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# Sociology beyond Societies

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Mobilities for the twenty-first  
century

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*Urry & the others  
2009*



London and New York

## Chapter 8

# Sociologies

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Modern bourgeois society, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the underworld that he has called up by his spells.

(Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels [1848] 1964: 58)

### Gardeners and gamekeepers

In this book I have developed three main arguments. First, I have shown multiple ways in which the mobility of people has been sociologically ignored. Incorporating the mundane practices of personal mobility (albeit often technologically assisted) transforms appropriate metaphors and sociological concepts. Social processes have to be rethought as involving multiple mobilities with novel spaces and temporalities. Second, notions of such mobile persons can be transferred, metaphorically and literally, to the mobility of other entities, of ideas, images, technologies, monies, wastes and so on. In each case it is hybrids that are mobile, flowing along various scapes. Such networks comprise 'physical' and 'human' entities whose power derives from their complex mobile combination. And third, I have considered some of the disruptive implications of these mobile hybrids for the nature of a self-reproducing 'society' and hence for the discipline of sociology that has been historically based upon the societal realm as its starting (and finishing) premise.

I begin this chapter by briefly turning to Bauman's famous use of the metaphor of 'gardening' to describe modern societies based upon their careful tendering by the state (1987; Hetherington 1997a: chap. 4). He suggests that a gardening state has replaced earlier states which can be described through the contrasting metaphor of the 'gamekeeper'. Such a gamekeeper state was not bothered to give society an overall shape and was uninterested in detail. By contrast the gardening state presumes exceptional concern with pattern, regularity and ordering, with what is growing and what should be weeded out. Legislators have been central to the

gardening state, as using their reason to determine what is and what is not productive of order. The social sciences have been part of that application of reason to society through facilitating the husbandry of societal resources, identifying what is and what is not to be cultivated and determining what are the exact conditions of growth of particular plants.

The new global order involves a return to the gamekeeper state and away from that of the gardener. The gamekeeper was concerned with regulating mobilities, with ensuring that there was sufficient stock for hunting in a particular site but not with the detailed cultivation of each animal in each particular place. Animals roamed around and beyond the estate, like the roaming hybrids that currently roam in and across national borders. States are increasingly unable or unwilling to garden their society, only to regulate the conditions of their stock so that on the day of the hunt there is appropriate stock available for the hunter.

The former East European societies were societies based upon exceptional degrees of very detailed gardening. But these societies were unable to develop dynamically and became surrounded by hordes of 'animals' (consumer goods, images, western ideas and so on) which increasingly crossed into and over the land that had been so carefully husbanded. Their populations chased after the animals and trampled the carefully tended plants to destruction (a different kind of 'animal farm').

In this final chapter I examine a number of ways in which gamekeeping rather than gardening is an appropriate metaphor for contemporary social developments. I advocate a sociology that is able to mobilise powerful theory and research in a post-societal, post-gardening epoch. My arguments are organised around the implications of gamekeeping for four crucial domains, 'civil society', the 'state', 'nature', and the 'global'.

I begin with showing how social inequalities should be seen as spatial and temporal, and are not just inequalities that are within the garden. I consider the development of a *civil society* based upon automobility, in which the ability to roam and to escape the previous fixities of public time and space is central. There is regulation of automobility but not the ability to determine where the herds of cars might travel to or when. In the following section I analyse changes in the character of national and other *states* as the regulation of flows and networks of civil society become central to their constitution. States turn into gamekeepers rather than gardeners, as they regulate the herds moving in and across their land. In the next section I consider how gardening was based upon a strict division between the gardener and the garden, showing how this parallels the historic divide between society and nature, or between sociology and the physical sciences. I argue against this division and explore, through the concept of affordances, some implications of 'natural-social' hybrids for contemporary citizenship. I then return to the herds of interacting, patterned and intensely mobile hybrids that roam the *globe*. I briefly

consider whether notions of chaos and complexity can assist with the elaboration of a 'sociology beyond societies', a sociology that is appropriate to gamekeeping rather than gardening. The book concludes with an advocacy of a mobile sociology.

### Mobile civil societies

I briefly return to the motor car, arguing that automobility has ushered in some striking changes in the character of civil society; and that it is only by analysing the significance of such mobility that contemporary social life can even begin to be analysed. I am obviously reducing everything here to the car, but in part to use this as a model of analysis that the study of mobility necessitates (and see Chapter 3 above).

It has been seen that automobility is a complex of interlocking machines, social practices and ways of dwelling, not in a stationary home but in a mobile semi-privatised capsule. The hybrid car driver is at home in large-scale movement, transcending considerable distances in order to complete a series of activities within highly fragmented moments of time. Many journeys involve multiple functions juggled together and involving complex monitoring. Automobility makes instantaneous time and new kinds of space central to how social life is configured. People dwell and socially interact via movement in and through their cars. The car is thus not simply an extension of each individual; automobility is not simply an act of consumption because of the way that it reconfigures the modes of sociality. Social life has always entailed various mobilities but the car has transforms these in a distinct combination of both flexibility and coercion. Civil society is thus in part a 'civil society of automobility', a civil society of quasi-objects or 'car drivers', and much less of separate human subjects who can be conceived of as autonomous from their machines. People in effect enter the public sphere in their mobility.

Automobility is a source of freedom, the 'freedom of the road'. Civil society seized on the roads and carriages that had been the province of the élite and turned these into the current systems of mass transportation. The flexibility of the car enables the car driver to roam at speed, at any time in any direction along the complex road systems of western societies that link together most houses, workplaces and leisure sites. Cars therefore extend where people can go to and hence what as humans they are able to do. Much of what many people now think of as 'social life' could not be undertaken without the flexibilities of the car and its availability 24 hours a day. One can travel to and from work, friends and family when one wants to. It is possible to leave late by car, to miss connections, to travel in a relatively time-less fashion. People travel when they want to, along routes that they choose, finding new places unexpectedly, stopping for relatively open-ended periods of time, and moving on when they desire.



Moreover, car-driving is an activity that people enjoy in itself or at least feel that it is part of what it is to be a contemporary citizen. Car-driving is a goal and a set of skills and accomplishments in themselves. Driving a car can be a source of pleasure: of flexibility, skill, possession and excitement. Not to drive and not to have a car is to fail to participate fully in western societies. In research conducted in the 1970s it was reported that the overwhelming majority of employees demonstrated more skill in driving to and from work than in what they actually did while they were at work (Blackburn and Mann 1979). The car is never simply a means of transport. To possess a car and to be able to drive it are crucially significant rights articulated through powerful motoring organisations. States provide the licensing and the infrastructure, of who may roam but not where or when.

The nature of this 'dwellingness' has changed, from 'dwelling-on-the-road' to 'dwelling-within-the-car'. The former was found within inter-war North America and Europe and can be seen in much of contemporary Africa and Asia. The car driver is part of the environment through which the car travels and the technologies of insulation do not exist or have not been repaired. The car driver dwells-on-the-road and is not insulated from much of its sensuousness. This contrasts with the car driver in the contemporary west who dwells-within-the-car, one effect of which has been to provide much greater safety for the car driver since risks have been externalised on to those outside. Those who dwell within the car are also able not only to prevent the smells and sounds of the outside to enter, but also to effect an environment in which a certain sociability can occur. Car drivers control the social mix in their car just like homeowners control those visiting their home. The car has become a 'home from home', a place to perform business, romance, family, friendship, crime and so on. Unlike 'public' transport, the car facilitates a domestic mode of dwelling. The car driver is surrounded by control systems that allow a simulation of the domestic environment, a home from home moving flexibly and riskily through strange environments.

But at the same time automobility coerces people into this intense flexibility. Automobility entails instantaneous time that has to be juggled and managed in a complex, heterogeneous and uncertain fashion (J.G. Ballard in *Crash* refers to this infantile world where any demand can be satisfied instantly; 1995: 4). This instantaneous time is to be contrasted with the official timetabling of mobility that accompanied the development of the railways in the mid-nineteenth century (and which continues with many timetables; see Lash and Urry 1994: 228-9). This was modernist clock-time based upon the public timetable (gardening rather than gamekeeping). Automobility by contrast involves a more individualistic timetabling of one's life, a personal timetabling of these many instants or fragments of time. There is here a reflexive monitoring not of the social but of the self. People try to sustain 'coherent, yet continuously revised,

biographical narratives ... in the context of multiple choices filtered through abstract systems' (such as that produced by automobility: Giddens 1991: 6). The objective clock-time of the modernist railway timetable is replaced by personalised, subjective temporalities, as people live their lives in and through their car(s) (if they have one). Automobility coerces almost everyone in advanced societies to juggle tiny fragments of time in order to put together complex, fragile and contingent patterns of social life, which constitute self-created narratives of the reflexive self.

The freedom of the car subjects all of civil society to its power. The shortage of time resulting from the extensive distances that increasingly 'have' to be travelled means that the car remains the only viable means of highly flexibilised mobility. Walking, cycling, travelling by bus, steamship or rail may be relegated to the dustbin of history since these are relatively less effective means of roaming the world (Graham and Marvin 1996: 296-7).

There are three other aspects of a civil society of automobility. First, the hybrid of the car driver is in normal circumstances unnoticeable (Michael 1998). There is a careful, civilised control of the car machine deploying considerable technical and interactive skills. But in situations of 'road rage' another set of scripts are drawn upon, of aggression, competition and speed. But these scripts of the other are always components of automobility. Michael elaborates on this polysemic nature of automobility: encouraging people to be careful, considerate and civilised (the Volvo syndrome) and to enjoy speed, danger and excitement (the Top Gear syndrome). There is multiple scription involved here and hence different kinds of car driver, the careful and the competitive, which are both elements of the hybrid car driver and hence of an automobilised civil society (Michael 1998: 133). In the case of road rage, Michael argues:

one actually needs to be more skilful, to push both body and machine into quantitatively greater alignment, than in the case where one is a responsible civilized driver ... In order to exercise 'loss of social control', one needs to practice greater technological control.

(1998: 133)

Michael describes this as 'hyperhybridisation' with the human being more or less obscured or immersed within the technology and vice versa. According to motoring organisations such a virulent hybrid must be purified, by changing not the technology but the pathology of the human.

Second, automobility involves contestation. From the 1970s the car began to be viewed as more polluting than the train (Liniado 1996: 28). And most recently new roads 'slicing' through the landscape have provoked intense opposition, including from many 'car drivers'. Automobility produces resistance within civil society. Partly this is because

new roads instantaneously destroy the existing taskscape and no amount of re-landscaping compensates for that sudden loss. Also roads allow means of movement into the landscape that demonstrate no *travail* and hence may be viewed as less worthy than walking, climbing or cycling that environment. Overall then, while one may 'love' one's car, the system that it presupposes is often unloved, resisted and raged against. Civil society is significantly being remade through contestations over the power, range and impact of automobility. The same people can be both enthusiastic car drivers as well as active protestors against schemes for new roads. By 1994 there were an estimated 250 anti-road groups in the UK, a movement significantly impacting upon civil society. The array of direct actions has also diversified as protesters have become more expert, through the use of mass trespass, squatting in buildings, living in trees threatened by road programmes, and digging tunnels. They too became more sophisticated in the use of new technologies, including mobile phones, video cameras and the Internet. This has enabled almost instantaneous dissemination to the media, as well as information about actions for a growing band of protesters prepared to travel up and down the country to protest against proposed developments (see Macnaghten and Urry 1998: chap. 2; see details in McKay 1998).

Third, large areas of the globe now consist of car-only environments – the quintessential non-places of super-modernity (Augé 1995). About one-quarter of the land in London and nearly one-half of that in Los Angeles is devoted to car-only environments, where in a sense the public spaces involved in urbanisation have been swamped by automobility. These car spaces areas exert an awesome spatial and temporal dominance over surrounding environments, transforming what can be seen, heard, smelt and even tasted (the spatial and temporal range of which varies for each of the senses). Such car-environments or non-places are neither urban nor rural, local nor cosmopolitan. They are sites of pure mobility within which car drivers are insulated as they 'dwell-within-the-car'.

Automobility then constitutes a civil society of roaming herds of hybridised 'car drivers' who enter the public realm in their mobility, dwelling-within-their-cars, and excluding those without cars or without the 'licence' to drive such cars. And such a civil society of automobility transforms public spaces into public roads, in which to a significant extent the hybrids of pedestrians and cyclists are no longer part of that public. Only those moving even slowly in cars, buses and trucks are *public* within a system where public spaces have been democratically seized, through notions of individual choice and personal flexibility, and then turned into public roads. A civil society of automobility, or the right to roam where and when one wants, involves the transformation of public space into public roads.

Elsewhere in this book I have elaborated how various other mobilities

transform social life. In particular such mobilities often fragment nations as a consequence of the emergence, or the resurgence, of local, regional, sub-national, networked, diasporic and global economies, identities and citizenships. In his wide-ranging review of the economic changes involved in such transformations, Scott argues that there are: 'no longer any territorial coincidence between the political forms of states, the flow of economic transactions, and the cultural and communal boundaries of "societies"' (1997: 253). Especially significant have been the growth of monies, environmental risks, taxation-revenues and information which evade control by national states and whose movements do not coincide with those of national borders. They each pass over those borders in instantaneous time. In the case of the Internet it is almost impossible to determine the point of origin of most transactions. The customer often does not know who the provider is or where they are located. To express this more graphically, there is as yet no tax authority for cyberspace.

These changes transform the analysis of social class that has been historically rooted in both data and arguments derived from the 'golden age' of organised, national capitalism. Up to the early 1970s in north Atlantic rim societies it was reasonable to investigate what could be termed 'national' classes. However, conditions are now very different. Change processes in which national states fragment or are drawn into supranational entities add 'a further potential challenge to the [historic] association between class structures and national states' (Breen and Rottman 1998: 16). Specifically with regard to the capitalist class, Scott argues that 'national capitalist classes themselves are being increasingly fragmented along the lines of the globalized circuits of capital and investment that they are involved in' (1997: 312). Some writers go on to argue that this will result in 'transnational capitalist classes' that become detached from national class situations and will possess a kind of global solidarity and cohesion (see Sklair 1995; Scott 1997: 312-13). Even if this lies a little in the future, there has been the more general growth of many powerful professions whose taskscape are partially global and who can be said to dwell in many places located along diverse scapes. Reich argues that: 'Barriers to cross-border flows of knowledge, money, and tangible products are crumbling; groups of people in every nation are joining global webs' (1991: 172; see Luke 1996, and Chapter 7 above on scientists).

Connected to this de-nationalisation of management and many professions is the significant de-nationalisation of knowledge and of the more cultural and informational determinants of class. We have seen how information can become instantaneously and simultaneously available more or less anywhere, as knowledge has become 'de-territorialised' and turned into hugely mobile bits of information (Delanty 1998). Determinants of status within a given 'society' are as much derived from these global informational flows as from status processes that are endogenous to each such society.

Central to the historic notion of the nation-state has been a single, stable and exhaustive national identity, a civil society organised around a single nation. It is this that had ensured a coherent and unified nation-state able to striate the space surrounding it, clearly distinguishing those people and institutions inside from those who are outside. Smith summarises:

Nation-states have frontiers, capitals, flags, anthems, passports, currencies, military parades, national museums, embassies and usually a seat in the United Nations. They also have one government for the territory of the nation-state, a single education system, a single economy and occupational system, and usually one set of rights for all citizens.

(1986: 228)

In this book we have seen many ways which mobilities both within a country through especially automobility and across borders through multiple mobilities and citizenships makes such a the notion of a single, stable and exhaustive national identity implausible. In the next section I examine how states increasingly regulate these diverse mobilities that transform civil societies and the character of nation-states.

### **Regulating mobilities**

Social inequalities are often spatial, resulting from hugely uneven forms of access to, or the effects of, various kinds of mobility. In this section I show how states connect to these diverse mobilities, and examine in particular whether national or supra-national states can ameliorate their often detrimental consequences. The shift in corporeal travel from buses and trains to cars highlights the shift in states that I want to generalise here. The development of twentieth-century automobility has involved a massive reduction in the direct production, control and timetabling of corporeal mobility; at the same time it has involved huge new forms of social regulation of such mobilities. Thus contemporary states are involved in licensing, testing, policing, taxing, building, maintaining and managing, drivers, roads and cars.

Various new mobilities imply parallel changes in the character of contemporary states that, no longer able to garden the world, can only act as gamekeepers. Deleuze and Guattari argue:

the state has always been in a relation with an outside, and is inconceivable independent of that relationship. The law of the State is not the law of All or Nothing ... but that of interior and exterior. The State is sovereignty. But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally.

(1986: 15–16)

And what is outside states cannot be reduced purely to the foreign policies of states. Outside are both huge worldwide machines as well as what they term neo-primitive, tribal societies. Both constitute a '*perpetual field of interaction* ... its exteriority in what escapes States or stands against States' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17).

For Deleuze and Guattari, states are necessarily involved in seeking to regulate the spaces that lie beyond its borders and especially to regulate those numerous mobilities that move in and across such spaces:

one of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns ... It is vital concern of every State not only to vanquish nomadism, but to control migrations and, more generally, to establish a zone of rights over an entire 'exterior', over all the flows traversing the ecumenon. If it can help it, the State does not dissociate itself from a process of capture of flows of all kinds, populations, commodities, money or capital, etc. ... the State never ceases to decompose, recompose and transform movement, or to regulate speed. (1986: 59-60)

They talk of how fourteenth-century China, despite its very high level of technology in ships and navigation, 'was unable to react except by a politics of immobility, and of the massive restriction of commerce' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 61; the events of 1989 may have resulted from a similar immobility).

More generally, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that there has been a recent shift in western societies away from social relations based upon territory and state – that is, Foucault's disciplinary societies. The move is to societies of control, to social relations based upon numbers and deterritorialisation. Contemporary states are forced to regulate 'the mobile occupant, the movable in smooth space, as opposed to the immovable in striated space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 66). Such smooth deterritorialised spaces, of which the pure number is the paradigm case, creates huge new issues for states. Such flows are smooth and deterritorialised especially because of computerised digitisation: 'what counts is not the barrier but the computer that tracks each person's position' (quoted Thrift 1996: 291).

States thus struggle to striate the space surrounding them, but numerical smooth global fluids cause them singular difficulties. This can also be seen by turning to a more conventional definition of the state: namely, that it consists of that set of centralised and interdependent social institutions concerned with passing laws, implementing and administering those laws and providing the legal machinery to enforce compliance with them. These institutions rest upon the state's monopoly of legitimate force within a given territory, which means that most of the time laws are upheld. The



powers of the state ultimately rest upon this threat of legitimate force. Such powers include the ability to make and to enforce laws, to raise very sizeable sums of money through general taxation and to effect redistribution through various benefits, to employ large numbers of people and to produce a variety of especially universal services, to own and control land and its uses, to manipulate various instruments of economic policy, and to act as a 'social regulator' employing a variety of coercive and ideological techniques. No set of private institutions, even the most powerful of corporations, possesses this *range* of powers.

Some writers have proceeded to argue that such nation-states no longer possess the particular domestic combination of capacities to offset the disruptive consequences of global flows and networks, while others argue against such a thesis. I consider this latter 'anti-globalisation' argument initially.

Global sceptics argue that the thesis of globalisation is much overstated and that there are possibilities for societies and governments to control international developments. Hirst and Thompson argue that the present international economy is not as distinct as often argued and that in some ways it is less open than in the period 1870–1914 (1996; and see Weiss 1998). They also maintain that most large companies are based within a given society (Ford as American, Sony as Japanese) and there are relatively few truly international companies. Most investment occurs between the rich countries, especially between the triad of Europe, Japan and North America, and is not equally spread across the globe. They claim that governments are able to intervene and make a difference to their conditions of life of their citizens, since although the economy has become internationalised it has not been globalised. There are three critical comments to make on this thesis. Hirst and Thompson conceptualise globalisation in the most extreme and implausible form; they over-concentrate upon the economic aspects of globalisation and ignore the many other global processes; and they do not sufficiently consider how some of the phenomena they discuss will develop further in a global direction over the next few decades.

These global sceptics do however make some effective points about contemporary states. Weiss argues that there is not convergence of states in a uniform powerless direction (1998: chap. 7). Rather there is increasing variety as a consequence of their diverse capacity to deal with global flows. States can moreover function as midwives for such flows and not just be subject to them. And states increasingly act as catalysts of networks of countries at the regional or international level and hence function as one class of agencies in a complex system (Hirst and Thompson 1996: chap. 8; Pierson 1996). Moreover, there are many international conferences and events that still involve individual states signing up to international agreements (such as the 1992 Rio Earth Summit).

However, this relatively benign analysis of the enduring power of the nation-state may significantly change if the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) is implemented. This provides a new set of investment rules that greatly increases the mobility of capital and reduces the capacity of states to striate. These rules include the principles of non-discrimination against foreign investors, no entry restrictions, and no special conditions. The Director-General of the World Trade Organisation states that with the MAI 'we are writing the constitution of a single global economy' (Rowan 1998). Critics of the MAI argue that it will generate a new class of supercitizens, namely the 40,000 transnational corporations worldwide, who will be largely exempt from any obligations to local workforces or environments. Clarke and Barlow describe the MAI as a 'Charter of Rights and Freedoms for transnational corporations against citizens and the earth' (1997: 8).

Thus shifts towards global networks and flows transforms the space beyond each state. It is this space which states have to striate and they are therefore involved in increasing efforts at 'social regulation'. Such regulation is both necessitated, and is only made possible, by new computer-based forms of information gathering, retrieval and dissemination. What states increasingly possess are exceptional information flows, especially databases, which enable performance indicators to be implemented and monitored across extensive geographical areas, within and beyond the borders of the nation-state. Such databases can refer to almost every economic and social institution. It has become possible to assess the efficiency of most aspects of life relevant to those living in or visiting any particular country. Such information flows derive from what Power terms the 'audit society' (1994). Organisations have to justify their accountability to the public (and to consumers) through an explosion of audits and the resulting availability of the data collected. There are increasing quantities of surveys and polls designed to ascertain what people really think and feel about almost all aspects of life. This polling culture is itself part of the shift in the nature of states away from the direct provision of services to the regulation of goods and services provided by state-organisations, public-private partnerships, voluntary organisations, the private sector and so on.

Britain has perhaps led the way in recent 'social regulation' (following the US model in part as well). The Conservative Governments in the 1980s, which were elected as apparent 'deregulators', introduced extensive new forms of regulation (Pierson 1996: 107; THES 1997). There was 're-regulation' of private industries (OFGAS and the gas industry), the environment (the EU Bathing Waters Directive), education (OFSTED schools inspection service), railways (the Rail Regulator), the press (Press Complaints Council), trade unions (the Certification Officer for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations) and so on (see publications from the London-based Centre for the Study of Regulated Industries).



In some of this regulation the national states of Europe are modelling themselves upon the European Union. The EU provides a kind of model of the emergent regulatory state (see Majone 1994, 1996). It is a small state employing few bureaucrats and controlling a modest budget (apart from the Common Agricultural Policy that is a historic legacy of a previous epoch). It was organised around the promotion of various mobilities and as a result of this common market, was designed to ensure peace across Europe in the post-war period. It has sought to develop the four freedoms of movement – of goods, services, labour and capital – and has intervened with national state policies to eliminate barriers to mobility, trade and competition. The EU has also pursued something of a 'social' agenda, especially since the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, with regard to environmental, health and safety, industrial and equal opportunity policies. European laws take precedence over national laws where they conflict and it is possible for the actions of individual governments to be declared illegal, although the 'common market' remains the EU's primary consideration (see Adam 1998: 112–13).

The EU is a 'regulatory state', mostly involved in the monitoring and regulation of the policies and practices of its individual nation-states. Its Treaties and Directives are particularly powerful. They mean both that governments must bring their own legislation in line with such Treaties, and that individual citizens in the EU can appeal direct to the European Court of Justice when it is believed that national governments have not implemented appropriate policies (see Walby 1999). Such laws are cheap to pass since the costs of implementation are passed on to national governments.

An example of where such regulation has had significant effects is the development of equal opportunity policies, drawing upon Article 119 in the Treaty of Rome, which has provided a more effective legal base than that found in member countries (Walby 1999). The EU insists that there is a fundamental right to social protection, especially for migrant workers and their families when they move to other states in the EU (Meehan 1991). The EU, especially following the establishment of the European Environment Agency in 1990, has developed much environmental protection. In the UK over 80 per cent of environmental legislation emanates from the EU (Lowe and Ward 1998). Ward analyses how the European Bathing Waters Directive has provided legal norms as to what constitutes clean and unclean water. This Directive enables NGOs, such as Surfers Against Sewerage in the UK, to become more knowledgeable about the issues and to be reflexively proactive in their campaigning (Ward 1996). Regular publication of precise official data as to which beaches do not meet the appropriate standards provides the kind of media opportunities for NGOs to shame governments and water companies, as discussed in Chapter 7. Other areas where the EU has developed an

extensive regulatory regime include consumer product safety, medical drug testing, financial services and competition. Survey data shows that, although the EU is overall not popular, 60 per cent or so think that the EU should deal with those matters which national governments cannot deal with. Thus 'Europe's citizens do want "problems without frontiers" to be dealt with at a European level' (Leonard 1998: 46; Lowe and Ward 1998: 22).

Thus states in the future, like the EU, will not so much tax and spend on their own forms of economic and social provision. Rather, following the EU, they will increasingly act as legal, economic and social regulators, or gamekeepers, of activities and mobilities that are predominantly provided by, or generated through, the private, voluntary or third sectors. These regulative functions are only achievable because of the emergence of extensive computer-based databases on populations, organisations and enterprises that involve almost continuous auditing. Social regulation involves increased monitoring and surveillance. It also involves heightened mediatisation in order that regulatory failure is brought into the open, made visible and individuals and organisations can be shamed by the ensuing scandals or threat of scandals.

### **Mobile natures**

I have noted how contemporary states are often involved in efforts to regulate various kinds of deleterious impact upon the environment. Such an arena of state action demonstrates the increasing interdependence of what would once have been thought of as either 'domestic' or 'foreign' issues. It also shows the reduced significance of the means of physical coercion to the determination of the powers of states. 'Regulation' of environmental impact involves networks of other states, multilateral agencies, the power of the media to shame, the employment of international science and so on. There is no simple 'national' environment that a national state can order and regulate through its own gardening.

However, when people analyse 'nature' or the 'environment' they both appear certain of what they mean (see Macnaghten and Urry 1998, for much of the following). In different ways they adopt a taken-for-granted sense of nature, which is a singular nature, out there, immobile and waiting to be saved, either through science or through social protest. A clear distinction is drawn between nature or the environment, on the one hand, and society, on the other. Obviously what is taken to be natural differs for these different groups. For scientists the environment is a real entity to be investigated by modern science and from which the social activities and experiences of people are largely absent. To the extent that people are considered, the main issue is how to persuade them with increased information or financial inducements to behave in ways that scientists believe will improve the environment, the nature of which they

have scientifically established. In the case of protestors nature is a source of particular values which are seen as especially vulnerable to the debilitating effects of modern science and the modern economy. The environment here is treated as a singular fragile nature that is enormously threatened by the values and practices of science, which treats the globe as a laboratory, and by an increasingly global marketplace.

In Chapter 1 it was shown how sociology as the science of society developed on the basis of the juxtaposition of society and nature. This juxtaposition reached its fullest development in nineteenth-century Europe. Nature was degraded into a realm of unfreedom and hostility that needed to be subdued and controlled. And modernity involved the belief that human progress should be measured and evaluated in terms of the domination of nature by society, rather than through any attempt to transform the relationship between the two. This view that nature is separate from society, and should be dominated by it, presupposed the doctrine of human exceptionalism. This entails a number of beliefs: that humans are fundamentally different from, and superior to, all other species; that societies can determine their own destinies and learn whatever is necessary to achieve such destinies; that a singular nature is vast and presents unlimited opportunities for exploitation by human societies; and that the history of each society is one of unending progress though overcoming the resistances of the natural world (see Glacken 1966; Williams 1972, 1973; Merchant 1982; Schama 1995).

The first difficulty with this formulation is that there have been many attempts to establish 'nature'; normally it is distinguished from both God and 'society'. But what has been regarded as nature has hugely varied over time and across different societies, depending in part with what particular notion of God/society it has been contrasted. Thus there has been no single nature but very different *natures*, which differ from, and often contradict, each other (see Macnaghten and Urry 1998). There is no single authority of 'nature'.

Second, one particular nature is what we now call the 'environment'. But such an environment is not simply out there and analysable either as a set of scientific laws or of human values. The environment is a hybrid, a simultaneous fusion of the physical and the social. Or as Latour maintains 'extrasomatic' resources have been necessary to sustain society. Society on its own does not hold us together but it is what is held together (1993; Diken 1998: 266–7). In the past few decades the emergence of this hybrid 'environment' has resulted from the complex interactions between a diverse mix of social and physical elements. These include environmental science, the media, travel patterns, environmental protest movements, state actions and inactions, the sensing of changes by the public, actions of corporations, various environmental writings, changing technologies, advertisements which use images of the globe, the shaming of states on the

public stage and so on. The resulting hybrid of the 'environment' comprises various scientifically determined risks (such as models of climate change), particular texts and images (such as the blue globe), some notable heroic actions and moments of witness (such as Brent Spar), and particular individuals and networks (as at various road protests).

Third, there is a significant paradox about contemporary developments. In most western societies, there is a greatly enhanced focus upon the importance of nature and valuing the natural, purchasing natural products (and even natural products made more natural such as decaffeinated coffee), employing images of the natural in marketing products, policies and organisations, and joining and supporting organisations concerned with the conservation of nature (Strathern 1992: 173). But Strathern argues that culture has been necessary to rescue nature; thus there is 'the conceptual collapse of the differences between nature and culture when Nature cannot survive without Cultural intervention' (1992: 174). The strength of nature in the past lay in the way in which its cultural construction was in fact hidden from view (Latour 1993). But in the contemporary world of uncertainty and ambivalence, this is no longer true. All natures we now can identify are elaborately entangled and fundamentally bound up with social practices and their characteristic modes of cultural representation.

Fourth, different natures are indeed embedded within different patterns of social activity, of belonging and travelling (see Chapters 3 and 6). These practices are patterned over different stretches of time, from the instantaneous to the glacial, and across different spaces, from the local community, to the nation-state and to the global. Social activities are organised in terms of how people dwell within different places, how they sense such places through sight, smell, hearing and touch, how they move across and beyond such places and how much power of agency they possess to transform their lives and their immediate environment. Thus different social practices produce different 'natures'. These include: nature as the open countryside available for upper class leisure; nature as visual spectacle sensed through sketches, landscape paintings, postcards, photographs and the camcorder; nature as sets of scientific laws established especially by environmental science; nature as wilderness away from industry and cities and enabling spiritual and physical refreshment; and nature as undergoing 'global environmental change' rather than isolated localised changes.

I will make a few points about 'global environmental change'. The notion of sustainability was institutionalised at the singular global mega-event of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. This event, the world looking reflexively at itself, led to the viewing of the environment as global. Rio emphasised global warming, ozone depletion and biodiversity – issues that rely on increasingly sophisticated scientific programmes to determine the impact of social processes upon planetary processes. A new type of science

emerged in the fields of atmospheric chemistry, oceanography, climatology and geology, dedicated to establishing the impacts of industrial activities upon the bio-geo-chemical cycles of the planet, and the likely long-term effects of current and predicted trends in industrial growth. Such science has contributed to a 'new global ecological look', the sense that environmental problems may be more global, more serious, more urgent, and much more interconnected than previously imagined (Finger 1993: 40).

This globalisation of nature increases the possibilities of agency on behalf of the planet because of people's increased knowledge as how environmental risks flow across national borders. But at the same time such global flows reduce people's sense of personal agency because of the increased awareness of how states and corporations endlessly disobey their own environmental directives, fuelled by instantaneous economic and political interests. More generally, these flows transform the nature of the 'social'. I have shown various ways in which it shifts from being principally comprised of 'national social structures' to putatively globalising networks and flows (Chapters 1 and 2 above). Such global flows criss-cross national borders disrupting the organised coherence of individual national societies. They exhibit spatial unevenness and temporal diversity. And this means that 'nature' becomes less intertwined with each individual national society, with a national 'community of fate', and is much more interdependent with these putatively global and hybrid relations, roaming across societies in ever-more elaborate and 'unnatural' shapes, evading constraints of time and space and of those policies routed within particular nation-states.

At the same time that various natures appear even more out of control, so many people argue that they possess rights of glacial time. However, such rights have been resisted because the context for conventional citizenship has been that of 'society' and not some broader concept of 'society-and-nature' (see Chapter 7 above). Within societies only humans are deemed to possess rights – natural and other apparently inanimate objects are not citizens and do not possess rights. In order then to attribute rights to nature (and other objects) we would have to 'treat "natural" non-humans as autonomous participants ... in the world' (Michael 1996: 135). And this would further mean that nature (and other objects) not only has rights but should also have responsibilities (see Batty and Gray 1996, for a duty rather than a rights-based approach to nature). But to conceive of natural objects, let alone artefacts, as having responsibilities, obviously runs counter to western science and its construction of the object-ness of the external world, a world separate from any sense of subjectivity.

There is one approach though to the notion that objects might be said to have responsibilities, Gibson's analysis of the affordances of the environment (1986: chap. 8; see Michael and Still 1992; Costall 1995). He argues that in the environment out there we do not encounter a set of

objective 'things' that we may or may not visually perceive. Rather different surfaces and different objects, relative to the human organism, provide opportunities for lying on, sitting on, leaning against and so on. An affordance is both objective and subjective, it is both part of the environment and part of the organism. Affordances stem from the reciprocity between the environment and the organism (Costall 1995: 475). They derive from the manner in which people are kinesthetically active within their world. Nature provides limits to what is corporeally possible but it does not determine the particular actions that humans may engage in. Affordances do not cause behaviour but constrain it along certain possibilities. Michael summarises: 'there are a range of options ... implicit within a physical milieu and this implicitness is directly connected to the bodily capacities and limits of the [human] organism' (1996: 149).

Affordances can also be said to stem from artefacts as well as from the physical environment (see Costall 1995). Some examples include a path that beckons people to walk along it, a rock that provides a place to hide from the sun, a building that affords a panoramic view, a wood that is a repository of memories, a flat entrance that allows unhindered wheelchair access, the lake that engulfs one with cooling water and so on. It is also important to note various resistances existing within the environment: the heat of the sun that prevents one climbing a mountain, a road that spoils the view of a bay, the low bridge that prevents bus tourists from visiting an up-market beauty spot and so on (see Costall 1995). Thus objects can afford certain possibilities, a 'collection of affordances, that inheres in the ecology of the situation' (Michael and Still 1992: 881), even if western science would tell us that lanes cannot invite, rocks cannot provide viewing places and so on. But they do – or rather they sometimes do because of the particular embeddedness of people, technologies and environments. Given certain past and present social relations then particular 'objects' affords a range of possibilities and opportunities; nature and other physical objects owe certain affordances.

Thus we can consider whether nature possesses not just rights but duties towards humans and other living beings. Can we imagine a responsible nature – a nature that has the duty to provide humans and other animals with appropriate affordances? That this is counter-intuitive stems from the elision of the concepts of citizen and citizenship, as though the only entities that might be involved in citizenship are human citizens. This notion of the unique character of humans is further reinforced by more recent attempts to elaborate universal human rights, as opposed to those particular to a given society (see Soysal 1994; Chapter 7 above).

But while it would indeed be odd to describe nature as a *citizen*, it is surely not so strange to conceptualise nature as embedded within the discourses and practices of *citizenship*. This is addressed in a further reworking of the concept of affordance. Michael seeks to 'draw out some



of the ways in which "nice nature" interacts with the body to recover previously suppresses possibilities, where the environment ... potentially enables, rather than constrains, the movement of the body in light of the body's capacities' (1996: 149). 'Nice nature' is, one might say, nature demonstrating good citizenship. Affordance refers to the way in which the array of surfaces and structures in the environment specify a range of possible embodied actions for the organism, and particularly for the human organism.

I conclude with three points to note about nature and this reconfigured sense of citizenship. First, the options afforded to humans should relate to the variety of senses that can be involved in their relationship to the environment and not just to the optic sense that Gibson principally examines (see Chapter 4 above). Nice nature should afford experiences of touch, hearing, smell, taste and movement, as well as vision. If it does not, then humans and other animals are not being provided with full citizenship.

Second, a 'nice nature' is one which maximises the array of affordances for humans, especially that which allows corporeal resources for resistance against various modes of disciplining (Michael 1996: 149–50). Nature acting as a good citizen opens up behavioural vistas. For human organisms a good nature expands the potential range of identities which are available to individuals.

Finally, the niceness of nature does not mean that it should be wholly enabling of all human practices. What should be afforded by nature in citizenship terms might well constitute limits upon immediate, instantaneous human practices, in order that there is a viable longer-term or glacial time built into nature's role. Such practices organised through glacial time involve expanding the concept of affordance. It should apply not just to individuals or to social groups but to the human species as a whole as the species reaches into an indefinite future along some of the enormously lengthy timescapes of nature (see Adam 1998, Sullivan 1999). And that in turn entails some further examination of the relations between social practices and their environment which 'complexity theory' has made possible.

## **Complex mobilities**

In Chapter 5 I discussed how chaotic, unintended and non-linear consequences are generated in systems, consequences that are patterned but unpredictable, distant in time and/or space from where they originate and involving patterns of system bifurcation. These features derive from the 'complex' nature of physical and social systems. They are characterised by a very large number of elements which render formal means of representation inappropriate, such elements interact physically and informationally over time, there are positive and negative feedback loops, such systems

interact dissipatively with their environment and they have a history which evolves irreversibly through time.

In this section I will consider whether an emergent level of the 'global' is developing that can be viewed as recursively self-producing, that is, its outputs constitute inputs into an autopoietic circular system of 'global' objects, identities, institutions and social practices. And if there is, what are its complex properties, how are chaos and order combined in the global (see Robertson 1992, on the global; and Byrne 1998, Cilliers 1998, Wallerstein 1998, on recent social science applications of chaos/complexity theory)?

Complexity theory in the physical sciences uses mathematical formulae and powerful computers to characterise the enormously large number of iterative events that occur in any such system. In particular experiments, examining increases in the reproduction patterns of gypsy moths showed, through resulting changes in population size, dramatic non-linear changes in the quality of the system. Changes in the parameter resulted in transformations in the system; in certain contexts, order generates chaos (Baker 1993: 133).

This iterative character of systems is one that has not been sufficiently interrogated in sociology. Partly this stems from the presumed a-temporal character of the social world, rather than the seeing of all social hybrids as necessarily historical (as are physical hybrids). But it has also stemmed from the baleful consequences of the conceptual divide between so-called structure and agency. In sociological thought the millions of individual iterative actions are largely subsumed under the notion of 'structure' (such as that of class structure, or the structure of gender relations or social structure). Such a structure does not then have to be further examined; it is 'ordered' and will be reproduced through continuous iteration. The concept of structure solves the problem of iteration for sociology. Of course social systems do change and the sociological trick is then to draw on the concept of agency, to argue that some sets of agents do somehow manage to escape the structure and change it (see Chapter 1's discussion of Archer's morphogenetic formulation of this structure-agency divide).

Of course some authors have seen the limitations of this formulation. Giddens developed the notion of the 'duality of structure' in order to account for the recursive character of social life (1984). Now recursive sounds much like iteration; and Giddens undoubtedly advances the ways in which we understand how 'structures' are both drawn on, and are the outcome of, countless iterative actions by knowledgeable agents. However, in Giddens' analysis there is insufficient examination of the 'complex' character of these iterative processes, of how order can generate chaos, unpredictability and non-linearity. So although there is recurrence, such recurrent actions can produce non-equilibrium, non-linearity and, if the parameters change dramatically, a sudden branching of the social world.



And this is the crucial point; such complex change may have nothing necessarily to do with agents actually seeking to change that world. The agents may simply keep carrying out the same recurrent actions or what they conceive to be the same actions. But it is through iteration over time that they may generate unexpected, unpredictable and chaotic outcomes, often the opposite of what the human agents involved may seek to realise (see Urry 1995: 50). Moreover, of course, agents are not just human but will be a variety of human and non-human actants that constitute the typical mobile, roaming hybrids.

One clear social science example of complexity thinking is Marx's analysis of the unfolding 'contradictions' of capitalism (see Elster 1978). Marx argues that individual capitalists seek to maximise their profits and hence pay their particular workers as little as possible or make them work increasingly long hours. This 'exploitation' of the workforce will continue unless states, or collective actions by trade unions, prevent it, or workers die prematurely. The consequences of such endlessly repeated actions reproduces the capitalist system since substantial profits are generated, so offsetting what Marx hypothesised as the law of the declining rate of profit. The realisation of such profits has the effect of reproducing the class relations of capital and wage-labour integral to the ordering of the capitalist system.

However, the very process of sustaining order through each capitalist exploiting their particular workers, results in three system contradictions. First, the overall level of demand for the products of the capitalist system is reduced since each worker is minimally paid; hence there will be over-production in relationship to demand and the underemployment of capitalist resources. Second, the workforce will be increasingly unhealthy, inefficient and disgruntled; Marx argues that out of the order of reproduced capitalist relations, the chaos of a revolutionary proletariat will be generated. Third, capitalists will seek to find alternative markets for their products and this will, as he says, smash down Chinese walls, expand capitalism worldwide and generate a revolutionary proletariat stretching across the globe. Thus the outcomes of capitalist order are over time and millions of iterations, the opposite of what capitalists appeared to be reproducing through exploiting their local workforce. Millions of iterations produce chaos out of order, non-linear changes and a catastrophic branching of the capitalist system (see Reed and Harvey 1992).

Much sociology has sought to explain why Marx's famous prognostications have not in fact materialised. However, his inability to predict social revolution can be regarded by contemporary theory as understandable since relatively small perturbations in the system could produce a very different branching from what Marx had envisaged a century or more ago (to post-Fordist consumerism, for example). Moreover, the structure of his analysis illuminatingly brings out the key significance of *local* forms of

information. Cilliers summarises how any emergent complex system is the result of a rich interaction of simple elements that 'only respond to the limited information each is presented with' (1998: 5). Thus, according to Marx, each capitalist operates under conditions that are far from equilibrium; they can only respond to 'local' sources of information since relevant information carries across only a limited range. Incidentally local struggles by groups of workers against the conditions of their exploitation had the longer-term effect, through iteration, of reproducing the capitalist system. In the end such struggles prevented such an exploitation of the workforce that revolution would have necessarily resulted. Their struggles, based upon local knowledge, had the effect of re-establishing social order albeit at a higher level.

Capitalism, we now know, has indeed broken down many Chinese walls and has in part gone global. Can complexity provide some illumination into such a global capitalism? First, we can note that billions of individual actions occur, each of which is based upon exceptionally localised forms of information. Most people most of the time act iteratively in terms of local information, knowing almost nothing about the global connections or implications of what they are doing. However, these local actions do not remain simply local since they are captured, represented, marketed and generalised elsewhere. They are carried along the scapes and flows of the emerging global world, transporting ideas, people, images, monies and technologies to potentially everywhere. Indeed such actions may jump the scapes, since they are fluid-like and difficult to keep within any particular channel. Interestingly though some connections can exist between the local and the global and this results from an increased reflexivity about those interconnections partially developed through the media (see Chapter 7).

In general though the consequences for the global level are non-linear, large-scale, unpredictable and partially ungovernable. Small causes at certain places produce large consequences elsewhere. Consider a pile of sand; if an extra grain of sand is placed on top it may stay there or it may cause a small avalanche. The system is self-organised but the effects of local changes can vary enormously (Cilliers 1998: 97). The heap will maintain itself at the critical height and we cannot know in advance what will happen to any individual action or what its consequence will be for the pile of sand.

The emergent global order is one of constant disorder and disequilibrium. The following are some recent examples of where millions of decisions based upon local knowledge have resulted in unpredictable and non-linear consequences at the emergent global level. First, as we saw in Chapter 2 out of the US military there emerged the Internet, the technological invention whose use around the world has grown faster than any previous new technology used by humans. Second, again as we saw in

Chapter 2, in 1989 there was the almost overnight collapse of all of Eastern Europe, once the particular local centre of the Kremlin was seen as unable and unwilling to act. Third, as discussed in various chapters we have seen how the apparently 'rational' decision of millions of individual people to drive has resulted in carbon gases that threaten the long-term survival of the planet. Fourth, the exceptional growth of 'western consumerism' has in part remade most of the world in the image of north American shopping malls and theme parks. And finally, almost everywhere there has been the growth of religious fundamentalisms that oppose much of this emergent global order and its omnipotent consumerism.

Barber has apocalyptically explored the last two of these. He describes the emergent global order as being locked in a major conflict between the consumerist 'McWorld' on the one hand, and the identity politics of the 'Jihad', on the other (1996). There is a 'new world disorder' in which McWorld and Jihad depend upon, and globally reinforce, each other. There is a kind of spiralling global disequilibrium that threatens existing public spheres, civil society and democratic forms. There are of course forms of global governance designed to dampen down some of these forms of disequilibrium, but mostly they are based upon national governments (of which there are now over 200) acting in some particular local context. There is a tendency for states to regulate what can be locally measured rather than what may be globally significant if of course it were ever possible to establish what the latter might be.

Baker has interestingly elaborated on how the relationship between the centre and the periphery, or what he calls the 'centriphery', functions to create both order and turbulence in social life (1993). He suggests that the centriphery functions as an attractor, which is defined as the space to which the trajectory of any particular system is over time attracted (Byrne 1998: 26-9; Cilliers 1998: 96-7). In this case the centriphery is a dynamic pattern that is repeated at many different levels, involving flows of energy, information and ideas that simultaneously create both centres and peripheries. The trajectory of social systems is irreversibly attracted to the centriphery.

Finally, can this concept play a useful role in the analysis of global networks and flows? Baker himself argues that:

Today, particular multinational industries center vast amounts of human activity, locating specific aspects of their enterprise in different continents. In each of these cases, the exchange of goods and services binds and lubricates a dynamic relationship between the center and the periphery. As centering progresses, it deepens the periphery ... Because centering and peripheralizing involve the transformation of energy and information and, thus, the creation of entropy, the process is irreversible.

(1993: 140)

It might be suggested that a specific form taken by centripetry is that of the 'glocal', whereby there is a parallel irreversible process of globalisation-deepening-localisation. Both are bound together through a dynamic relationship, as huge flows of resources move backwards and forwards between the two. Neither the global nor the local can exist without the other. They develop in a symbiotic, irreversible and unstable set of relationships, in which each gets transformed through billions of iterations worldwide. Small perturbations in the system may result in unpredictable and chaotic branching of such a system (see Brodie 1998, on some likely effects on the local).

## Conclusion

In this book I have thus shown that mobilities rather than societies should be at the heart of a reconstituted sociology, following the new rules of sociological method elaborated in Chapter 1. Two concluding points about such mobilities should be highlighted for future examination.

First, Dogan and Pahre show the importance of 'intellectual mobility' for innovation in the social sciences (1990). On the basis of extensive research on twentieth century social science, they demonstrate that innovation does not principally result from those scholars who are firmly entrenched within disciplines, nor from those practising rather general 'interdisciplinary studies'. Rather innovation results from academic mobility across disciplinary borders, a mobility that generates what they call 'creative marginality'. It is this marginality, resulting from scholars moving from the centre to the periphery of their discipline and then crossing its borders, which helps to produce new productive hybridities in the social sciences. These can constitute institutionalised sub-fields (such as medical sociology) or more informal networks (such as historical sociology; see Dogan and Pahre 1990: chap. 21). This creative marginality results from complex, overlapping and disjunctive processes of migration, processes which can occur across disciplinary and/or geographical and/or social borders (in the case of the 'Frankfurt School' it was all three; Dogan and Pahre 1990: 73-4). Intellectual mobilities are good for the social sciences, it would seem (see Diken 1998 as well).

Second, most important developments in sociology have at least indirectly stemmed from social movements with 'emancipatory interests' that have fuelled a new or reconfigured social analysis. Examples of such mobilised groupings have at different historical moments included the working class, farmers, the professions, urban protest movements, student's movement, women's movement, immigrant groups, environmental NGOs, gay and lesbian movement, 'disabled' groups and so on. The emancipatory interests of these groupings were not always directly reflected within sociology; more they have had a complex, refracted

impact. But in that sense, sociology has been 'parasitic' upon these movements, thus demonstrating how the 'cognitive practices' of such movements have helped to constitute: 'public spaces for thinking new thoughts, activating new actors, generating new ideas' within societies (Eyerman and Jamison 1991: 161; Urry 1995: chap. 2). Societies were organised through debate occurring within a relatively delimited national, public sphere. The information and knowledge produced by its universities centrally formed those debates and delimited possible outcomes. Disciplines were particularly implicated in contributing knowledge to such a public sphere, and indeed in constituting that sphere as part of a national civil society (Cohen and Arato 1992; Dahlgren 1995: 127).

However, the increasingly mediated nature of contemporary civil societies transforms this. It is not so much that the mass media reflects what goes on elsewhere, so much as what happens in and through the media is what happens elsewhere. The sphere of public life that provided the context for knowledge produced within the academy is now increasingly mediated (see Dahlgren 1995). Debate is as much concerned with image, meaning and emotion, as it is with written texts, cognition and science. As I discussed in Chapter 7 the global economy of signs is transforming the public sphere into an increasingly visual and emotional public stage.

And on that mediated public stage, many social groupings are appearing, developing partially, imperfectly and contingently, a kind of globalising civil society. The extent of this is summarised in Falk's account of the World Order Models Project. He documents the widespread growth of transnational citizens' associations, world-wide shifts towards democratisation and non-violence, huge difficulties for national states in maintaining popularity and legitimacy, and the more general growth of diverse global trends (1995; and see Archibugi *et al.* 1998). Falk concludes that: 'Such cumulative developments are facilitating the birth and growth of global civil society' (Falk 1995: 35). And it is this set of social transformations that constitutes the social base for the sociology of mobilities that I have elaborated in this book. It is to be hoped that the social basis of a 'global civil society', and of its resulting 'sociology of mobilities', will come to occupy powerful places in the scapes and flows that are re-constituting the complex emergent global domains emerging in the twenty-first century.