Affects and urban infrastructures : researching users' daily experiences of Santiago de Chile's transport system

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Abstract

This article reflects on the relations between transport infrastructure, affect and daily mobility. While transport systems has been always designed along the lines of discrete choice model paradigms, we want to show choice as a situated practice in which affects and emotions shape the way in which the infrastructure experience is configured. We show that decisions (regarding which mode of transport to use, which changes or connections to make, and which routes to prefer) are intertwined with affects and emotions that define relationships with the infrastructure and the situations encountered. Drawing on the travel experiences of the users of Santiago de Chile transport system (Transantiago) we analyse choice from the perspective of affects and emotions and examine the way in which certain decisions by users are temporally and empirically stabilized and constructed. Additionally, through this reflection we explore an aspect that is relatively undocumented in Science and Technology Studies (STS) about infrastructures, concerning the role played by affects and emotions in the way certain urban structures and technologies are used and appropriated.