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ABSTRACT

Most existing research about postcards focuses merely on their visual representation, but postcards offer more than only images and texts. We analyse 134 postcards sent from Smyrna between 1895 and 1922 by discussing five interdependent mobilities constituting the New Mobilities Paradigm (Urry, 2000; 2007), namely mobility of objects, corporeal, imaginative, communicative and virtual mobility, and pertaining systems enabling them. We aim to show the empirical richness of postcards and a way of looking at them through the concept of mobilities. By this we uncover who were the people sending postcards, for what purposes, which places postcards connected through images and words, and how did postcards function as ordering artefacts in the pre-telephone and internet era.

Keywords: new mobilities paradigm; postcard mobility; communication; ordering; Smyrne.

INTRODUCTION

Although postcards have been of some interest to researchers in the field of tourism, most authors (Corkery & Bailey, 1994; Markwick, 2001) focus on postcard fronts and, to a lesser extent, on texts. Tourism research and historical research has covered a wide range of questions in which postcards, particularly postcard images, served as medium to explore representations of places, cultures and particular groups of people. When exploring representations of places or cultures, postcards are seen as institutionalized forms of representations (see Corkery & Bailey, 1994). Authors such as Markwick (2001) would often problematize the (mis)interpretations of places and particularly cultures on postcards. For their documentary role, postcards have also often been used to analyze places or cultures in a particular historical period, such as Spennemann's (2006) discussion on imagery of Micronesia during the German Colonial period and Schulle's (1998) depiction of Maine between 1900 and 1930 (see also Schor, 1992). Albers & James (1985) explore a documentary role of postcards before a wide use of cameras. Postcard images were also used for tracking changes in the way landscapes or cultures are represented or perceived throughout different historical periods (see Debussche, Lepart & Dervieux, 1999).

Whereas tourism literature focuses mostly on images of postcards, there are also some that focus on the written messages. Phillips (2000, p.12-3), offering transcriptions of 2000 cards, indicates that postcards were a way to make arrangements, place orders and keep in touch with people, and that the necessary elements of messages were greetings, talk about weather and health. Other studies that analyze texts usually focus on particular themes such as historical research on health care in the early 1900s (Hook, 2005), depicting Blacks on early twentieth century American postcards (Baldwin, 1988; Mellinger, 1992) and Great Lakes Indians (Albers & James, 1983). Some of the aforementioned studies, e.g. Hook (2005) and Mellinger (1992), analyzed postcard messages in relation to the aesthetic elements of the

images and Baldwin (1988) uses postmarks, signatures and other elements in his analysis. These studies are moving towards a more holistic way of analyzing postcards by including their diverse elements. Yet, research on postcards is usually limited to images and accompanying texts. Cohen's (2000) entry in the *Encyclopedia of Tourism* is indicative of this. Apart from defining postcards as a 'minor source of historic documentation', Cohen (2000, p.456) identifies (only) four components for analysis: pictorial representation; caption printed to accompany the image; text which, if related to the pictorial representation, can shed light on the way images were read; and the address depicting the flow of communication. Therefore even when including texts in the analysis this serves as explanation to the core component of the postcard – the image.

This paper thus argues that postcards offer more than images and texts. The study thus looks at 134 postcards written in/sent from Smyrna (Izmir) between 1895 and 1922 through the prism of the New Mobilities Paradigm (henceforth NMP), introduced by Urry (2000; 2007), which was coined to remedy the static and bounded nature of social and tourism research. More specifically, we argue that postcards need to be examined in relation to the five interdependent mobilities proposed by the NMP, namely corporeal, imaginative, communicative, virtual and the mobility of objects, and systems supporting them, which in turn produce and sustain social lives. First, postcards are objects that circulate within networks of people that are physically distant and mobile. We therefore analyze them in relation to the corporeal mobility of senders. Second, we discuss postcards as travelling objects that are produced by, necessitate, and move within various hybrid systems of people and technologies. Third, by analyzing texts and images we look at the imaginative and communicative mobility of senders and recipients, as well as various social practices such texts reveal. Lastly, we draw parallels between postcards of the early 20th century and virtual mobility of the 21st century. For their amount and speed of circulation as well as communicative and visual properties, postcards can be seen as representing virtual mobility of the time (Gillen & Hall, 2009).

The NMP requires looking at postcards beyond images and texts and as such it uncovers other dimensions of these objects and the social life surrounding them, such as the ordering role of postcards, the complexity and movement related to their production and the entanglement of systems affording their imaginative function. For each of the five mobilities discussed, pertaining systems and categories that derive from looking at postcards in relation to these five mobilities can be examined in more detail. However, the word limit of this paper does not afford such a detailed analysis. Our paper should rather be understood as proposing a guideline for analyzing diverse aspects of postcards that moves beyond representations deriving from images and text.

BEYOND POSTCARD IMAGES AND TEXTS WITH THE NMP

The NMP was established to remedy the static and bounded nature of social enquiry, including tourism studies. The main claim of the NMP is that the 'social' has been increasingly changed by diverse mobilities such as corporeal, imaginative and virtual travel, circulating objects, goods, money, images, waste, and pertaining technological advancements. Therefore, 'social as society' should be rather understood as 'social as mobility' (Urry, 2000, p.2). Social science has dealt with such mobile conditions of life inadequately; the main focus has been

'geographically propinquitous communities' which do not constitute (if they ever did) the contemporary life of absent presence and present absence or imagined presence enabled by various technologies (Urry, 2007, p.47).

Although technology and technological advancement is at the core of the NMP and thus it makes it particularly applicable to the analysis of contemporary life, it can also be applied to historical research. It has been, among others, used to analyze the development of car and road systems (Peters, 2006), mobility and networking of aristocracy in the 19th century (Wilkins, 2010) and postcard mobility of the Edwardian era (Gillen & Hall, 2010b). Furthermore, postcards are intricately linked to technological advancement such as photography, steamship and postal systems and, more importantly, postcards are mobile objects, thus a valuable subject for applying the NMP approach.

The term mobilities in the NMP is used in a generic sense encompassing all kinds of movement; there are five interdependent 'mobilities' that produce and shape social life, namely virtual mobility, imaginative mobility, communicative mobility, corporeal mobility, and the mobility of objects (see Urry, 2007, p.47). Virtual mobility or virtual travel often appears in real time and thus transcends geographical and social distances. Imaginative mobility is triggered by circulating images through print and visual media. Communicative mobility encompasses all kinds of communication through messages, texts, letters, telegraphs, telephones and the like. Corporeal mobility is the movement of people for work, leisure, pleasure, migration, family life, or escape and involves complex time-space patterns. Mobility of objects ranges from all kind of objects in economy systems to gifts and souvenirs. All these mobilities are intricately connected. They are supported by and entangled with technology, and exist because various immobile platforms and systems facilitate them. These are the five interdependent mobilities we address below since postcards entail or involve all of them.

Further, the NMP claims that social life is, and should be understood as involving various kinds of connection at a distance, with diverse intensity, speed and movement (see Latour, 1999). Such movement is not equally distributed and it requires a certain kind of network capital, which, among others, includes access to appropriate documents, money, means of mobility, social networks, time and other resources to manage movement and ways of communicating on-the-move (Elliott and Urry, 2010). In relation to postcards, it is exactly corporeal mobility and distance that constitute the need and possibility for the spread of postcards. At the center of this claim is that alongside the spread of corporeal mobility which has its roots in new technological developments and systems enabling it, the need for communication at a distance and the possibility to do so was developed. Gillen & Hall (2010a) argue that the early 20th century postcard mobility meant an incredible change in the way people communicated and imagined the world. Although most people could not travel, they were nevertheless affected by those who did.

Physical travel also involves our multi-sensuous bodies through which we experience the world, and our bodies are interwoven with various objects and technologies that assist movement and experiences; bodies become part of hybrid assemblages which are 'assembled and reassembled through space-time' (Urry, 2007, p.50). Postcards are an incredible example of this; their material properties afford easy use, thus hybrid assemblage between body and the object. Gillen and Hall (2010a) show how the changing patterns of communication were

partially enabled by the materiality of postcards and their relation to our bodies and practices; being small, stiff and highly portable they afforded to be written almost anywhere.

At the core of the NMP are also various expert systems coupled with technology that organize and enable such mobilities to flow. There are several systems enabling the existence and flow of postcards. Postcards are created and gain meaning through photography, print, literacy and postal movement, and for their materiality they easily move between and within various systems where they alternate between movement and stasis. More specifically, the proliferation of photography and print enabled their existence; modes of travel (sea travel, railway) gave them the possibility to move; and the spread of literacy as well as social acceptance of poor writing skills appearing on postcards allowed almost anyone to send them (Gillen and Hall, 2010a).

Once the complexities of movement are taken into account, postcards immanently entail a more complex and broader conceptualization. Although only a piece of paper with an image and a few lines of text, they can uncover the mobility of people, their bodily and social practices, their need and ability to communicate and arrange their social lives. Add to this numerous social and technological arrangements and platforms enabling their flow, and postcards become an intricate concept superseding representation through images and texts.

METHODOLOGY

Our approach is inspired by several mobile ethnographic contributions, such as Marcus' (1995) multi-sited ethnography and Lury and Lash's (2007) 'follow the object' method, both inspired by Appadurai (1986), and Law's (2006) exploration of foot and mouth disease, having its roots in Latour's work and Actor Network Theory. Marcus (1995) proposes one should 'follow the thing', which entails observing objects in different fields through which a sense of the system they move through can emerge, as in the approach of Appadurai. Similarly Lury and Lash (2007) argue for a biographical approach, which escapes seeing objects in just one of the phases of their lives. They suggest that in order to follow objects a researcher needs to 'find out as much about them in as many places in time and space from as many points of view as possible' (Lury and Lash, 2007, p.20). In order to do this they employ situational observation and processes of observation uncovering the temporality of objects. Law (2006) offers a valuable approach of following a virus of foot and mouth in which he first establishes a background and reasons for the appearance of the disease in the UK, he then follows various mobilities contributing to the spread, and concludes by discussing politics and policies that enabled and contributed to various mobilities.

We are employing a similar approach of gathering as much information from and around postcards as possible. In practice this entails two stages. We first look at postcards as material objects that feature the following information: stamp and postmark, address, image, caption, text and publisher. Each of these features uncovers a certain aspect of production, movement, imaginaries and communication of postcards. These elements are further connected to various social practices and systems. This second stage of analysis offers a rich contextual description within which postcards gain their meaning. In this paper the second level of analysis will be indicative rather than deep. Nevertheless, it points towards relevant

issues that should be further explored. We now offer an overview of the information postcards as objects allow us to discuss and their pertaining systems.

First, sent postcards have a stamp and a postmark with date and location. Many early postcards often have two or more postmarks (place of sending and receiving) which allow us to map out their movement in space and time and to understand the logistics and speed of the postal system. Second, postcards include the name and the address of the recipient and often the name of the sender. This data shows the final destination of the card and can also unveil the gender and relation between the sender and receiver. Third, postcards feature information about editors and printing companies, which gives us an insight on the systems of production and dissemination of postcards before their intended use (see Rogan, 2005 for a brief overview). Fourth, there is countless information deriving from the postcard image itself (and printed caption by the publisher). For the length limit of this paper, we only offer a brief analysis of images coupled with text, which explains how place was looked at and experienced, as well as how it should be imagined by those receiving the postcards. In relation to images, photography, print and the editorial role of publishers are systems that should be discussed. Fifth, messages often uncover senders' past movements and plans, and offer various confirmations of other items and objects circulating through these webs of physically distant people. One can thus map not only the circulation of postcards, the movement of people and their communication, but also the mobility of other objects. With this topic, systems of movement are discussed.

The sample analyzed in this study is based on 343 postcards acquired by one of the authors over a twelve year period, from postcard fairs in England and from on-line listings on the auction sites E-bay and Delcampe. Primary criteria for the selection of postcards in this study are: featuring images of Smyrna on the front; posted before the destruction of the city (22nd September 1922); and containing some written text. By text, we mean either the message and/or the address of the receiver. Following these selection criteria we gathered 134 postcards. The earliest postcard in the sample was written in 1895 and the latest in 1922, resulting in a twenty-seven year time frame.

From the sampled postcards, 24 (18%) remained unsent despite text and/or addresses having been written on them, and 15 contained text but not the recipients' address. These postcards were most likely used for personal collections, to be sent in envelopes or handed over in person. The other nine postcards contained text and the recipients' address, but they were never mailed. Nevertheless, the latter nine postcards are included in the mapping of networks of travelling people since we know where they were intended for. Only 12 (9%) postcards that were sent contain no text except the address of the receiver. A partial reason for this is that early monochrome postcards with black, green or dark blue print allowed no text on the back other than the address, since they were designed to be mailed just for the sake of sending them, and only occasionally senders squeezed short messages in the white space on the picture side (Baldwin, 1988, p.17). The remaining 98 (73%) postcards were mailed, contain recipients' addresses and text. Postcard texts range between one and 203 words (mean 25 words).

Apart from the features of postcards described above, we particularly focus on the analysis of texts. All texts were translated into English and gathered into one single file. We used content analysis and a process of grounded coding (see Charmaz, 2006). This entails the

coder spending a significant amount of time reading through texts. Two separate themes could be abstracted from the texts. First, the texts indicate the senders of postcards (their primary 'motive' for being in Smyrna) which relates to corporeal mobility in this paper. Second, the kind of topics/kind of communication that populated these postcards relates to communicative mobility. Within the corporeal mobility theme, we indicate the following: tourists, businessmen and their families, people who came to recuperate after illnesses and permanent residents who used postcards to communicate among each other. Within the communicative travel theme we indicate: greetings, business communication, reporting on movements and activities, reporting on plans for movement and ordering social and material life.

When presenting captions and texts from postcards, we indicate the number that was attributed to a postcard (PC) in our sample, the date a postcard was sent and the place it travelled to. Numbers were attributed as postcards were collected. Even though this is not a quantitative analysis, we offer percentages of postcards belonging to a particular category, since this gives a better understanding of the significance of the phenomena in question. When presenting percentages of the themes these do not add up to 100% due to multiple categories postcards belong to. Texts which were in parts illegible are presented with […].

POSTCARD MOBILITY

During the late 19th century and the early 20th century, Smyrna was an exciting city. Its geographical locations offered a unique combination of the industriousness of the West and the pleasures of the East. One of the most important features of the city was the commercial port through which goods and people constantly arrived and departed, making Smyrna a vibrant international hub. In NMP terms, Smyrna was located in the fast lane of circulating people, goods and images and therefore the amount of communication arriving and departing from this hub was equivalent to other major cities around the globe. Alongside business activities, the social life offered many attractions; the principal promenade (the quay) included the American theatre, cinemas, hotels, office buildings; teas, dances, musical afternoons and evenings were given in the luxurious salons of the rich inhabitants of the city (Horton, 1926). In the late 19th century the city's population was more than 250,000; there was a multinational presence of European merchants, giving the city the distinctly cosmopolitan identity (Frangakis-Syrett 2001, p.24). The Americans, French, British, Austrians, Italians and Germans constituted the most important groups of temporary inhabitants, and the Greeks and Armenians were some of the largest groups of permanent residents. In September 1922 the Kemalic Army destroyed the city and many architectural masterpieces were lost. Smyrna never gained the same international status, thus postcards are among the limited available sources of research material of the golden era of the city.

Corporeal Mobility. In order for postcards to travel and gain meaning, most commonly people have to travel. Although sometimes permanent residents would send postcards, the travelling had to occur at some previous time in order to create connections, the wish and the need to send postcards to a distant place. Travelling to or temporary residence in Smyrna was relatively common for a particular class of people, because Smyrna, only second to Constantinople, was an important merchant center as well as a home to many European

consuls and clergymen. By 1837, the British, French and Austrian steamship companies developed regular lines in the Eastern Mediterranean (Issawi, 1982, p.46). To travel from Marseilles to Constantinople in 1837 it would take an average of 8 days (Schiffer, 1999). By the late 19th century with technological advancements such as the replacement of paddlewheels with screws in the 1840s, steamship travel became even faster and more accessible (Gjenvick-Gjonvik Archives).

A large number of travelers to Smyrna, and more or less permanent residents that came from elsewhere, generate the largest pool of people who needed and wanted to be in contact with their physically distant friends and families. Postcards appearing from around 1870 gradually allowed more space for written text, leaving a complete back side for text in 1902 (Gillen and Hall, 2010a), thus gained meaning by the corporeal mobility and distance between people. We start our analysis by mapping out places which postcards in our sample connect. The following figure represents countries where 119 postcards were sent (or were intended to be sent to).

Figure 1. Places postcards travelled to.
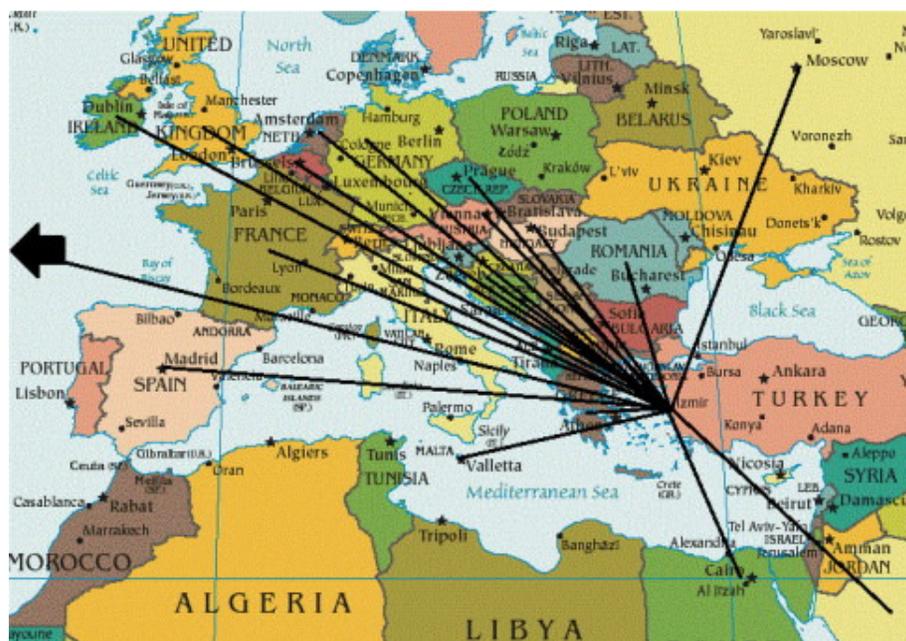
Figure 1 uncovers several interesting pieces of information regarding the mobility of postcards. First, it shows to which countries and cities the images of Smyrna travelled and, by means of images and texts, where the imaginative travel (imagining Smyrna) took place. We address imaginative travel in more detail below. Second, we can stipulate from which places and countries our senders originate. The highest number of postcards in our sample were sent to France (29%), the United Kingdom (16%) and the United States (12%), followed by Belgium (6%), Italy (5%) and Austria (4%). These nationalities were also the most represented Westerners in early 20th century Smyrna (see Horton, 1926 for population data). Although Horton suggests these were mostly merchants and army or governmental officials, temporary residents were not the only ones sending postcards. From those postcards that

allow us to understand the relationship between senders and receivers, and the reasons for travelling through or staying in Smyrna, we suggest four kinds of senders.

First are postcards sent by those on journeys and travels, passing through Smyrna and wanting to send greetings to their loved ones. Out of 134, postcards eight (6%) clearly display that the trip of the sender was what we would nowadays call tourism. All eight postcards indicate a short term visit to Smyrna ranging from "we haven't stopped in Constantinople, but we are here for a couple of days. If you want to send us a letter, mail them to Malta from now on" (PC3, 19/9/1899, Belgium), "stopped here for couple of hours" (PC 52, 30/1/1903, Russia), "passage from here" (PC 13, 8/12/1909, Belgium) and "splendid journey across" (PC 58, 7/6/1902, Belgium) to "I passed from Smyrna" (PC 106, 13/8/1913, France). Smyrna was a place to stop and see when in the vicinity. In fact most cruises as well as postal services had Smyrna on their itinerary (Okan, 2003). Apart from indicating short term visits to Smyrna, these postcards allow us to map out journeys tourists made and planned. In the above text (PC 3) the senders explain they have passed Constantinople (Istanbul), stopped in Smyrna and were planning to leave for Malta; the author of PC 13 confirms receiving letters in Marseille and Naples; and the author of the PC 52 reveals he/she is on a cruise, passing by Smyrna. Here we offer three more examples:

> On shipboard from Smyrna, Asia Minor - to Constantinople. (PC 94, 16/5/1900, USA)
> We left and proceeded to Smyrna. On the way, we stopped in Port Laqui, situated in an island of Archipelago. It's a town occupied by the Italians, since the war. (PC 117, unclear date, France)
> We touched at the Piraeus from Alexandria, […] Smyrna Metylena last night there this afternoon. Had a morning in Athens to [...] We return probably next Tuesday by a week (PC 133, 1/3/1909, USA)

At the time, tourists would not simply go to Smyrna on a one week vacation and then return to the UK or France, but would mostly visit other significant sites such as Constantinople, Athens, Tunis, Sicily and Malta (see Bolles, 1943; Wharton, 2004). We can see that travels lasted for weeks and would include many places en-route. Most tourists arrived at Smyrna on cruise ships to visit mainly Ephesus, and on the same day they were departing towards other Mediterranean ports of call (Andriotis, 2010). Late 19th and early 20th century was the time of cruises (the Titanic set off on its journey in 1912) and most of our examples indicate some type of a cruise. For the length of this paper we do not offer a deeper analysis of Mediterranean cruises. There are several descriptions of cruise travel (see Brassey, 2010 [1880]; Christmas, 1851; McCready, 2009 [1902]; Pemble, 1987) and coupled with itineraries, ship logs and other material, these postcards would offer an interesting insight into cruise travels.

The second type of senders of postcards from Smyrna were businessmen who reported on daily activities of a temporal stay in Smyrna, and their families who often travelled or were relocated with them. Here is an example of such communication, reporting on business to friends and family back home:

My dear mother, a short note to tell you that I arrived safely. Mr. Dummes was waiting here for us and the day after tomorrow will take us to our offices in order to proceed with selling for one month. The country is safe and the weather is gently warm. Tomorrow, I will write you a detailed letter. Many kisses Volay (PC 9, 14/9/1910, France)

Our sample includes seven (5%) postcards that indicate temporary residents in Smyrna, who, in direct or indirect ways, convey that they are located in Smyrna for business purposes. Businessmen would often relocate to Smyrna for months or years in order to commence business, and their families would follow them. There are many postcards that simply report on daily life in Smyrna that were most probably sent by wives of businessmen. There are two postcards (1,5%) that were clearly sent by church missionaries. The Missionary Registers (1813-1855) of Anglican and Protestant Christians are an incredible source of data regarding the movement of missionaries, from which we can conclude that they most commonly travelled with their spouses, and usually resided in different places for weeks or months at a time. Many postcards in our sample were therefore sent by temporary residents of Smyrna. Again, coupled with other historical material, they unveil the kind of business their senders performed (for more see Issawi, 1982; Islamogu-Inan et al., 2004; Mansel, 2011) and the activities of the church. Postcards describing experiences of living in Smyrna would offer rich insights into the lives of temporary residents.

The third group of senders is people who came to the Mediterranean to recuperate from illnesses. Although our sample does not feature many such reports on postcards (three postcards, 2%), it was not uncommon for wealthy people in the 19th and the early 20th century to travel to Mediterranean destinations in order to recuperate. One such well-documented health trip is Christmas's (1851) detailed account of his travels to warmer climates among which he stopped in Smyrna. In 1885 Yeo published a book on climate and health resorts. A valuable source for further analysis is also Taylor's *The Wanderings in Search of Health* published in 1890. Wealthy people would travel with their staff or servants, so if they fell very ill, their employees would keep families and friends at home informed of the health of their employers. The following example shows a report on Mr. G's health, most likely written by a caretaker:

Mr. G. got up yesterday for three hours with no bad result and no sign of fever. Today he may be allowed to walk a few steps. He is making plans for his journey. L.G. (PC 5, 29/5/1901, USA)

Out of such travels stems also a proliferation of appreciation for Turkish baths. It was therefore not only people travelling to the Mediterranean and Minor Asia, but the health practices that travelled back with them to their home environments (see Urquhart, 1850). Several detailed travel accounts, coupled with a bigger sample of such postcards, would allow researchers to map out and discuss in detail health tourism in the Mediterranean. Similar work has been done by Hook (2005), who explored the way that images and messages of hospital postcards reveal issues in health care in the early 1900s.

The fourth group of postcard senders is residents or temporary residents who used postcards to communicate in relative proximity. Such postcards would often not be sent via post, but most likely delivered by domestic help since they do not include stamps. It is difficult to say who were the people exchanging postcards in this way, for our sample includes only two (1.5%) such postcards. Gillen and Hall (2010b) offer an extensive account of such communication in Britain, where post would be delivered up to six times per day in major cities. In the late 19th century most postal deliveries in the Ottoman Empire had to be picked up from the post office, with the exception of the German post, which delivered to recipients' addresses (Okan, 2003). Postcards were a handy and inexpensive way to communicate within relative proximity in the UK, but most likely did not serve the same communication function within Smyrna. However, other services for distribution of mail might have been used within the city parameter.

In relation to the movement of people, it is important to say that the postal system would not only connect moving parties to sedentary relatives and friends back home, but also link moving groups of people. A postcard sent by Fritz Heringer from Smyrna to Cairo, written in English states:

Wishing you a very happy Xmas and a very pleasant time on the Nile. Yours very sincerely, Fritz Heringer. (PC 111, 16/12/1909, Egypt)

The recipient of this postcard is Mr Osborne, c/o Thomas Cook and Sons. It is very likely that Mr Osborne was a customer of Thomas Cook. From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century anyone who purchased their travel tickets from Thomas Cook was entitled to use any of Cook's offices as mailing addresses for correspondence (P. Smith, personal communication, September 2, 2011). The inscription thus indicates a foreign temporary resident in Smyrna and the connection to a moving party in Cairo, which illustrates the postcard's ability to connect moving parties. It was not uncommon to send such written communication to hotels, or other temporary residences, in order to communicate with people on the move. As seen in some postcards above, people would let their recipients know where to contact them next when they were on cruises.

Mobility of Objects. Postcards are mobile objects that travelled great distances and they necessitated systems for their movement. However, the story of the mobility of postcard does not start when postcards are sent, but when they are produced. Many postcards of that era were produced in Germany, including some postcards in our sample, which necessitated a transportation of these items to hubs around the world (Rogan, 2005). Not many postcards feature the name of the publisher on the side; in our sample 61 (45%) postcards are of unknown publishers. However, two publishers out of 21 were clearly situated abroad (Germany and Italy).

Most postcards in our sample were published by Smyrna-based publishers Zachariou & Koury (16%) and Decipris (16%), Dermond (11%), Daponte (5%), Sarantopoulos (5%), Maison Homere (5%), and CSD/KSD (5%). All these names denote small shops mainly located in the Thenekides Passage or around Austrian post. According to Atay (2009) most of these postcards were printed outside of Smyrna in bigger cities such as Vienna or

Constantinople. In fact, publishers play a linking role between photographers, printers and the selling to customers. Local photographers would bring images into shops and sold only printing plates to publishers, often the same plates to different publishers. Publishers were thus choosing the kind of collections they wanted to disseminate to tourists, and would then organize the shipping of plates to major cities where postcards were printed and sent back to their stores (Atay, 2009). Thus postcards first travelled from photographers to publishers, then from publishers to producers, and then back again to the locations they represented. Unfortunately not much is known, or has been written, about these editors and shops, or the way photographic plates were purchased and transported, thus this would constitute a worthwhile topic for research.

After purchase, postcards travelled around the world to greet, send reminders or negotiate relations between people (see below). However, another issue related to the circulation of objects is that postcards were often used to confirm or announce the arrival of goods or letters. This also indicates that postcards were used alongside letters rather than replacing letters (see also Gillen and Hall, 2010b).In total 16 postcards (12%) refer to receiving or sending letters, six (4.4%) confirm or announce the receipt or dispatch of other objects or goods, and 12 (9%) refer to exchanging postcards. Here are some examples:

> *Your letters of Dec. 23rd and 28th arrived yesterday and I got them upon my return. (PC 129, 14/1/1909, USA)*

> *Received father's letter. Will answer it tomorrow. (PC 130, 23/9/1909, USA)*

> *My dear Josef, I have received a card dated 24/2 and I thank you a lot but I have to tell you that I haven't received any notified cards. Would you agree to make a claim at the post office there? As for me, I have already made here. (PC 112, 21/3/1902, France)*

This indicates that postcards served as an 'in-between' communication that kept distant people informed of other communicative and material aspects of their lives. Most likely people had to walk to post offices to pick up their parcels and letters. A postcard purchased in one of the small shops close to the post office would then serve as a quick note explaining that the goods have arrived safely, or that the letters have been received, but it will, of course, take some time to properly reply to them. The situation of sending parcels in the Ottoman Empire (as it is today) was more complex than sending postcards and letters. The following postcard indicates this issue:

> *My dearest friends, I have just received a letter from father that made me really pleased because he told me that you have safely received the package of tobacco. I am truly happy because I was worried of the package not having reached Chartres, given that everything should be foreseen in the post offices and nothing but a bump could make the package open. That is why I addressed the package to Mistress Georges, therefore any suspicions on tobacco would be avoided. (PC 33, 6/5/1921, no address – probably sent in an envelope)*

In addition to the more challenging circulation of bigger objects via the postal service, the Ottoman post was also in constant rivalry with other foreign post offices because they were cheaper and better organized. Several attempts were made at the end of the 19th century to prohibit the circulation of certain goods and particularly newspapers that were deemed dangerous through the foreign postal service (Okan, 2003). This made the circulation of goods more volatile and dependent on the political and economic situation of the time. In such circumstances postcards were a great linking media in the networks of people and other goods and objects. Postcards are thus 'located in material networks of exchange' (Gillen and Hall, 2010b, p.181). It is through postcards that the circulation of numerous objects is announced and confirmed.

Apart from this linking and ordering role, interacting with postcards also became an activity in itself. Buying, sending, collecting and exchanging them was one of the most popular activities of the era, and this is why we would find postcards of Smyrna sent from other places as well (for similar activities in the UK see Gillen & Hall, 2010a,b). Hence postcards and their images started globalizing the gaze, enabled places to travel, and changed the way people saw the world.

Imaginative Mobility. Imaginative mobility is triggered by images circulating through print and visual media, including postcards. In other words, it is triggered by text and image. The analysis of images would deserve a paper in itself. We indicate eight categories of images on the front of postcards. However, for the purpose of this paper we only discuss the first and most frequent type of images and the imaginary mobility these images suggest. The authors will offer a complete analysis and discussion in a forthcoming publication.

The most common types of images people sent featured local people in their traditional clothing and engaging in traditional activities such as Turks smoking pipes, women working the figs, or children in traditional costumes. However, many of the traditional costumes were not used in everyday life, especially not among the Greeks, thus images were produced to enhance the exotic appearance of Smyrna. According to Atay (2009) postcard images of Smyrna were not really representing the place, not only because they were printed with a two year delay, and Smyrna was a vibrant and constantly changing city, but also because each publisher had its own take on what to represent. Moreover, Schiffer (1999, p.113) explains that most European visitors perceived Smyrna as only partially belonging to the otherness of the exotic Orient, and, from a Muslim perspective, the city was European rather than Islamic, thus gaining the name 'Infidel Smyrna'.

Publishers, with their choice of images, were therefore shaping the imaginative travel of those who were receiving postcards. By choosing particular images or directing photographers towards particular sites and sights, they often portrayed and emphasized the exotic side of the city. Further, as seen from our collection of postcards, those images that emphasized the exoticism of the place, particularly the unusual attire of inhabitants, were also most commonly chosen by the senders. From available images chosen by the publishers, senders further highlighted such image of Smyrna and consequently inspired receivers of postcards back home to imagine Smyrna in such particular way. All images in our sample that feature people, represent them in traditional clothing engaging in activities quite foreign to the Western eye. Although Schiffer (1999) reports that the Western perception of Smyrna was

only partially related to the exotic otherness, it is clear that senders preferred 'keeping up appearances' of the exotic for those who were only imaginatively travelling to Smyrna by receiving postcards.

To emphasize this point, we present (Figure 2) the postcard image which was taken at the end of 19th century when the city was harassed by outlaws and the governor at the time took the matter into his own hands, tracking down the bandits, cutting their heads off and displaying them in front of the City Hall (Yegin, 2009, p.49). This kind of practice was surely specific for the Orient, and the image emphasizes the choice of publishers and senders to choose extremely unusual and thus exotic images for the western eye. Therefore, the most common images that circulated from Smyrna portrayed Smyrna as an exotic and unusual place, filled with people in traditional garments or displaying exotic and unusual customs. On this basis, Smyrna travelled as an exotic place to the West. In the chain of delivery, the images affected not only the receivers of postcards, but also postal workers and other people who came into contact with postcards, and thus reinforced the exotic imaginaries of the East.

Figure 2. Beheading (PC 82).

Communicative Mobility. Communicative mobility encompasses all kinds of communication through messages, texts, letters, telegraphs, telephones and the like. Communicative mobility depends on various systems such as telephony, the internet and postal systems. At the turn of the previous century the availability of systems that would facilitate communicative mobility was limited. Telephone and telegraph were introduced some years before the widespread use of postcards, but they were not commonly used, especially for everyday communication. There is another very important system that enabled communicative mobility – literacy and the educational system that supported it. Though literacy was still limited at the time, postcards were seen as a medium for which one did not need to possess perfect language skills. Writing down a few words, or simply saying "greetings" was enough, and the front image would compensate for the lack of words (see Gillen & Hall 2010a for more on literacy in relation to postcards). Furthermore, the foreigners that sent postcards were either businessmen, or other educated elite, that could afford to travel and were thus also rather educated.

We are, however, more interested in what kind of communicative mobility postcards afforded, in other words, what kind of communication purpose postcards served. Our sample offers several types of communication. The largest category of postcard communication includes greetings and regards or simply signatures. In fact, every card includes some kind of greetings or regard, however there are 34 (25%) postcards that feature only greetings. This category does not say much about the kind of information people were exchanging through postcards. Those postcards that feature more text are divided into the following categories. First is the business communication (5%). We have already seen some examples in the first section on corporeal mobility. There we also indicated that details about business activities were usually not written on postcards. But sometimes simple messages would be conveyed through postcards, as the following example shows:

Dear Sirs, In reply to yours of the 4th, 14th and 17th last month. I beg to inform you, that codfish being of no interest to me for the moment. I am [willing, though] of avail myself of the offers you are making me. (PC 1, 26/1/1895, UK).

More often, postcards were written to families back home and would feature indirect information about business, such as reports on the location of new offices, expectations on where, when and how long the business activities would take, or reports on sales. Such reports would thus be intertwined with the second type of communication - reporting on activities or movements (32 cards, 24%). This type of writing served to update friends and family on everyday life activities by temporary residents in Smyrna, or to report on places, interesting sites and sights and activities carried out by tourists. Again, we have seen examples above, where tourists report about places they have visited (see PC 94, 117, 133 above).

Further, reporting on movement and activities was usually followed by the third type of communication, describing plans for movement (11%). Although sometimes reporting on plans about movement was simply done for receivers to vicariously travel with tourists, reports were particularly important for people on the move in order to arrange the exchange of postcards or letters. Thus we often find the fourth and the largest type of communication intertwined with such reports. We call this category ordering social and material life (27%). This category includes the arrangement of meetings, exchanging of goods, letters and postcards, and confirmation of arrivals of people, goods and letters:

Now, that I am writing to you, I am in Smyrna having just met Efstathion Macheran. He is fine and I am writing to you what he said to tell you: I spent Xmas and New Year's eve in Smyrna with my family. When I come to the States, I will also bring a cousin of mine […] her sons and daughters, too. Greetings, your nephew John. (PC 59, 15/1/1920, USA)

Business communication, reporting on past activities and future plans, and arranging or confirming meetings and the exchange of goods all indicate that postcards served to order social, business/professional and emotional life. This ordering ability is related to the material properties of postcards, efficient postal systems of the time and the inexpensiveness of postcards. Particularly important in ordering social and professional life (arranging meetings

and exchange of goods) was the speed of the system. The next section addresses this topic by showing how we can think about postcards at the turn of the previous century as equivalent to contemporary SMS or email communication. For their visual attributes, postcards can be compared to virtual mobility.

Virtual Mobility. Although virtual mobility or virtual travel denotes mobility that appears in real time and thus transcends geographical and social distances, and postcards, from today's perspective, hardly seem to fit this category, they should be seen as SMS or internet communication of their era. Above, we offered the types of communication that were travelling via postcards, and our analysis shows these messages were in many ways organizing and ordering people's everyday lives. This was particularly possible because of the speed of the postal system. Most postcards from Smyrna have two postal stamps, the first indicating the date the postcard was sent, the second indicating the date and place where the postcard arrived. Some postcards have three postal stamps indicating bigger hubs through which postcards were then distributed to smaller cities or across the ocean. Not all postal stamps are clear, but we can offer information about a few of them travelling mostly within Europe.

The earliest postcards in our sample sent in 1898 travelled from Smyrna to London in nine days, however it was during the Christmas period, thus the delay can be attributed to the specific circumstances. The postcards sent to Chimay, France in 1899 travelled for only five days. The fastest postal service was between Smyrna and France, Germany and Belgium. A postcard sent in 1908 to Mirabel in France travelled there remarkably in three days, but on average these postcards travelled for five days. Also nearby places were reached fairly quickly, such as a postcard to Cairo, sent in 1908, that arrived in four days. Some places were more distant, in terms of geographical distance, and the efficiency of the postal system. For example, a postcard sent in 1904 to Piatra in Romania travelled for six days, and the ones sent in 1902 to Plzen in todays' Czech Republic (Bohemia), or Russia in 1911, travelled for seven days. Though geographically not so distant, the postcard sent in 1907 to Port of Sudan travelled for nine days.

This indicates that not all places were equally well connected to Smyrna. Whereas there was a good foreign postal service run by foreigners connecting Smyrna with the UK, France, Belgium and Germany, the connection to Tripoli or Sudan was mostly run by the Ottoman postal service, which was less effective and fast (Okan, 2003). The postal system in the Ottoman Empire was more complex than in other countries at the time, because they allowed (from 1718) foreign countries to offer their postal services within the Empire. The largest and most efficient was the Austrian post, having two post offices in Smyrna and running their own steamships, as well as land routes, to deliver post (there were also Greek, French, German, Russian, Egyptian and Italian post offices in Smyrna). In fact foreigners heightened the speed and productivity of the postal system by coupling their systems. For example, transportation of post between Constantinople and Germany was done by Russian and Austrian steamships (Okan, 2003). Also each country had a distribution hub, and capitals were more easily reached than smaller places further away from the hub within a postal network.

However, the speed of postcards was remarkable, even when comparing it to the speed of today's postal system. Today the ordering of social life, coordinating movements, the exchange of goods and letters and meetings within a fairly short span of time would be done through SMS texting, email or phone. Greater daily mobility and the need to keep in touch and organize professional and social life necessitates fast synchronization (Ling & Yttri, 2002). Nevertheless, communicating between Smyrna and London or Berlin today might cost you much more than sending a postcard at the turn of the previous century. The cheapest way to communicate today is through the Internet either by using email or services like Skype. Thus for the price and the speed of communication, postcards are more similar to contemporary Internet facilitated communication.

Virtual and postcard mobility share another similarity. Because of the speed and simplicity of sending postcards any time from almost anywhere (Austrian post had mailboxes in hotels and numerous other places [Okan, 2003]), they were more often used for fast communication between moving groups of people than letters (see also Gillen & Hall, 2010b). The following two examples show this:

Mail has just closed will write when we shall be able to send the mail. (PC 96, 7/9/1907, UK)
I will write to you on Sunday, so if you should shift let me know. (PC 36, 2/12/1899, UK)

Whereas nowadays it is those on the move that send postcards to those left behind, thus representing a one-way communication, in the Golden Age of postcards, these were used for two-way communication, regardless of the movements of both parties. The ordering and arranging ability of postcards (that linked to their textual function) was similar to today's use of the internet in one's mobile phone or SMS/MMS. A message you can send from almost anywhere to almost everywhere, and can include an image (see also Gillen & Hall, 2010a).

Furthermore, when speaking of virtual communication or mobility, one of its features is that it encompasses written text and images. To say this differently, when browsing on the internet, one most definitely encounters information in written and image form. Internet surfing or browsing initiates imaginative travel, and so too did postcards with their images and texts. Moreover, the wide use of the internet today and the transgression of classes it seems to represent, are again similar to the postcard mania: at the turn of the century almost everybody was sending and receiving postcards, regardless of their literacy ability. Also, the reactions to early postcards, and the semi-public messages they featured, were very similar to the early reactions towards the Internet. The internet was seen as problematic by governments since it transgresses borders and boundaries invisibly and it is difficult to control. Postcards were also seen as problematic for their semi-public writing (see Gillen & Hall, 2010a). However, virtual mobility also means travelling without physically moving bodies or objects. For this reason we cannot say postcards of the Golden Age are equivalent to virtual mobility, but they surely share many similarities with it, particularly the shifting imaginaries, and the possibilities of ordering social life and expectations about communication.

CONCLUSION

We have argued that postcards are multifaceted objects revealing more than just a way of presenting places. By looking at them through the prism of the NMP, we focus on five interdependent mobilities that postcards represent, entail or enable, as well as systems that are needed for the circulation of these items. In relation to corporeal mobility, we first show that postcards allow us to map out the networks of people and places they connected. Smyrna was populated particularly with British and French merchants, thus the amount of communication going to these countries is higher than other countries. Postcard communication also allows us to unveil who were the people sending postcards. The majority of senders were temporary residents of Smyrna who travelled there either for business, other kinds of work or military purposes (see Horton, 1923). Often merchants would be accompanied by their families, and most postcard communication would thus be related to reporting about everyday life to the rest of the family back home. Other people who visited Smyrna were either tourists passing through or people who came to recuperate. We believe that further analysis of postcards, coupled with other sources of data, would constitute great research about people's lives within and through Smyrna.

We further claim, in relation to the mobility of objects, that postcards are themselves travelling objects that necessitated systems of photography, production, dissemination and literacy in order to travel. We show complex production and dissemination networks that produced postcards. As objects, postcards travelled first as photographic images to publishers in Smyrna, then to printing shops abroad and back to shops in Smyrna only to be sent again to various places around the world. Furthermore, texts on postcards often unveil the travel of other objects, particularly announcing or confirming the receipt of letters or other goods. For this postcards have an ordering function not only in proximity (Gillen and Hall, 2010a), but also at great distances, such as between Smyrna and the USA.

Postcards are also objects that through images and texts trigger imaginative travel. The images postcards featured at the time were mostly exotic and edited to represent a stunning and mystic way of seeing Smyrna. In a way, this function of postcards is no different from what it is today; sending beautiful scenes to those left behind, offering them a glimpse into what one might be experiencing. However, for many people postcards were the only medium to encounter faraway places visually. Their imagination and imaginative travelling was limited to this source of information, and thus it was most likely very exotic and also biased. Sometimes images would be accompanied with short explanations of what was to be seen in Smyrna or on the postcard. On the one hand, postcards were making places travel and enter the imagination of people who never visited them. On the other hand, their imagination was shaped by publishers and senders, for they were choosing particular exotic ways of representing Smyrna.

Apart from widening the imaginative horizon of receivers, postcards were mainly used to order social, emotional and business life. On this basis postcards were a medium for communicative mobility. The most common communication one finds on postcards is related to confirming meetings, exchanged goods and letters. Postcards were not used for one-way communication like today, but for a continuous communication. The highly developed postal system, and no other alternative inexpensive means of fast communication at a distance, made these items linking particles between different mobile people or groups of people. Postcards thus played a paramount role in ordering social and material life at a distance.

Following the latter, we conclude this paper by arguing that postcards of the Golden Age should be seen as equivalent to today's information technology mediated communication. This was particularly possible because of the material and temporal features of postcards and the postal system. In relation to material properties, postcards were easy to obtain and write on. In relation to the temporality of the system, postcards could be sent anytime from and to almost anywhere. Moreover, the speed of the postal system rendered them a valuable means for fast ordering of life. We thus conclude by claiming that postcards for their speed, visual attributes and inexpensive use were at that time the closest medium to the internet, hence they represent the almost virtual travel of the era.

Looking at postcards through the NMP prism thus unveils much more than the simple messages or images postcards represent. We discuss systems, people, images and communication all intertwined in the amazing circulation of postcards at the turn of the century. Postcards are a rich source of data and much information was not revealed in this paper. But rather than offering detailed analysis of images or texts, we offer a framework of the different types of information postcards enable us to discuss. Further research would thus need to offer a more detailed analysis of images; the kind of imagination and images that postcards from Smyrna were disseminating; a more detailed analysis and categorization of the kind of communication they were affording; and a more detailed analysis of corporeal mobility and the mobility of objects in and out of the city. Simultaneously, several systems of transportation can be analyzed further, such as cruise travelling and how postcards had the ability to sustain communication between different moving groups of people. Other analyses could include comparisons between places such as Smyrna, which was highly linked to other cosmopolitan cities, and cities that were "in the slow lane" of communication and the exchange of goods. For this a bigger sample of postcards and other documents such as ship itineraries or postmaster reports would need to be consulted.

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