migration and digitalization scholarship, have questioned the assumption that ‘mobility’ is *the* normative way of existing in our globalized era.

This questioning was a result of the impacts of the lockdowns, travel bans and cross-border shutdowns on the immobility of people, goods, transport systems and so forth. Cynically, one can observe that it was only when immobility began to affect people who had assumed mobility. As a culturally constructed crisis ‘concerning the body, space and media’ (Frosh and Georgiou, 2022: 240), forced immobility became a norm as shaped by broader and global governmental systems that prioritized and implemented health protocols and banned people’s movements to curb the spread of Covid-19. Those who followed stay-at-home orders embody immobility and were considered ‘responsible citizens’ by the state (Salazar, 2021). In this case, the turn of the century has been articulated as an ‘im/mobility’ turn, illuminating the ‘constraints, regulations and limits simultaneously placed on migration, everyday mobility and border-crossing at multiple scales’ (Bélanger and Silvey, 2020: 3425). Additionally, the im/mobility turn underlines how forms of movements have been shaped by regulations and inequalities rooted in gender, ethnicity, class, nationality and even colonialism (Bélanger and Silvey, 2020). However, it is important to highlight that ‘immobility’ – as a relational condition – has also already been discussed within the fields of migration (Carling, 2002) and mobility (Adey, 2006; Cresswell, 2006). For instance, Jørgen Carling (2002: 5) coined the term ‘involuntary immobility’ to capture how some individuals stay put rather than move elsewhere. Here, aspirations and abilities to move impact the desires, decisions and actions of staying put. Meanwhile, Schewel (2019) underlines the importance of paying attention to ‘immobility’ as an intervention to address bias in migration research. She articulates the need to unpack why people do not migrate elsewhere but stay where they are currently located, as informed by an individual’s social network, reliance on movements of others, and pre-existing cultural and socio-economic state. Indeed, Schewel’s (2019) contention can be mapped across several studies that have highlighted the immobility of social actors as shaped by social, economic and political structures (Carling, 2002; Mata-Codesal, 2015; Schewel and Franssen, 2022; Zharkevich, 2019).

It is important to note that the fields of both migration and mobilities studies have considered the entanglement of mobility and immobility. Within the new mobilities paradigm, the mobility of people, goods, finances and information are mobilized through

immobile infrastructures, such as roads, institutions, and travel and communication infrastructures (Adey, 2006; Urry, 2007). Hannam et al. (2006) argue that moorings inform mobilities. In migration research, the mobility of some individuals is shaped by the immobility of others, such as when a migrant moves overseas and a family member stays to take care of other family members in the home country (Zharkevich, 2019). Notably, migration scholars have also unpacked how differing people's cross-border (im)mobility has been hampered by mobility regimes or policies and infrastructures (Glick Schiller and Salazar, 2013). As highlighted by Salazar (2021), movements and stasis are intertwined and inseparable. More recently, several scholars whose works are situated within the intersecting field of digital media and migration have begun to examine the mobility and immobility continuum (Aziz, 2022; Cabalquinto, 2022; Smets, 2019; Twigt, 2022). Their studies unpack how individual users manage physical immobility with virtual mobility (Aziz, 2022; Smets, 2019; Twigt, 2022), as well as experiencing immobility in digital environments mediated by asymmetrical access, resources, competencies, socio-economic living conditions and socio-cultural systems (Cabalquinto, 2022; Twigt, 2022).

With the term *entanglements*, we seek to interrogate and extend conceptualizations of mobility and immobility by further bringing them into dialogue with scholarship on mediation, and digital media in particular. In contrast to a separatist logic which approaches mobility as happening in isolation and outside of mediation, and inspired by feminist critical theories (e.g. Giraud, 2019) and postcolonial history (İşleyen and Qadim, 2023), with entanglements we foreground a relational ontology (Leurs, 2023). As such, with entanglements we seek to draw attention to the intricate and multifaceted co-constitutive connections, relationships and interactions between mobility and digital technologies – which are in turn reflective of ‘context-specific economic, social and political realities’ (İşleyen and Qadim, 2023: 4). Taking entanglements as a starting point we can attend to the complex interplay between human mobility, communication technologies and information flows, shaping how human movement is facilitated, limited, experienced, understood and managed in the contemporary digital age. Therefore, as a critical prism, entanglements allow us to shed light on the workings of power and the ways in which digital mediation can both empower and constrain migrants. On the one hand, these technologies can provide valuable resources, support networks and access to information that aid mobile people in their journeys and integration processes. On the other hand, they can immobilize people and expose them to surveillance, exploitation, misinformation and new forms of vulnerability (Alencar, 2023; Cabalquinto, 2022).

More specifically, we critically inquire how entanglements between mobilities and media have been reconfigured by the proliferation and widespread uptake of digital communication technologies, social media platforms and mobile applications. We situate our critical proposition against the backdrop of ‘pandemic (im)mobilities’ (Adey et al., 2021) or the intensification of disparate socio-spatial and temporal immobilities. Yet, during this period, people, communities and various institutions across the world relied on digital communication technologies to facilitate diverse types of connections and civic participation. Importantly, in approaching (im)mobile entanglements as informed by increased digitalization, we apply a multi-scalar perspective (Sheller, 2021). This special issue provides insight on how macro, meso and micro factors inform mobile subjects’ everyday

and relational mobilities and immobilities (Salazar, 2021; Sheller, 2018) in a digitally mediated realm. To reiterate, we draw our articulations from a growing number of studies that have highlighted how the mediated mobility and immobility of refugees (Aziz, 2022; Smets, 2019; Twigt, 2022) and migrants (Ahlin, 2023; Baldassar et al., 2007; Cabalquinto, 2022; Madianou and Miller, 2012), enabled by digital media access and use, has been informed by technological landscapes and competencies, socio-demographic backgrounds, culturally specific familial and social relations, and broader migration regimes. This approach seeks to advance the conception of the intertwining of mobilities and immobilities in an increasingly digital and datafied era (Cabalquinto, 2022; Smets, 2019; Twigt, 2022).

The ten articles included in this issue critically examine how mobility and digital media variously co-shape and reshape issues such as government and corporatized interventions, data collection and surveillance, agentic and negotiated subjectivities, community building and belongingness, transnational connections and solidarity, and digital inclusion and exclusion. These works open critical reflections on the conditions and structures shaping both mobility and immobility among a diverse range of social actors using digital communication technologies, including governments, medical professionals, labour migrants, international students, refugees and ageing migrants. This outcome therefore has allowed us to further develop a nuanced perspective on researching and examining the positive and negative impacts of increased digitalization on the lives of individuals, communities and institutions. Nonetheless, by understanding the entanglements between migration and digital technologies, researchers shed light on the complexities of contemporary migration experiences and offer critical, reflexive and methodological considerations to inform future research.

In thinking about the entanglements of mobility, stasis and mediation on a more *macro* level, the first three articles in the special issue unpack how various nation-state and governmental mobility infrastructures (Lin et al., 2017), such as migration policies (Glick Schiller and Salazar, 2013), technologies (Shamir, 2005) and media contents (Chouliaraki, 2017), produced and implemented by various institutions and social actors have created the immobility and exclusion of migrants in digital environments. The studies have shown an additional layer of immobility for already less mobile people, or individuals 'contained' in certain locations and countries as shaped by the intertwining of migration policies and digital technologies. During the pandemic, health interventions under a neutral and inclusive guise, contributed to the tracking and immobility of migrants. In some cases, immobilizing individuals can be traced to past governmental practices.

First, the work by Gerard Goggin and Kuansong Victor Zhuang addresses the implications of the digitalization of migrant infrastructures (2023). Across the world, this has been a development which has been advancing consistently for a number of years, but it accelerated worldwide during the Covid-19 pandemic. Goggin and Zhuang focus on Singapore's use of Covid apps in response to the pandemic from 2020 to 2022. They argue that the state enacted 'managed inequality' by deploying specific apps to control and regulate migrant workers. Alongside a contact tracing app, mandatory for all Singaporeans, migrant workers were mandated to utilize the FWMOMCare (Foreign Worker Ministry of Manpower) application to log their temperatures twice a day and

notify the authorities if they experienced symptoms such as a cough, sore throat, runny nose, or shortness of breath. The specific deployment of such apps reveals how digitalized migration infrastructures are not neutral or transparent but are entanglements reflective and generative of pre-existing power hierarchies. The government's attention was directed toward male migrant workers, particularly those with low-paid work permits, in its endeavours related to Covid apps. It aimed to tightly regulate and guide their actions and mobility during the pandemic through highly detailed and authoritative measures. Emblematic of migrant 'infrastructures of injustice' (Kathiravelu, 2021: 645), apps targeting and limiting the mobility of particular groups of migrants also increased the perceived risk to others posed by these mobile people.

The second article considers digital migration infrastructures developed to process another specific group of mobile subjects: asylum seekers and refugees. Focusing on the particularly situated context of Denmark as a case study, Marie Lunau and Rikke Andreassen study how immigration authorities engage in surveillance practices as they process digital traces of asylum applicants (2023). Their particular focus is on how asylum seekers' mobile phone and social media content are used to assist in identifying and determining whether asylum applicants have a 'genuine' or 'fraudulent' LGBTQ+ identity. Here, LGBTQ+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning, with the '+' representing other identities within the broader spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities. The reason for requiring proof of LGBTQ+ status in asylum cases is to establish the validity of the asylum claim based on persecution related to their sexual orientation or gender identity. The particular cultural entanglement addressed here reveals how Danish migration officials tend to look for proof of stable and categorizable sexual identities. Officials perceive LGBTQ+ asylum seekers primarily as (cis) gay men, which is also reflected in their scrutiny of applicants' mobile devices as it centres on dating apps like Grindr and porn platforms that cater predominantly to gay (cis) men.

Third, Koen Leurs and Philipp Seufferling draw attention to pre-digital, historical mediations of regimes of (im)mobility (2023). They present a case study of the two historical media operations surrounding the documentary propaganda films of the Filmstichting West Indië (Film Foundation West Indies) and zines made by the Vereniging Ons Suriname (Association Our Suriname) in the Netherlands in the 1940s and 1950s. Drawing insights from previously unexplored archival materials, they document how these media operations have represented and impacted upon mobility and immobility during the postcolonial transition of the Dutch colonial empire. The propaganda films glorified the allure of upward social mobility, societal advancement and secure lifestyles in post-Second World War colonial life among Dutch settlers. However, through their zines, the Vereniging spoke back to the stereotypical and detrimental media operations of the Filmstichting. In turn, the zines were considered by the Dutch intelligence service as a means of 'low-tech' intelligence gathering, shedding light on the pre-digital histories of the governmental interest in community media as 'technologies of anticipation' (Bonelli and Ragazzi, 2014: 476). In order to understand the historical and contemporary constitution of mobility regimes (and, in order to be able to critique them), we need to study the entanglement and co-production of mobility regimes within regimes of mediated representation.

From the macro structures governing physical and mediated mobility and immobility, we shift our focus to the *micro* forces influencing the ways digital technologies facilitate connections, control and resistance. Scholars have argued for the importance of paying close attention to how class, age, gender, ethnicity and disability (Elliott and Urry, 2010; Sheller, 2018) contribute to curtailed movements and temporal or permanent immobilities (Cresswell, 2010). Two articles unravel the ways intertwined gendered, classed and racialized structures impact the patterns, textures and dynamics of movements and stasis.

In the fourth article, Hao Zheng (2023) interrogates (im)mobility by examining the experiences of Chinese queer female international students using WeChat in managing their ties with their parents back at home. During the pandemic, this cohort of people connected to their distant parents to manage the anxieties and isolation stirred up by the pandemic. By conducting interviews among 20 participants, Zheng showcases the three features of social media use in queer transitions or the process of managing relationships with parents living at distanceset within the wider context of queer identity making. The three proposed features include shielding (segmentation of networks and visibilizing 'eating well' contents), leakage or the involuntary disclosure of sexuality managed through selective communicative practices, and routing or selective conversations with family members on sexuality. Significantly, Zheng also highlights how the border closure allows the interlocutors to reclaim autonomy and sustain relationships at a distance during queer transitions. Indeed, the study demonstrates the ways sexuality and gender structures inform (im)mobility in digital spaces.

Renato de Almeida Arao Galhardi's study (2023), – the fifth article in this issue – brings forward a critical exploration of the lived and affective experiences of Mexican deportees in the borderscape and borderland of Tijuana, Mexico. By conducting ethnographic interviews with 15 Mexican deportees, he examines the affective experiences of Mexican men living in temporary male-centric shelters and attempting to cross borders and enter the United States. He underlines hope and shame as key affects that reconfigure the mobility and immobility of his interlocutors. Here, hope is considered an ingredient for one's resilience in order to move or attempt to cross the border, and shame operates to bind the men to staying put in Tijuana, and to find a way of living to support themselves and their families. Importantly, with the increased contained mobility in the borderscape as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, deportation for Mexican men mediates self-realization, fatherhood and the gendered responsibility of providing to one's family. Nonetheless, Galhardi's research foregrounds the immobility of Mexican men as shaped by border regimes, gender, race and emotions.

We also dive deep into the *meso* factors, such as familial, peer and community relations, in informing everyday digital practices of migrants and refugees while navigating immobility in physical spaces. Studies have highlighted how kinship, communal ties and searching for a sense of belonging drive the ways migrants (Cabalquinto, 2022; Madianou and Miller, 2012) and refugees (Leurs, 2014; Smets, 2019; Twigt, 2022) use digital technologies to traverse physical immobility. Three articles unpack how digital technologies and social media have been appropriated to enable proximity, sociality and solidarity. Diverse, affective and culturally tailored digital practices contribute

to coping with the challenges of short- or long-term physical separation from family members, peers and community members.

In the sixth article, Charlotte Hill (2023) charts the everyday lived, digital and cultural practices of young Karen living in Mae Lae refugee camp in Thailand. Prior to the pandemic, Hill conducted ethnographic research in the camp, allowing her to capture the robust cultural activities in the market, shops, schools, and religious institutions. During the pandemic, however, she shifted her data collection online and conducted interviews with her interlocutors through Messenger, enabling her to unpack the ways young refugees navigate increased physical immobility in the camp. Here, her study reveals how her interlocutors used a wide range of social media channels to receive information on Covid-19, curate their agentic subjectivity (such as a selfie beyond material restrictions), stay connected to their family members, peers and communities as well as forge romantic relationships. Significantly, Hill's work also exposes the limits of digital media use in the camps, especially when not everyone had access to a device or internet to attend online classes, or a poor internet connection disrupted online interactions. Hill even shared her personal account of conducting the interview via Messenger, which was undermined by unstable connection, the camp's ambient noise, and many other issues. Nonetheless, Hill reflects on the multifaceted socio-digital dynamic of refugee life and advocates that we learn from the stories, experiences and practices of solidarity of young refugees living in protracted displacement.

Two articles critically investigate the role of Facebook in facilitating sociality and solidarity among migrant communities. In the seventh article, Fortunat Miarintsoa Andrianimanana addresses how Malagasy mothers in France utilized a Facebook group called Groupe des Mamans Gasy de France to create a space for benevolence, empowerment and cultural belonging during the pandemic (2023). By analysing 813 in-group posts, he presents the ways Malagasy mothers convened and interacted on the Facebook page to share experiences of navigating challenges and social (im)mobility during the pandemic, content about health work and bureaucracy, Madagascar-related information, posts about their children learning the Malagasy language and updates on changes in school attendance because of Covid-19, news of deaths and exchanges of wishes, as well as notices of products for sale. Furthermore, the Facebook page demonstrates solidarity and respect for the admins of the group, who also shared posts on measures to address domestic violence against women. Indeed, Andrianimanana's study foregrounds the solidarity and sisterhood of dispersed Malagasy mothers who convened and supported each other on Facebook during turbulent times.

In article eight, Audris Umel examines how migrants used Facebook to re-enact the homeland (2023). More specifically, her work analyses how Filipino migrants in Germany accessed and used Facebook to replicate a concept and practices of the '*barangay*' or traditional Filipino village, '*bayanihan*' or Filipino solidarity and the *plaza* or the Filipino community public space for exchanging entertaining and political contents. Notably, drawing on the work of Michail Bakhtin, she conceptualizes how Facebook is used to negotiate diasporic chronotopes between the timespace of the Philippines (as homeland chronotope) and Germany (hostland chronotope), drawing on data based on her fieldwork with Filipino migrants in Germany in 2016 to 2017. She shows how the Philippines has been associated with a 'tropical island chronotope', evoking warmth,

comfort and belonging. In addition to this, colonial attitudes are discussed in relation to the Philippines. Meanwhile, Germany is articulated as a newfound rootedness and transformation. Umel's study offers a critical perspective on chronotopes in a migration and digital media context by articulating the notion of the ironic chronotope. Here, she highlights how Facebook becomes a site to connect Filipino migrants but also triggers conflict and non-engagement with other Filipino's living abroad. This, she notes, is a result of how physical gatherings become a timespace which is processed with for example flamboyant or disruptive comments online. Despite this, Facebook operates as a significant space in activating solidarity, community and belongingness for Filipino migrants.

Lastly, the special issue also offers ways of capturing and analysing data that reflects both mobility and immobility through digital media use. During the pandemic, several studies have illuminated ways of doing 'remote fieldwork' (Kaufmann and Palmberger, 2022; Watson and Lupton, 2022; Watson, Clark et al., 2021; Watson, Lupton et al., 2020). Scholars have highlighted the methodological configurations, reflexivity, ethical considerations, and challenges of doing remote fieldwork at a time when researchers and their interlocutors were stuck in their socio-spatial and temporal arrangements. In this special issue, two articles present ways of articulating digital technologies and online channels as sites to collect data and reflect on the meanings and practices of mobility and immobility among migrants.

The ninth article by Luca Follis, Karolina Follis and Nicola Burns (2023) illuminates a mobilities-informed approach to explore mobility inequalities in the context of healthcare provision among mobile groups and patients during the pandemic. They collected and analysed a wide range of resources to problematize the impacts of how governments and non-government organizations in Europe deployed healthcare services in 2020 and 2021. However, their study has shown how a sedentary healthcare system delivered in physical and digital spaces excludes individuals with uncertain residential and immigration status. Here, nomadic communities and migrants struggle with accessing health services as result of their citizenship status (such as being unable to provide a residential address), as well as digital and infrastructural access (such as using mobile devices or accessing Wi-Fi in public libraries and community sites) and technological literacies. Cultural barriers, such as accessing health information written in English, facilitated exclusion. In this case, Follis, Follis and Burn recommend the need for rethinking health interventions from the point of view of a mobile patient. Highlighting some approaches in several different countries, they show the possibility of developing and deploying health systems that serve the needs of mobile individuals and communities. This approach therefore attends to enabling a digitally and culturally inclusive health intervention.

Meanwhile, in the tenth article, Earvin Cabalquinto and Tanja Ahlin show how fieldwork has been reconfigured by the onset of the pandemic (2023). At a time when the world was at a standstill, their study underscores how remote interviewing – via Zoom and a phone call – was deployed to interview 15 older people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and understand their everyday digital practices in managing the lockdowns in Victoria, Australia. By unpacking the human–digital assemblage of remote data collection, they conceptualize fieldwork as a collection of ethnographically significant field events. On the one hand, they present how digital

access and the presence of support networks facilitate the remote recruitment of and interviewing of participants and the interview set-up and process. On the other hand, they underline the disturbances of remote data collection, as shaped by technical issues and differing digital literacies, as well as the lack of immediate support of other technologically savvy people. Indeed, they showcase how the entry of digital technologies into data collection is valuable and captures valid data, while also not losing sight of how digital exclusion creates mediated immobility among the researcher and the research participants.


This special issue has highlighted the multidimensional and multi-scalar nature of mobile and immobile entanglements within the context of performing and managing personal, familial and social lives in an increasingly digitalized world. At the core of these articles is an attempt to shed light on the practices and possibilities of mediated mobilities in response to navigating physical immobility. Importantly, as presented in the articles, immobility can also become virtual, as exposed in the ways institutions seek to gather personal information to control individuals, individuals and communities opting not to use certain technologies or share information, as well as other patterns of forced immobility in digital spaces enabled by differing digital access, competencies, social networks, as well as cultures and systems of governance. Indeed, virtual immobility adds another layer to the complexity of physical immobilities endured by a diverse range of social actors in a migration domain. However, we hope that exposing these outcomes may serve as a window of opportunity to continuously capture, rethink and problematize both agency and the lack thereof of individuals, communities and multiple sectors, especially at this time, as the world attempts to shift its gears again toward fast movements as a key modality in accessing the possibilities and rewards of a post-pandemic and modern world. Indeed, these are vantage points that necessitate further exploration, especially in unpacking the causes and impacts of the deep interlinking of mobilities and immobilities in digital and global spaces, and in and beyond pandemic times.

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