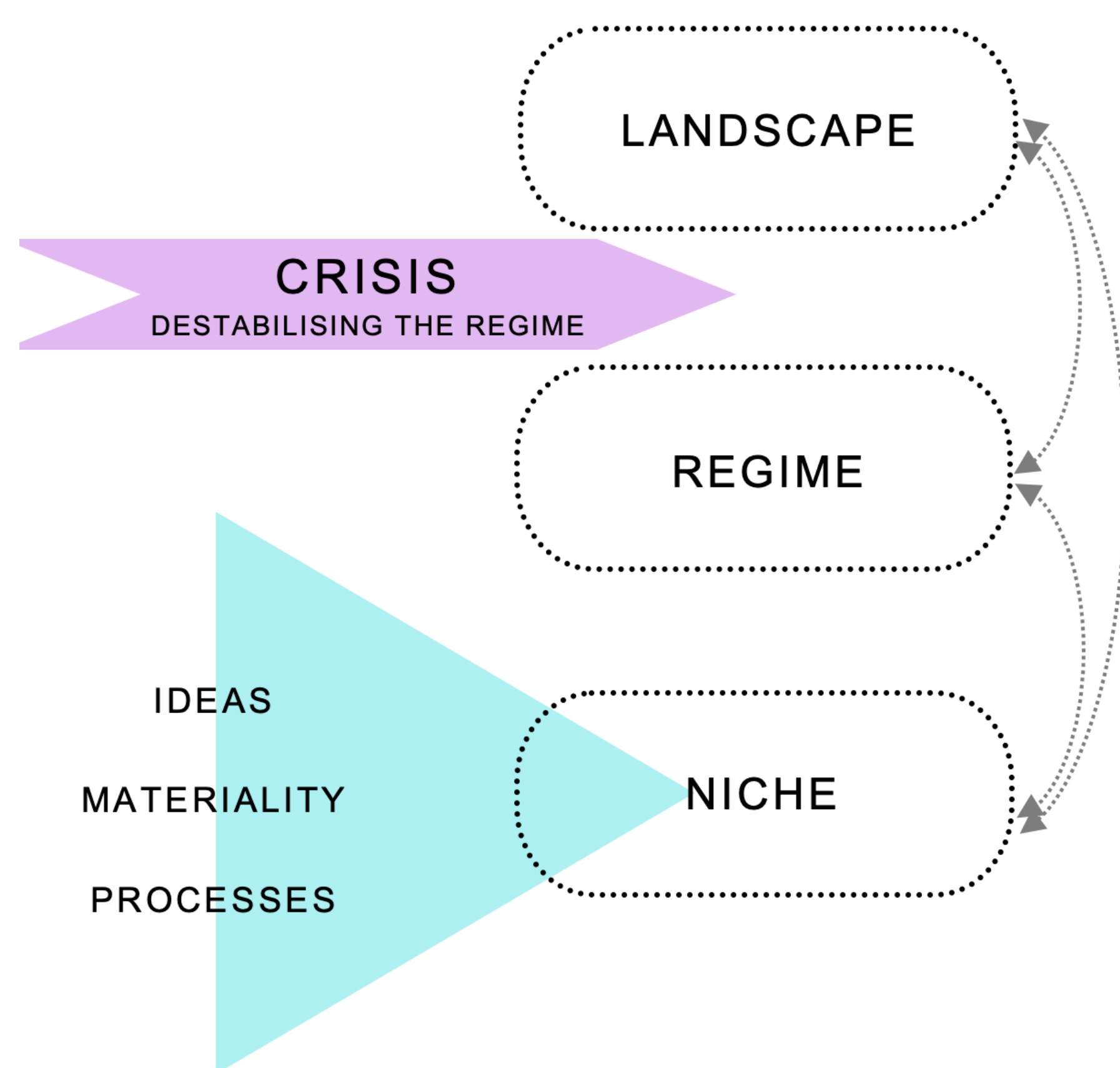


Data Politics and New Regimes of Mobility and Control During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Conceptual Framework

We approach digitalization of mobility as a socio-technical transition involving three levels: landscape, regime and niche (Geels, 2002). Crises such as COVID-19 potentially trigger a socio-technical transition. We view this transition at niche level and examine digital artefacts used for human mobility governance. We analyse the ideas, materiality, and technology, as well as the processes of artefacts used for mobility governance purposes (Power, 2019).



Two Case Studies

Cape Town and Geneva have well-established data infrastructures that facilitate mobility and service delivery. The impacts of digitalization on mobility governance are tackled by looking at context-specific dynamics of the digitalizing state.

In Geneva the digital governance of mobility is a central element in the constitution of a transnational quasi-state between Geneva and adjacent regions in France. We focus on the controversies related to this process, notably the frictions between the governance of mobility and migration at the border in times of crisis.

In Cape Town our findings point to the enduring legacy of the apartheid state and its huge data apparatus. Findings on the Department of Home Affairs digitalization project show that digital artefacts are extending borderscapes for migrants.

Research Question

How are different forms of digitalization shaping human mobility and urban governance regimes during and after the COVID-19 pandemic?

Contributions to NCCR

Innovative comparative approach to digitalization's impacts on mobility-migration governance in Cape Town (South Africa) and Geneva (Switzerland).

Bringing together data politics, mobility regime, and socio-technical regime perspectives to understand digitalization processes for mobility governance, before and after crisis.

Planned Outputs

We have papers planned on pieced-together digitalization; cartographic communities of practice; digitalizing borderscapes; the digital management of cross-border commuters; the actors at work in producing the digitalizing state; and comparing cities in a world of platforms.

How we compare?

We distinguish between genetic (how the cases come together in relation to wider circulations) and generative comparison (what we are interested in discovering across the two cases) to learn across them (Robinson, 2022).

	GENETIC COMPARISON	GENERATIVE COMPARISON	COMPARATORS
CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varied forms of digitalisation, temporalities and mobilities A globalised imperative (discourse and practice) of the "value" of digitalised governance for MMN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How mobility is digitally governed How COVID-19 affected digitalization of mobility How specific artefacts are instrumental in this process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporality of digitalization: obduracy of data politics Institutionally fragmented and varied nature of data Politics of access to (use and shape) digital governance
GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID 19 and crisis 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spatiality of digitalization: spatial stretching of governance through data politics Forms of power in urban governance

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