

Relearning to travel in Santiago: the importance of mobile place-making and travelling know-how

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Abstract

Cities today are experiencing constant, significant and abrupt infrastructural and spatial transformations. This is particularly evident in Metropolitan cities and more specifically, in cities in the Global South. Over the last decade, the implementation of Transantiago – a new public transport system – created greater awareness about the relevance of mobility practices in everyday life in the city. The intervention generated general unrest and particular daily challenges to Santiago's residents requiring them to suddenly adapt, relearn and create ways of making sense of the complex situation that took place. It also generated major challenges for Transantiago implementers, who had to quickly react to the importance of everyday mobility experiences. Based on ethnographic research on mobility practices in Santiago de Chile prior and after Transantiago, this article presents the idea of mobile place-making as well as the various strategies urban travellers develop to adapt and create new ways of making sense of the city on a daily basis as it transforms. The results explore how travellers creatively find ways of learning or relearning to use new mobile spaces based on a travelling know-how which thickens the more mobility is practised, thus providing new possibilities within these places on the move.

Keywords

mobile place-making, place, Santiago de Chile, social practices, urban daily mobility

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