Towards Just Transitions to Low-Carbon Mobility

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Structure of talk

Justice in transport and mobility

Just (energy) transitions

Just transitions towards low-carbon mobility

- Questions
- Four propositions

Conclusions

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Transport and mobility justice: Evolving discussions

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Justice in transport and mobility

1) Interest across many disciplines and epistemic communities

2) Strong focus on distributive justice:
   - Actual mobility: revealed behaviour & practices
   - Potential mobility: accessibility & capabilities

Justice in transport and mobility

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2) Strong focus on distributive justice:
   - Actual mobility: revealed behaviour & practices
   - Potential mobility: accessibility & capabilities

3) Increasing attention paid to participatory justice, justice as recognition and epistemic justice

Justice beyond distribution

Procedure: nature of decision-making and governance, including the level of participation, inclusiveness, and influence participants can wield

Recognition: Acknowledgment of and respect for the rights, needs, values, habits & experiences of groups & individuals

Epistemic: capacity of groups & individuals to offer knowledge and insights, and for these to be taken serious and understood in wider knowledge production processes

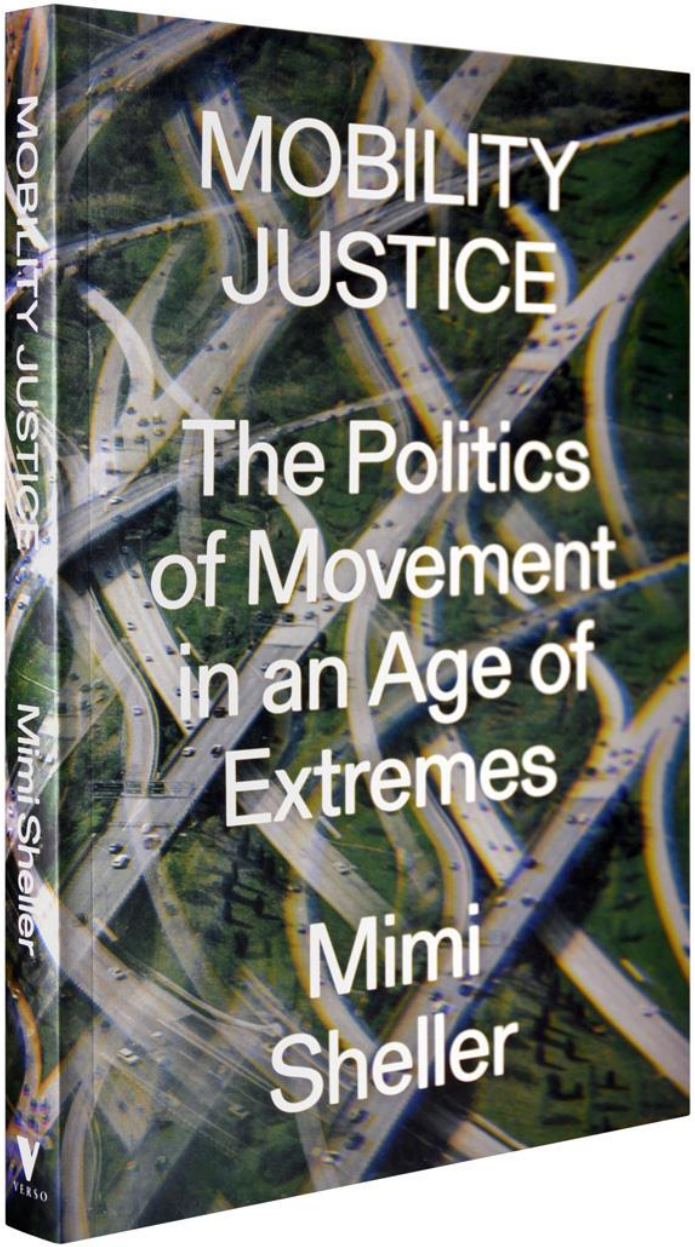
Justice in transport and mobility

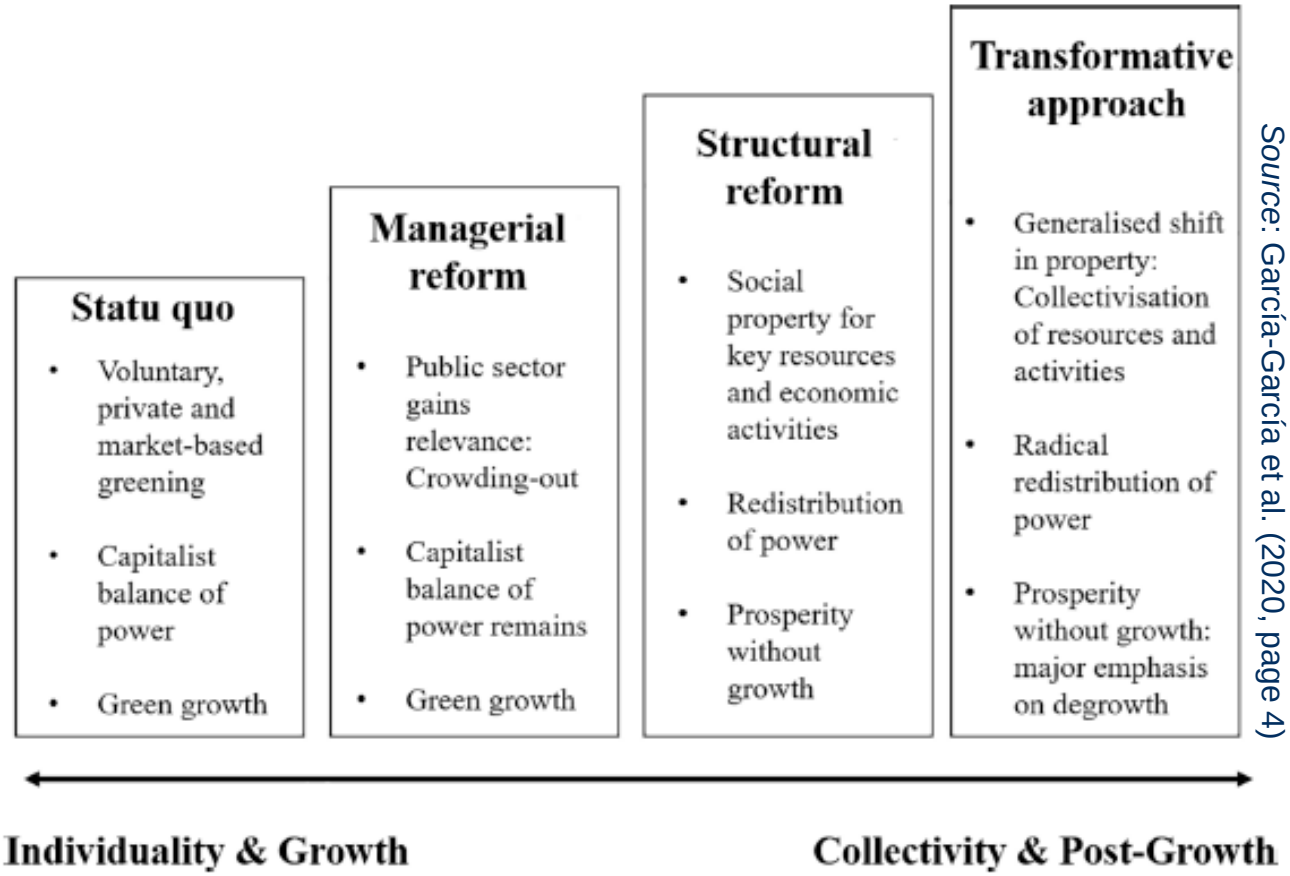
1) Interest across many disciplines and epistemic communities

2) Strong focus on distributive justice:
   - Actual mobility: revealed behaviour & practices
   - Potential mobility: accessibility & capabilities

3) Increasing attention paid to participatory justice, justice as recognition and epistemic justice

4) Distinguish between transport and mobility justice


MOBILITY JUSTICE
The Politics of Movement in an Age of Extremes
Mimi Sheller
MOBILITY JUSTICE
Mimi Sheller
VERSO



Source: García-García et al. (2020, page 4)

Fig. 4. Approaches to the concept of just energy transition Source: Own elaboration.

An energy justice for transitions

Dimension of justice	Definition	Ilustrative examples related to electric mobility/EVs in Norway
Distributive	Equitable distribution of social and economic benefits and costs, fair and open access	EV ownership limited to those with higher income, increased traffic congestion for busses, erosion of revenues for ferry operators
Procedural	Adherence to due process, fair and adequate public participation, inclusion and consent	Procedural exclusion of e-bikes, planning bias towards motorised cars
Cosmopolitan	Protection of global human rights, accounting and mitigation of global externalities	Raw materials, waste flows and overseas manufacturing
Recognition	Appreciation for the vulnerable, marginalized, poor, or otherwise underrepresented groups	Enhanced vulnerability of those with disabilities, single mothers, the elderly, and the rural poor

Source: Sovacool et al. (2019, page 591)

Philosophical issues & questions

1) Generality vs domain specificity
2) Anthropocentrism or more-than-human justice
3) Understandings of justice as permanent ‘Ideas’ or as malleable ‘Forms’ dependent on space and time
4) Universality vs culture specificity and need for ‘decolonisation’

Proposition #1:

Thinking about just transition in mobility should be wary of the Euro-American fascination with the new

Proposition #2:

For justice in terms of distribution, participation and recognition to be central to low-carbon mobility transitions, then transformative approaches to governing change should be pursued

Selected recommendations

- Ensure solutions are **accessible and affordable** to all sections of society;
- Help create **significant change at an individual level**, including through education, incentives and disincentives;
- Achieve **cross-party support** for decisions so that they are not changed by successive governments;
- Follow the principle that **the polluter should pay**;
- Check and **be careful about side effects**, including moral, ethical and environmental implications;
- **Invest in and develop public transport** to make it accessible and affordable;

Proposition #3:

The concept of capabilities needs to be rethought in the context of just transitions to low-carbon mobility

Rethinking capabilities

Broaden beyond distribution

Conceptualise capabilities as entangled

Valuation based on future(s) they open up

Proposition #4:

The concept of capabilities needs to be rethought in the context of just transitions to low-carbon mobility

Epistemic justice

1) Capacity of groups & individuals to offer knowledge and insights ≈ *testimonial justice*

2) For these to be taken serious and understood in wider knowledge production processes ≈ *hermeutical justice*

After Fricker (2007)

Assessing performance of on-street EV charging installations

Ease of access	Proximity of the charger to residents' homes, availability of one or more dedicated parking bays, and ease of parking
Ease of use	User friendliness of cable, installation interface and smartphone app, taking account differences in users' bodily capacities (e.g. ease of moving around, ability to bend over/knees, muscle strength, eyesight, digital literacy). Installations need to be user friendly to as wide a range of human bodies as possible
Installation footprint	Integration into wider streetscape in terms of risks to vehicles and other street users (pedestrian trip hazard, hazard to cyclists and vehicles on the road) as well as aesthetics
Robustness	Reliable functioning of equipment and resilience to vandalism and minor collisions with vehicles (e.g. during parking)
Maintenance and repair	Ease and speed with which chargers are repaired, ability to report breakdowns, ability to see which (alternative) chargers are operational
Price	The cost of charging in absolute terms (£/kWh plus connection fee) and especially relative to other charging options, fossil fuels and electricity in one's home.
Data and billing	Accuracy and transparency of usage data and billing
Speed of charging	The actual electricity output of an installation

Source: Hampton et al. (2019)

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Towards decolonial human subjects in research on transport

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Conclusion

Significant potential to achieve (more) just transitions towards low-carbon mobility exist

Focus should be on distribution, participation, recognition and epistemic justice

Significant changes are required in transport governance

Just mobility transition approaches allow energy questions to be integrated with concerns over equality, wellbeing, liveability, histories of oppression, and our relation with the non-human world