

**FRIDAY, 22 April**

**9.00 - 10.20 Parallel Sessions**

**Public transport as public space (part 2)**

*[Marshrutka – Zenne 23]*

Convenors

*PUTSPACE team*

*Chair: Louise Sträuli (Tallinn University and Université Libre de Bruxelles)*

**Samuel Mutter, Aberystwyth University**

***Felt Spaces of Logistification: An Auto-Ethnography of Technology, Aesthetics and Affect in the London Underground***

The London Underground is increasingly animated by technologies which collect, process, and feed back data about the system and its passenger-publics in 'real-time', helping to anticipate threats and faults, optimise circulations, and generate additional revenue. While concerns have been raised about the safety of such technologies, their data ethics, and implications for labour, uneven impacts upon more banal, granular, felt (sensory and affective) mobilities of the space remain under-investigated.

**Laura Kemmer, Humboldt University of Berlin**

**Wladimir Sgibnev, Leibniz-Institute for Regional Geography**

**Tonio Weicker, Leibniz-Institute for Regional Geography**

**Maxwell Woods\*, Universidad Adolfo Ibañez in Viña del Mar**

***Spaces of exposure: Re-thinking 'publicness' through public transport***

Developing thoughts on exposure in cultural geography, literary studies, and mobilities research, this article aims to provide a more comprehensive account towards the publicness of public space. What would happen if we assessed publicness not by degrees of openness and inclusion, but through the nexus of vulnerability and complicity that is fundamental to the notion of exposure? To grasp such an intrinsic dualism, our perspective goes towards public transport, where experiences of exposure are intensified by its specific conditions of encapsulation and movement. We illustrate this perspective drawing from the autobiographical chronicles of the Chilean writer Pedro Lemebel, in order to then propose a 'learning from' the case of public transport for a rethinking of publicness. Specifically, we argue that exposure provides new insights on agency, power and vulnerability as part of a more processual notion of public space.

**Rania Dawood, University of Nottingham**

***How can we Improve the Train Station Experience in Suburban Locations? Saving Time while Enhancing the Experience of Time***

Railway Stations have always been the windows to the destination, now they are on track to becoming the destination. We naturally develop preconceived ideas about the location from our perception and experience of its station. Hence, the station needs to live up to the expectations of the user and needs to encourage the further use of public transportation. This research aims to gain an understanding of the aspects that are currently on offer in train stations across Britain that are used to enhance user experience, to identify the elements that have the potential to be included in suburban stations in order to investigate the concept

of the living station or passenger hub, to better serve local communities, enhance the experience of waiting time, and make better use of it through the facilities that have the potential to be included, as the concept of waiting, is generally deemed as time-wasted, and in a busy, fast-paced era of living and time being our most priceless asset, adding value to time is an attraction. To investigate this, the report analyses case studies drawn from entries for the Re-Imagining Railway Stations competition, as well as a survey which has been distributed to suburban train travellers across Britain, and expert interviews with Jacobs Head of Station Design and Network Rail's Principal Architect. Through the survey, an understanding of the current needs of a suburban community has been gained, with many individuals rating aspects such as comfortable waiting areas, accessibility and inclusion, and information board/desk as being very important, while votes for importance of facilities were significantly varied, but with the majority of respondents saying that they would come to the station outside of their usual travel days/hours to use specific facilities if they were to be provided. This is not surprising, as the study considered multiple communities across Britain, and each community varies in age, size, and existing facilities, which tells us that facilities need to be tailored to individual locations to satisfy and serve the maximum number of users.

**Christoph Schimkowsky, University of Sheffield**

***Passenger etiquette, customer experience, and the management of conduct on Tokyo's commuter railway network***

This presentation highlights the implications public transport environments' nature as public space has for public transport companies seeking to provide their customers with a 'comfortable' transit experience. Public transport environments such as train stations and subway carriages are 'quintessentially urban space[s]' in which passengers 'move with others' and are always faced with the task of managing contact with strangers (Benediktsson et al., 2018, p. 2; Bissell, 2016). This forced proximity to other transport users begets an inherent potential of discomfort and vexation. Passengers on public transport might be subjected to a range of inconsiderate misbehaviours such as co-passengers cutting in line, occupying multiple seats, or playing loud music. The risk of experiencing nuisance is only amplified by the fact that urban transit brings together highly diverse individuals with disparate mobility goals and understandings of 'appropriate' conduct who have to endure each other's company until they alight (Moore, 2012; Smith and Clarke, 2000; Symes, 2007). In other words, public transport environments' character as public space renders comfortable transit experiences contingent on the behaviour of fellow passengers. Taking transport provider-led manner improvement initiatives on Tokyo's commuter railway network as a case study, this presentation highlights the challenge the intimate relationship between passenger etiquette and travel experience presents for urban railway companies pursuing ideals of customer service and satisfaction. It draws on expert interviews with Japanese industry professionals and document analysis to demonstrate that public transport providers' engagement with passenger 'misbehaviour' is guided by considerations of customer service, satisfaction and sensibilities. It argues that the management of passenger (mis)conduct presents a highly sensitive task that Japanese railway companies engage in only reluctantly due to public transport users' overriding status as customers and dominant business discourses of customer sovereignty.