

‘Car States’ in motion.

(Re)Producing mobility cultures in industrial politics.

Investigating “the change of the automobile industry” in car-producing regions



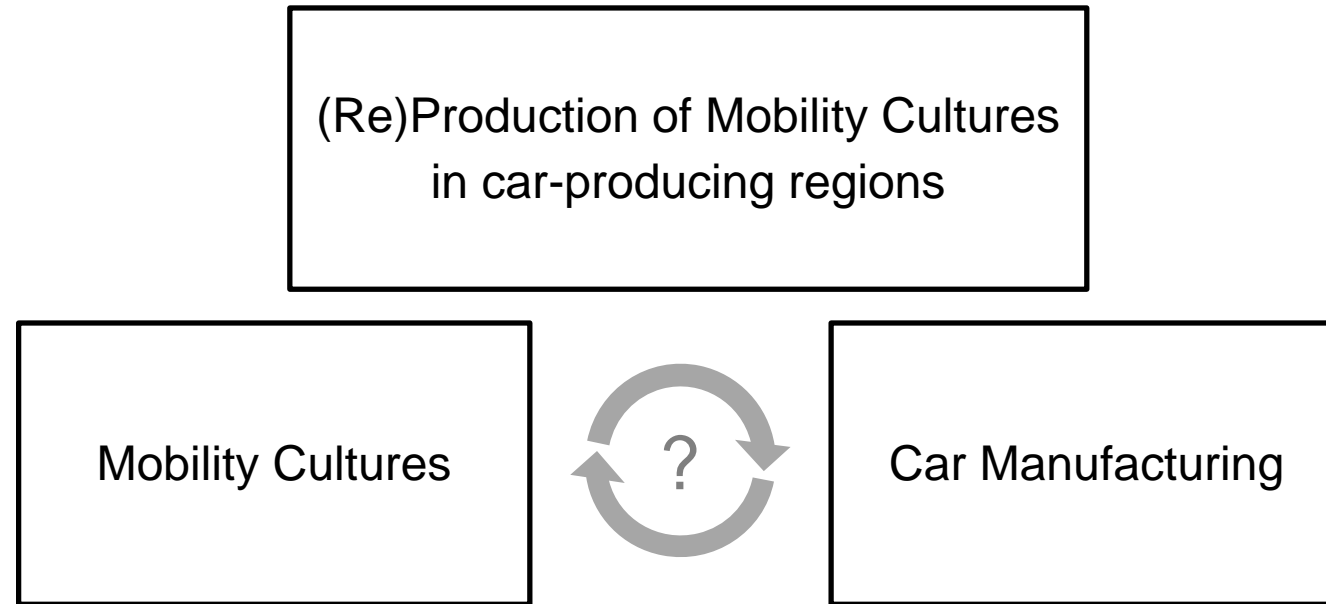
We save the car!

(...) Here we have documented the solidarity between the automotive industry and politics, which we actually take for granted, but which no longer seems so obvious in view of the debates of recent months and years. We know that we will continue to need the car in the future to maintain the quality of life, especially in rural areas. The urban public may think differently, but even there the vast majority of people are dependent on cars. And we need future-proof models how to be able to present the car to the public in the long term (...) because there are attacks on whether driving a car is still modern.

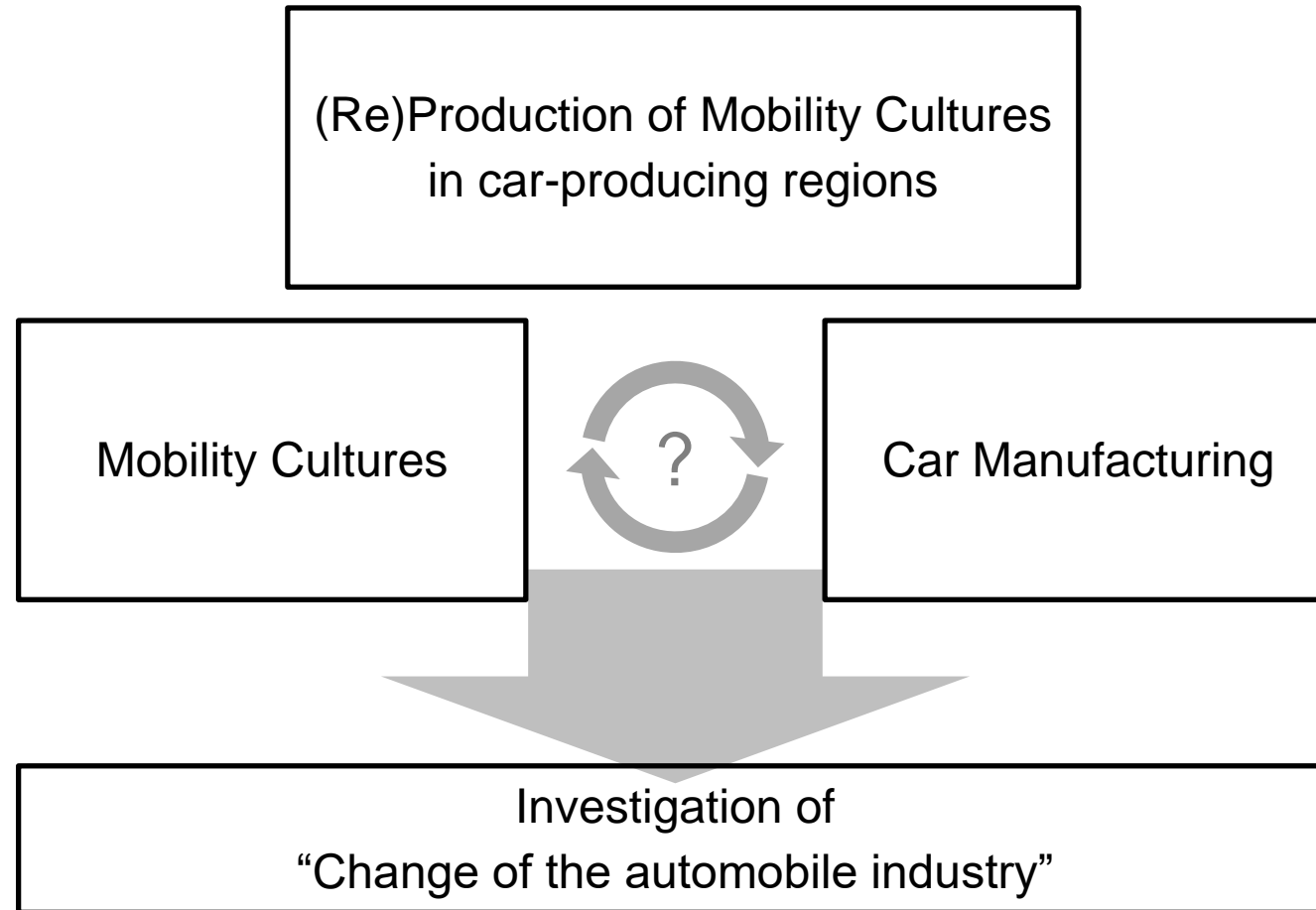
Yes, driving is modern and must remain modern!

Bavarian economics minister at press conference Future Forum Automobil on Phoenix 2019; translated by MM)

Research Focus – (Re)Production of Mobility Cultures & Car Industry



Research Focus – (Re)Production of Mobility Cultures & Car Industry



Theory: Automobility and automobile cultures

The “System” of Automobility (Urry 2004); Automobilitismus (Burkart 1994)

Automobility as a specific way of mobile life

- Focus on cultures around driving a car
- Car as cultural artefact
- Driving as cultural practice

- Usage-oriented definition of automobility as mobility cultures based on individual mobility using cars
- Car industry is not part of culture but is seen as provider of product.

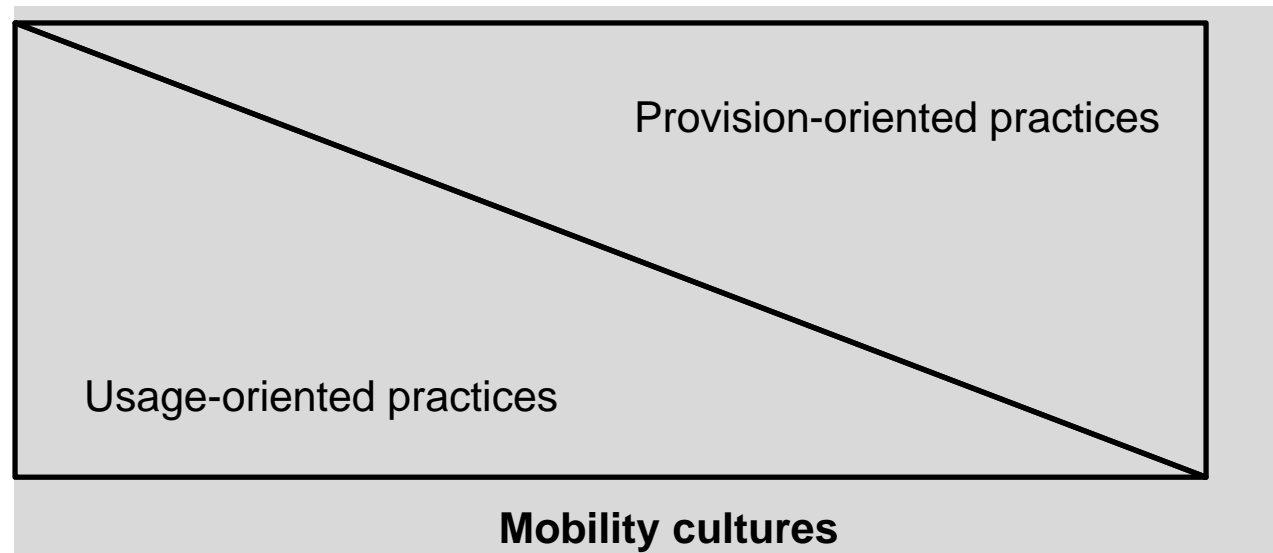
- Car manufacturing and mobility provision is *part of* mobility cultures.

Theory: Mobility Cultures

Concepts of mobile societies in contemporary social sciences:

- Mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry 2006)
- Mobility cultures (Deffner et al. 2006)

Mobility cultures are meaningful mobile lifestyles (re)presented in the totality of all conflict-laden provision-oriented and usage-oriented everyday practices - as a complex of meanings, competencies and materials - which (re)produce meaningful mobility as the "production *and* consumption of distance".



Methodology: Culturally Sensitive Approach

Culturally sensitive approach to study (Re)Production of mobility cultures in contemporary political processes (Rau 2008; Aldred & Jungnickel 2014)

Inspired by Argumentative Discourse Analysis (Hajer 1995)
Interpretative-hermeneutic approach (Keller 2007)

Focus on cultural meanings and social practices
Analytical tool: Storylines (narratives, argumentation, positions and practices).

Methods:

Document analysis

Problem-centered interviews

Participant observation

Data material: documents, secondary data, video and interview material, field notes, reports

Description of Case Study

- Two car-producing regions
- “Change of the automobile industry” as process dealing with mobility cultures and car industry
- Special focus on two institutionalized state initiatives (Bavaria & Baden-Württemberg)
- State initiatives provide access to dominant discourse coalition and represent set of mobility cultures

Results – Narratives representing different mobility cultures

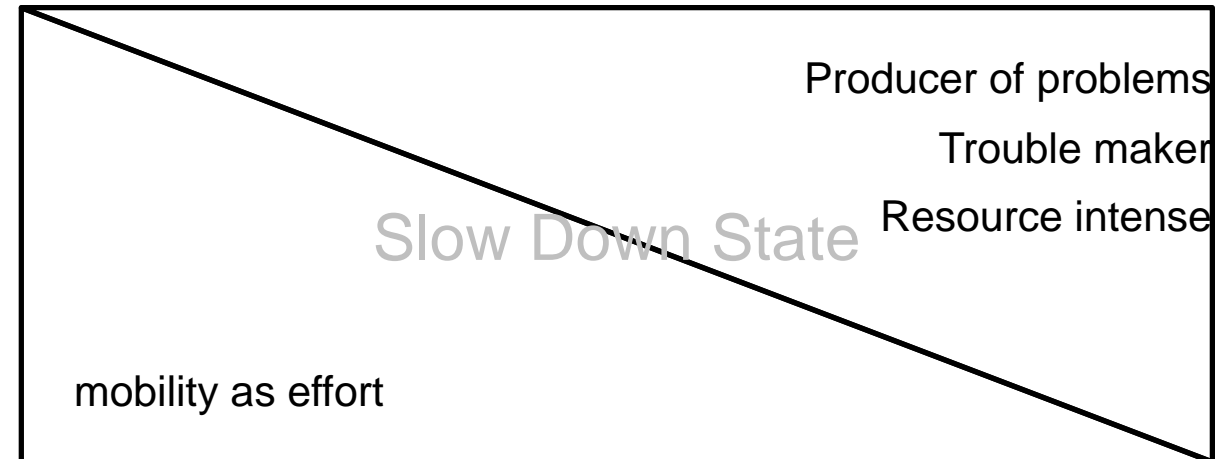
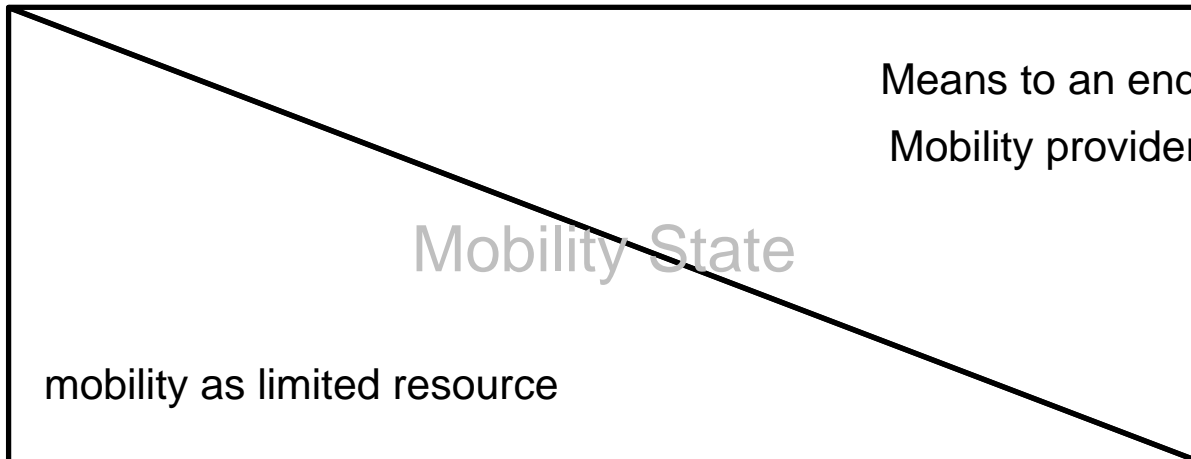
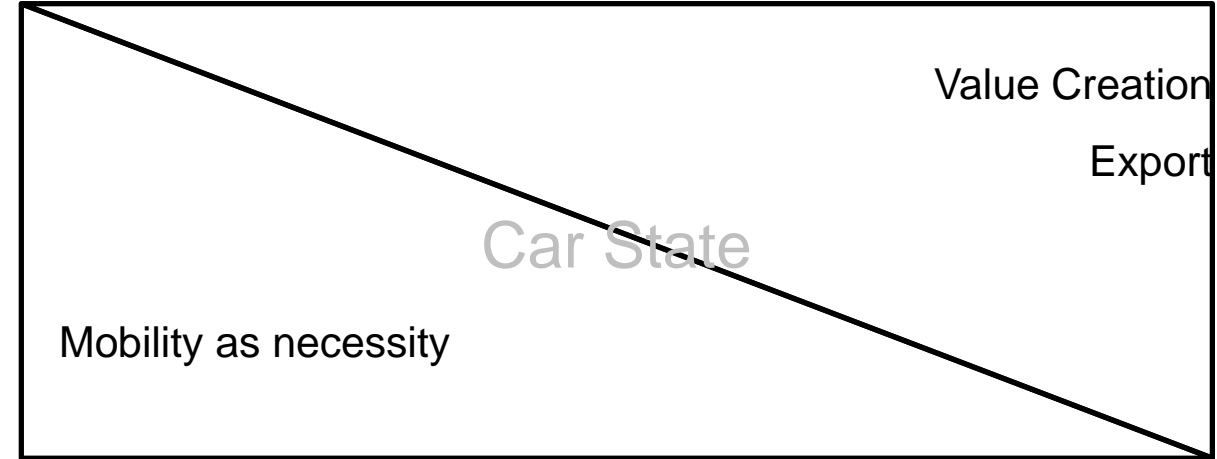
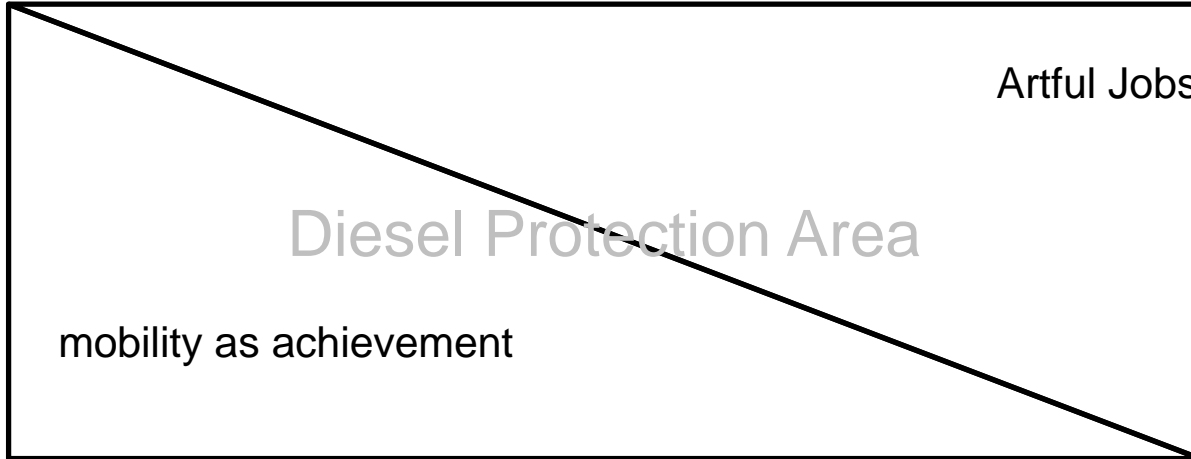
Diesel Protection Area

Car State

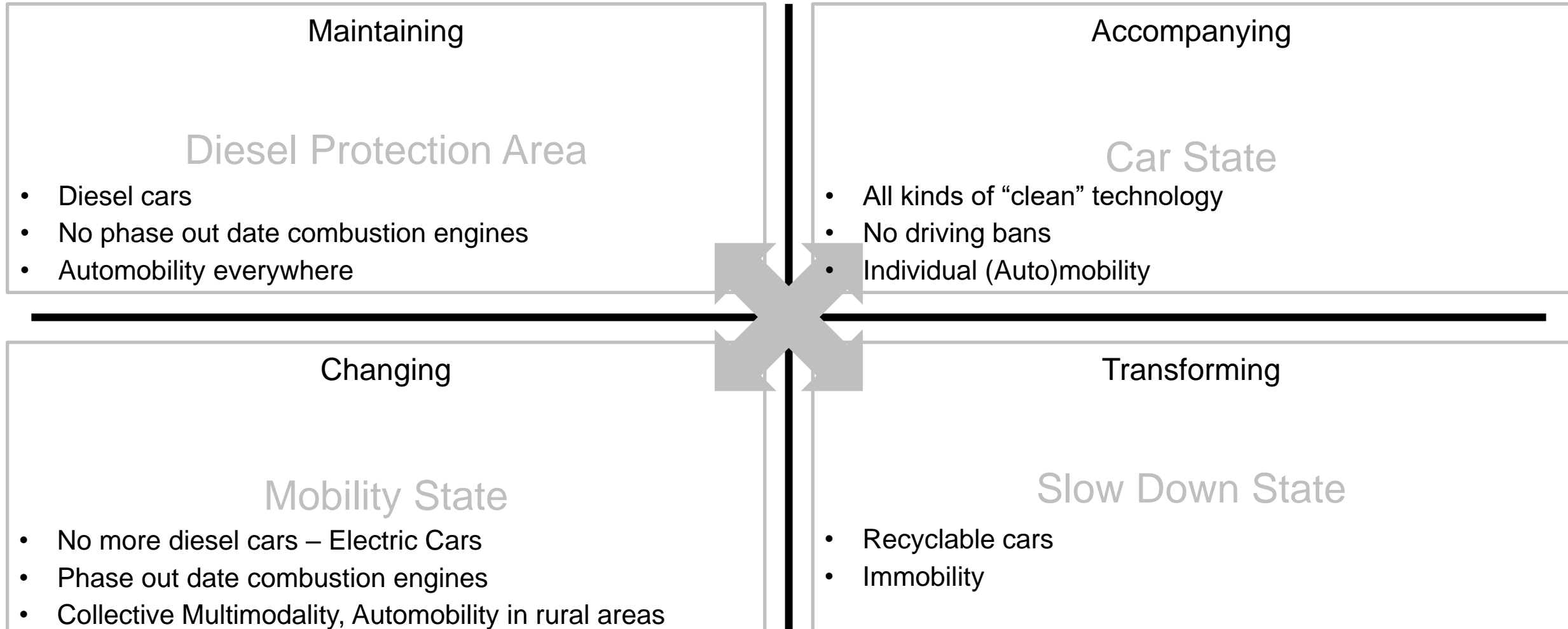
Mobility State

Slow Down State

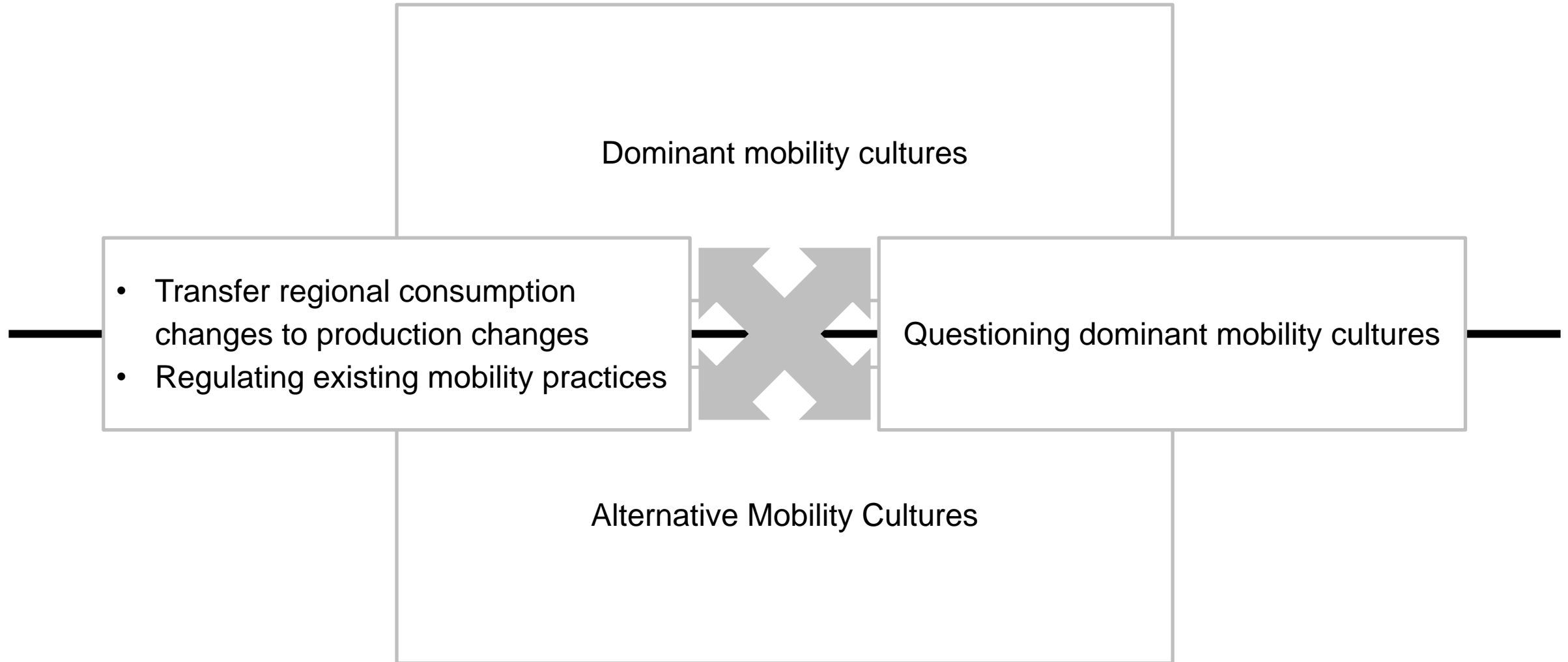
Results – Meanings in narratives



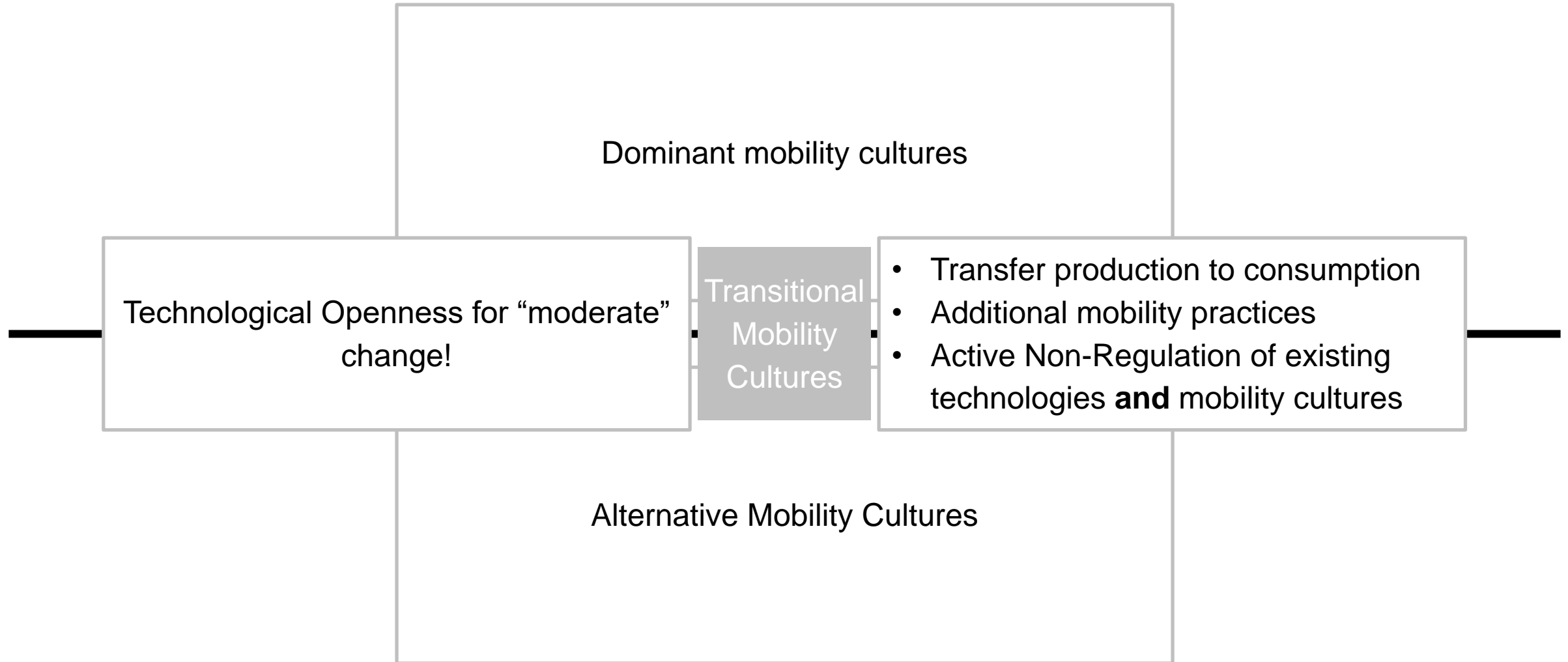
Results – Positions regarding change



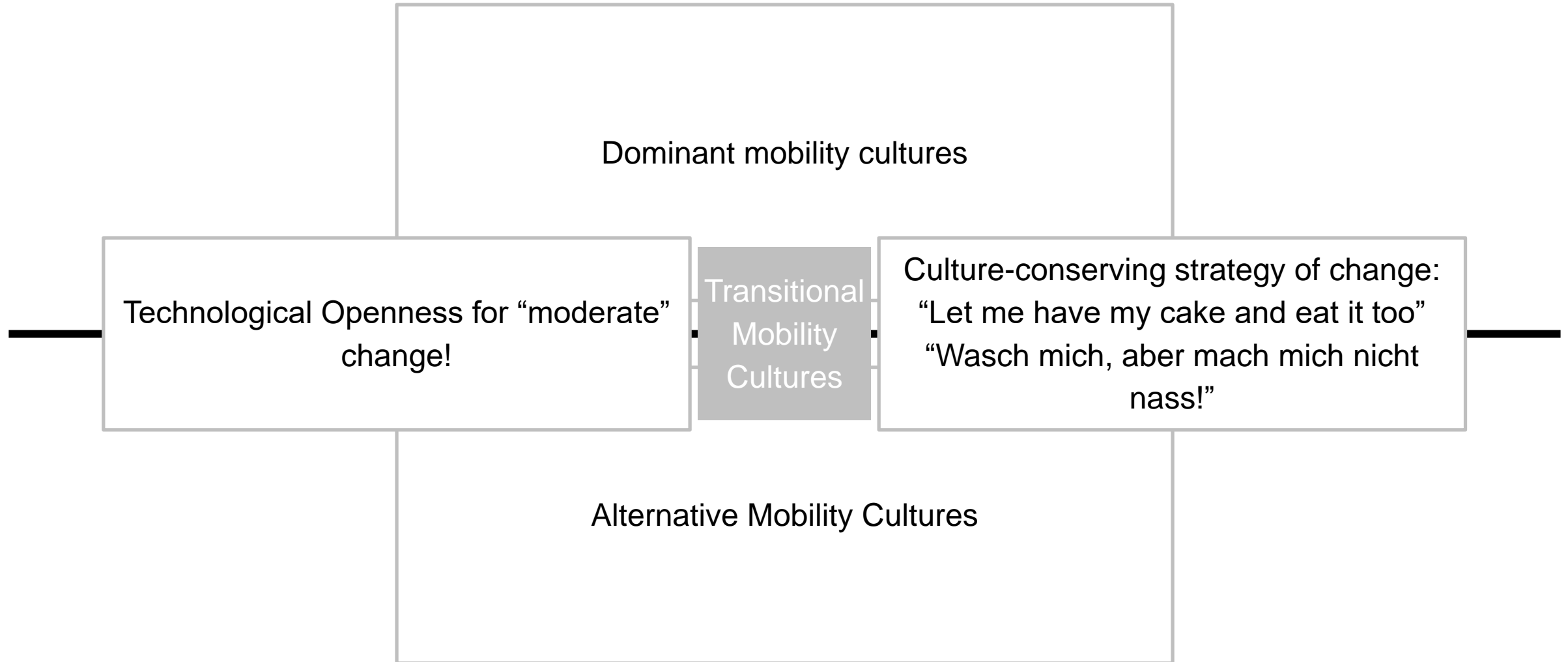
Results – Occurring Cultural Conflicts



Results – Introducing a transitional phase called “Technological Openness”



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Conclusion- Understanding the (Re)Production of Mobility Cultures

- Mobility cultures are more than specific practices of “being mobile”: embraces mobility provision and mobility consumption
- Intersectionality of mobility provision and mobility consumption is important to understand the process of (Re)Production
- “Change of automobile industry” is proxy for process of conflict between mobility cultures
- “Productive Mobility Cultures” as mobility that makes mobile and provide meaningful jobs continues to be dominant meaning that has to be ensured if change is happening.
- Alternative mobility cultures seem “unproductive” due to orientation towards “mobility with limits” and immobility
- Technological openness as “Keep it up!” strategy of linear modernization (“Weiter So!”) (Beck et al. 1999)
- Provision-oriented mobility practices are important for understanding continuity in mobility cultural change

THANK YOU!

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