# Introduction: Changing Movement(s)

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T he world is in constant movement, with patterns, objects, and beings shifting like imperceptible currents in a river. Global forces result in different forms of migration; societies and cultures change through time; and ideas and beliefs infinitely transform. Conventional thinking relates movement to progress.[1] Yet, to isolate movement as advancement here and loss there would be a misreading. Movement is incessant, bringing about change that is not necessarily forward-moving or consistent. This understanding of change as continuous and multi-linear helps us to make better sense of the world, therefore forming the departure point of this fifth edition of LEAP. The different articles reflect the diversity of definitions of 'movement' from the perspective of multiple fields of study, theoretical frameworks, time periods, and geographic regions. The contributions are grouped in three parts that point to three different dimensions of movement: Movement through Space, Movement through Ideas, and Movement through Action. Movement, however, remains an ambiguous concept. This Special Issue reflects this, in that the articles interact and overlap with each other, and resist rigid categorization. While no single contribution captures movement in totality, collectively this Special Issue contests reductive and conventional understandings of movement, aiming to participate in and expand on academic discourses on movement. In the words of philosopher Thomas Nail: "[i]f we want to understand contemporary social reality, and thus respond to it appropriately, we need ways of thinking that foreground movement and transformation as central to human experience."[2]

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[1] Cambridge Dictionary, "Progress."
[2] Nail, "Introduction I," 2.

## Movement through Space

This first group of articles conceptualizes movement through various types of spaces, ranging from digital to physical spaces, and from cultural to political spaces. In line with relational spatial theory, the various contributions share an understanding of space as "the product of interrelation [and] always under construction."[3] The articles also reflect the idea that space and the objects within it—whether goods, ideas, languages, or cultures—constitute one another in an ongoing process of negotiation and contestation. This process lies at the basis of contemporary global politics. From the EU's revised pact on migration and asylum, to increased numbers of individuals being sent to processing and deportation centers globally, current affairs remind us that movement through space is not neutral.[4] Power often depends on the possession and instrumentalization of spatial knowledge and infrastructure. Space, then, is political: who determines how spaces are given shape and who benefits from this? The ways knowledge is obtained and applied by controlling space is also a means of *exerting* power.[5] With this in mind, the focus in this first dimension moves from digital to physical space.

Milla Piitulainen's work, "Weaving Through: Digital Cowpaths and Placing the Web," is about navigating digital space. It focuses on how people exercise agency through playful explorations of platform affordances, such as digital cowpaths. Piitulainen explores how user personal mobility is reduced, as shared online spaces are handed over to corporations and shareholders. Personal mobility, thus, remains a negotiated concept, even when the negotiation occurs online. By shedding light on the continuous contestation and redefinition of online space between its users and regulators, Piitulainen's work also underscores the 'realness' of online spaces. Ultimately, the article criticizes the polarized reactions of obstruction or legitimation to playful web space behavior, an issue that is especially pertinent in a twenty-first century web infiltrated by algorithms and customized feeds.

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[3] Massey, *For Space*, 9.
[4] European Commission, "Migration and Asylum."; Amnesty International, "EU Return Proposals."; Walters, "Denied, Detained, Deported."
[5] Gutting and Oksala, "Michael Foucault."

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Giorgio Sebastiani's travelogue "Logistics of Dispossession: A Transit through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec" marks the transition to reflecting on physical space. Sebastiani grounds first-hand accounts of his interactions with Southern Mexicans impacted by the logistical megaproject in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in critical logistics studies literature, illustrating the megaproject's impact on the region and its inhabitants. He finds that while some view the project as a source of opportunities, for many others it leads to violence and dispossession. As such, Sebastiani explores the theme of movement in terms of the securitizing and policing of space, highlighting the Isthmus of Tehuantepec project's contrasting effects on the movement of things and people.

Touching upon similar themes, Bart van Dieën's "'Hanoying' Traffic: Manifestations of Mobility Injustices through the Cát Linh-Hà Đông Metro Railway" is an ethnographic approach to theorizing Hanoi's inaugural metro line as a vexing paradox. While ostensibly designed to improve mobility, the infrastructure reconfigures itself into a biopolitical apparatus that polices mobility in space. Van Dieën reveals a gap between the state's strategic intent and the 'on the ground' effects, where the superimposed technopolitical visions of mobility collide with how people experience mobility in Hanoi. As such, Van Dieën's work is an important reminder that infrastructure's transformative power arises not from intention, but from how it materializes once it enters the everyday world.

The relationship between people, mobility, and infrastructure is also addressed in Steven Hoekstra's contribution "The Liminality of Early Modern Japanese Roads: Physical and Social Mobility in Utagawa Hiroshige's *Fifty-Three Stations of the Tōkaidō*." Specifically, Hoekstra researches the visual representation of travel in early modern Japan (1603-1868), arguing that Utagawa Hiroshige's prints of the *Fifty-Three stations of the Tōkaidō* show roadsides as liminal spaces that challenge social boundaries. As such, Hoekstra's work sheds light on the unanticipated ways in which road users utilize space to exert their agency, crossing social boundaries, and displacing norms as they navigate physical space.

This reflection on movement across space resonates with Sonya Condro Lukitosari's work, "Identifying Sounds: Comparing Interpretations of Sonic Histories of East Javanese *Ludruk* Folk

Theater Performance," though this time the focus is on an audiovisual medium. Lukitosari's work investigates current scholarship on the movements of sound within *ludruk*, arguing that analyzing this art form's soundscapes is essential to gaining a deep cultural understanding of this genre of folk theater, and, by extension, of East Javanese society as reflected on stage. Lukitosari's work highlights sound's ability to act as a carrier of culture, moving through physical space and reaching certain ears but not others, thus following paths that reflect larger patterns of cultural production and consumption. As such, music becomes more than just sound and transforms into a politicized medium that leaves a trace in the spaces it crosses.

## Movement Through Ideas

The contributions in the second part of this Special Issue explore movement through ideas. To think of the evolution of ideas from the perspective of movement is to emphasize that knowledge is not a collection of fixed truths, but something that continuously changes as it circulates through space and time. Thomas Nail, in his book titled *The Philosophy of Movement: An Introduction*, redefines reality as fundamentally kinetic (where even "solid" or "static" things are temporary patterns in flux), thus treating knowledge as migratory.[6] This also applies to the knowledge produced about social norms, belief systems, and scientific theories. Social norms are created through resistance and revision; belief systems adapt to new contexts; and scientific theories are not endpoints, but change continuously through evidence, scrutiny, and reinterpretation. Fundamentally, conceiving of movement through ideas poses a shift from *what we know* to *how we know.*

One key institution where knowledge is created, scrutinized, and organized is academia, an important forum for the movement of ideas. Currently, this function of universities is under threat by cuts to university budgets, especially in the United States, but also closer to home. These cuts limit academic freedom, challenge the movement of ideas, and restrict access to diverse perspectives.[7] The

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[6] Smith, "Foreword."
[7] Binkley and Megerian, "Trump orders a plan."; Puylaert, "Voorjaarsnota."

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articles in this part introduce changes in perspective that allow for the creation of new forms of knowledge. The authors investigate how reality is structured and shaped through narration and through beliefs, by individuals, (in)formal institutions of power, or through social networks.

Theocharis Tzimas's work "Grammaticalization and Cognition: The Catalan go-past" studies the "go + infinitive" periphrasis (a linguistic term referencing the use of several words in the place of a few or one) in Catalan. Unlike in most of its neighboring languages, in Catalan, this periphrasis functions as a past tense rather than as a future marker. This changes its pragmatic uses. As such, the periphrasis marks a double semantic shift, or movement: through space, with the verb 'to go' losing its lexical meaning, and through time, with the verb's tense detaching from the action's temporality. Hence, Tzimas's work highlights how movement exists in and through languages, and how this movement comes to shape cultures and cognitive processes. In the philosophy of language, how we learn languages establishes how we learn to view the world. Our perceptions of the world are partially based on how we describe this world through language.

The following contribution discusses the scientific implications of shifting our perception(s) of movement. Myrthe den Boestert's "Movement all the Way Down" is a double interview with philosopher of science John Dupré and nanobiology professor Liedewij Laan, about how (nano)biology as a discipline fundamentally challenges conventional ideas on science, movement, and objects. Objects are commonly conceived as displaying 'substance ontology': they are assumed to have an underlying, measurable substance that undergoes movement, changing in position or state. In their book, *Everything Flows: Towards a Processual Philosophy of Biology*, Dupré and Nicholson theorize movement as part of the fundamental fabric of reality: he conceives of objects as processual instead of rigid.[8] Objects *are* movement rather than being something that *undergoes* movement. For Laan, this idea resonated when studying small-scale living systems. The fundamental rethinking of movement has important implications for

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[8] Dupré and Nicholson, *Everything Flows.*

scientific knowledge production, for instance by moving research away from measuring single "things," such as molecules.

Such a shift in scientific perspective is echoed within Dana Bouwknegt's article "Modeling the Movement of Beliefs: Epistemic Bubbles and Echo Chambers," which examines the concepts of epistemic bubbles and echo chambers through the lens of network epistemology. Bouwknegt builds on philosopher C. Thi Nguyen's distinction of the two concepts, arguing that even rational people can enter echo chambers without committing epistemic vices, and that epistemic bubbles and echo chambers are often unjustly conflated in digital empirical research. Bouwknegt shows how findings from the field of network epistemology, in which computational models are typically used to study polarization, can be reused to bridge the gap between philosophical conceptions of bubbles and chambers and their empirical analysis. As such, Bouwknegt's work is essentially about the movement of beliefs, and about how a system-level perspective on this movement can improve our understanding of epistemic bubbles and echo chambers.

This part concludes with Berber Kommerij's contribution "Memento Mei: The Two Thieves and the Movement of the Soul in the *Spiegel om Wel te Sterven* (1694)." While investigating a very different medium, Kommerij, too, focuses on factors that influence people's belief systems. She analyzes a 17th-century richly illustrated Dutch book that instructs the *ars moriendi*, the art of dying. Kommerij argues that the role of the Two Thieves in the *Spiegel* text and engravings is pivotal in eliciting the church's prescribed penitential conduct to perfect the soul in the last moments before dying. As such, Kommerij's work approaches the theme of movement as *emotional* movement. This type of movement can sometimes transcend the mind's boundaries and result in practical action: in this case, the following of the Good Thief's model to die a good death by learning to 'suffer with' Jesus.

## Movement through Action

The last group of articles reflects on how individuals and collectives are moved to take deliberate action. Within the humanities, there is a tendency to interpret the concept of movement politically, as a

means of enacting social change.[9] Action, in this context, can be interpreted as re-action; as the act of reacting to and resisting specific systems of power, whether they be institutional, socio-economic, or cultural. Antonio Gramsci theorizes this type of action as counter-movement against "cultural hegemony," the concept with which he refers to the dominant ideologies that pervade every aspect of life within a society.[10] Like all social movements, counter-movements rely on the sum of individual efforts to thrive; there is no collective movement without individual participation. In the current political climate, engaging in peaceful forms of resistance has become increasingly policed, not only in authoritarian states but in liberal democracies as well.[11] Dissent is increasingly criminalized—with more previously lawful behaviors being stigmatized—and with forms of protest receiving harsh punishment.[12] One recent example is the prosecution of two young 'Just Stop Oil' activists, who were respectively sentenced to two years and twenty months in prison for throwing soup at a Van Gogh painting, even if this piece of art was not irreparably damaged.[13] Civil disobedience, too, is increasingly met with violent repression, whether through physical police violence during (student) demonstrations, or through intimidatory acts such as the recent instances of Dutch police paying visits to the homes of Extinction Rebellion protesters.[14]

Reflecting on movement through action means reflecting on how individuals can be inspired to act on their beliefs despite their obstacles. Therefore, the contributions in the third and final part of this Special Issue zoom in on individual agency, through a series of case studies that relate to patriarchal and environmental injustice. They explore how the connections between activism, mindfulness, and philosophy influence humans' relations to their own and to each

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[9] Fard, "The Transformative Power."; Amenta and Polletta, "The Cultural Impacts."
[10] Martin, "Gramsci."
[11] Amnesty International, "Under Protected."; Selmini and di Ronco, "The Dissent and Protest," 225.
[12] Selmini and di Ronco, "Dissent and Protest," 201.
[13] Rufo, "Activists jailed."
[14] NOS, "Kort Geding Extinction Rebellion."

other's bodies. The focus, then, is on how humans embody and express knowledge through action.

Beatrice Scali's article "Taiwan's #MeToo: Early Takeaways from a Late Movement" analyses Taiwan's 2023 #MeToo wave as a case study to assess the movement's effectiveness as a political tool against gendered violence. Scali engages with the anti-carceral critique of #MeToo, which accuses the movement of sharpening the criminal justice system's repressive tools instead of creating systemic change. Taiwan's case study, however, suggests that #MeToo does contribute to dismantling patriarchal violence, and its carceral turn is a collateral effect induced by the movement's habitat, rather than a structural flaw. Ultimately, Scali's work reflects on the tension between institutional and grassroots approaches to activism within social movements.

Subsequently, Isa van Schaick's work "Anti-Capitalist Ecology: Are Green Parties Part of a Counter-Hegemony?" is similarly concerned with a social movement and the question of how to take action. She discusses Global North movements against climate change and zooms in on the economic positions of various Green parties. In literature, ecologist parties are usually conceived of as anti-capitalist, especially Green parties, which are ecocentric in nature. By studying the Parties' election manifestos and contrasting these with the Parties' ecological standpoints, Van Schaick argues, however, that Green Parties are not as anti-capitalistic as their ideological underpinning might suggest. This raises the important question of whether Green party principles should be revised in order to better address environmental issues.

The question of how to take action against climate change is also central to Christopher Schweitzer's "Buddhists Responses to the Moral Imperative of Climate Change." Through applying Buddhist conceptual resources, Schweitzer investigates the motivational gap between accepting a moral imperative and acting on it, and its related moral issues, including intergenerational justice. He argues that Buddhism can help us understand and overcome the lack of action on climate change, fostering the development of moral agency that is essential to bridge the motivational gap, and prompt the kind of sustained and collective action needed to answer the moral imperative of climate change.

This reflection on an inner, selfless impulse to take action is also present in Inge Versteeg's contribution "Butoh's Embodied Methods to Enrich Śāntideva's 'Exchanging of Self and Other' Meditation," which reflects on the transformative potential and philosophical underpinnings of two apparently separate practices: Butoh, a dance style, and Śāntideva's exchanging-meditation, a Buddhist meditative approach. Bridging the practical and theoretical distance between the two practices, Versteeg argues that both require a form of ego-dissolution, with the dancing/meditating person allowing the practice to transform them spiritually, allowing them to feel compassion, and physically, moving their bodies through space. Indeed, Versteeg's work touches upon themes common to all three conceptions of movement identified in this issue, underscoring our argument of movement being circular, rather than linear, and constantly resisting efforts to bend it towards a certain direction, or compartmentalize it into rigid categories.

Similar to the previous issues of LEAP, this fifth issue reflects a continued commitment to the Humanities as a crucial space in which ideas are exchanged, debated, and sometimes acted upon. Collectively, our contributions aim to disrupt received ideas about movement by critically interrogating the concept's current manifestations in the world, and by offering alternative explorations of movement and counter-movement. Our thirteen voices are already in dialogue with each other through this Special Issue, and we now invite you to join the conversation.

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