

Introduction



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Transnational Railway Cultures accomplishes two interlinked goals: it shifts the cultural study of trains into a transnational mode, and it prioritizes representations of the rail experience in a wide range of humanities texts. This volume's ten chapters investigate the dual role of trains as both artistic symbols and social realities as they figure into avant-garde music, poetry, fiction, travelogues, film, and visual art from selected spaces across the globe. The chapters cover railway cultures in and across Argentina, Catalonia, China, England, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mongolia, Russia, Scotland, South Korea, Spain, and the United States, with each chapter dealing with at least two if not three of these areas. Contributors to the volume themselves hail from a variety of global contexts, including Argentina, England, India, and the United States. The result is an ambitious volume that appeals to a global readership and forges a new line of interdisciplinary and transnational scholarship on the cultural representations of the railroad.

Steering readers toward brief summaries of the individual chapters that make up this book, the present introduction sets the coordinates for our journey. Throughout highlighting various and sundry texts devoted to the scholarly study of train travel, we begin by acknowledging two key points of reference. *The Railway Journey*, by Wolfgang Schivelbusch ([1977] 1986), and *The Machine in the Garden*, by Leo Marx (1988), have both been privileged in the cultural study of trains. These books—and the subsequent studies that have relied on them explicitly and implicitly—included compelling analyses of the changing social relationships that have long accompanied locomotive power. Each theorist, in his own way, humanizes and broadens what might otherwise be a dry, historical, or instrumentalist accounting of the contradictions and consequences inherent in technological shifts.

Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* ([1977] 1986) is a primary touchstone for this book. Though it has sometimes been seen in purely historical terms, his study is increasingly a point of origin for twenty-

first-century cultural and transnational investigations of the train. Schivelbusch's oft-repeated insights into the machine ensemble and the compartment forge the coordinates for understanding a new social consciousness that arises with the railway. Undoubtedly, the expansion of a physical infrastructure for railway transportation is made possible by, and further develops, a new fusion of social space, temporality, and technology. As his study explored, this machine culture reshapes human social relationships in profound ways. New fears and anxieties emerge from the experience of train travel and the press coverage of crashes; new illnesses such as railway spine and railway brain began to capture the public's attention.¹ Connections of the railroad with death were heightened through popular discourse, such that "the threat of being run over while bound to the train tracks preoccupied a transnational cultural imagination from the mid-nineteenth century onwards" (Aguiar 2011, 154). Visions of increased speed and the realities of space-time compression forced a recalibration of the tropes of closeness and distance and the social forces of alienation.² In these broad arguments and the human scope of his book, Schivelbusch arguably established the foundation for contemporary cultural studies of trains (Spalding 2014, 42).³

While some readers may be tempted to see the geographical scope of *The Railway Journey* in terms of the national histories of Austria, England, France, Germany, and the United States, we underscore that it is unquestionably a transnational contribution. Schivelbusch identifies a coherent and relatively nimble set of insights regarding what is at once a new material and social technology. In the process, he reveals the general contours of what we call a transnational railway culture. As supported by subsequent research, this notion of a railway culture has proved versatile enough to be applied to spaces around the world.⁴ It is important that there is room in the historian's account for the machine culture of rail technology to take on the nuances present in distinct sociocultural, national, regional, local, and imaginative and artistic contexts.⁵ Whether explicitly or implicitly, then, each chapter of this volume owes greatly to the cultural and transnational study of the railway as initiated by Schivelbusch.

The crucial importance of the humanities in any evaluation of the legacy of the railway was notably emphasized in a work that constitutes the second touchstone for the present effort: *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (Marx [1964] 2000). In that book, scholar Leo Marx took on the writings of canonical authors including Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, James, Adams, Norris, Hemingway, and Faulkner. Marx's success, it has been

noted, "probably owes much to his border-jumping, interdisciplinary method as a literary scholar who made a point of addressing wider cultural concerns, and in particular technological issues" (Meikle 2003, 155). As Colin Divall and Hiroki Shin have written, Marx was pioneering an approach that "takes technological culture as a metaphor," and *The Machine in the Garden* thus emphasized a certain "sense of the machine as a sudden, shocking intruder upon a fantasy of idyllic satisfaction" (Divall and Shin 2012, 4; Marx [1964] 2000, 23; see also Marx 1988; Velez 2012, 220). Marx's book did not focus either exclusively or exhaustively on the locomotive, but rather envisioned it simultaneously as both "a cosmos as well as an industrial tool" (Marx [1964] 2000, 205). The whistle of the train announces a social transformation, and perhaps more pointedly, "The sensory attributes of the engine—iron, fire, steam, smoke, noise, speed—evoke the essence of industrial power and wealth" (204).

The depth of Leo Marx's interest in literature is complemented by other twentieth-century studies carried out in a national key—not just of American poetry by James Bodenstedt (1992), but moreover French literature by Marc Baroli (1964) and German poetry by Johannes Mahr (1982).⁶ In the twenty-first century, scholars continue to delve into North American literature's fascination with the railroad—there is an annotated bibliography by Grant Burns (2005) to consider, as well an important study of the railway in African American literature by Darcy Zabel (2004; connected to the interest displayed in an earlier dissertation, Zabel 2001). Kevin G. Flynn (2002) expands critical interest in the North American railway to Canadian literature, and Michael Matthews (2013) has crafted a cultural history of the iron horse in Mexico. Indebted, in many respects, to the books by Schivelbusch and Marx, the contemporary study of train representations continues to accelerate in the twenty-first century. Single-authored books covering the national contexts of Uruguay/Argentina, Japan, India, and Brazil—Sarah M. Misemer's *Moving Forward, Looking Back: Trains, Literature, and the Arts in the River Plate* (2010), Alisa Freedman's *Tokyo in Transit: Japanese Culture on the Rails and Road* (2010), Marian Aguiar's *Tracking Modernity: India's Railway and the Culture of Mobility* (2011), and Martin Cooper's *Brazilian Railway Culture* (2011)—have the additional advantage of paying close attention to humanities representations of trains in theater, prose literature, film and visual art. While this survey of the English-language studies of railway cultures is necessarily incomplete, particularly when one takes into account article-length publications, it is safe to assume that scholarship in other languages has been delving into the study of trains at an equally frenetic pace. What is not as easy to find, however—given the undeniable tendency for train scholarship to reaffirm national boundaries—is a

transnational vision of railway cultures. It is to this situation that our book responds.

Compared with its increased visibility in the twenty-first century, the notion of transnational studies was neither as popular nor as entrenched in the discipline of History when Schivelbusch originally published his book in German in 1977. One notes today a great number of books that adopt a transnational perspective on social science topics. This perspective is frequently used in order to shake up somewhat limiting understandings of the way in which individuals and groups negotiate scales of social experience that are themselves culturally constructed.⁷ For example, *Transnational Lives: Biographies of Global Modernity, 1700–present* very lucidly asserts, "Human lives elude official classifications," explaining, "The transnationalism—the mobility, confusion and sheer messiness—of ordinary lives threatens the stability of national identity and unsettles the framework of national histories" (Deacon, Russell, and Woollacott 2010, 1–2). As *Transnational Ruptures: Gender and Forced Migration* (Nolin 2006) and *Transnational Families: Ethnicities, Identities and Social Capital* (Goulbourne et al. 2010) both emphasize, the nation-state cannot be ignored, but must be seen as one of many constellations of power that impact the movement and migration of people across the globe.⁸ The author of *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization* strikes this balance well when he writes, "In contrast [to the discourse of globalization], the transnationalist discourse insists on the continuing significance of borders, state policies, and national identities even as these are often transgressed by transnational communication circuits and social practices" (Smith 2001, 3).⁹ In bringing increased attention to the way in which human relationships cannot be fully explained through national paradigms, these and other works in effect actualize a number of discourses that historically gain greater visibility with the irruption of train travel.

Looking backward, the railway's connection with transnationality is patently obvious. From its beginnings, many in Europe asserted the power of trains to bring people, and by extension, all of humanity, closer together.¹⁰ The global expansion of the railroad effected unprecedented levels of geographic interconnection, such that "by 1910 the railroad was established on every continent" (Osterhammel 2014, 911).¹¹ Most often, railway construction involved transnational dynamics at the interconnected levels of design, financing, direction, and labor.¹² These dynamics were far from egalitarian, of course. Monetary gains sourced from the railway business were disproportionately enjoyed by social actors and private companies from industrialized nations. Capitalist accumulation strategies ensured that the wealth created by workers who

were local or, in some cases, actively recruited from other countries, was absorbed into persisting (post)colonial networks.¹³

There was, in a sense, a contradiction in the way nation-states became involved in what was inherently the transnational project of railroad construction. Irene Anastasiadou mentions “the role of railways in building nation states” but also underscores that the “Internationalisation of European railways started early in the nineteenth century” (2007, 172, 173). While “transport networks, and more specifically railways, were placed in the service of the political goals of nation states and empires,” it was nonetheless true that, “politically, the redefinition of borders posed problems of ownership of lines in many parts of Europe” (172, 173). Moreover, this contradiction between national interests and the transnational scope of the railway is just as palpable today as it has been throughout the railroad’s history. The scholar remarks on the 1918 plan for a “large-scale railway artery that would connect Paris with Dakar through Spain” using the vocabulary of transnational trade.¹⁴ “Coupled with the construction of a railway tunnel under the Channel,” she writes, “the projected railway line and the tunnel under the straits of Gibraltar would provide a direct railway link from European capitals such as Brussels, London, Paris and Madrid to their African colonies, while it would also intensify exchange between them” (176–77). As can be seen in the 2017 announcement of Chinese financial backing for a planned Ethiopian railway,¹⁵ the train continues to be a way of rethinking an expansive global transportation network tied to the interests of individual nations but exceeding the scope of the national.

At the most general level, analyzing the transnational character of the railway involves paying attention to many distinguishable but overlapping spheres. The outline provided in the collection titled *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations* (Khagram and Levitt 2008b) is helpful in thinking through analytically distinct categories that nonetheless overlap in the social realities of the railway experience and its history.¹⁶ In their introduction to the volume, editors Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt sketch out what they refer to as the three primary varieties of transnationalism: empirical transnationalism, methodological transnationalism, and theoretical transnationalism (2008a, 2).¹⁷

There may not yet be a book-length text that approaches railway history from an explicitly transnational framework, but we would argue that existing approaches have necessarily had to deal with what should be seen as the inherently transnational character of the railroad. In line with empirical transnationalism, Schivelbusch’s original text itself arguably contributes to the comparative-historical study of similarities and differences in railway travel.¹⁸ While not specifically addressing transna-

tionalism, the edited volumes *Trains, Literature, and Culture: Reading/Writing the Rails* (Spalding and Fraser 2012) and *Trains, Culture, and Mobility: Riding the Rails* (Fraser and Spalding 2012), as well as a special section of the journal *Transfers* on "Railways and Urban Cultures" (Spalding 2014) implicitly engage the framework of methodological transnationalism to reveal the transnational form of the railway experience across specific social contexts. Even more compelling, a masterful book like Todd Presner's *Mobile Modernity: Germans, Jews, Trains* (2007) illustrates the power of theoretical transnationalism—by moving beyond national history to forge what the author calls a "complicated cultural geography of German/Jewish modernity."¹⁹

Individual chapters in this book may be transnational in one or more of the three primary senses identified by Khagram and Levitt (2008b) in *The Transnational Studies Reader*. Nonetheless, as a whole, *Transnational Railway Cultures* shows a preference for a nontraditional variant of transnational studies that the editors call philosophical transnationalism.²⁰ This approach "starts from the metaphysical assumption that social words and lives are inherently transnational. In other words, transnational phenomena and dynamics are the rule rather than the exception, the underlying reality rather than a derivative by-product" (2008a, 2). In truth, the acceptance and strength of philosophical transnationalism is quite evident in certain areas of contemporary interdisciplinary research. In order to demonstrate this concisely in a way that contributes to the study of railway cultures, specifically, it is important to acknowledge the intersection of transport history and studies of culture that is part and parcel of mobility studies.

In truth, the notion of mobility has already proven to be a powerful theoretical tool in refashioning the interdisciplinary field of transport history in transnational terms. Key landmarks of mobility studies include Tim Cresswell's *On the Move: Mobility in the Western World* (2006), John Urry's *Mobilities* (2007), and the creation of the peer-reviewed journals *Mobilities* (founded in 2006) and *Transfers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Mobility Studies* (founded in 2011). Significantly, mobility studies affirm philosophical transnationalism by taking transnationalism to be the rule of contemporary society rather than the exception. In their editorial to the inaugural journal issue of *Mobilities*, Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry defined the field broadly as "encompassing studies of corporeal movement, transportation and communications infrastructures, capitalist spatial restructuring, migration and immigration, citizenship and transnationalism, and tourism and travel" (2006, 9–10; see also Sheller and Urry 2006). Material culture and national culture are specifically mentioned in that editorial, and railway culture in general—

in the sense we attribute to Schivelbusch—figures broadly into those arguments by John Urry in his book *Mobilities*, for example where he explores the railway compartment, the objectification of passengers, the railway station, train timetables, and the drastic social shifts prompted by train travel in everyday life (2007, 93, 94, 95–100, 104).²¹

Scholarship in this new articulation of transport and mobility studies generally speaking is clearly aware of and relevant to the humanities research. In "Mobilizing the History of Technology" (2010), published in the journal *Technology and Culture*, Colin Divall underscores the need for transport history to reach wider audiences: "The so-called cultural and spatial turns that have remodeled many other areas of the humanities and social sciences open up exciting possibilities, for transport is a deeply spatio-cultural act" (Divall 2010, 950). And yet it is not clear that cultural texts themselves, combined with humanities methods, are precisely what he has in mind. In an earlier publication, Divall and George Revill explicitly stated, "We need a conception of culture that does more than merely consider (although this is no simple matter) how and why transport technologies are represented in the arts and popular imagination" (2005, 109). Indeed, work in the social sciences often steers away from the specific nature of cultural texts under the guise of appealing to the broad cultural imaginary (101). This is not necessarily an error, as culture is a curious force that overflows specific texts and involves everyday social life. Yet in the present book we continue to believe that the textual humanities are crucial to the future directions of mobility studies. It is true that broader cultural understandings create and give social and not merely technological meaning to transport. Humanities methods informed and enriched by insights from transport and mobility studies are nimble enough to engage with these broader understandings of culture through analysis of specific texts themselves. Such an approach, we believe, furthers the call by Divall and Revill to pay attention to "transport technologies as mediation between the imaginable and the material" and "transport technologies as a creative producer of spaces" (105, 106).²²

Transfers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Mobility Studies has perhaps done the most to further connections between transport and mobility history and humanities research methods. As recounted in its inaugural editorial in 2011, its editorial team and referees were recruited with a specific intent to include "literary scholars, artists, cultural critics," and its stated goal was to "combine the empiricism of history with more recent methodological approaches that have reshaped the social sciences and the humanities" (Mom et al. 2011, 7, 3, respectively). Subsequent editorials have consistently underscored the need "to bring critical mobilities

frameworks into closer conversation with the humanities by encouraging empirical collaborations and conceptual transfers across diverse disciplinary fields" (Clarsen 2015a, 41).²³ Just as important, the journal has been strongly "committed to trans-disciplinary and transnational research that opens up global perspectives" (Mom and Kim 2013, 1; Merriman et al. 2013). Its vision resonates productively with Khagram and Levitt's notion of philosophical transnationalism. One editorial declares that "transnational approaches denaturalize the nation, thus rendering our historical imaginings less parochial by tracking the networked relationships and global circulation of entities and relationships across borders"; another encourages authors to move beyond "the North Atlantic sphere" in their analyses and think more capacious about "imaginary travel, imaginary worlds of connection and imaginary geographies" (Clarsen 2015a, 41; 2015b, 115). The intersection between transport mobilities research and the humanities remains a vibrant, if sometimes overlooked, component of the broader railway imagination.

Whether in *Transfers* or in other venues from the humanities, an increasing number of article-length studies have been published that prioritize humanities methods in exploring the cultures of train travel.²⁴ Just as the railway covers a vast distance so too does the literature on railway culture constitute a vast terrain. Yet in terms of book-length publications, there is a need for further study.²⁵ Substantial analyses such as Gijs Mom's *Atlantic Automobilism: Emergence and Persistence of the Car, 1895–1940* (2015), as well as Peter Merriman's *Driving Spaces: A Cultural-Historical Geography of England's M1 Motorway* (2007) and *Mobility, Space and Culture* (2012), have pushed transport history farther into cultural terrain than previous work. Nevertheless, there is still more to be done in order to understand railway cultures through the textual humanities. Reflecting on one of the most-studied national traditions of railroad study in his book *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity*, Ian Carter was able to remark that accounts of the British railways have tended to be "lopsided"—in other words, "they pay little attention to social issues and less to culture" (2001, 3).²⁶

Twenty years later we believe that there is still a need for a book such as this one—a book that takes on multiple humanities representations of railway travel in a specifically transnational framework.²⁷ Methodologically speaking, *Transnational Railway Cultures* certainly deals in the "mobility, confusion and sheer messiness" (Deacon, Russell, and Woolacott 2010, 1–2) of transnationalism as noted above. Motivated by the basic premise of philosophical transnationalism, the contributions to this volume collectively acknowledge the shifting transnational ground of contemporary transport and mobility studies. Individual authors each

define and approach the transnational aspects of railway transport in their own way. It is important to understand, however, that transnationalism is also important to the study of humanities representations and not just railway cultures themselves. Intriguingly, as Nataša Ďurovičová (2010) writes in her preface to *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, a book coedited with Kathleen Newman (Ďurovičová and Newman 2010), "the prefix 'trans-' implies relations of unevenness and mobility" (Ďurovičová 2010, x). Cinema in particular is increasingly transnational, not only in terms of its depiction of contemporary mobile lives, but also in terms of flexible models of production that frequently involve multiple nations.²⁸ Selected chapters in this book cover films whose characters' mobile lives suggest extended and overlapping boundaries of national identities and cultures. Others treat cinematic coproductions. Cultural production on the whole has in a sense always been transnational in scope. The cultures in which literary movements, traditions of painting and visual art, and the creation of musical compositions have been immersed have very rarely, if at all, been hermetically developed in isolation from the transnational flow of ideas.²⁹ As chapters in this volume suggest, the representation of the train in cultural texts—not only cinema but also prose, poetry, painting, and musical composition—makes it quite difficult to sustain hermetic notions of nationhood. Each functions as a window into shifting conditions, messiness, unevenness, and mobility as lived in social spaces and as represented in artistic practices across the globe.

Whether speaking of cinema specifically, or more broadly of literature and visual art, the railway is now an icon deeply rooted in representational practices. While it "belongs to a collective, transnational cultural consciousness that has long cast the railway as the scene or agent in nightmarish scenarios," the train is at times also a more positive symbol of "freedom, adventure and new possibilities" (Aguiar 2011, 153; see also Klein 1994, 20–21). If it is tempting to see the train as an icon with a singular identity, one must be reminded of its connection with a range of competing and overlapping concerns. As Amy G. Richter writes in her book *Home on the Rails: Women, the Railroad, and the Rise of Public Domesticity*, "nineteenth-century journalists, travelers and poets used it [the train] as shorthand for social diversity, national integration, technological innovation, and corporate organization" (2005, 4).³⁰ Whether a symbol of routine mobilities, ruin, or redemption, as George Revill remarks in *Railway* (2012), the icon of the train has left its stamp in the realm of high art, in popular culture and in the wider imagination.³¹ In the main, these chapters privilege "the railway as a set of cultural symbols, meanings, images, artefacts and activities" precisely by giving

priority to textual humanities representations (14). In doing so, they frequently deal with Wolfgang Schivelbusch explicitly, and implicitly they reinvigorate Leo Marx's fascination regarding the value, impact, and insights of artistic discourse.

Chapter Summaries

In chapter 1, "The Railway Arts: Sound and Space beyond Borders," Aimee Boutin argues that train travel holds a privileged position among the new means of transportation developed during the nineteenth century because of its effect on the senses. Wolfgang Schivelbusch and others have concentrated on the new ways of seeing enabled by the railway; from the train window, the landscape appears as panoramic and proto-cinematic. The railway, however, affected the other senses as well. Rather than focus on the relation between vision and speed, this chapter explores the sounds of the railway to consider how the railway affected perceptions of sound and space. How did travelers experience railway travel with their eyes and ears when they traversed distances at high speed? Did this new sensory experience change the conception of the landscape? Furthermore, did the spatialization of sound transform awareness of space-time and if so, how did this new attentiveness translate into writing? Transposing Schivelbusch's original inspiration to an artistic key, Boutin adapts the framework of empirical transnational to in a comparative analysis of Charles-Valentin Alkan's *Le chemin de fer, étude* (*The Railway*), op. 27, the first musical representation of the railway composed in 1844, and poems on the railway, notably Louisa Siefert's pantoum "En Passant en chemin de fer" and Robert Louis Stevenson's "From a Railway Carriage." These analyses show how variations in intensities and in rhythm used to represent the journey through space, sound out new transnational conceptions of space as multi-perspectival and permeated/permeating.

Chapter 2, Benjamin Fraser's "The Sonic Force of the Machine Ensemble: Transnational Objectification in Steve Reich's *Different Trains* (1988)," combines transportation and mobility studies with work on avant-garde music, semiotics, and transnational imaginaries in a cultural studies approach to Steve Reich's *Different Trains* (1988). In *The Railway Journey*, train theorist Wolfgang Schivelbusch famously emphasized the dehumanizing effects of train travel noting both what he called the "machine ensemble," which interjected itself between the traveler and the landscape, noting also the traveler's conversion into "the object of an industrial process" ([1977] 1986, 24, 73, respectively). A transportation

and mobility studies approach to Reich's piece reveals how the avant-garde composer's three-movement recording—commissioned by Betty Freeman for Kronos Quartet—reproduces this machine ensemble, representing it through multiple levels of aural signification. Blending tones of recorded speech, train sounds and sirens with multitracked musical notes, Reich's composition uses sonic variants of iconic, indexical, and symbolic signification. The composition's content bridges two very distinct forms of dehumanization: the evils of the Holocaust and the alienations routinely experienced under globalized industrial capitalism. Following Raymond Williams, the cultural studies approach to music used here gives equal weight to both musical content/form and also the extra-musical American-European referents that inspire and structure what is undeniably a transnational representation of railway travel.

John D. Schwetman's "A Genealogy of Apocalyptic Trains: *Snowpiercer* and Its Precursors in the Transnational Literature of Transport," chapter 3, focuses on South Korean director Bong Joon-ho's 2013 film *Snowpiercer*, which quickly developed a devoted following as a result of its mixture of cagey political satire and stunning visual effects. While its deviations from the conventions of science fiction indicate that it derives more from the aesthetics of railroad travel and the symbolic power of railroads than it does from the science-fiction objectives of projecting future scenarios logically from present-day trends, *Snowpiercer* succeeds as a satirical dramatization of the apocalypse. Through close readings of the images of apocalyptic trains culled from media with transnational appeal, Schwetman argues it is possible to stitch together the structural elements of the *Snowpiercer* itself. Trains that appear in the opening montage of Nicholas Meyer's made-for-television film *The Day After* (1983), China Miéville's novel *The Iron Council* (2004), Steven Spielberg's remake of *The War of the Worlds* (2005), and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), all come together to form a complex transnational meditation on collapsing rail infrastructure and the end of civilization. As a symbol of a globalized, hierarchical economic system in a state of collapse built on elements of its literary and cinematic precursors, the *Snowpiercer* of Jacques Lob's graphic novel series and of Bong Joon-ho and Kelly Masterson's screenplay satisfies the expectations of its viewers. In the end it provides a concrete, visual emblem of a more abstract potential decline and collapse that has been observed more generally in transnational representations of the railway.

Chapter 4, "Dangerous Borders: Modernization and the Gothic Mode in *Pánico en el Transiberiano* (1972) and *Howl* (2015)" by Fernando Gabriel Pagnoni Berns and Juan Juvé, explores the way in which fantastic films illustrate the inability of modern thinking and advancements in

technology to erase the old, uncanny imagination of a global world filled with monsters, fears about the human condition, and obscurantism. Transnational films always speak about anxieties about borders, citizenship, and national belonging, and in the filmic fantastic fears about mechanization, modernization, and social class are turned into a dark fantasy about uncanny trains and the fear about obsolescence, both human and mechanical. *Pánico en el transiberiano* (*Howl*, Eugenio Martín, 1972) takes place in 1906, in China, when a British anthropologist (Christopher Lee) discovers a frozen prehistoric creature and decides to transport it to Europe aboard the trans-Siberian express, but during the trip the monster thaws out and starts to kill the passengers one by one. As a transnational coproduction between Spain and the United Kingdom, the film highlights the many fantastic scientific progresses of humanity (forensic sciences, anthropology, the train itself) against a backdrop of blind obscurantism (specially illustrated in the communist countries and passengers), and the supernatural within a context of Euro-horror. If the nineteenth-century steam railway epitomized modernity's relentlessly onrushing advance in the United Kingdom, the film illustrates the futility of battling the atavistic mind, while the train is just a space for oppression (including social oppression) and darkness.

In chapter 5, "Anachronism, Ambivalence, and (Trans)National Self-Reference: Tracking the English Literary Chunnel from 1986 On," Heather Joyce embraces the Chunnel as a touchstone for cultural critics in the twenty-first century. At the same time that it is insistently territorial, encompassing contending and contradictory claims of extension and abrogation of sovereignty by the nations it connects, it presages what Emily Apter calls a "state of postnational borderlessness" (2002, 287) and connects with key insights from transnational studies. The cultural inflection of representations of the Chunnel on the British side reflects the role the Channel has played in enabling the nation to imagine itself politically and culturally in relation to France and the rest of Europe. Though representations of the Chunnel echo and extend this existing narrative of historic self-reference, they also draw on the symbolic value that railways have accrued since their inception. The "new, reduced geography" that Wolfgang Schivelbusch associates with railway travel ([1977] 1986, 35) means that the Chunnel predictably promises to bridge nations, as Patience Agbabi's poem "Chunnel/Le Tunnel sous la Manche" makes clear; it also engenders the defensive territoriality that we see in Nicola Barker's novel *Darkmans*—a defensiveness provoked by what the inception of the Chunnel means not only for transnational relations but transregional ones, as well. These contending formulations converge in depictions of the mode of transport itself. The Eurostar brings together

the contrapuntal histories of the national rail system and localized rail travel in London; in doing so, it calls into question the extent to which convivial groupings such as those envisioned by Paul Gilroy can move beyond being political expediencies that continue to facilitate the nation's self-understanding of itself as modern.

Chapter 6, "Crossing Borders on and beyond the Train in *Joan of Arc of Mongolia* (1989)," by Steven Spalding, explores an obscure but important filmic representation of the Trans-Siberian Railway connecting Russia and Asia. The exotic scenery of the great train journey has intervened in this film to break the linear, masculine teleology of the train in order to set its protagonists on a detour out of time. The film's two-part structure allows the film to accomplish a number of deliberate and fascinating symbolic movements—all with a wry satirical sensibility—from portraying and parodying stereotypical European and international train travelers, Russian peasants, military officers, and train service personnel, and the interactions among these heterogeneous groups, to debunking the legendary mythos around the Trans-Siberian as tsarist (i.e., masculine) legacy and accomplishment. In the second part, the train—along with its attendant symbolism—has been defeated by the least likely of antagonists, a peaceful band of nomadic Mongolian women on horseback and their brightly decorated leader. This chapter examines the film's feminist project of intercultural exchange through its use of the train as locus of symbolic and narrative creation, and through the positive feminist transnationalism underlying the film's playfulness and irony. The characters' whimsical abduction by the Mongolian princess transforms their journey in fundamental ways, as they are challenged to shed cultural familiarity and all the reassuring effects of the train (à la Schivelbusch) and confront cultural difference head on.

In chapter 7, "'The Cosmopolitan Writer: Exploring Representations on the Underground Railways of Buenos Aires and Paris through Julio Cortázar,'" Dhan Zunino Singh investigates a peculiarity of railway travel pertinent to the work of subway scholars. Specifically, he explores the experience of descending within an explicitly transnational frame. Cross-culturally, to ride under the city has triggered specific representations associated with death, hell, the underworld, and so on. These atavistic representations are more related to the space in which travel takes place (the tunnel) than to the notions of movement that guide analyses of above-ground travel. The practices and relations that have emerged from consideration of the subway's subterranean paths have been the subjects of a wide range of cultural representations (films, literature, comics, music, and so on), many of which are tied to the peculiarities of specific urban environments across the globe. This chapter

analyzes the representations of the Buenos Aires subway through the work of Argentinean writer Julio Cortázar, linking his texts to other cultural products in order to establish the impact the subway has had on its surrounding culture since its implementation in 1913. More broadly, it engages the metropolitan railway (metro) as a transnational space and reflects on shared cultural meanings expressed also in the Paris Metro and London Underground. Cortázar's significant fascination with the underground enables scholarship to explore a variety of considerations related to traveling with crowds, anonymity, visual and embodied effects of the subway, bodily proximity and social distance, sociability, speed, love stories, and the underworld.

Chapter 8, Abhishek Chatterjee's "Literary Railway Bazaars: Transnational Discourses of Difference and Nostalgia in Contemporary India," takes on the commonplace that there is no better symbol of national integration than the railway network in India. All of the country's railway stations tend to look and feel the same, irrespective of differences in culture, cuisine, or people—not in some postmodern discourse of sameness but in timescapes of colonial nostalgia. The Indian railway network, sometimes described as the British Empire's most enduring legacy to the jewel in its crown, retains a colonial flavor and an old-world charm. There is a transnational aspect to this legacy, as it has stoked the Orientalist imagination of writers like Paul Theroux in *The Great Railway Bazaar* (1975) and *Ghost Train to the Eastern Star* (2008) as well as filmmakers like Wes Anderson in *The Darjeeling Limited* (2007). While Theroux saw token images of poverty, starvation, and filth through the windows of his first-class compartment, Anderson's film looks at India as a fantasy of spiritual mystique and self-discovery. With air travel becoming more accessible to the Indian middle class, train journeys in contemporary India have become the mainstay of travel for millions of huddled masses, and a far cry from the romance of the journey motif. This chapter thus builds on existing humanities analysis of railway cultures in India (Aguiar 2011), examining these aspects of train journeys and the travelogue in light of accounts by contemporary Indian writers.

In chapter 9, "Memories of Trains and Trains of Memory: Journeys from Past-Futures to Present-Pasts in *El tren de la memoria* (2005)," Araceli Masterson-Algar analyzes the representation of train travel in a fiction film directed by Marta Arribas and Ana Pérez. The film revisits the history of transnational migration from Spain to northern Europe, specifically to Nuremberg, Germany, during the mid-1960s. The train in this film narrates a journey that is deeply marked in the bodies of those who left as immigrants half a century ago, and who now remember through the physical act of returning to Nuremberg in the present. The

rails of nostalgia bridge pasts, presents and futures through the sensorial experiences of the journey, articulating the Madrid of the 1960s and Nuremberg's past as an industrial center to both cities' present as tourist destinations. By doing so, *El tren de la memoria* works as the vehicle to tighten the loose stitches of Spain's memory of emigration while accounting for the lived experiences of the country's new residents in the global city.

Chapter 10, Scott D. Juall's "Nord-Sud: The Paris Metro and Transnational Avant-Garde Artistic Mobilities and Movements in Early Twentieth-Century Paris," explores the way in which the modern metro influenced the trajectory of visual art from a transnational perspective. In 1900, the Compagnie du chemin de fer métropolitain de Paris (metropolitan railway company of Paris) opened its first line, and within ten years eight metro lines were in service. Between 1910 and 1916 the Société du chemin de fer électrique souterrain Nord-Sud de Paris (North-South society of electric underground trains of Paris), a competing private company, constructed the Parisian Nord-Sud subway Line A, which played an integral role in developing early twentieth-century and visual and literary arts in Paris. Facilitating exchanges among avant-garde writers, painters, art theorists, and art dealers between the two regions of the French capital, it prompted the development of a close relationship between modern public transportation in twentieth-century Paris, transnational art circuits, and transnational art criticism. Part of a major network of physical and artistic movements guiding and orienting some of the most dynamic transformations in modernist art and literature between 1910 and 1918, the Nord-Sud works of art brought attention to the intimate links between the metro line and artistic movements in modernist Paris, as seen in several works of the period: Italian futurist Gino Severini's paintings and illustrations, all titled *Nord-Sud* (numerous artworks, 1911–17); Catalan proto-surrealist Joan Miró's painting *Nord-Sud* (1917); and French cubist Georges Braque's ink drawing *Nord-Sud* (1918). *Nord-Sud, Revue littéraire* (16 issues, March 1917–October 1918), was an ephemeral Parisian literary review edited by poet Pierre Reverdy.

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Notes

1. Schivelbusch ([1977] 1986) covers this ground extensively. See also Osterhammel: "Twas the new calamity of the train crash: Charles Dickens barely survived one in 1865 on a journey from the south coast to London; in Russia, where Tsar Alexander III suffered the same experience in 1888; as well as in India and Canada" (2014 75). General fears about the railroad were, as Paul Youngman notes, somewhat paradoxical: "Freud and Schivelbusch emphasized the paradox inherent in rail technology: the world becomes both smaller and larger, frightening and tame at the same time" (2005, 11).
2. For example, "the nineteenth century became the age of the speed revolution" (Osterhammel 2014, 74; see also Divall and Shin 2012; Spalding 2014; Studeny 1995; Virilio 1977).
3. Importantly, Schivelbusch's work was very soon complemented by studies carried out by cultural historians such as Hermann Glaser (1981) and Dirk Hoeges (1985) in Germany, and Jeffrey Richards and John M. MacKenzie (1986) in England. The work of Remo Ceserani (1993, 1995) is also notable in this regard for its transnational approach.
4. The present account differs from arguments that the railway had solely a homogenizing effect on local cultures, one that can be seen, for example, in the statement, "However different the cultural reactions and modes of employment, the effects of rail travel were in principle the same all over the world" (Osterhammel 2014, 74).
5. Freedman makes this case in her book, noting, "Partly because of the spatial design of the city, Tokyo vehicles are social and cultural spaces different from the New York subway, London Tube, Paris Metro, Mumbai railway, and other metropolitan commuter networks. . . . Behaviors and interactions not possible elsewhere occur inside passenger cars and in stations. These small gestures and encounters greatly influence the ways that individuals experience national history and describe the events of their own lives" (2010, 5).

6. Along these lines, see also Marshall (1991).
7. Scale as a socially constructed tool and discourse is best treated from a geographical perspective by Marston (2000). See also Brenner (2004), Howitt (2003), and Taylor (1982).
8. "The subject or problematic of transnational families, therefore, raises intriguing or provocative questions about such matters as migration, identities, communities, resources and relationships in the contemporary world" (Goulbourne et al. 2010, 3); "Though mobility is identified as a key feature of transnationalism, it must be recognized that the agency and life choices of the world's refugees are quite different from those of (im)migrants and the social processes that bind the two contexts when physical presence is impossible in the home country. As with all people on the move, refugees undoubtedly maintain a 'double consciousness,' but the transnational social fields they forge and maintain are decidedly different from those created by labour migrants, international entrepreneurs, and transnational political activists. For refugees, physical mobility is often short-term, one-way, and violence-induced" (Nolin 2006, 183).
9. The notion of *Transnational Urbanism* is quite relevant to a number of chapters in this book where individual cities are explored.
10. One prominent example is given in the article "Europe's System Builders": "In 1833 the Saint-Simonean and future French minister Michel Chevalier had singled out railways as the ultimate tool to tie peoples and countries into interdependency, co-operation, and peace" (Van der Vleuten et al. 2007, 322).
11. Also, by the same author, "However different the cultural reactions and modes of employment, the effects of rail travel were in principle the same all over the world" (Osterhammel 2014, 74).
12. "The great railroads of the world took shape along construction sites that were transnational in character. British and French capital were dominant before 1860, but afterward national sources of finance made increasingly important contributions. The materials, craft labor, and technical know-how were seldom only local; European and North American planners and engineers everywhere monopolized the higher rungs of the job ladder. Skilled workers with experience were also in great demand. Only few of the countries engaged in railroad construction had the heavy industry and machinery sector necessary to organize it by themselves" (Osterhammel 2014, 692). The transnational character of the railroad, of course, has not always been emphasized in the literature. A recent special section introduced by Sjöblom works to correct for the fact that even in policy studies, "The literature consists mainly of single-nation studies—international comparisons, regional perspectives and transnational narratives are badly needed" (Sjöblom 2011, 55). That section takes on "three case studies from the interwar period in Belgium, the Netherlands, and California" (51). Sjöblom asserts four significant commonalities across the group explaining that this is the time when "transport coordination first became a major issue" (51).
13. In the case of the construction of the transcontinental railroad in the United States (from Chicago via Omaha to Sacramento), "The Transcontinental also hired approximately 100,000 Chinese workers" (Osterhammel 2014, 692).
14. In 1918 (the date given in her 2011 book *Constructing Iron Europe*), "Henri Bressler, a member of the French Society of Civil Engineers, proposed to the French Minister of Public Works and Foreign Affairs the construction of a large-scale railway artery that would connect Paris with Dakar through Spain" (Anastasiadou 2007, 176; see also 2011).

15. For more on this, see Hladik (2017).
16. We regard the basic premise of the reader, as conveyed in two concise quotations, as very crucial for a transnational study of the railway: "Social life crosses, transcends and sometimes transforms borders and boundaries in many different ways." "Even contemporary nation-states and the nation-state system have been transnationally constituted and shaped over time and space in powerful ways" (Khagram and Levitt 2008a, 1). Other views of transnationalism are of interest. Though he is primarily interested in viewing the social relationships implicated in migration studies through the notion of transnationalism, Boccagni notes, "Transnationalism continues to be, in one and the same expression, both a theoretical lens (or a research programme) and a set of empirical phenomena (Morawska, 2003)" (Boccagni 2012, 119). Boccagni notes that transnationalism is sometimes "controversial" and "not without contention" (118, citing Waldinger 2011). In "Toward a Transnational History of Technology," Van der Vleuten distinguishes three uses of the term transnational: first "cross-border flows" (2008, 978); second, "the historical role of international *nongovernmental* organizations (and the relations and flows that they represent) in shaping the modern world." (979; my emphasis); and third "decentering the nation-state from its position as the principal organizing category for scholarly inquiry" (982).
17. Empirical transnationalism "focuses on describing, mapping, classifying, and quantifying novel and/or potentially important transnational phenomena and dynamics." Methodological transnationalism "involves, at a minimum, reclassifying existing data, evidence and historical and ethnographic accounts that are based on bounded or bordered units so that transnational forms and processes are revealed." And theoretical transnationalism "formulates explanations and crafts interpretations that either parallel, complement, supplement, or are integrated into existing theoretical frameworks and accounts" (Khagram and Levitt 2008a, 2).
18. Under the definition of empirical transnationalism, the editors write, "TS [trans-national studies] uses comparative-historical and ethnographic strategies to identify and explain similarities, differences, linkages and interactions among different transnational phenomena" (Khagram and Levitt 2008a, 2).
19. Compelling, in this sense, is Presner's statement: "I do not restrict myself to Germany as a preexisting territorial unit of reference because the argument that I am presenting is not based on nationality. The deterritorialized Germany that I am examining begins in Berlin and Delos and moves to Sicily, New York City, the North Sea, Nuremberg-Fürth, Palestine, Auschwitz, Vienna, Prague, Antwerp, and Paris. What emerges—through the multiplicity of places of contact, mobility, and contention—is a complicated cultural geography of German/Jewish modernity, not a national literary history" (2007, 13). Note, too, John Urry's remark, "The railway system is central to modernity's appearance" (2007, 95–96); and Tony Judt's statement: "More than any other technical design or social institution, the railway stands for modernity" (2010, 60).
20. This variant is one of a pair of nontraditional approaches that "challenge conventional paradigms and praxis more fundamentally, moving beyond dominant forms of scholarship, philosophical assumptions and prescriptive orientations" (Khagram and Levitt 2008a, 3).
21. One is reminded of the empirical transnationalist argument regarding the similarities of railway culture in a comparative-historical sense: "An incredibly powerful, speeding mechanical apparatus is foregrounded as a relatively fa-

miliar feature of everyday life even within places otherwise made up of green and pleasant land. This is a nineteenth-century phenomenon in Europe, a late nineteenth-century phenomenon in North America and an early twentieth-century phenomenon in much of India, Africa and Latin America (Vaughan 1997; Richards, Mackenzie 1986: ch 9)" (Urry 2007, 93). Martha Thorne puts this somewhat differently when she writes, "The creation of the modern railway occurred almost simultaneously in the U.S.A. and Great Britain" (2001, 11).

22. The larger intent of analyses that reconcile transport history with humanities representations, we believe, lies in the potential reconciliation of what C. P. Snow, in a speech from 1959, famously called "The Two Cultures" (of Science and of Poetry. Remarking on Snow, specifically, Youngman writes, "As explanatory narratives, both science and poetry are culturally determined systems that represent reality in a specific historical and cultural context" (2005, 152). On C. P. Snow and his controversy with F. R. Leavis over the compatibility of a literary culture and a scientific culture see Fraser (2015a, 5–11); see also Leavis (1972) and Snow ([1959] 1993). We note that there are numerous academic railway centers whose faculty and students might be interested in reconciling the literary and scientific cultures of railway transport in a way complementary to what we do here. These include the Transport Research Institute at Edinburgh Napier University, the Centre for Mobilities Research at Lancaster University, the Centre for Mobilities and Urban Studies at Aalborg University, the Center for Mobilities Research and Policy at Drexel University, the Cultural Mobilities Research center at Leuven University, and the Institute of Railway Studies at the University of York. In addition, Texas A&M has the Center for Railway Research and ambitions to be the premier academic railway center in the United States, but none of these centers seems yet to be connected with a publishing program that moves beyond the science and economics of rail transportation.
23. See also "But we have also been interested in areas that have been less often framed in terms of mobilities, like media and communication studies, cultural studies, film studies, literary studies, museology, critical legal studies, and the creative arts." (Clarsen 2015b, 116).
24. In addition to many if not most all of the essays in the collections by Beaumont and Freeman (2007), Fraser and Spalding (2012), Spalding and Fraser (2012), and Spalding (2014), see Fraser (2015a, 2015b), Masterson-Algar (2014), and Thornbury (2014).
25. We note, for example, that this book has no direct counterpart or competition (other than our own volumes and special section: Fraser and Spalding 2012; Spalding and Fraser 2012; Spalding 2014). That said, there has been a significant increase of interest in the cultural imaginaries of global transportation among publishers over the past decade. The existing three books in the series "Explorations in Mobility" with Berghahn Books (<https://www.berghahnbooks.com/series/explorations-in-mobility>), edited by Mom, Sheller, and Clarsen, deal in part, but not substantially, with cultural artifacts in their exploration of transportation themes. Further supporting the remarks of Ian Carter (2001, mentioned in the body text), the significant number of book titles (more than fifty) in the Railroads and Transportation line with Indiana University Press focus overwhelmingly on historical approaches—not artistic representations—and almost exclusively on trains in Anglophone contexts (http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/index.php?cPath=1037_1272). The Transport and Society book series (now with Taylor and Francis Group, formerly with Ashgate—<https://www.routledge.com/>)

- Transport-and-Society/book-series/TSOC) does, however, include selected titles incorporating cultural approaches.
26. Carter's book (2001) treads through print literature with some comment on the visual arts and cinema.
 27. There is a transnational component to the scholarship by Bannerjee 2004, Nina Lee Bond 2011, as well as the examination Leah Garrett (2001) provides of the train in modern Yiddish literature.
 28. "Cinema has developed from national cinemas to transnational cinematic practices as a result of globalization, which has reduced the power of the nation state. Increasingly filmmakers are trained abroad, receive multi-national funding, and make films for a world market, and increasingly narratives involve characters that travel across borders" (Mennel 2008, 10). See also Ezra and Rowden (2006), *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader*. Interestingly, of course, the train is virtually unavoidable in early film; see Lynne Kirby's *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (1997).
 29. Of course, this has not stopped culture from being shaped or harnessed by the interests of national ideology. Consider the history of the novel as a literary form that develops in tandem with a specifically modern nationhood formation in the nineteenth century. But to accept this as a totalizing explanation of what the novel form is and what individual novels mean is a naturally reductive view in the sense that this perspective tends to reaffirm rather than question or challenge the project of national identity.
 30. On the same page, the author also mentions the appearance of the train in the writings of Foucault (1986), De Certeau (1988), and Berman (1988). Freedman (2010), Richter (2005), and Thornbury (2014) all make significant contributions to the productive entanglement of the discourse of gender with that of train travel.
 31. "Evidence for the social and political as well as economic importance of railways in an industrializing world is manifest in the huge range of cultural materials, from painting to music and ceramics to film, that mediate its role in both popular and elite imaginations. It is certainly true that railways have left a firm imprint in the canons of high art. . . . Yet the railway is an equally powerful symbol in popular culture" (Revill 2012, 9); "It is clear that the cultural imprint of the railway on popular and elite cultures has far transcended the realms of art, however this is defined, and etched itself on the ways we think and behave. Railways continue to play a role in the popular imagination" (12).

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