

Why don't women cycle in São Paulo?

**An analysis on the low rates of female
commuting cycling in São Paulo, Brazil**

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Low rates of female cycling in São Paulo?

Empirical knowledge says so...

... And the available data on cycling in São Paulo as well

- Origin-Destiny Survey by the subway company: women were never more than 12% of the bike trips (2012)
- Bike counts by the local cycling advocacy groups (2010 – 2016): women are an average of ~ 8% of the counted cyclists
- Cyclists Profile Survey (2015): women were 14% of 1.804 interviewed cyclists

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Context – 2013: change of paradigm

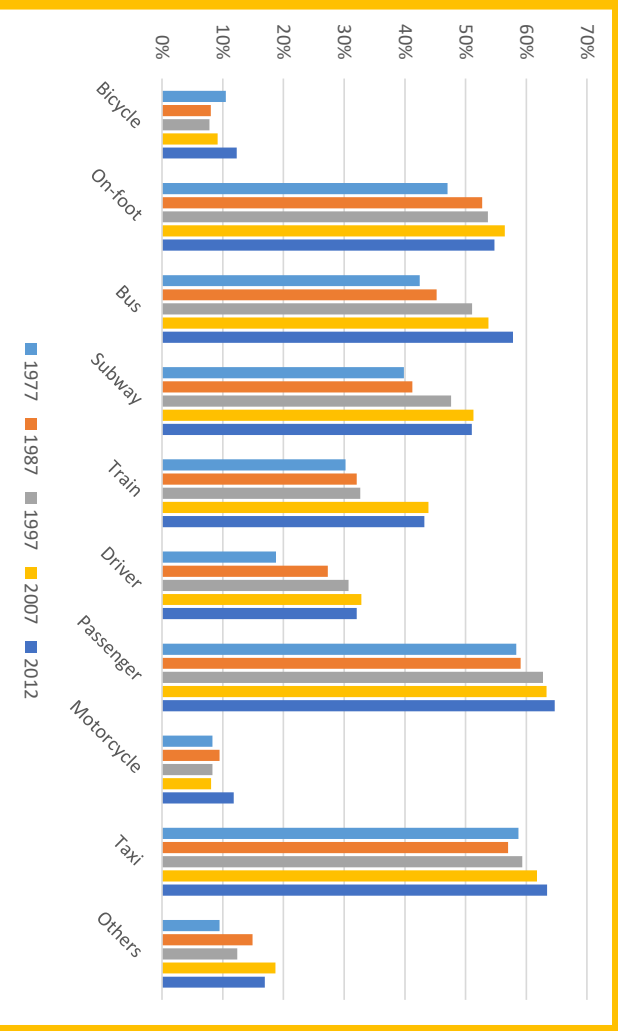
- Electoral campaign 2012: candidates signed compromise with cyclist's groups in order to invest in cycle infrastructure
- January 2013: newly elected mayor faces tragic car-collision with cyclist in his first month in the office
- Local administration starts dialogue with local cyclists; talk is intensified after June 2013's protests against the raise of transportation fares
- Government makes plans on implementing 400km of cycle infrastructure until end-2016

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Origin-Destiny Survey

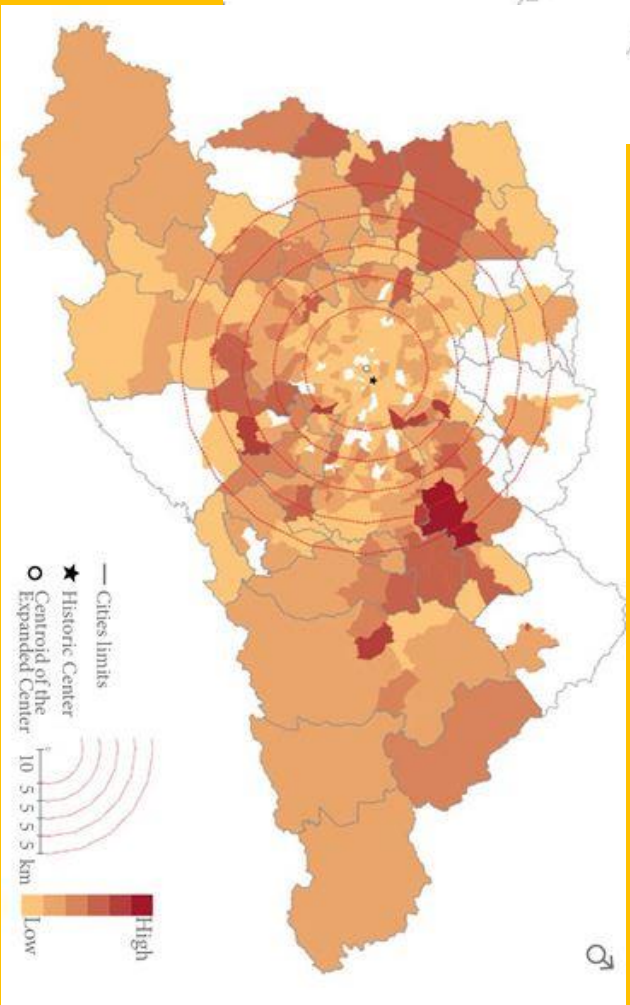
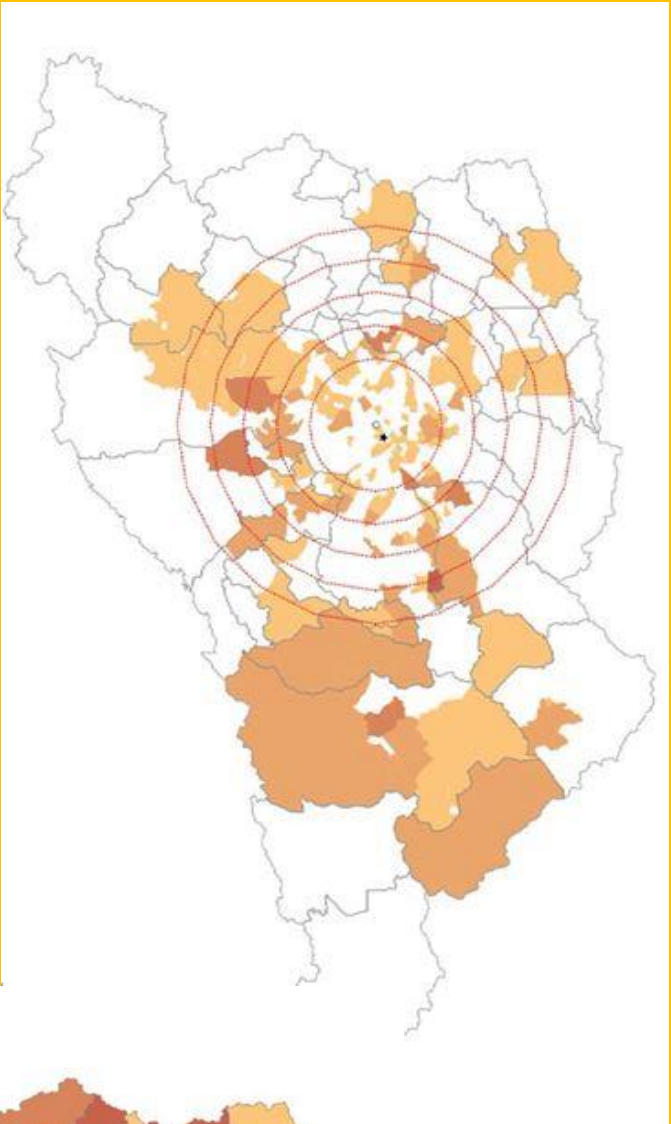
- Made for planning mass-transporte – does not serve to measure active transportation trips (walking and cycling)
- Even though, it is the most comprehensive survey in the metropolitan region
- Very low female bike trips rates: the peak was in 2012 and the trips were only 12%

Female travel ratio by main mode, from 1977 until 2012



Source: Lemos et al., 2016.

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Bike counts

- Bike counts on 11 roads since 2010
- Only two roads with historical series of more than three periods, with counts pre and post infrastructure
- Avenida Paulista – 118% increase in cyclists; 1,004% increase in female cyclists
 - 2010: 27 women
 - 2015: 298 women
- Avenida Eliséu de Almeida – 122% increase in cyclists; 1,444% increase in female cyclists
 - 2010: 9 women
 - 2015: 139 women

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Cyclist's Profile Survey (2015)

- First massive quantitative research on urban cycling and the profile of São Paulo's cyclists; 1.804 cyclists interviewed (and 257 women)
- Methodology not made to capture the share of bicycle trips in the city
- Bias in the methodology might have influenced the socioeconomical profile of the interviewed female cyclists
 - 48% of the women had income above 3 MW, against 28% of the men
 - 75% of the women had completed college or graduate school, against 50% of the men

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Cyclist's Profile Survey (2015)

- Men and women's use of the bicycle in São Paulo seem to be similar – women tend to have a little smaller travel times and to use the bicycle less frequently in the week
- Women appeared as being more recent cyclists than men: 60% have been cycling for less than one year, while for men the proportion is 34%
- Women tend to use the bicycle more often for shopping trips than men (42% against 27%)

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Conclusions (and what's next?)

- The travel patterns are different for men and women – specially cycling travel patterns
- How can we discuss that gender difference in cycling patterns considering the female socialization and women's main responsibility for domestic work?
- We've been watching a huge increase of female cyclists in São Paulo – but that is also true for cyclists in general
- Does that increase is directly linked to the implementation of infrastructure?

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Conclusions (and what's next?)

- There's few data available to draw conclusions and causal relations: we need more information
- Recent launch of a specific research the challenges for women cycling in São Paulo is a first step towards that. Some findings:
 - Female bicycle trips were found over the entire city, proving again Origin-Destiny Survey's lacks
 - Shopping is the 2nd most common destination for cyclists and non-cyclists
 - Cyclists tend to be mothers less often than non-cyclists

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Thank you!

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