Disciplined Mobility and the Emotional Subject in Royal Dutch Lloyd’s Early Twentieth Century Passenger Shipping Network

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Abstract: This paper examines the disciplined mobility and emotional geographies of “between-deck” passengers in Royal Dutch Lloyd’s early Twentieth Century passenger shipping network. Specifically, it is concerned with the ways in which the network was established and with the efforts made to maintain it. It is found that such a disciplinary network furthers the firm’s goal of shipping healthy and productive bodies for corporate profits and that transhipment facility Lloyd Hotel in Amsterdam was integral to the performance and maintenance of such a transnational disciplinary network. The key consequence of such disciplined mobility was the creation of an emotional passenger-migrant subject shaped in relation to the power of corporate, cultural and other authorities in maritime travel and migration. In identifying this historic network of disciplined mobility and its emotional subject, this paper seeks to reveal the emotional geographies relating to mobile subjectivities and the power relations associated with their historically significant travels.

Resumen: En este artículo se examinan tanto la movilidad disciplinada como las geografías emocionales de los pasajeros de tercera clase dentro de la red de transporte de pasajeros del Royal Dutch Lloyd a principios del siglo XX. En concreto, se refiere a las formas en que el Royal Dutch Lloyd estableció la red, así como a sus esfuerzos realizados para mantenerla. Se ha descubierto que este tipo de red disciplinada impulsó el objetivo de la empresa de transportar individuos sanos y productivos para obtener beneficios empresariales. El hotel Lloyd, en Ámsterdam, fue parte integral del desempeño y mantenimiento de esta red disciplinaria transnacional. La consecuencia fundamental de esta movilidad disciplinada fue la creación de un sujeto pasajero-migrante emocional, formado en relación con el poder de las corporaciones empresariales, culturales, y de otras autoridades que forman parte del mundo del viaje y la migración. Mediante la identificación de esta red histórica de movilidad disciplinada y de sus sujetos emocionales, este artículo pretende poner de relieve las geografías emocionales relacionadas con subjetividades móviles y las relaciones de poder asociadas con sus viajes históricos.

Keywords: biopolitics, emotional geographies, historic passenger shipping, subjectivities, Koninklijke Hollandsche Lloyd

Introduction

The Lloyd Hotel is today an impressive building located along the Amsterdam renovated docklands. It opened its doors in 1921 to provide housing for emigrants in transit and on route to South America using the services of the Royal Dutch Lloyd (Koninklijke Hollandsche Lloyd, hereafter RDL). After the bankruptcy of the company in 1936, the building was bought by the city of Amsterdam and used to house
Jewish refugees. In 1941 it became a regular prison, incorporating for a period Sicherheitsdienst offices, to be eventually transformed into a youth detention centre that operated until 1989. After having hosted a colony of artists in the interim years, in 2003 it was converted into a boutique hotel with over 100 very diverse rooms designed by Dutch artists. As a result of this specific history and the objective of its present management to transform it into an engaging utopian public space, the hotel is also often considered as a social experiment of sorts. Most notably, the hotel comes equipped with a “cultural embassy” aimed at facilitating cultural exchange and inclusive social practice, and with an evocative use of past photos and texts, hanging on the walls, narrating its previous functions (Figure 1).

This building was indeed originally designed to be a functional “machine” capable of sorting out people in transit and actually manage their bodies, via their mobility, classification and selective segregation. It was the lynchpin of a transnational network created to facilitate the sanitization, maintenance and transportation of healthy and productive bodies. The hotel’s main purpose was to provide a mechanism aimed at reducing the risks implied by the RDL’s shipping activities and keeping the migrants disease free while using the company’s ships. It also strengthened the firm’s control over its passenger migrants by reducing their exposure to rival firms and unsanitary accommodations. The building was clearly not conceived to serve the interest of its guests, but rather that of the RDL. Its overall architecture, and especially its original interior, is testimony to this intention. In order to take care of the hygienic conditions of the “guests” there were in fact “specialized” spaces separating men from women, families from singles, the ill from the healthy, Jews from non-Jews. The guests, mainly poor migrants from Eastern Europe, after being picked up at Amsterdam Central Station, were taken by train to a disinfection building next to the Lloyd Hotel, where the operation was conducted by dedicated personnel in white uniforms, before been directed through a sheltered corridor to the hotel. Officially it was not a prison and guests were technically allowed to go outside. However, due to its isolated

![Image](image1.jpg)

**Figure 1:** The Lloyd Hotel (right) in its present form as a boutique hotel and a cultural “embassy”, and its associated “Ontsmettings Gebouw” or disinfection building (left), a modern-day cafe. The sheltered corridors connecting the two buildings have been removed.
position, very few could leave the building and go somewhere else. It was thus a sort of “warehouse for people” (Groot nd), a camp in disguise: not surprisingly, with a few alterations the building eventually was converted into a prison; a new spatial machinery for the management and control of bodies. This spatial machine, however, functioned within a broader network of outposts, recruitment offices and management offices designed to help maintain and advance the firm’s biopolitical control over their passenger migrants and to transform such bodies into corporate profits.

This paper is thus focused on the spatialities linked to and generated by this hotel, a building studied precisely as a laboratory for the investigation of the broader implications of mobility, discipline and space, at different scales. The historical trajectory of the Lloyd Hotel, in fact, is in our view of great interest for the understanding of questions of migration mobilities and the related emotional geographies, a topic at the core of many investigations on the contemporary biopolitics of (im)mobile transnational bodies (Ashmore 2011; Bissell 2008; Enticott 2008; Major 2008). The Lloyd Hotel, in its controversial but fascinating history, has indeed played a pivotal role in the deployment of a unique set of human geographies, made of spatial arrangements of protection and control of migrant bodies, but also of transnational commodification of those very bodies via the global routes of shipping, a revealing example of the multiscalar workings of global capitalism, now and then (Figure 2).

The Lloyd Hotel is indeed an extraordinary site in this respect. The spatial arrangements at the basis of the governance of the migrants’ bodies before their shipping overseas, in the early stage, and the disciplining of incarcerated bodies generated by the uses of that same building in the stages that followed, present important continuities and discontinuities worth exploring for any student of the biopolitics of transnational mobility. What we try to do in this paper, however, in line with the broader project focused on this unique hotel of which this paper is one of the results, is to reflect on questions of mobility, emotion and discipline in an historical perspective to feed into present discussions on the most recent developments of these connections or intersections. There is a lesson to be learned from the Lloyd Hotel and its past geographies. We thus situate the findings of this study in the broader literature on securitization and intersections of biopolitics and transnational mobilities. This article also intends to build on a nascent existing shipping geographies literature (Ashmore 2013; Hasty and Peters 2012; Vannini 2012) to highlight how hotels, ships, migrants and transnational routes intended as political spaces can be seen as key sites for the understanding of these very intersections and their related practices.

This paper is thus structured as follows. In the next section, we contextualize our approach conceptually and provide methodological notes. Next, we review concepts and works on the disciplined mobilities of passengers and their emotional geographies. Following that, we examine the capitalistic rationalities, geopolitics and strategies that shaped the routes and routing of the journey and the related enterprise. Specifically, we focus on the firm’s obsession with the management (and numbering) of the passenger bodies often conceived as “containers” and sites of productivity and profit. Then we move on to consider the normative measures that had to be undertaken in order to further the RDL’s objectives—the classification and targeting of diseased/contaminated bodies and the embedded sentiments. Against this biopolitical backdrop, we pay attention to the emotional geographies that intertwine with such a
historical and transnational journey and reflect on the consequences of the firm’s control—passenger conditions, individual situations and emotional geographies upon arrival at their “promised lands” at Buenos Aires. In the conclusive section we bring the material discussed in this paper in relation to persistent concerns of our societies’ present and future.

**Understanding and Researching Passenger Migrants: Mobility, Biopolitics, and Corporate Rationalities**

The control and regulation of mobile subjects within disciplinary spaces has recently become the focus of a substantial amount of academic scholarship (see eg Diken and Laustsen 2005; Giaccaria and Minca 2011a, 2011b; also Minca 2007, 2009). While studies of prisoner, passenger and migrant subjects examine...
the intricate spatialities of such control, they tend to focus on either the more rooted/immobile disciplinary and punitive nature of prison spaces and carceral geographies (Moran et al. 2011) or on the mobile/footloose/rampant “preemptive” geographies of securitization (Adey 2009). However, to date little is known about the ways in which tactics and strategies at the core of these mobile spaces of transnational controls intersect with and implicate the emotional geographies of voluntary fee-paying passengers. Indeed, much has been written about how the mobilities’ “turn” in the social sciences (Cresswell 1993, 1999; Featherstone 2004; Gogia 2006; Hannam et al. 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006) has generated new insights into an array of movements and flows: of people, ideas, designs, images, commodities and capital (see Appadurai 1990, 1996). Specifically, this “turn” has been argued to have brought renewed dynamism in conceptualizing and framing corporeality, health, automobiles and mobility (Angell and Cetron 2005; Featherstone 2004; Gogia 2006; Pooley et al. 2006; Thrift 2004; Urry 2004), aspects of materiality and stability (Law 2006; Normark 2006) and technology and the transnational projection of ritualistic and religious activities (Kong 2006) and city images (Ong and du Cros 2012b). In a more explicitly political sense, mobility has been considered alongside resistance (Cresswell 1993, 1999) and the securitization and surveillance of such mobile societies and geographies (Adey 2009; Moran et al. 2012; Muller 2004, 2008; Philo 2012). While this vast and growing literature has produced a corpus of work describing and examining the materiality, the corporeality and the circulation of power, discourses, ideals and images, the emotional aspects of such regulated movements and directed mobilities have been partially overlooked.

Building upon emergent work on the spatialities of biopolitics (Giaccaria and Minca 2011a, 2011b; also Minca 2005, 2007, 2009), “disciplined mobility” (Moran et al. 2012), constrained migrant mobilities (Brown 2010; Guiraudon and Lahav 2000; Kim et al. 2009; Silvey 2007) and the insights on the workings of actual emotional geographies (Anderson and Smith 2001; Bondi 2005; Colls 2004; Davidson and Milligan 2004; Kawale 2004; Pile 2010; Pini et al. 2010; Rose 2004), we examine the underlying rationalities of the network of transnational control and mobility of passengers, the performance of the network and the related emotional geographies of its disciplined mobile subjects from an historical perspective. We situate this in the RDL’s early twentieth century shipping of Eastern European migrants to South America—part of what was and still is regarded as the greatest “intercontinental migration in human history” (Keeling 1999:195) and one of the first global-scale international transport businesses (Deltas et al. 2004; Keeling 1999; Stjostrom 2009).

At the end of the nineteenth century, poverty, intensified pogroms for Jewish communities and the outbreak of contagious diseases brought about increased migration of East Europeans to South American destinations such as Argentina and Brazil (Feierstein 2006). By the beginning of the twentieth century, passenger transportation had become a highly competitive business dominated by four large German and British lines: Cunard, White Star, HAPAG and NDL (Deltas et al. 2004; Grubb 1987; Keeling 1999; Rutz and Coull 1996). In order to survive the dominance of the “Big 4” passenger shipping cartels, Dutch lines established mutual agreements concerning the exclusivity of routes (Cochius 1960). The shipping firm we investigate in this paper, the RDL, sailed on routes to Brazil and Argentina.
(Meeting minutes RDL 1916). While passengers of this historic route also encompassed individuals of a wider social and economic class, including elite company directors and middle-class tourists, this paper focuses on East European migrants, the group subjected to more intense discipline and regulation.

In particular, we are concerned with how the network was established transnationally and with the corporate and capitalistic efforts made to maintain it. The passenger-migrant shipping route constructed and undertaken by RDL’s ships, crew and passengers operated through a network of recruitment offices in East Europe, quarantine stations midway in Amsterdam and Buenos Aires, destination and transhipment hotels and the social spaces of the “tween-decks” (between-decks) of the passenger liners. The Lloyd Hotel, the transhipment hotel in Amsterdam, is analyzed here as a key node in the regulation of passenger migrants and the maintenance of a transnational network. This disciplinary network furthered the firm’s goal of shipping healthy and productive bodies for corporate profits. We are thus particularly concerned with how an emotional passenger-migrant subject was created by the workings of such a network of tightly disciplined mobility. By passenger-migrant subject we mean, in line with a Foucauldian perspective, a subject position created in relation to the power of corporate, cultural and other authorities in maritime travel and migration. In doing so, we intend to emphasize the emotional geographies relating to newly created mobile subjectivities and the micro-power relations associated with their travels.

Since these events and encounters had happened close to a century ago, conversations, interviews and other direct modes of investigating the phenomenon proved unattainable. For this reason, other than a single interview conducted with Dutch historian Annette Lubbers to patch the gaps in our understandings of the historical context of our archival work, we rely solely on a socio-historical approach and analyze a few key archival sources. First, we use RDL company records from archives in the Netherlands. Recorded in Dutch, these are quarterly commissioners’ meeting minutes in which all the strategic decisions and activities of the company were discussed. These records were type written and bounded in chronological order. We draw on records from 1907–1912, 1912–1917, 1917–1921 and 1922–1925. Second, we consider the Dutch language biography of shipboard physician and poet/writer Jan Jacob Slauerhoff written by Wim Hazeu in 1995 and focus on Slauerhoff’s original writings, letters and poems, recorded and excerpted. Third, the diary of a nurse working on two of the RDL steam liners, the Gelria and the Orania, between 1926 and 1928 proves a useful source of information. In order to reflect upon the migrants’ experiences, we also analyze the blog of Jacobo Rendler. A Polish passenger on board RDL’s Argentina-bound ship Flandria in 1928, Rendler reflected on his journey on an Argentinian blog (www.enplenitud.com/el-viaje.html). Complementary to this, we discuss an online collection of reflections in Spanish titled Testimonios y Memorias from migrants and relatives of migrants migrating from Eastern Europe to Argentina. This collection of testimonies and memories is presented by María González Rouco (http://www.monografias.com/trabajos14/inmigrusos/inmigrusos.shtml). Rouco made use of many different sources such as biographies, Argentinian magazines and newspaper articles and interviews amongst many more to collect migrant experiences. A historical documentary Port
of Amsterdam in 1925 depicting quarantine and boarding procedures of migrants and snippets of life in the transhipment hotel and Lloyd Hotel, Lubbers’ (2004) popular historical account of the transhipment hotel provided contextualization and orientation to our materials. Overall, our analysis of the migrants’ emotions and experiences are based on the following documents: an emigrant’s personal reflection on the journey (Jacobo Rendler), a nurse’s personal reflection on working on the RDL steam liners and in the hospital wing of Lloyd Hotel, and the experiences of a shipboard physician and migrants collected and excerpted by the biographers.

**Disciplined Mobilities, Hotel Geopolitics, and the Emotional Geographies of Transnational Travel**

The ways in which mobility has been regulated, controlled and/or disciplined have received geographers’ attention in various ways. Contemporary air travel has been found to be intensely regulated and controlled affectively and biopolitically as a result of a discourse of “preemptive securitization” (Adey 2009:274) and such control is articulated via intended and “calculative” airport designs (Adey 2007:438). A regulation of mobility can occur even when voluntary travel was motivated by ideals of freedom. Ong and du Cros (2012a), for instance, discussed the regulated and political nature of Chinese backpacking in China’s formerly ceded territories as a result of the state-controlled strategies and the ways such context and practice potentially contradict backpacker ideals of freedom and independence. Disciplining mobility can also be a demonstration of power. On travels of an extremely involuntary nature, Moran et al. (2012) considered the “disciplined mobilities” of prisoner-passenger subjects in the Russian Federation’s prisoner transportation system and argue that punitive powers can be articulated through coerced mobilities.

In the last decade or so, there has been increased discussion on the role of emotions in geographical spaces and recognition of the need to geo-graph emotionally. Anderson and Smith (2001), for instance, pointed out the need to reflect upon the emotional constructedness of the human world and to stand face to face (and heart to heart) with its silencing in social and public life. Such arguments and their critiques (see eg Pile 2010; Thien 2005) have found space in a wide spectrum of empirical research ranging from emotional geography of mothers and their family photos (Rose 2004), to nickel mine closure (Pini et al. 2010). The “walking geography” strand of research (see eg Sidaway 2009; Wylie 2005) has also drawn geographers into recognizing their need to geo-graph emotionally on a more micro and human(istic) scale. These walking geographies and geographers weaved personal, political and affective narratives of the routes and pathways travelled and served as a conceptual template for understanding emotional geographies and mobilities. In this paper, we seek to build upon these approaches and work in order to incorporate the feelings and emotions of migrants in our investigation of a transatlantic journey. We are concerned in particular with the ways in which emotions are enrolled into a historic transnational travel. Such an effort also builds upon existing social and cultural geographical work on narratives of immigrant history (Kelly and Morton 2004), emotional geographies of heritage and homeland (Kearney 2009) and the geographies of secured spaces and disease control (Enticott 2008; Major 2008).
historical approach, our study thus departs empirically from a recent stream of work on biopolitics, emotions and security in contemporary transnational travel (Ashmore 2011, 2013; Hinchliffe and Bingham 2008; Kelly and Morton 2004; Muller 2008; Vannini 2012).

The emotional geographies of the historical transnational travel considered in this study did not happen in an apolitical space. A network of control across territories and cultural identities was at work. Writing about biopolitical control during the time of Marco Polo’s travels and the Mongol Empire, Kao (2011:44) argues that the “yams”, crucial nodes in the Mongol messenger and diplomatic hosting system, were part of what can be called “a biopolitical hospitality in the service of imperial security”. With conceptual and historical roots in the Chinese Tang Dynasty, this network of hospitality stations helped the Mongol Empire (and later the Chinese Sung Dynasty) govern their subjugated populace by successfully transforming the “subjects’ living bodies into political resources” (Kao 2011:43). This has parallels with the policy used in the twentieth century passenger shipping here discussed. While the focus has shifted from maintaining the empire to sustaining the company, passenger shipping firms such as the RDL employed a similar tactic in the deployment of outposts and offices in passenger and migrant originating places, transhipment ports and destinations (Ashmore 2013; Hasty and Peters 2012). In the case of the RDL, its creation of a lavish transhipment hotel in Amsterdam can be seen as an articulation of its strategies of biopolitical control over its passengers and migrants. We are, however, not original and pioneering in our efforts to investigate the political of hospitality spaces and hotels. There is an emerging literature in shipping and hotel geographies (Ashmore 2013; Craggs 2012; Hasty and Peters 2012). Amongst others, Craggs (2012), in a piece on hotels in Southern Rhodesia, has argued for an investigation of the geopolitical in hotels and spaces of hospitality. Ashmore (2013) and Hasty and Peters (2012) made similar arguments for spaces of ship and shipping. To these scholars, spaces of ships and hotels are as political (sometimes more) as other spaces currently privileged by scholars in international relations, political geography and political science.

Securing Strategic Transnational Control: Rationalities, Strategies, Bodies, and Profit
The creation of a network of “transnational control” began with the internal changes in the firm. The RDL, originally Zuid Amerika Lijn or “South America Line” had specialized in the live cattle export trade from Argentina. However, it was forced to find alternative product offerings because of an outbreak of the foot and mouth epidemic at the beginning of the twentieth century (Cochius 1960:90). Consequently, the company invested in passenger transportation and was renamed “the Royal Dutch Lloyd” (Cochius 1960:90).

The RDL transnational network of control extended to both the migrant-sending regions and their destinations, having established an extensive network of local travel agents. A key characteristic of this network is that it encapsulated the company’s obsession with the control of their material means of production, but also of its human ones. Beyond the quality of their ships, the Lloyd’s success
was seen to have depended on the reputations of their local agents and the company constantly sought to maintain this. For instance, Director Wilmink argued in 1914 that:

The local representation of Martinelli and its agents no longer meet the actual standards... Therefore we need to install a representative of our own, Mr Beaufort, to control the local agents. The expansion of our services makes such control highly necessary although we do not aim to take over Martinelli’s agency. We aim to send some young employees with Mr Beaufort to work in Martinelli’s agency in order to bring our business in Brazil slowly under the Dutch flag (Meeting minutes RDL 1914).

Recruiting and hosting passengers were not the only challenges. Migrants using the company’s services had to make an overland journey across the vast Prussian empire—a journey that generated much geopolitics. As Wilmink stated:

The German liners have—with the realization of control stations all along the Russian, Austrian and Swiss borders, under the pretences of securing national health—gained absolute control over the passage of migrants through Germany. Any steam-liner that does not agree with the German liners or that is unwilling to become dependent on their services will experience great difficulties getting migrants to their harbours (Meeting minutes RDL 1914).

Indeed, the conditions elaborated by Wilmink unfolded into a situation in which only when one had a ticket from a steam liner sailing from Hamburg would he/she be allowed to enter Germany. As a result of the intentional closure of borders, RDL’s recruited passengers initially travelled via Switzerland, France and Belgium to get to Amsterdam. In 1914, the Austro-Hungarian government employed similar border-closing tactics following the establishment of their Austro-American line sailing from Trieste. This resulted in a total landward isolation of Amsterdam and a cutting off of RDL’s recruitment practices. To secure the company’s flows of passenger migrants, the Board of Directors decided on a seaward “flanking” manoeuvre they hoped would eliminate such dependency on the landward access through territories controlled by rival firms and cartels. In the words of the Board:

Meanwhile, the idea of realizing a direct connection with Russia from which most of the migrants originate has become a central point of attention, more so because recently an opportunity emerged to seize control over a Russian steam-liner which is already engaged in transporting migrants to the Netherlands... We would protect ourselves from the intrigues of the German liners, seize the opportunity to better focus on the transportation of Russian migrants and get them at lower costs in comparison to the journey over Switzerland or Hull-Dover (Meeting minutes RDL 1914).

Despite controlling almost all services and aspects of the migrants’ journey from East Europe to South America, there remained one weak link: Amsterdam. As Lubbers (2004) describes, it was in Amsterdam where financially strapped migrants awaiting transfer to their Buenos Aires bound RDL steam liners had to rely on fly-by-night cheap establishments and where the company risked losing their passengers and profits to rival recruiters. The company also risked losing what could be defined as “healthy productive bodies” to contagious diseases such as trachoma, typhoid and cholera. An outbreak of one of these diseases on one of their ships during the weeks at sea
could have been disastrous, both for the passengers and the company’s reputation (Lubbers 2004, to be examined further in the next section).

Even though the First World War was at its height in 1916 and migration and passenger numbers were low then, Director Wilmink predicted that the post-war stream of migrants would exceed 6000 (Meeting minutes RDL 1916). The construction of a transhipment hotel in the city’s Eastern Docklands was decided within the context of these predictions. This hotel was envisioned to house over 300 emigrants, a figure to be raised to 600 in times of emergencies (Meeting minutes RDL 1916). The construction, establishment and operation of this migrant hotel in Amsterdam was a cornerstone of the firm’s efforts at strategic controls of its transnational management of passenger migrant bodies for what it envisioned to be lucrative profit. In the next section, we examine the processes that acted upon these very passenger-migrant bodies and subjects. In particular, we discuss the notions of migrant bodies as (potential) carriers of contagious diseases, together with the company’s intentions and rationalities behind the creation of that disciplinary yet hospitable space; we also report some of the migrants’ emotional responses in the transhipment facility of Lloyd Hotel and the other medical and bureaucratic gazes to which they were subjected to at the various quarantine checkpoints.

The “Birth” of the Emotional Passenger-Migrant Subject: The Medical and Bureaucratic Gaze

The Lloyd Hotel was the fulcrum of the network of transnational control of the firm as it encapsulated RDL’s efforts at casting a medical gaze on and promoting positive feelings and moods for the passenger migrants. When discussing the intended construction of a transhipment hotel in Amsterdam, the Board claimed that this hotel would represent:

A big advantage because we will keep emigration entirely within our own control, away from the small establishments in the city and as such, we will be able to—in cases of an epidemic—isolate these from the rest of the enterprise and by doing so secure the company’s continued operation (Meeting minutes RDL 1916).

It took more than five years to get the hotel operational. It was located at the “Oostelijke Handelskade” between Amsterdam’s central train station’s shunting yards and the sea. As described by historian Annette Lubbers during a recent interview (5 June 2012), migrants who arrived at Amsterdam central station were intercepted by the agents of the Lloyd Hotel. From there they would be placed in another carriage which crossed the many shunting yards between the station and the RDL’s docks in order to stop right in front of the hotel. As soon as they got off the train, the migrants were directed to form rows in front of a disinfection building. Port of Amsterdam in 1925, a documentary made by the municipality of the City of Amsterdam, illustrates what used to happen upon arrival (see Figure 3). The documentary depicts a train loaded with migrants who, appearing as full of aspirations, anticipation and apprehension, got off and strode towards an iconic building located at the Eastern Docklands—the Lloyd Hotel. After they entered the disinfection section of the building, some of them were asked to turn left and others to turn right, as they were
sorted according to their health conditions. The documentary shows a stern-looking physician dressed in a white robe casting his “medical gaze” on the incoming migrants and taking a lady away from the group while inviting her to move towards the left of the building. The lady looked fearful and possibly worried at the prospect of being detained and not being able to make the journey to Buenos Aires. Then, the documentary turned to another doctor as he was checking the hair of passengers with a magnifying glass presumably for hair lice. This is followed by a wide-angle shot of the hospital where the ill were taken care of. Then, the documentary displays a serious-looking physician dressed in white plastering soap on the heads and bodies of a row of undressed juvenile migrants. Next, we see more undressed migrants against a wall waiting for hot water to be sprayed on them. The children awaiting the hot shower look somewhat amused by the cinematic gaze of the film crew making the footage of what perhaps appeared to them as a mundane scene. The documentary goes on to show the massive ovens used to disinfect the clothing of the migrants and a woman cooking a huge pot of soup to feed the migrant guests of the Lloyd Hotel. Following this, we see migrant guests eating contentedly and, in the final cinematic frames, boarding one RDL.

**Figure 3:** Sorting out potentially ill passenger migrants and creating happy and healthy passenger migrants at Lloyd Hotel (source: Amsterdam City Archives)
ship, with the same expressions of hope and uncertainty, while the sick stayed behind in the hotel’s hospital.

The hotel was thus both a sorting machine, performing acts of identification and isolation, and a “cheerleading” one, aimed at instilling positive feelings and moods in the passenger migrants. It was designed, first, to aid the process of identifying and isolating unhealthy bodies from the rest; second, for the further cleansing of healthy (but “filthy”) ones; and third, for the general maintenance of passenger bodies by means of feeding and recreating through leisure. On the first floor, there was a sick ward with separate sections for men and women. Those who failed the medical examination could be immediately isolated and treated there without further entering the hotel. Only when cured could their journey continue. The building was also created to instil positive feelings in the passenger migrants and leisure and recreational facilities were available. There was a recreational hall and a large canteen, several shops, a currency exchange office and a foreign administration office (see Figure 4). They even screened eastern European movies, a rarity in those days (Lubbers 5 June 2012). The hotel provided almost everything the migrants needed. There was no need to wander off. Strolls on the docks were allowed and often undertaken, yet always accompanied by Russian- or Polish-speaking employees of the Lloyd Hotel. Migrants would spend two to five days in this protective but fully surveyed environment and before departure they would go through another medical inspection (Lubbers 2004:44).

The need to maintain healthy and productive bodies for the final destination necessitated an extension of the medical gaze and care on the firm’s ships. As such, medical doctors were employed to watch over and treat the ill and to advise and maintain a healthy environment. Writing about medical care and the shipboard physician Dr Slauerhoff (see Figure 5), biographer Hazeu (1995) stated:

![Old plan of Lloyd Hotel’s ground floor depicting the kitchen (down left), offices (upper left), canteen hall (middle under), recreation zone (right), entrance (middle up), Jewish waiting chambers (right of the entrance) and waiting chambers (left of the entrance) (source: Dutch National Archives)](https://example.com/figure4.png)

**Figure 4:** Old plan of Lloyd Hotel’s ground floor depicting the kitchen (down left), offices (upper left), canteen hall (middle under), recreation zone (right), entrance (middle up), Jewish waiting chambers (right of the entrance) and waiting chambers (left of the entrance) (source: Dutch National Archives)
Dr. Slauerhoff received a contract with the RDL and was placed immediately under the supervision of the captain of the ship. He was charged with the medical services on board including: “the treatment of those who are ill, the preparation of medication and the supervision on hygiene, sanitary facilities etc. When passengers are boarding in every harbour, he will make sure that no person carrying trachoma or any other contagious disease, or anyone whose health status is in any other way a danger to the passenger, is allowed on the ship” (Hazeu 1995:356).

Indeed, so stringent were the requirements that all potential threats to the general health of the passengers were to be eradicated—including bodies already carrying contagious diseases. Such oft-humiliating quarantine and health checks, however, did not end in the transhipment hotel or the port of Amsterdam. Regardless of class, anyone found sick would be removed in the next port (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde, 1926). According to diary accounts of members of medical staff and passenger migrants, migrants were subjected to further inspection on arrival:

Immigration laws, immigration papers, immigration servants. Two days of disgust and resistance against this repulsive monstrous organism. I see our equals in the zoological garden: the small predators that walk there and back again in their cages do exactly the same as we do on the decks of our ship (Slauerhoff, cited in Hazeu 1995:327).

Figure 5: Photograph of the shipboard physician and poet Dr Slauerhoff on display in today’s Lloyd Hotel and Cultural Embassy
Such barriers to immigration upon arrival at Buenos Aires had been likened by Slauerhoff to bordering on the predatory, animalistic and inhuman(e).

RDL’s quest for business viability through the successful transportation of healthy and productive migrant bodies had brought about such enactments of control. Performing intensive control also required attending to the migrants’ biological and emotional needs. The provision of Eastern European movie screenings, of relatively lavish and comfortable spaces at the Lloyd Hotel, and of warm meals and hot showers were aimed at attending to such bodily and emotional needs. Yet, the constant medical examinations, the ever present possibility of being excluded from the journey, and the perceived and real uncertainties upon arrival had arguably given rise to the fears and apprehension one can detect from the narratives of the historical documentary and the biographies discussed. In the next section, we discuss how some of these passenger-migrant subjects responded to and coped with the effects of this transnational travel and control. In particular, we focus on the ways in which their disciplined mobilities were shaped not only by RDL-directed gazes and actions, but also their individual biographies and “tourist” imaginings of the destination.

Coping with Transnational Control: Discipline and Emotions on the Move
Jacobo Rendler was born on 7 October 1908 in Lublin, Poland to a deprived Jewish family. In the summer of 1928, at almost age 20, his enlistment into military service was looming. As Rendler (2000b) recalled: “The situation for Jews was getting worse in Poland. I knew that I could probably not endure the humiliation I would suffer in the army. It would have practically meant a death sentence for me.” He decided to leave for Argentina. The only countries he knew which admitted Jewish immigrants at that time were South Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay. Rendler’s parents did not want him to go for fears of human trafficking in South America. After months of debate and a consultation with a rabbi, his parents relented reluctantly:

My mother … hugged me and said, “Go with God. He will accompany you and have ‘JAIN’, which is Yiddish for be welcomed and well received by the people”. I immediately went to the emigration agency to hand them my parent’s authorization. In early November, they gave me all the paperwork: a passport, visa and permission of the Argentina Polish Foreign Ministry, authorizing me to travel to Argentina to study (Rendler 2000b).

On 9 November 1928, Rendler took the train from Lublin to Warsaw. From there he went to Gdvnia, where he boarded a boat that took him to Amsterdam (Rendler 2000a). As Trudy Aerents, a nurse working for the RDL explains, “once arriving in Amsterdam, the emigrants were taken to the hotel. There they were examined and vaccinated and after several days in the hotel embarked on their journey to South America” (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde 1928:8).

From Amsterdam, Jacobo Rendler boarded the Argentina-bound Flandria. He described the conditions onboard and in the tween-decks:
We travelled in third class with 450 other passengers of various nationalities, especially Italian, Spanish and Polish... our place was in the cellar that had been emptied and filled with rows of three layered bunk beds. We were with about fifty Jews, some married, some religious who passed the time praying (Rendler 2000a).

The Gelria, a bigger RDL ship, carried up to 1485 passengers, of whom 275 were first class passengers, 2200 were second class passengers and 990 were third class and tween-decks passengers (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde 1927). On board, the passenger migrants were confined to very tight spaces. They would stay there for the entire 23-day journey to South America. There was almost no furniture. The passenger migrants sat on baskets and duffel beds. Sanitary facilities were simple and rats abundant (Lubbers 2004). As (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde 1926:6) recalled from sailing on the Gelria: “When I want to leave my hospital I have to cross the 3rd class decks. It is very crowded there, children are sitting on the stairs, I can hardly pass”. Strict rules dictated that the third-class passengers reside within the cramped spaces in the least desirable parts of the ships and that they be kept out of the luxurious recreational spaces of the first-class passengers composed of Dutch and German company directors (Slauerhoff, cited in Hazeu 1995:313). They were allowed to stroll on their own decks but could not go to the first- and second-class decks where recreational facilities were available. They were also subjected to a strict schedule. As one unnamed Gelria passenger migrant remarked in a newspaper article found in the shipboard nurse’s diary (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde 1927):

At home we normally do not wake up at 6:30, eat at 7:00 and to do everything pünktlich (on time). Some of us think this should be different and we should also have more space. We are on a steamer however and we have to make do with the circumstances.

In her diary, Aerents also describes frequent instances of passenger migrants consuming mouldy hard bread.

The disciplinary process was then a class-based one. For instance, based on Nurse Aerents’ and Rendler’s accounts, only third-class and tween-deck passengers were required to undergo the repeated medical checks at Lloyd Hotel and the only ones bounded to confined and dark spaces, while the first- and second-class passengers enjoyed costume balls, Italian cuisine and excursions on islands and transhipment ports. However, third-class and tween-deck passengers organized their own activities to somehow negotiate and overcome their marginalization. As Rendler (2000a) recalls, “we shared games, songs and mutual help”. Nurse Aerents instead writes about gymnastics sessions organized on the third-class decks by one of the ships translators (Aerents and van Deel-Van Heerde 1927). These were some of the ways in which passenger migrants tried to cope with and negotiate the biopolitical discipline and subjectification implemented by the shipping company. Such coping mechanisms, however, did not isolate and immune the migrants from sickness and death. In fact, in the diary of Dr Slauerhoff titled “5 April. The Death of little Lysieck” they constituted the group in most need of medical care:

Suddenly, blue with bleedings on hands and feet. My cabin a moratorium with praying and weeping Polish. Strange, farmers in this cabin, in the mirror reflected. Sweating, nasal praying, sobbing. At midnight it slides into the sea, freed from many torments and saved from many yet to come (Slauerhoff, cited in Hazeu 1995:325).
Passenger migrants also had to deal with emotional struggles over the uncertainty of their career and life in their destinations. In Rendler’s words:

Onboard I met a guy of my age from Warsaw named Melcer Lazarus, who was in the same situation as me. No relatives or acquaintances in Buenos Aires. He however had a small advantage. In those days, having a job was a bonus: and he was a watchmaker. We spent all those days on the boat thinking about the future. *He, at least, was a watchmaker but what would I do? Who would help me, where would I go?* (Rendler 2000a, our emphasis).

While Rendler longed for a degree of certainty in his future, other passenger migrants suffered emotionally too for other reasons. For some, their expectations of the destination, crafted by both their personal biographies and tourist imaginations, resulted in great disappointments upon arrival. Some migrants were bitterly disillusioned for how they were received. For instance, Jorge Ochoa de Eguileor described a passenger migrant’s experience on arrival in Buenos Aires:

She was very angry when she arrived in Buenos Aires because she could not see any palm trees or coconut trees that she had imagined—the European vision of the Americas—and instead, as she was used to a good life in Hungary, needed to come here with nothing but her memories of that past and the thought of arriving in a three to four star hotel. Instead she found a hotel with many people and large sleeping quarters for everybody—men on the one side and women and the children on the other. She felt really disenchanted (Jorge Ochoa de Eguileor, cited in Rouco 2013).

Rendler also felt discontented upon his arrival in Buenos Aires:

We were taken to the Hotel of Immigrants. The Jews were kept together. Soon two people approached us. They introduced themselves and spoke to us in Yiddish. They told us that they were from the Jewish society and that they would help us were they could. We were taken to an office where there were long benches. They sat us down and we were called forth after one-another. They asked us our name, origin, profession and if we knew anybody in the country. They noted down everything and escorted us to the first floor. All the time, my friend was beside me. There was a huge room with three layered bunk beds. When we saw the beds, we lost our desire to lie down. Melcer chose to sleep outside on cement benches instead (Rendler 2000a).

The migrants’ general unease with the conditions provided was not limited to hospitality within the immigrant hotels. It was extended to their more permanent work sites and everyday lives deeper in Argentina’s heat and back country. Indeed, such were the struggles the migrants faced and endured upon arrival. Many of these immigrants found that they were confronted with equally if not more treacherous and unforgiving conditions at destination than back home. In fact, some of them had not wished for a move to Buenos Aires and had soon been missing home. In the words of Jewish migrant Yagupsy:

Why did we Jews come here? For most of us it was to escape pogroms. We did not move, as the Italians did, in order to seek a more comfortable life or escape poverty. There the Jews were poor, but we were accustomed to poverty. We loved life in the ghetto because it meant to live together, in the great family, so much so that up till her deathbed in Argentina, my grandmother referred persistently to her home country—“there in my house”. Despite living in poverty, that was her home (Yagupsy, cited in Rouco 2013).
Emotional connections to home also propelled migrants to make difficult life decisions. Rendler travelled to Bariloche, Rio Negro in the far west of Argentina with the help of family friends and worked as a salesman, walking with his goods from door to door. His love for his family, coupled with the politico-economic situations so well exploited by a shipping capitalist company like the Lloyd, resulted in the abandonment of his dreams:

On one day I read the “Di yidishe Tzaitung” (The Jewish Journal). It had news from Europe, stating that anti-Semitism grew day by day under the influence of Hitlerism that contaminated Europe and especially Poland. That night I made a decision. I gave up my youthful dream of traveling to Israel. Instead, I decided to dedicate myself to work hard and to help my family by bringing them over as soon as possible (Rendler 2000a).

In this section, we have discussed some of the ways in which passenger migrants on the RDL’s passenger route were subjected to emotional strains as a result of their migration, and how they coped with and managed these strains. We have showed how the negative feelings and emotional strains experienced were a combined result of the shipping firms’ disciplining and the workings of a gaze shaped by tourist imaginations and personal biographies. Far from being simply an economic activity, the disciplined mobilities across these territories had created emotional passenger subjects caught within challenging circumstances and the realization of profit based on their needs and their vulnerability.

**Conclusion**

Drawing materials from Dutch and Spanish original sources, including the shipping firm’s meeting minutes and reports, onboard and harbour physicians’ and migrant diaries, photographs and documentary footage, we have sought to weave and piece together—against a biopolitical backdrop—emotional and geographical fragments of a significant historic passenger shipping route. We have argued that the RDL, an integral part of one of the greatest intercontinental migrations in human history, was essentially a set of transnational control and management networks between Eastern Europe and South America, orchestrated and coordinated in Amsterdam. We have also asserted that among the four key platforms maintaining this transnational network of controls—which included the recruitment offices in Russia, the transhipment in Amsterdam, the liners and the immigrant hotel in Buenos Aires—the Lloyd Hotel was the fulcrum of this operation, playing a key role in the production, division, management and transport of passenger bodies across multiple territories and over the Atlantic. In this respect, the establishment of the hotel as a one-stop quarantine, disinfection, recovery, recreation, surveillance and transfer station and its location within a long transnational route were crucial elements in the production and enactment of the disciplined mobility experienced by the passenger migrants discussed.

Specifically, we have sought to demonstrate the existence of a disciplined transnational network concerning passengers on a historic migratory route and outlined some of the related techniques and strategies. We have argued that such attempts at establishing and strengthening this network were premised on economic rationalities.
of transporting large numbers of healthy and happy passenger migrants in what was then a very competitive passenger transport market. While we had analysed RDL-centred efforts at constraining, regulating and disciplining passenger migrants, we have taken into consideration other processes at play as well. In particular, we examined the ways in which personal biographies and touristic imaginings were enrolled into the performance of the passenger migrants’ emotional geographies. Their disappointments with the immigrant hotel in particular and their negative feelings about the destination on the whole contributed to the overall emotional geographies of the network created by the RDL.

While this research is historical in its sources and scope, we trust that the reader may see its broader implications beyond its time. Returning to and becoming immersed in this historical route and its associated assemblage of historical narratives, images and sources has brought insights that resonate with and highlight some aspects of present and future global mobilities of migrating and transnational subjects. This paper is about hotels and shipping, read biopolitically in their implications with the macro and micro geographies of capitalist power geographies of the day. However, we do not believe that the findings of this project are limited to mere insights into those past spatialities of capitalism. In fact, the biopolitical powers we have identified and discussed in the early years of the transhipment hotel had persisted in varying degrees and forms in its later functions, and the building had lent itself to subsequent biopolitical and geopolitical shapings. Specifically, it was enrolled into Nazi and postwar state geopolitics and had become entangled in their networks and the trajectory of its environs and the wider city. Following migration of impoverished farmers and Jewish people from Russia, some of whom formed RDL’s first passengers and Lloyd Hotel’s first guests, Jewish and political refugees from Germany arrived in the city of Amsterdam as Hitler’s Nazi politics gained ground in 1933 (Mak 1995). As the Nazi aggression peaked in the Kristallnacht, Lloyd Hotel became one of the 25 improvised refugee camps in the Netherlands (Lubbers 2004).

The choice of a building that was paradoxically a fulcrum in transnational mobility and migration, but inaccessible and remote within the spatialities of the city of Amsterdam, clearly relates to the form of disciplined mobility this paper discusses. This form of disciplined mobility speaks in particular to the screening and isolation of “contaminated” bodies, but also to the ways in which the building becomes a node in the forced mobilities of politically prosecuted individuals and groups to the refugee camps. Together with refugees previously granted permission to stay with their Dutch relatives, refugees from Lloyd Hotel were in fact transported to the centralized Westerbork camp when it became clear in October 1939 that they would not gain entry into countries beyond the Netherlands (Lubbers 2004). While diseased and “contaminated” passenger-migrant bodies were consequently quarantined and treated in Lloyd Hotel or removed from RDL’s liners at the next port when identified on board, in its later use as an improvised refugee camp and a node in European and Nazi geopolitics, some of the buildings’ “guests” and refugee subjects were ultimately brought to and disposed of in the notorious Auschwitz. In this sense, disciplinary power was articulated through a sophisticated rationale of mobility of subjects (Moran et al. 2012), and the Lloyd Hotel’s involvement demonstrates how such mobility can be formed not only in regular prisons but also
via spontaneous nodes in turbulent historic moments. As such, there were many continuities and links to the ways in which the building persisted in its role as a biopolitical machine caught up in the various micro-politics and broader geopolitics of the violent continent.

The Lloyd Hotel was involved in such machinery when it served as a punitive space for the interrogation, detention and reformation of people arrested for the strike held on 25 February 1941 (Lubbers 2004; Mak 1995). The building went on to play a role in incarceration in post-war European modernity and leisure and cultural tourism development in neoliberal European Union. Shaped by post-war ideals of European modernity, the Dutch society embarked on a series of policy experiments in carceral spaces and reformation (Boin 2001). As a more centralized modern system of prisons was built in the Netherlands, the Lloyd Hotel was converted to a youth detention centre. While the demographics of its “guests” had changed, the disciplinary processes had been unrelenting. Arguably, the building enjoyed a brief respite and disjuncture from its disciplinary and carceral vocation when it was subsequently used by artists and migrants from Yugoslavia as a cultural meeting space (Lubbers 2004). However, one could also argue that the voluntary congregation of these groups of people were the result of consequent marginalization from the Dutch politics of the day and the broader European geopolitics as much as it was for solidarity. Today, the building serves as a boutique hotel and cultural hub for fee-paying hotel guests and cultural visitors. This had followed extensive and expensive restoration and had arguably resulted in the creation of a sophisticated hub for some of those who can travel for leisure at a time of financial crisis and budgetary cuts in the European Union and the Netherlands. While the class position of its guests has changed drastically from its first use as a transhipment hotel, existing work in the political geography of hotels (Craggs 2012) and enclavic tourism (Minca 2009) points to their potential lingering biopolitical presence.

The regulatory measures and biopolitics discussed in this paper also speak to contemporary trends and developments in immigration and border controls. Specifically, while human mobilities of the early twentieth century were found in this study to be regulated primarily on biopolitical issues of health and fears of circulations of contagious diseases, at the same time they reveal important signs of continuity with some twenty-first century geographies of securitization (see eg Adey 2009; Muller 2008) that tend to go beyond the biological-political aspects in order to emphasize more behavioural-preemptive ones. Such shifts in our modes of securing spaces and bodies have significant implications on the ways in which we may understand freedom and autonomy in individual and collective mobility and how these may have been changing in our increasingly mobile societies. The Lloyd Hotel and its spatial entanglements with a specific transnational network of capitalist power, in other words, may be worth studying for the continuities and the legacies that seem to find space and legitimacy in the most recent spatial arrangements of security and the protection of global health (Enticott 2008; Fearnley 2008). The biopolitical governance of bodies, docile or less docile bodies in movement, has by now a long history that shows how discipline manifests itself in varied and complicated ways. This is why, we think, there are important lessons to learn from this brief incursion into the historical geographies of this Amsterdam institution.
One lesson among others is the need, in the examination of the disciplinary aspects of any regulation of bodies across territories, to consider the emotional dimensions of both the historical and contemporary journeys that this regulation implicates. As the “tween-deck” passenger migrants discussed in this paper occupied the lower strata of social hierarchies of their day, an examination of their agony, hurt and marginalization connects contemporary emotional geographic approaches with longstanding concerns with the felt subjugation in classed experiences (Dicks 2008) or “hidden injuries of class” (Sennett and Cobbs 1972). This is why we have sought to expose some of the emotional responses of passenger-migrant subjects as they reflected upon their departures, their experiences of and negotiations with the medical and bureaucratic gaze, their time in the Lloyd Hotel, their life on board the “tween decks” of the RDL liners and their conditions, aspirations and disappointments upon arrival at Buenos Aires; we have used these reports on the emotion of travel and migration in order to highlight the importance of incorporating in our work the felt and experienced aspects of any disciplined mobility, regardless of origin, time and nature.

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