

The Visual Communication of 'Correct' Passenger Conduct

Design Challenges of Transit Etiquette Poster Campaigns by Urban Railway Providers in Tokyo

PREMIS Seminar 2022-2023

28 September 2022, 16:00-18:00

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Public transport providers often attempt to prevent passenger behaviours they consider dangerous, deviant, or otherwise undesirable through the use of media technologies. For example, railway companies in cities worldwide employ posters and notices to convey desirable codes of passenger behaviour, thus orienting and directing mobility practices.

This talk introduces the case of 'manner poster' campaigns by Tokyo railway providers: colourful and comic posters targeting a wide range of behaviours which are believed to interfere with the transit system's safe and smooth operation, or cause nuisance to other passengers, and which form a near-ubiquitous presence in urban public transport environments in the Japanese capital.

Drawing on interviews with transport and design professionals involved in the production of manner poster campaigns as well as a visual analysis of posters, the talk examines the design considerations shaping the visual communication of 'correct' passenger etiquette. It analyses the visual strategies employed to problematise passenger misconduct and promote desirable mobility practices while simultaneously protecting customer sensibilities.

Christoph Schimkowsky was recently awarded his PhD from the University of Sheffield (Department of Sociological Studies/School of East Asian Studies) for his work on the management of passenger conduct on public transport in Japanese cities. He is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at Åbo Akademi University as part of the PUTSPACE (Public Transport as Public Space in European Cities, <http://www.putspace.eu/>) project and will take up a postdoctoral position at the University of Tokyo later this year. Christoph's work has previously appeared in *Mobilities*, *Japanese Studies*, and *Visual Communication*, among others.

What is PREMIS? It stands for Post-graduate Research in English: Multimodal and Interdisciplinary Studies, and refers to a literary and cultural seminar which promotes post-graduate research. While the emphasis is on new developments in literature, the seminar also keenly appreciates multi-modal, interdisciplinary or multi-cultural input.

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