

ABSTRACT

Resenärer i bilsamhället. Vardagligt resande i kulturell belysning (Travellers in motorized society. Everyday travelling in cultural light) (Written in Swedish with an English summary) by Håkan Andréasson.
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The everyday travelling patterns in the large city regions of great parts of Western Europe have been developed during the last 40-50 years. Automobility has reached a dominant position. Most people regard car driving as the most rational and effective way of moving. But there are major elements of irrational behaviour in connection to car driving, even if it is experienced as rational. To go by collective means of transport would often be a better alternative. An important ambition with this work is to look at everyday travelling in its cultural context. This is done through a description of the daily travel patterns of some groups of people, representatives from which have been interviewed qualitatively in the form of long, structured conversations. The individual, subjective conceptions are ascribed a great importance in the analysis. The establishing of travel patterns are discussed in relation to theoretical discussions on modernity and changes in life conditions. The investigation is limited to the region of Göteborg, but it may in large parts be generalized to any large city area with developed mass mobility based on private cars. The analysis of the study is concentrated to travelling by car and by collective means of transport.

The results shows for example that those who are unshakable car users today have been so for as long as it has been possible. Their lack of knowledge about collective transport is significant. Daily travelling means to many habitual car users the development of their own specific habits and bad habits. Since the most part of all travelling is done with only a single person in the car, there is room for strictly individual routines. The interviews present many examples on this theme, from listening to the radio (or the tape recorder), to lighting a cigarette, often at daily recurring moments. One important observation is that these routines create a need to be on one's own, something that fits well with the increased individualism of late modernity. At the same time these individual habits become barriers to, for instance, sharing a car, or to the use of collective transport (and thus to be forced to submit to the will of others).

The collective transport travellers have their arguments for not using cars. It mean for instance economical advantages which make possible enriching leisure activities (as travelling or hobby activities). By choosing a place to live near collective transport facilities they do not need to be dependent on cars. When using collective transport they can relax and read papers and books - doing things that are impossible for the car drivers to do. Through walking and bicycling they get exercise which is good for their health etc.

Keywords: everyday travelling, culture, individual subjective conceptions, the meaning of cars, modernity, Göteborg.

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