Dusk to Dawn:

A bottom-up approach to the social effectiveness of public transport

DEPARTMENTS OF LAW, ANTHROPOLOGY AND GOVERNMENT
LAIDLAW SCHOLARS PROGRAMME 2025/26

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Dusk to Dawn" was a qualitative study of the interpretations held by individuals on their city's public transportation and how it shapes daily life. Focusing on Amsterdam and Rome we aimed to evaluate transportation impact on individual experience. We employed ethnographic data collection, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. These captured participants perspectives, informing our analysis. Three themes were identified. Inefficacy caused friction and stress in decision making, led to negative outcomes in disenfranchisement from social connections, and caused internalisation of ideologies which govern infrastructure investment.

INTRODUCTION

Dusk to Dawn investigated experiences of public transportation through ethnography.

- **How does transport impact social connectedness?**
- **What are the hidden, psychological impacts of transport networks?**

Tuvikene *et al* (2023) shows that social measurement of transport is overlooked when it's really a public space.

> *"when I came to the big cities, like Amsterdam, it [clubbing] became such like an arduous and difficult activity. […] And you usually travel for like 40 minutes to get there"*

INVESTIGATING VIA TESTIMONY

To explore a social experience, we needed to understand Allowing participants' testimony to inform our findings was crucial. Therefore, we focused on semi-structured interviews. 5 in Amsterdam, 3 in Rome. Investigating 3 areas:

- **Participant background**
- **Transportation usage**
- **Affective experience and perspective**

Participant observation provided framing for our understanding.

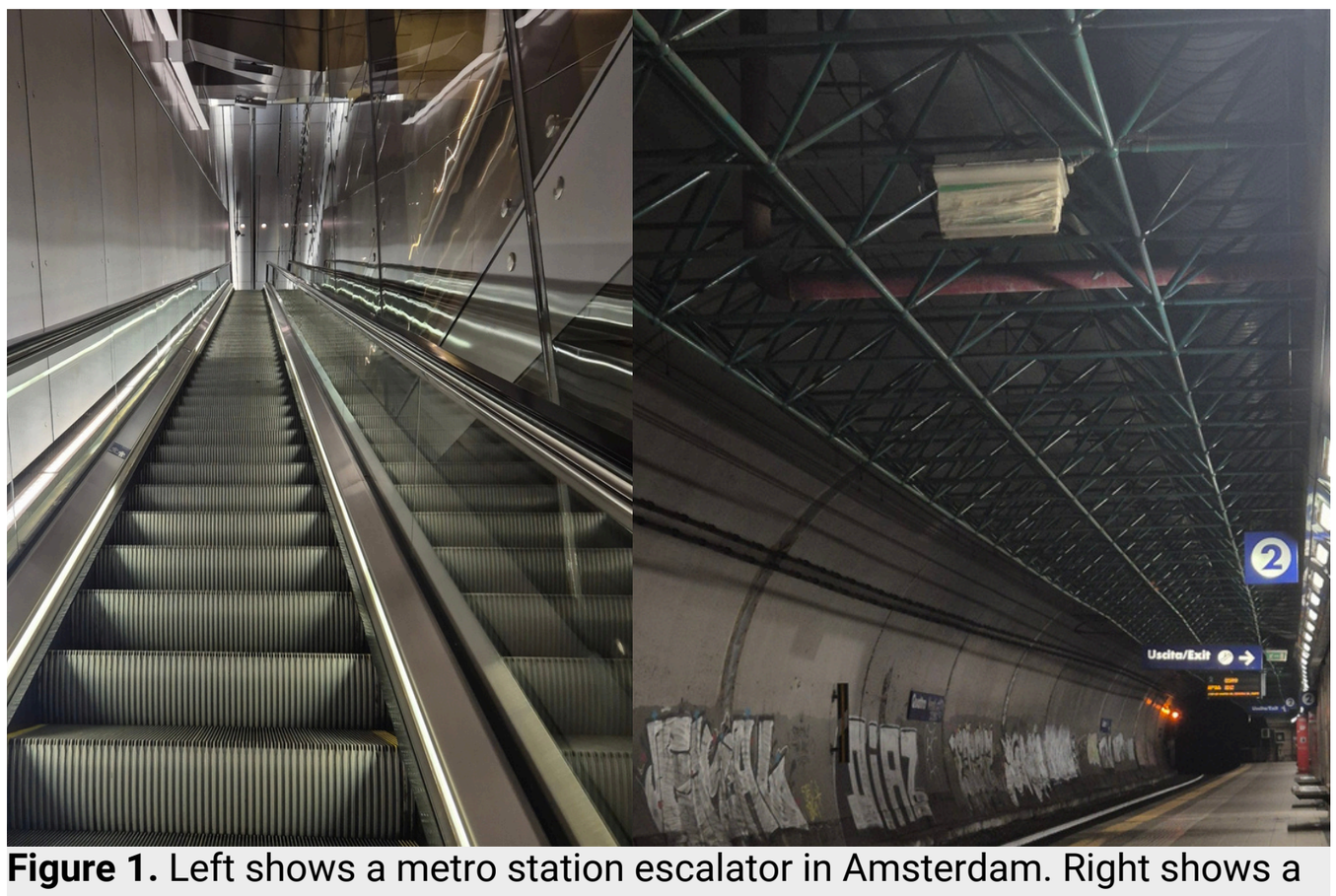


Figure 1. Left shows a metro station escalator in Amsterdam. Right shows a suburban railway platform in Rome with a broken emergency exit sign

ANALYSIS THROUGH THEMES

01 **Decision making.** Transport timetables add friction and stress between social life and practicality

02 **Travelling decisions' impact.** "Transport took a lot away from my life" each decision consumes capital and mental energy.

03 **Internalisation of ideology.** The ideology behind transport infrastructure is internalised creating a sense of unworthiness.

CONCLUSION

Bailey *et al* (2020) shows that travel time not distance limits social connectedness. Furthermore, we found that transportation changes the experiences and perceptions of individuals.

For public transport to serve as adequate public space:

- **Prioritise work AND social usage.**
- **Reduce sharp service cut-off times.**
- **Engage in further analysis of individual experience. Not just stats.**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bailey, M. et al. (2020) 'Social connectedness in urban areas', Journal of Urban Economics, 118, p. 103264

Tuvikene, T. et al. (2023) 'Public transport as public space: Introduction', Urban Studies, 60(15), pp. 2963–2978