

The ethnography of (Im)mobilities: Mobile technology as a dimension of islanders' life

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Abstract

Based on an ethnography of the pier of Achao and the experience of two young islanders, it is demonstrated how the daily mobility has been modified with the arrival of new technologies and objects on the islands. On the one hand, it is postulated that the arrival and use of these objects – especially the smartphone – serves for the space-time displacement of previously unexplored territories, due to spatial exclusion and a lagging technological modernity. On the other hand, it is a practice and experience that draws on the neoliberal promise “of the mobile” to maintain and govern an immobility of discomfort. It is argued that mobility in Quinchao (Chiloé) can be thought beyond the effective or connective movement in the boat to include the immobility and waiting, where the daily use of the cellphone makes great sense as a buffer against the tensions between mobility and immobility present in the islands

Author keywords

Immobility

Islands of Chiloé

Neoliberalism

Smartphone

Waiting