



Geographies of Rhythm

*Nature, Place,
Mobilities and Bodies*



Edited by
Tim Edensor

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Repetition and Difference: Rhythms and Mobile Place-making in Santiago de Chile

Paola Jiron

Introduction

As the location of particular sets of intersecting social relations and activity spaces (Massey, 1995) places can be characterised as open, permeable and always in construction, unbound and mobile. Places can be constituted through reiterative social practices, including the practice of urban daily mobility, presented here as crucial to analysing contemporary urban living. As socially produced motion, mobility implies giving social meaning to the practice of moving from one place to another, and it involves an appropriation and transformation of the space encountered during this practice, thus generating mobile places.

The reiterative characteristic of places, along with the moving characteristics of mobility practices, suggests an investigative approach to mobile place making by exploring the multiple and diverse rhythms present in this practice. Rhythms are pluralistic, diverse, relative and repetitive; this and particularly their lineal/cyclical repetitiveness, makes them inextricably linked to time, just as important as the appropriation of space in place making.

Using an ethnographic approach to urban daily mobility practices in Santiago de Chile, this chapter analyses the everyday generation of mobile places. It argues firstly that place making can be generated on the spaces encountered in mobility, that is those spaces travelled on, in, by, through or within: buses, Metros, cars, bicycles or foot, become mobile places. Secondly, it discusses how in the analysis of mobile place making, linear and cyclical rhythms can offer opportunities for individual rhythms 'of the self' to avoid being subsumed by the rhythms 'of the other' (Lefebvre, 2004), thus emphasising the multiple possibilities for daily travellers to 'tailor their journeys in accordance with their own strategies, imperatives and feelings' (Edensor, 2009).

Mobility and everyday practices

A major aspect of what makes mobility significant is that it greatly impacts upon people's daily life; lives do not stop while being mobile. The time spent travelling is not 'wasted' (Jain, 2006), and much occurs during these mobile

moments. Although mobility has mainly been conceived as physical, it can also be virtual or imaginative (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Szerszynski and Urry, 2006), and the use of television, the internet or mobile phones allow for the possibility of being present in more than one place at the same time. These technological advances make the management of distance increasingly relevant and the choices of presence can be broadened to three: co-presence, which eliminates distance; mobility, which handles it through displacement; and telecommunications, which transfers dematerialised information (Bourdin, 2003). However, despite constant innovations in technologies, being physically present remains imperative in daily life and physical travel is still required to make necessary connections. According to Urry (2004), virtual and physical travel transforms the nature of and need for co-presence; thus virtual travel complements physical travel which in turn leads to co-presence. Urry (2003) also asserts that it is unlikely that virtual communications will alter the importance of meeting or face-to-face connection, hence the need to look at how these moments of connection and encounter occur.

Kaufmann (2002) explains issues of co-presence in terms of *connexity* and *contiguity*. *Connexity* can be defined as establishing relations using the intermediary of technical systems, whereas in *contiguity* this relationship is established by spatial proximity, implying density. *Connexity* cancels out spatial distance to allow for actors' interaction through trains, aeroplanes or automobiles. Kaufmann explains that these are often thought of as having a tunnel effect, meaning that whatever lies outside these modes is invisible, avoided, ignored, and that 'the appropriation of space crossed between the origin and the destination is not possible' (2002: 23) due to speed.

However, as will be discussed in the next section, I argue that the space inside can indeed be appropriated and signified; that is, the train, aeroplane or automobile can become meaningful spaces in themselves. It may appear that, as *connexity* increases territories lose importance, but in practice *contiguity* and *connexity* may have a tendency to merge. These spaces generate experiences which may be characterised as being reversible or irreversible. Kaufman (2002) understands reversibility as the impact mobility has on actors' identities, that is, the traces left behind in the body and consciousness by mobility experiences. A reversible experience would not leave any trace behind, as it would quickly disappear, if ever present; whereas an irreversible one would remain in the person's body, emotions and consciousness. Reversibility is linked to the process of place-making as temporal and spatial experiences may become impregnated in a person's body or memory, thus modifying the relation with space.

Places, spaces and time

Under current global processes, some believe that spaces lose their distinctiveness and become subdued and unified, making place lose its significance with its characteristics emptied and abstracted (Harvey, 1996); others insist that place

persists as a constituent element of social life and historical change (Gieryn, 2000; Sheller and Urry, 2006). According to Savage et al. (2005), while still relevant, the process of place making in contemporary cities is complex, and people's sense of place making changes and is not so much based on historical attachment but on choice. Massey (1994, 1995) has argued that if the social organisation of space is changing, disrupting existing ideas about place, then the concept of place should be rethought as the location of particular sets of intersecting social relations and activity spaces in time.

This chapter develops this re-conceptualisation, thus place refers to a location, a locale and meaning (Cresswell, 2004; Agnew, 2005) which involves an appropriation and transformation of space and nature, inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space. In this progressive sense, place is open, permeable and always in construction, and is constituted through reiterative social practices, such as the everyday mobility practices discussed here, which remake place on a daily basis. As Cresswell (2004) mentions, places are never complete, finished or bounded, they are always becoming, in process.

Due to the multiplicity of changes in space and time in terms of speed, forms and encounters, Massey (2005; 2007) refers to places as events, a constellation of trajectories and processes, multiple and not necessarily coherent. In these events, multiple temporalities collide, synchronise and interweave (Crang, 2001). The event of place requires negotiation and poses a challenge as to how encounters with others (or things) will take place. As events, places cannot be predetermined or anticipated; they occur as they happen in time and space and although certain regulations may produce situations that repeat steadily, a similar constellation is difficult to obtain on a daily basis.

Hence, places are about relationships, about placing (or displacing or replacing) people, materials, images, and the systems of difference they perform (Sheller and Urry, 2006). This means that places are not experienced in a similar manner by everyone, for place is both the context for practice as well as a product of practice. The relationship between places and practices, particularly those which occur on a daily basis, are productive of contemporary urban life.

Practices of mobility, whether through travel and tourism, migration, residential mobility or everyday practices characterise modern living; the latter being the focus of this research. Place making occurs in fixed spaces, and also on the spaces travelled on, by, within. Understood as socially produced motion, mobility implies giving meaning to the practice of moving from one place to another and suggests the possibility of places being appropriated and transformed during this practice, generating what I term 'mobile places' and 'transient places'. Mobile places are those that people signify while travelling on and in them: cars, buses, metros, trains, or bicycles. In transport and urban planning the time spent on these is often represented as 'dead time' (Urry, 2006; Jain, 2006) and policy interventions are aimed at diminishing travelling time and improving connections by making it more efficient. As will be seen in the narratives in this chapter, travel time is experienced differently by different people, and not everyone experiences it as dead time; on

the contrary, for many the moments spent on different transport modes are crucial to their everyday existence.

Transient places involve those fixed spaces which people signify while moving through them. They are not places of permanence but places of transit and transition elsewhere. Regardless of the amount of time spent travelling through them, they are nonetheless appropriated and signified. These often vary in type, form and permanence and are sometimes understood as public spaces or spaces of public use. Those most commonly studied include markets (Cresswell, 2006), bus stops, petrol stations (Normark, 2006; Sabbagh, 2006), airports, parks, and streets (Duneier, 1999). These have been conceived as 'non-places' (Augé, 1995), spaces of institutions 'formed in relation to certain ends (transport, transit, commerce, leisure)' (Kaufmann 2002: 94). Augé does not use this term in a derogatory way, but rather to describe a certain sort of place that inculcates a new sense of thin or abstract identity. Relph, on the other hand, points to such places as strip malls, new towns, international architecture style and tourist landscapes as examples of contemporary placelessness (in Agnew 2005). However, as Agnew (*ibid.*) argues, 'placelessness' is in the eye of the beholder, as malls, markets or bus stops are not just spots along the way, but reflect important meanings to people's everyday experiences. This chapter focuses on the first type of places: mobile places.

Rhythms and mobile places

The dichotomy, overlap, similarity and juxtaposition of space and time have been a major topic of discussion in geography and urban studies. Torsten Hägerstrand's (1970) time-space geography pioneered the study of sociospatial analysis, asserting the indissoluble link between time and space. The notion of 'timespace' developed by May and Thrift (2001) is also helpful in apprehending the mobility turn insofar as it relates to the interconnectedness of time and space, and the multiplicity of timespaces. It attempts to overcome the dualism in understanding time and space as separate entities and sees them instead as analytically inseparable. Timespace and its experience, as a multidimensional, uneven and always partial process, becomes pertinent in the context of mobile urban life, since changes in the nature and experience of either space or time impact upon changes in the nature and experience of the other.

Additionally, the experience of social time is multiple and heterogeneous and varies both within cultures and between societies and individuals, being related to their social position. May and Thrift identify four interrelated domains where time and space have particular implications for social practices. In the first, the experience of timespace varies according to timetables and rhythms, according to daily cycles, seasons or body rhythms. In terms of mobility, this may have differentiated impacts on social practices: people may use different modes of transport according to seasons or access to the places to and from which they travel may be highly dependent on the times of day. For the second, timespace is

also shaped by systems of social discipline – or Lefebvre’s linear rhythms (2004) – including work time, home time, religious time and leisure time which have different meanings in different spaces. These timespaces influence how, why and where people move at certain times; for instance, the experience of time for going to work is different from the time for going to church. A third domain concerns the relationship with instruments and devices which affect the way time and space relate with social practice. Mobile phones or computers have made physical mobility less necessary at times, and cars and rapid forms of transportation have major implications for the way timespace is experienced. Lastly, May and Thrift point to the ways in which timespace is translated into various forms of representation. Where this involves the study of mobility, it requires understanding travel patterns, travel experiences, travelling conditions or the consequences of mobility, along with other practices that take place in timespace. Consequently, it also involves creating new methods to capture these mobile practices in timespace and representing them in innovative ways, including methods like the mobile ethnography presented here. By using such approaches, the picture that emerges is not that of a singular or uniform social time stretching over homogeneous space, but rather that of various (and uneven) networks of time stretching in different and divergent directions across uneven social space.

The multiplicity of timespaces can be best understood using Lefebvre’s (2004) work on rhythmanalysis, which attempts to deal with the temporal orders of everyday life (Meyer 2008) and unifies time and space through the analysis of rhythms. Lefebvre understands rhythms in terms of a relational repetition, meaning that there is always a certain comparison to other rhythms: slow, varied, repetitive, long, empty. Although rhythms are repetitive, they are not necessarily similar; in their repetitiveness, difference is always found as no rhythm is ever the same as another, and every rhythm has its own beat. In this repetitiveness, one of the main distinctions made by Lefebvre involves the difference between cyclical and linear rhythms.

The first refers to the natural and cosmic cycles of the universe that human beings are exposed to, including the recurrence of days, weeks, years, seasons and tides which have no beginning or end. They are repetitive cycles but always different in their repetition. Linear time, on the other hand, emerges from social practices, particularly those of work, and refers to the ‘monotony of actions and of movements, imposed structures’ (2004: 8). Lefebvre suggests an antagonistic unity between cyclical and linear rhythms which are nevertheless inextricably related, in perpetual interaction, exerting a reciprocal action on each other: ‘everything is cyclical repetition through linear repetitions’ (8). One becomes the measure of the other, making their interferences particularly relevant to explore.

In the analysis of rhythms the body becomes essential, including the polyrhythmic and eurhythmic body. According to Lefebvre, in rhythmanalysis, the body is crucial because of its unique rhythms and its capacity to perceive the rhythms outside of it. This is particularly relevant in the process of mobile place making, as through all its senses, the body perceives movement and experience

places in of all sorts of ways. The senses used in the process of place making as well as the way social characteristics are reflected on the body, such as the colour of skin, disability, being young, old, pregnant or blind, affect mobility practices.

Following the work of Crang (2001), who highlights the importance of the multiple rhythms and temporalities of urban life and uses time geography to analyse daily trajectories, and Edensor and Holloway (2008), who show how rhythmanalysis can highlight the experience of mobility in space and time, this research analyses how rhythms can help to understand mobile place making.

The following sections present the results from a mobile ethnographic study carried out in Santiago de Chile. The narratives examine processes of mobile place making through the rhythmic mobile practices of two urban travellers, Roberto, who takes the metro everyday and manages to find moments of place-making in the ride; and Isabel, who, at 80 years of age, thoroughly embodies the rhythmic travel experience on the metro. Though Lefebvre suggests going outside of rhythms in order to grasp and analyse them, both travellers were shadowed during their mobility practices.

A place for reflection: the Metro

Santiago's Metro system started running in 1975, and its lines have been continuously extended since, with five under and overground lines running North, South, East and West of the city. It is considered an important symbol of Chilean modernity due to its speed, efficiency and cleanliness (Procalidad, 2002). In the midst of contemporary harried lifestyles, the Metro's reliability and comfort make it a refuge for some, or a place for reflection and introspection. The following experiences of Roberto and Isabel illustrate this.

Roberto is 42 years old and lives with Cecilia, his second wife, in Jardines de la Viña, a middle income neighbourhood. At the age of 25 he married for the first time, and soon after separated. Unlike Cecilia, Roberto never went to University. He is an accountant by trade and his lack of education greatly hinders his chances of a more stable job and better salary. He works at an exporting company on the North-eastern side of the city, close to the airport and is not overly excited about his job. He works very long hours, including Saturdays. The taxi/metro/bus ride across the city lasts about 2 hours each way. His days are controlled by the linear rhythms of the city and his job. However, glimpses of his own imperatives and feelings emerge during his journey.

His journey starts at 6:40 when he walks out of his house towards the taxi stand. At this time, the queue is short and soon he's on his way to the Metro. Once embarked, he relaxes, stands by the window and contemplates the scenery (Figure 10.1). It's his moment, the only timespace in the day when he's alone and gets to think, to go over his thoughts, his days. He manages to break from the structures of the journey. He changes lines and complains about the excessive advertising; he says he feels invaded by it (Figure 10.2).



Figure 10.1 Morning view from inside Metro

He likes the Metro, he says, has been riding it since it first started and knows something particular about every station: the one with the mural, the one with the paintings of the ocean, the one with the tiles painted by children... (Figure 10.3). He remembers when each station used to have an icon identifying it.

During the journey, he never sits down, doesn't talk to anyone, and doesn't make eye contact. For him, it's like being in his own world. As the wagons get emptier he begins to feel more comfortable. He used to read books in the Metro, but not anymore. He says, 'I'm too tired, I now pick up *Publimetro* or *La Hora* [free newspapers] and I read it all, I read every detail of the news or do the crossword puzzles or sudoku, I really like them'.

He gets off the Metro and changes to a private bus that takes him to his job at ENEA, an industrial park, very close to the airport. Most of the area is still under construction, making the surroundings of his office building quite bare. He feels isolated at work, as it's difficult to leave since buses reduce their frequency after 9:00 am and travelling rhythms soften as workers remain indoors. He has lunch taken to his office and does not leave the building until 20:00 or 20:30, or sometimes later, when he returns to catch the bus that takes him to the Metro.

Once on it, Roberto is not oblivious to the outside scenery. For him, riding overground is the best part of the journey. 'On the way back, I don't read anything,



Figure 10.2 Advertisement inside Metro

I just contemplate'. He says it changes every day. 'I like the Metro coming back, it goes overground after Ñuble station, and I enjoy it because you can watch the scenery, although it's the same route. it may not vary one centimetre, to the right or the left, but it does change. It doesn't matter if it's dark, you see the lights. I like winter better than summer. I like it because I watch the clouds, the rain, the storms, the wind, the snow on the Cordillera is absolutely beautiful, or the sunsets (Figure 10.4). I use that time to think, to look, to distract myself just by looking at the scenery. Think about it, you are in the Metro and can somehow appreciate the outside while inside it, it's amazing. For me it's not really lost time, I use that time to think, it's time for me. It's nothing special, but I kind of renovate myself. I start rewinding the film. I like the time on my way back on the Metro, although it's the same, the outside changes [...] When you're inside the tunnel it's a drag, plus at the times I travel it's very compressed and uncomfortable; that's the bad part of the Metro, the quality of people, you start losing the quality of people,



Figure 10.3 Painting inside Metro station



Figure 10.4 View from Metro: Cordillera de los Andes

independently of the person next to you, they don't care if they have a big bag that squeezes you, they don't care, it's practically like a tin of sardines at times, but I still like travelling on it'.

At first glance it appears as though Roberto endures the daily journey, for a two-hour journey to cross the city seems tedious and extremely long. However, when analysed in the context of his broader life, the linear rhythms he follows, the demands and frustrations of work and family, it appears as though his time on the Metro is the only timespace he has to himself, his timespace for contemplation. He explains about the demands made by his wife of needing more time, more study, more money, more babies, and a better lifestyle: at work he complains about the mediocrity of the people he works with, the long hours and low pay, because he does not have the necessary academic credentials to be properly recognised for the job he already does. He gets home late, works all day Saturday, and Sundays are the only days he can rest, be with his wife and undertake the family events and chores required.

His travel time is the only 'in between' time to think, dream and drift away. His attitude on the Metro is a *blasé* one (Simmel, 1969), purposely ignoring the rest of the passengers and feeling annoyed by those who interrupt his thinking. His body is stiff, standing by the window and just contemplating. The Metro is not just a mode of transport from home to work; it is a mode of transport to drift away, to the times and places where he will never be. This 'in between' timespace is his way of resisting the rhythms of others and imposing his own.

Travelling by Metro: A place for independence

Isabel is 80 years old; she lives in Jardín Alto, a lower middle income neighbourhood, with her daughter and her daughter's family. For many years she lived in Sweden as a political refugee with her family, most of whom have returned to Chile since the return to democracy. After leading a life of political commitment and social awareness, and exploring new worlds, she returned to Chile to attempt to continue living as independently as when she was living abroad. When she first returned she lived alone, but her daughter soon insisted she lived with her, mainly because she was getting old.

Every Wednesday she visits her best friend from childhood, Soledad, who is 81 and lives in downtown Santiago. Although Soledad's son takes her to the doctor and she has someone helping her everyday, Isabel visits her once a week to run errands with her to the pharmacy, the supermarket, or just for a coffee close to home. For both of them this is their weekly outing and a routine they have been doing for years. Isabel appears to be in very good shape, but she says she feels increasingly tired, she can't see very well and has trouble going up and down the stairs. She has made herself a weekly routine which she follows strictly. However, when things change, like a new bus route, or a new Metro station opens, it's dreadful for her, as changes in city rhythms means finding her way around anew and she has difficulty. This once-a-week outing is her way of still feeling useful, alive and independent.

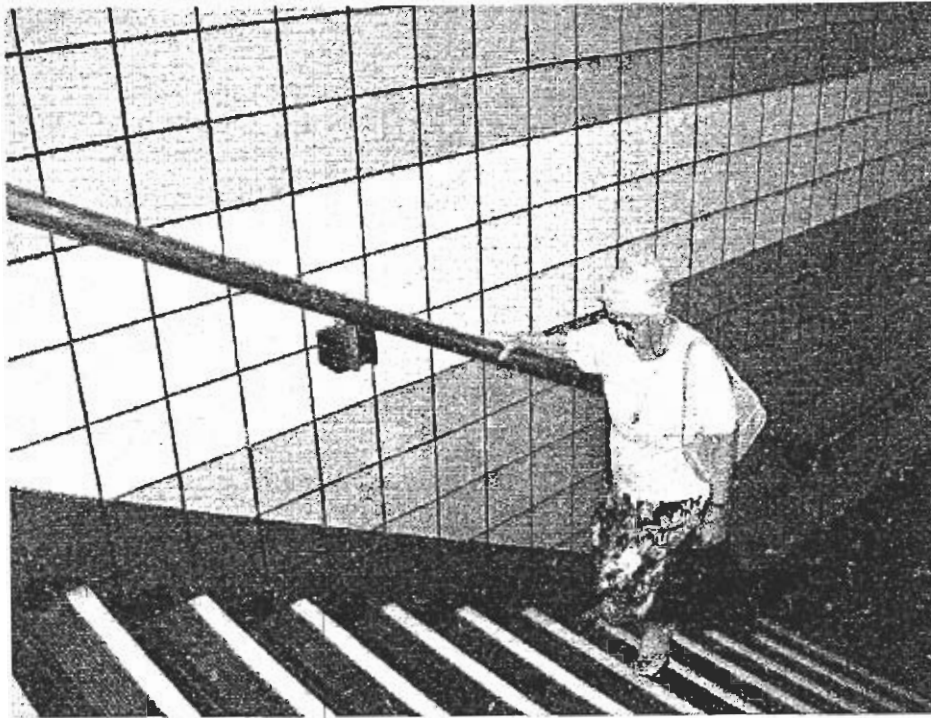


Figure 10.5 Isabel climbs the Metro stairs

She tries to avoid hectic rhythms and waits until the city calms down. Around 11:00 am, she strolls down the street to catch the taxi that will take her to the Metro. Although she sits in the front seat, the car is old and uncomfortable and she has trouble getting up from the seat and seems disoriented crossing the street to enter the Metro station. Once she reaches the Metro, she feels at home, she knows it well, knows her way, where to go, how it works. She has become used to it by now; she has a close understanding of its rhythms, hence she avoids busy times. Security guards are always helpful, she says. Although she has trouble going up the stairs, she grabs the hand rail and goes up slowly (Figure 10.5). She knows which way to turn and where to wait for the appropriate wagon. Once inside the train, she takes a seat, changes her glasses and enjoys the ride (Figure 10.6).

She loves the Metro; each station has a special design and generates a special meaning to her. Her favourite one is the one with the palm trees. She says, 'you know, the one with the long palm trees on the walls, it's so nicely designed, they really thought about it, the whole station is green and the palm trees just emerge from the ground, look' (Figure 10.7). In Baquedano station she changes to Line 2 and it is slightly difficult for her as there are many stairs and it is more crowded. People are not always kind on the Metro, but still one person gets up to offer her a seat. She then reaches her station and gets out. She gets scared of going back on the Metro on her own at night, particularly because the taxis are not very regular then, she says, and she fears getting off at the wrong station and having no way to get back home. So today, her daughter is picking her up.



Figure 10.6 Isabel inside the train

New stations are difficult, 'specially now, for me Vicente Valdés [station] is a mess, because I am still trying to adapt myself to those new levels, because they have two or three levels, the lifts and mechanic escalators are located only in some places within the station. so sometimes I'm in the lift and I don't know which button to press. There is something written, but I don't see too well, I'm almost blind, with these [glasses] that have so much prescription. I see awfully, and the other dark ones are worse, so if I want to see the sign I confuse the letters, and don't see well, so I end up asking people which button, where do I have to go, and it's embarrassing'.

As an embodied experience, mobility is specifically sensitive to the way the body performs in mobile places. The body is sensitive to the rhythms lying outside of it. the multiple and diverse rhythms that are captured by the senses, and also performs in accordance with the various rhythms and situations it faces. Isabel uses the rhythms of Metro and public transport to suit her needs to feel independent and

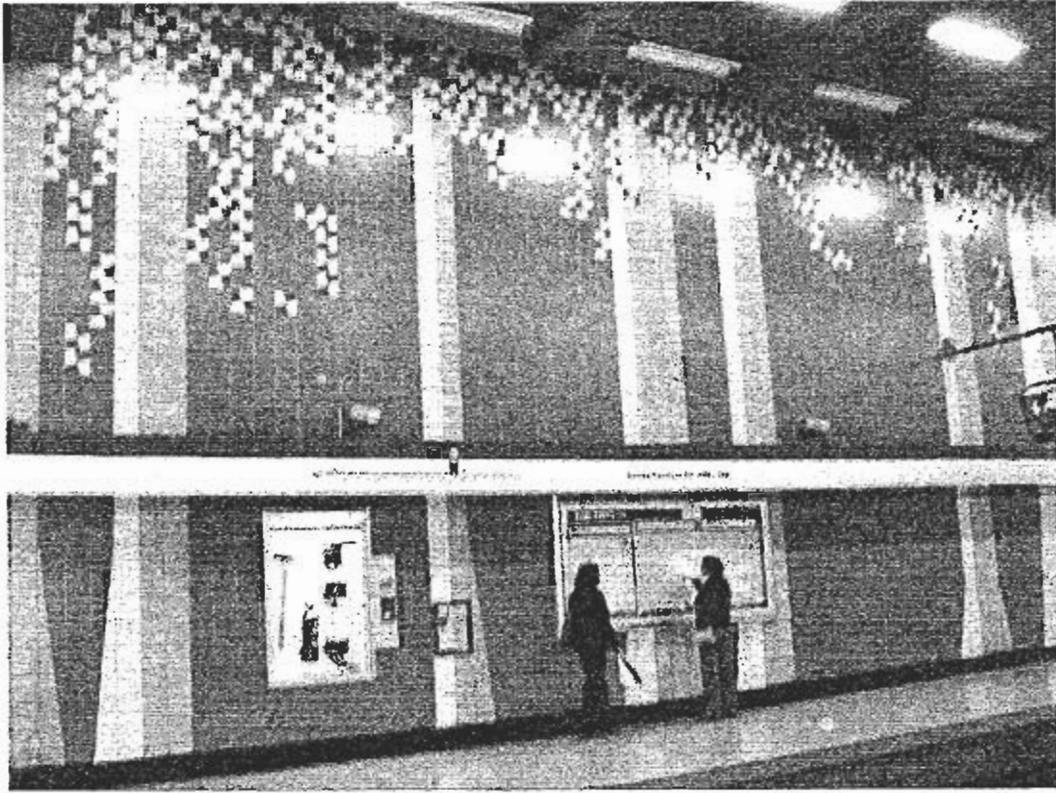


Figure 10.7 Tiles in the Metro station

still capable. She refuses to be a burden on her family yet understands that she no longer has the agile body she used to have in order to explore the streets. Her sight is weak, her strength frail, yet here she finds the energy to continue repeating the weekly practice of going out to visit her friend.

This weekly outing downtown does not only involve the experience of socialising with a friend, but it also provides the experience of being capable of undertaking the journey that takes her there. She skilfully appropriates the space of the Metro with her aging body. Though the Metro's infrastructure is not always prepared or equipped to accept this body, she nonetheless makes it suit herself by making it her mobile place, where she strolls independently, at the most convenient times and days that are easier for her, on the routes that are most familiar, that she has made and remade over time. She admires the spaces she goes through and the whole experience has meaning and remains with her for at least a week, making her look forward to the next occasion.

At the age of 80, Isabel's weekly outing is one of her only opportunities to connect to the outside world, to feel useful and independent. However, the infrastructure available is not designed for her needs: taxis are uncomfortable as she has difficulty bending down to get in and out; bus stops are unsafe and uncomfortable as they are unprotected from the weather and there is no place to sit; bus drivers are careless and rough and schedules are unreliable; the Metro's

constantly changing operation confuses her, signposting is too small and not easily located, there are many stairs to climb, and it is easy for her to trip with loose surfaces or holes on the badly maintained sidewalks. Finally, lighting is inadequate at night, making her scared of being in public areas. One of the most difficult problems is that of unfriendly passengers, who do not respect the elderly and their travelling difficulties. Her best consolation is the Metro security guards whom she seeks when she needs help.

Both travel experiences featured above accompany passage through different stages of life, different stages in a cyclical rhythm, which affect the appreciation of time and space, and thus the process of place making. Roberto is in his 40s, married, already has a child and is expecting another, and his education and preparation have already occurred. He is somewhat resigned to his current situation and it appears as though his daily routine leave him drained. However, his approach to daily travel is introspective, following his own rhythm: it is his time to think and be with himself, away from all the responsibilities that surround him. That is why he ignores others, as he mainly cares about the spaces he encounters.

Although Isabel is in her 80s and has lived a very hectic, fruitful and difficult life, remaking her life elsewhere, she has managed to reconstruct it in Chile. She compares the spaces she encounters with other places she has been to and sees the problems in the city as a reflection of society. However, she still feels useful and dares to go out and see what is out there, even if it scares her; she manages to control the spaces she goes to so she can still enjoy her weekly outing.

Shadowing these experiences is important because from an outsider's perspective, the mobility experiences might appear as reversible, meaning that few traces of them remain after the journey due to their apparently monotonous and meaningless use of time and space. However for these participants, although their journeys are part of their daily (or weekly) routine, they do not lose track of the characteristics of place; they are familiar with them and become part of them. The spaces encountered on or by the Metro are signified along the way and each traveller uses the rhythms of the city as best suits them: Roberto finds his way of drifting away from the linear rhythms while Isabel takes advantage of these rhythms for her own personal strategies.

Conclusions

The narratives presented above provide insights into understanding how place making is possible in everyday mobile practices. Through mobility, place-making is generated while travelling on moving objects such as a train, bus or car. While urban travellers may not experience these spaces in a similar manner, they are significant to some as a place of contemplation, reflection, independence and socialisation. The possibility of signifying these timespaces exists by dodging or understanding rhythms of the other, and imposing rhythms of the self. Practices of

moving on, through or by those spaces may thus enrich people's urban experiences, making them valuable and irreplaceable.

According to Agnew, for humanists, 'places are woven together through space by movement and by the network ties that produce places as changing constellation of human commitments, capacities and strategies' (2005: 90). Although this is true, mobility does not just bind or weave places together: places are created *in* mobility and *through* mobility, not just in spite of mobility. As seen here, the act of moving or repeating mobile routines creates mobile places that are meaningful. For the travellers presented, the Metro is a concrete significant space, a place they appropriate, look forward to getting to in order to unwind and prepare for another phase of their lives. It is an intermediate, 'in between' place where they stop having to perform as they move from a job to home where they have other responsibilities. Roberto has a introspective experience; he drifts to another world in the Metro, puts order into his life, and enjoys the beauty outside. For Isabel, by contrast, the experience of riding the Metro leaves with her a sense of being capable and independent in the space encountered.

In the context of mobility practices, co-presence remains significant, but so are the moments that people are capable of being isolated within conditions of co-presence, are able to be alone in the midst of multitudes. It seems that in the context of contemporary harried lifestyles, with a multiplicity of demands, and increasingly structured rhythms which regulate daily life, travel time offers an opportunity for co-presence, but also of stopping to take some air, to revise thoughts and be alone. Mobility appears to be producing in-between spaces that might otherwise have occurred at home, and people are increasingly providing meaning to these moments and making them valuable. Through choice or not, long periods on the move have caused people to adapt to rhythms, sometimes significantly improving their lifestyles, or conversely, impose their own rhythms in breaking away from increasingly demanding lives.