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Published in:
Mobilities

DOI (link to publication from Publisher):
10.1080/17450101.2013.769722

Publication date:
2013

Document Version
Accepted author manuscript, peer reviewed version

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This paper is published online in

Mobilities

This version is post-print

To access publishers version go to: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2013.769722

To cite this article: Mia Arp Fallov, Anja Jørgensen & Lisbeth B. Knudsen (2013) Mobile Forms of
Belonging, Mobilities, 8:4, 467-486, DOI: 10.1080/17450101.2013.769722

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Mobile forms of belonging

Mia Arp Fallov, Anja Jørgensen, Lisbeth B. Knudsen

Mobilities

Abstract

Mobility is often portrayed as the antithesis of belonging. In this article, we challenge this perspective investigating how mobility and motility influence belonging in everyday life. We develop a perspective on belonging consisting of the dimensions of mobility, people and place and conditioned by the underlying dimensions of time, resources and structures of meaning. Applying this on interview material from a case study in Aalborg, we propose a tentative typology of mobile forms of belonging. It is discussed how different rhythms, conditions of mobility, and variations in mobility resources result in different scales of belonging and modes of 'centering'.

Introduction

Despite the spread and increasing accessibility to mobility, and the augments in sociological literature on globalization of the disembedding of social relations from place (Giddens 1994Bauman 1998, Bauman 2000, Castells 1996) most peoples' lives are centred in and around their local neighbourhood (Forrest, Kearns 2001). The "majority of urban citizens live an everyday life characterised by human locatedness, routinization and involvement in different (more or less institutionalised) circles of social interaction. Everyday life is connected to places – sometimes even bounded; to places where we live, work, consume and bring up our children" (Simonsen 2003). A number of studies have shown that the question of time spent in a locality, as well as the length of residency in a particular place, has a positive correlation to belonging (see Lewicka 2010 for an overview). Thus, there is no evidence to suggest that forces of technological, social and environmental change have led to the

diminishing of local bonds. On the contrary, studies of place attachment show that attachment to place continues to be strong in regard to local neighbourhood scale and the scale of city or town (Lewicka 2010). Therefore, the focus of this explorative article is not to question belonging *per se,* but instead a wish to dwell on how belonging in everyday life in neighbourhoods is related to a particular aspect of what we *do*. The central question for the following is how mobility, and the potential for mobility, shape sense of place and influence belonging in everyday life.

The changing role of place and place attachment in a mobile modern society

The starting point for this article is that territorial belonging still matters to people in a modern mobile and globalised world, and that mobility and belonging should not be seen as mutually exclusive (Gustafson 2009). Rather, the meaning that people attach to place has to be seen as varying, not only between different types of places, but also between different degrees of rootedness, and with the different routes that people have in their everyday life (Gustafson 2001a). Thirty years ago, Anne Buttimer wrote about meaning of place as involving two reciprocal movements of "home" and "reaching out". To grasp sense of place, she argues, one has to focus on the processes of 'centering'. "*…[C]entering suggests an ongoing life process – the breathing in and bringing home which is a reciprocal of the breathing out and reaching toward horizon*" (1980:171). Belonging in this perspective appears to be a product of processes relating to both immobility and mobility. Moreover, the benefit of this perspective is that we can distinguish between different ways of belonging, which involve varying 'centering' processes and thus different combinations of mobility and immobility. In this way, we can allow for a sense of place that includes those that have a rooted belonging connected mostly to the dwelling and homemaking, as well as those for whom 'reaching out' becomes more important than homemaking. Places become, for the latter, mostly "topological surface of access" (Buttimer 1980:174). Hummon (1992) similarly, argues we should approach belonging as varied. In his typology of belonging, he includes, therefore, different types of community

rootedness, as well as different forms of low local attachment, which he coins *place alienated*, *relativity* and *placelessness*. Hummon suggests that in order to develop this typology, which he developed nearly twenty years ago, future research should focus on the relationship between belonging and different forms of mobility. *"To trace these and other processes, individuals need to be compared with different mobility experiences. Here, sense of place may well be influenced in complex ways: by the frequency of mobility, the conditions of mobility (voluntary and constrained moves), the timing of mobility in terms of life stages (e.g. retirement), and the patterns of mobility (e.g. homecoming). Such factors, when combined with interpretations of intra- and intercommunity variation in sense of place, will provide an integrated understanding of community belief and sentiment"* (Hummon 1992:276)

In the following, we suggest to think of belonging as a product of the relations between the dimensions people, place and mobility. We propose that these different dimensions influence in various ways on this reciprocal process of 'home' and 'reaching out'. Therefore, we replace the concern, within the place attachment literature, with psychological processes (se for example Twigger-Ross & Uzzell's study from 1996, and the review by Scannell & Gifford 2009) with a focus on movement and the potential for movement.[1] This is informed by David Seamon's focus on movement as important for the meanings attached to place, and the development of sense of place (Seamon 1980). He suggested that sense of place is created through the fusion of many body-ballets and time-space routines ("sets of habitual body behaviours which extends through a considerable portion of time" (1980:159)) in terms of place. Sense of place in a neighbourhood originates, Seamon argues, in the rhythm of life in place, the many daily interpersonal dynamics with people and the habitual patterns meeting in time and space (Ibid.). A similar focus on rhythms of spatio-temporal routines are found in Lefebvre's notion of rhythm analysis, although he was also concerned with how these rhythms of mobilities in place are sought regulated as part of the production of place (Lefebvre 2004, Edensor 2010). Thus everyday movement in place and how place

conditions these everyday routinized activities are important for understanding both varying forms of belonging to local places as well as the sense of place for those with low place attachment. Our suggestion of viewing mobility as one of the dimensions of local belonging, moreover, is influenced by the recent call for social science to take mobility seriously. We will return to this in the methodological section and the implications of the mobilities turn in the following section, but first a few words on the dimensions of people and place.

Several sociological studies have researched how belonging maps on to social distinctions and variations in resources (Blokland & Savage 2008, Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst 2005, Warr 2005). These studies suggest that different social groups mobilize different motifs for their sense of local belonging. Mike Savage and co-authors (2010) suggest with a Bourdieusian perspective that the cosmopolitan mobile middle class can be associated with a particular form of belonging rather than being viewed as disengaged from localities. They coin this as 'elective belonging' by which they imply that the middle class have an investment in place, which links aesthetic and ethical value of place with an emphasis on choice. What matters to the local belonging of the middle classes is how the symbolic values of their neighbourhoods convey a sense of who they are. Their engagement in local community is not out of a goal of social cohesion, but out of a concern with living near 'some one like me' (Ibid.). They contrast elective belonging with 'dwelling', the latter representing a more functional orientation to local place that emphasize the given-ness of their situation. Belonging as dwelling corresponds largely with the working classes, and represent a form of belonging where people are deeply vested in the locality in which they find themselves irredeemably thrown (Ibid.). The point here is not that the working classes do not have an aesthetic relation to place, but that these values are mobilised in a different manner to the privileged middle classes. It is the latter, which have the cultural, economic and social resources to possess space. There are many interesting elements to these studies (for a discussion see Jørgensen 2010), what is important for the present purposes is, that different types of resources and their combination mediates on the relationship between

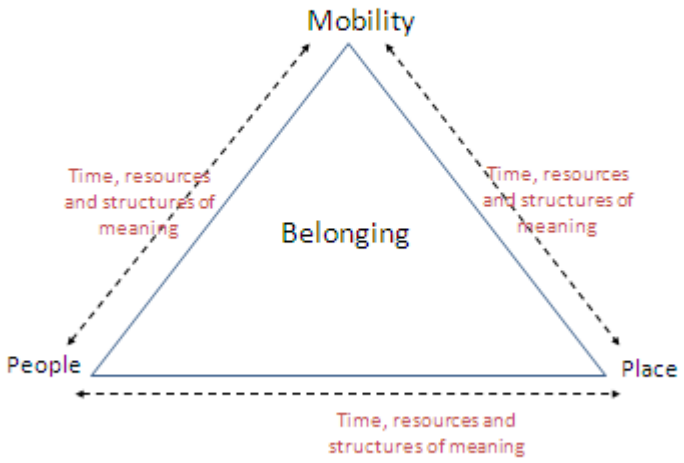
people and mobility, and that focusing on mobility highlights different aspects of how this mediation influence the relationship between people and place.

The way that the people dimension relates to mobility and place, and hence influences belonging, change during different life stages and depend on the particular biography of individuals (Hummon 1992, Lewicka 2010, Gustafson 2001b). Therefore, the categorization of people in typologies of belonging should not be static, as external events, change in life stage, identity change and social mobility will change meanings attached to place. In Gustafson's theorization of belonging as a triadic relation between self, others and environment (Gustafson 2001) he points to the importance of a time dimension to the understanding of belonging. This triadic relation interplays with the themes of continuity and change.[2] Moreover, meanings of place develop in relationship, not only with the biography of the residents, but also with the history and traditions associated with different environments. Thus, as Gustafson rightly argues, belonging is an on-going process where individual and collective strategies are in interplay with external events (2001b).

Thus, belonging has both temporal and spatial dimensions and neither of them should be neglected. Evidence from the place attachment literature suggests that attachment increases with the clearness of definitions of space (Gustafson 2001b, 2009, Lewicka 2010). However, the lesson from the human geographers like Massey (1994) and Seamon (1980) is that what people associate with, for example, local neighbourhood are in many instances interwoven in complex ways with attachment to other places and other scales – and at other times. Moreover, as Seamon (1980) argues, place is a dynamic entity and the place-ballets, which constitute the meanings attached to place, are sensitive to the change of rhythm and character of place. Therefore, neighbourhood, as the answer to the question of belonging to what, cannot refer to a static physical structure or set structure of meaning. Belonging is a continuing and contextual process (Simonsen 2008). We suggest that

belonging is a process that maps out between the dimensions of people, place and mobility, and which is conditioned by the sub-dimensions of time, resources and structures of meaning.

Figure 1



The need for mobile conceptualisation of the relationship between people and place in everyday life

In recent years, a growing body of literature has been investigating the importance of various forms of mobility for contemporary life and our understanding of society, particularly how we are to understand social life in place. Predominantly, John Urry (Urry 2000, Urry 2007) has asserted the need for view of the relationship between people and place as constituted through performances, many of which are mobile in character (Hannam, Sheller & Urry 2006) . Mobility practices and mobility induced place performances challenges the understanding of

neighbourhoods as contexts or containers of social relations and routinized activities. Neighbourhoods do not simply gain authenticity and meaning as places which allows for pause in movement (Tuan 1974), but are produced, at least in part, through mobility performances (Cresswell 2006, Cresswell & Merriman 2011). Neighbourhoods as localities must be seen in relation to the networks of mobility that pass through them and link them to other localities, and the meaning and identity work involved in the acts of moving in, through and between localities. There has been several studies of the variations in technologies involved in different mobility practices, what is important in the present context is that studies show how place are experienced differently according to our mobility practices (Cresswell 2006). Urry argues, for example, that we should conceive of automobility as 'dwelling at speed' and that this form of mobility practices change our experience of local places, their inhabitants, and how localities become visible for us (2006). To understand what characterises people's rootedness in places we have to take into account their routes to and within places and the meanings and practices involved in both. As Simonsen (2003) argues, we must move beyond viewing mobility and place as the antithesis of each other.

Our perspective emphasises the way mobility is dependent on forms of anchoring (Urry 2007, Adey 2006). Mobility has to be viewed in relation to immobile systems, which make mobility possible, such as systems of transport, of behavioural regulation, safety systems and information systems (Ibid.). Moreover, these spaces of 'anchorings' and 'moorings' form significant parts of the materiality of particular neighbourhoods, and thus condition our social relations within and between them.

Moreover, mobility has to be understood as a co-producer of subjects (Cresswell & Merriman 2011) identity, reflexive identity work, and of culture and norms in the everyday life (Jensen 2006). Therefore, taking the significance of mobility seriously involves a changed gaze, from focusing on place specifics, or solely on how

mobility characteristics change places, to focus on how mobility as practice, ideology, and symbolic work intersect with and co-produce place and place specificities.

Lately mobility theorists have pointed to the importance of how mobility works as stratifying principle and pointed to how the mobility of some groups rest on the immobility of other groups (Cass, Shove & Urry 2005, Larsen & Jacobsen 2009, Ureta 2008). Moreover, that mobility should not alone be associated with masculine views of progress, modernity and freedom (Massey 1994, Simonsen 2003), but that mobility becomes an important dimension of understanding contemporary forms of power and domination, restrictions and anxieties (Cresswell 2006, Jensen 2011). Thus, mobility is imbued with normative values of the good life. As Freudendal-Pedersen argues in her study of structural narratives of mobility in everyday life, mobility is often taken for granted and the consequences and ambivalences of everyday choices related to mobility are seldom discussed (Freudendal-Pedersen 2007). Late modern everyday life is loaded with demands to be flexible, reflexive and the ability to navigate individualised risks. Mobility is in many ways set up as the necessary answer to these demands. What Freudendal-Pedersen shows in her study, building on Kaufman's (2002) distinction between mobility and motility, is that motility, the potential for movement becomes as important as mobility for understanding everyday life. While mobility is associated with providing the freedom sought for in everyday life, she shows that motility actually is more important for the sense of freedom. The different choices of mobility patterns we make to sustain our everyday life are associated with ambivalence around freedom and constrains.

Mobility, immobility and the potential for movement form an important dimension of local belonging. Our everyday performance of mobility practices shape the meanings and qualities attached to place and how we experience our localities. Therefore, mobility as a dimension of belonging cannot simply be related to practice and materiality but must be seen as an intricate part of identity work and symbolic structures. Moreover, access

to mobility and connections to mobile networks provide residents with particular resources, which mediates on the two other dimensions of people and place, thus on meaning of place originating from the reciprocal movement of 'home' and 'reaching out' (Buttimer 1980) and the variations in place-ballets (Seamon 1980).

Methodological interlude

In the following, we will apply this perspective on belonging consisting of the dimensions of mobility, people and place, and conditioned by the underlying dimensions of time, resources and structures of meaning to material from an on-going project investigating the relations between mobility, local community and local belonging in the municipality of Aalborg. We aim with this article to answer the call for research into people's everyday mobility routines and the need to investigate the qualitative relation between mobility and territorial belonging (Gustafson 2009, Hummon 1992, (Macdonald, Grieco 2007). One advantage of this perspective on belonging is that we with Buttimer's (1980) words can attempt to straddle the divide between the insider (doing and living) and outsider view (abstracted view of places and people as nouns) of sense of place. Our primary focus here is on corporal mobility; the mobility of people in and between neighbourhoods. Although our material also covers access to communicative forms of mobility (see Larsen, Urry & Axhausen 2006) we will only to a very limited degree cover this here.[3]

Why Aalborg you may ask. Aalborg is situated in the Northern part of Denmark and is the third largest municipality of Denmark (with 199188 inhabitants in 2011), but small in a global context. We have chosen it as a significant case, since it is rebranding itself from its industrial past to become an entrepreneurial post-industrial knowledge based city. It is a strategic case in the sense of encompassing both old working class neighbourhoods and neighbourhoods of the new knowledge based middle classes. Moreover, it encompasses both rural and urban areas and therefore facilitates analysis of a range of different forms of belonging to different forms of

localities and social groups. The empirical study is a combination of interviews and register based investigations where the register based mapping of neighbourhoods and characteristics of inhabitants are used as an underlying basis for the recruitment of informants to the qualitative part of the study. In this article, we draw on parts of the qualitative interview material, which consists of 21 semi-structured interviews each lasting between 1-2.5 hrs. in 11 different localities in the municipality of Aalborg. The sample is not statistically representative, but chosen to cover variations in type of localities including urban, suburban and rural areas, different forms of dwellings from owner occupied detached housing over flats to more alternative forms of housing as well as age, gender, socio-economic background and length of residency. Thus, the sample was chosen to cover variations in the people and place dimensions of belonging, however for the purposes of this article we have analysed the material in relation to how the mobility dimension of belonging interact with people and place. The themes of the interviews comprised of questions concerning the dwelling biography of the informant, their everyday practices, their sense of place, their connections to mobile infrastructures and relations to local communities.

A typology of mobile belonging

We have gathered the many different ways that mobility influences belonging in our material in a tentative typology of different forms of mobile belonging.

Table 1

The sub-dimensions of belonging: time, resources and structures of meaning are in this typology operationalized as mobility rhythms, mobility resources, and conditions of mobility. We have structured the following sections in order to discuss the dimensions of this typology, rather than in order to outline each type in succession. In the

following section, we will discuss examples of how a very mobile working life influences feelings of local attachment and conceptualizations of home. We aim to show that modern everyday life is not about being mobile or immobile per se, but that mobility rhythms influence the scale of belonging. The third section focus on the conditions of mobility and the 'mode of centering' through examples of low local attachment, while we in the third section, turn our attention towards a discussion of mobility resources, and how they mediate on the dimensions of belonging.

Mobility rhythms, home and scales of belonging

"Mobility does not necessarily serve to threaten an attachment to place. For a route well travelled may over time turn into a meaningful place, just like the places or the nodes at either end of the route. Repetition is the key" (Adey 2010).

The stories that our informants relay to us contradict the hypothesis that high mobility leads to a weakening of local attachment. Rather a highly mobile working life necessitates for some of our informants strong attachment to home. What becomes apparent from the interviews is that the question of rhythms and patterns of mobility becomes important for the way a mobile working life influences local belonging, a good example of this in an informant, who lives with his second wife and three sons in an old farmhouse in the centre of a village West of Aalborg. He is working for a big multinational firm with checking the safety different places on the off shore oilrigs. This means that he is constantly away two weeks and then has 3-4 weeks at home. His portrayal of being mobile is ambivalent. On the one hand, he identifies with a mobile working culture with regional origins where work is detached from locality, and involves a lot of travelling. Home for him and his colleagues becomes a matter of choice. Since they do not commute every day, they are free to live abroad or in places far from everything. On the other hand, he has a tendency to diminish the importance of travelling comparing, what in the eyes of other

might seem an extreme mobility, with 'normal' commuting patterns. This tendency to naturalize the amount of commuting that is performed is a common streak in the narratives of our informants with a very mobile working life. It is also similar to what Freudendal-Petersen (2007) found in her study of structural narratives of mobility that people have a need to rationalize their mobility choices. Narratives that portray everyday life have a tendency to construe events, actions and performances in a way that relays connectedness and rationality rather than burdens and stress.

The informant explains how the rhythm of being away from home in longer periods makes home all the more important.

R1: "It does [gives special meaning to place]. That is... because you are away from your family and your base, so coming back... your base means something. And it is important that it provides safety for my family and me and that there are others nearby who can take over, when I am not here, if needs be. So it means something where you live...I mean, it would not be the same if I lived in the Western part of the city in a flat, then I would not in the same manner feel like returning to a home. I mean, it is not spacious enough. Because when you are away like that, and travel like that, you are often together many people in the same place and there is only work, and when you return home, then you need spaciousness, a garden and light, so yes, absolutely. Silence, in my case silence."

He explains how being on the rigs involves the constant noise of many people and cramped sleeping and private quarters and the constant buzzing of machines. He compares coming home with the experience of coming home after a noisy concert. Home has, therefore, one the one hand, importance in the sense of providing the arena in which he can recuperate after the bodily performance associated with the mobile working life. On the other hand, home is associated with safety and a controlled environment. He elaborates:

R1:"It is different what people associates with home... I am sort of a cave man, and ... I need my base and my nest, and, yes, a place where I can have my family and sort of – no, it is probably the wrong expression to manage,

but here everyone can be safe. Yes, it is different what people associate with it. For some, home is just a place to sleep and does not really mean anything, and you can move away anytime."

The valuation of home as a safe environment is for this informant not only closely related to the dwelling, but also to the local community in his village. He explains that he and his wife actively chose to move to this village, because of its local community. The close ties to their neighbours are necessary for his life away, since he knows that someone will always be there to help his wife and family if needs be. For this informant engaging in a working life that entails a rhythm of being absent from home necessitates strong local attachment, not simply to the place of the dwelling, but also to the social relations formed in this particular village as these help him manage home even in his absence. His story is therefore one of a combination of high mobility and seeking local community and we have coined this type as *mobile rootedness*. In some respects this informant represents the 'elective belonging' that Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005) portray in their study, since he and his family belong to the middle class families with enough capital to reflexively choose their place of residence in accordance with their preferences. In other respects, it is important to understand his story not simply in terms of having particular resources relative to a social field, but moreover, as a story about the importance for this family of a local community, which is 'not like one-self' but spacious and inclusive in a manner that may even challenge their preferences.

A contrasting story is from an informant, who moved to his working class neighbourhood 36 years ago. The history of this neighbourhood is tied to the big concrete factory that lies in the harbour of Aalborg. This informant's dwelling carrier is one formed by lesser economic means. Therefore, the choice of place of residence was primarily connected to questions of affordability. He has now retired but his story is, in a similar manner,

one of a very mobile working life working for the Danish National Railways (DSB), where home becomes important for sustaining the mobility of the working life.

R2: "I do not know whether it is because I live here, or whether it is something more general, but I need a base, and I need to come home, and I think home is here. When I was a trainee, I have been 75 places within DSB, and that is many places. I had a great need to come home and sleep in my own bed, even though it was ridiculous. I could have brought an extra shirt and found a place to sleep. I thought it was wonderful to come home and sleep, to drink coffee and read the newspaper, go to bed and then drive again the next morning. It is maybe my nature and we are all different"

For this informant sustaining and practicing the space-ballets of home (Seamon 1980) was so important that it meant returning home every night even though it meant many hours of travelling. The relationship between home and a mobile working life is, therefore, not simply a matter of the practicality of rational choices and diminishing travelling times. The meaning generated through rhythms and routines shapes the relationship between mobile commuting practices and local belonging. Again, here home is associated with the arena for recuperating the body and the mind in a mobile working life. In contrast with the previous informant, home is here more closely associated with the dwelling than with the local community. We have coined this type *mobile taken-for-grantedness*. Local attachment is also in this case associated with safety, but it is more safety in terms of familiarity and predictability than the safety that is associated with many, varied and strong local community ties.

Local belonging is in neither of these two stories represented as an antithesis to their mobile working life, the rhythms of which in both instances are characterised by high frequencies of journeys away from home, but also the regularity of returning home. Rather, these two examples show how practices involved in a mobile working life depend on and intertwine with immobility, and the qualities associated with immobility such as bodily

recuperation, silence, calmness and mundane practices around the home. What differentiates the two, apart from the differences in access to resources, is the scale of their belonging, where the first story represents a form of belonging that encompasses the entire local community, belonging for the latter is connected to the dwelling and the immediate neighbours. The variations in the scale of belonging outlined above illustrate that scale does not indicate differences in strength of belonging, but rather point to different types of mobile belonging associated with the way that the practices of mobility is weaved together with the meaning of "feeling at home" in the spatio-temporal routines of everyday life.

Such a perspective challenges belonging as exclusively connected to static conceptualisations of 'home'. Urry (2007) argues, for example, that the practices of dwelling and feeling of belonging no longer can be analysed in terms of the place of dwelling, but has to be understood as produced and reproduced in the many places and practices involved in the 'in between'. Belonging also has to be seen as produced in the spaces of the car, the train, and the paths trodden in our everyday practices, thus, belonging is produced in the meetings between human, machine and materiality (see also Simonsen 2003). On the one hand, this is a perspective that argues for moving the focus for a study of local belonging outside peoples' homes. On the other hand, it can also be argued that home is the setting for this meeting between dwelling and mobility, that home is the refuge for the burdens and demands of constant reflexivity shaping late modern everyday life. Home is the coming together of the family's connections to social arenas that stretch beyond the home and the surrounding neighbourhood. Therefore, the dwelling of the home becomes an important anchoring place or social arena for the production and reproduction of mobility practices and motility.

A way to avoid associating home with stasis, or identifying it simply with the dwelling, is to think of different categories of home, as suggested by Winther (2006). She suggest to distinguish between home as place, home

as an idea, to feel at home, and lastly "homing" to indicate how to establish 'home-feeling'. The category of 'homing' can be associated with Urry's focus on the practices involved in the 'in between'. For Winther homing is a verbalization of home, and a way to conceptualize the tactics of the mobile as a capability to be in the world. Homing refers to the practices associated with 'doing as home', fake at home, and act domestically (Winther 2006, Petersen et al 2010). Winther's research shows how people who live a mobile lifestyle in which home goes beyond the single house deploy homing tactics such as doubling equipment, territorializing new territory, and connecting while away with family and friends. In our study 'homing' tactics becomes a mediator for the burdens of commuting. An example of this is a female veterinarian who covers the farms in an area of approximately 200 kilometres. Like many of the other informants leading a mobile working life, she refers to the practices of commuting as a question of routine. Driving the long distances is something that one 'gets used to'. Homing practices might explain how driving many hours is not conceived as a burden. The veterinarian emphasizes how her mobility practices opens possibilities for engaging in personal practices that there is limited time for in a busy family life, such as listening to audio books and chatting with friends on the phone. Commuting for her is not 'dead' time as also showed by Edensor (2011) in his study of commuting. She has lifted practices normally associated with the home into the space of the car. These tactics not only makes the space of the car homely, but also makes it easier to juggle the demands of a mobile working life.

Modes of 'centering' and conditions of mobility

As outlined in the beginning, our approach to belonging involves a focus on how the dimensions of people, place impact on the mode of 'centering' between the reciprocal movements of 'home' and 'reaching out' (Buttimer 1980). Seen from this perspective the two informants, mentioned above, represent two different types of mobile belonging that have varying modes of 'centering'. For the first informant local belonging becomes central for his process of centering. Meaning of place is intimately connected, for this informant, to his belonging to local

community as it both mediates on the meaning of home and helps him cope with his mobile working life rhythm of periods of absence. Reaching out by way of periodical absence from home only becomes meaningful because everyday practices of home are conducted in the embrace of an active local community. In contrast, the second informant represents a type where home becomes the mode of centering. His sense of place is connected to the routines of everyday life at home, and his mobile working life is upheld by frequent homecoming.

Both of these examples represent types of mobile belonging with strong local attachment, although in varying ways. However, sense of place is not always connected to local attachment and our material includes examples of people who have no real attachment to their neighbourhood. A good example of this is a woman who originates from Buenos Aires in Argentina. Her story is about how one can negotiate low levels of local attachment by seeking mobility. Ten years ago, she ended up in a very small village in the western periphery of the municipality, due to her marriage to her second husband. Both she and her husband lead very mobile working lives. While he is a truck driver delivering goods all over Scandinavia, she commutes in her profession as a Spanish teacher 3 hours every working day to the two locations in which she teaches. She claims that she is a 'moving character' and that she has no real attachment to their village, but that they live there because her husband happened to own this property.

I: "Are you happy living here?"

R3: "yes, I don't know what to say. It does not mean much to me, actually. No ...maybe you have made an interview with the wrong person. I am happy with my neighbours and that it is quiet and peaceful, those are the positive elements about [name of village], but I have no, what should one call it...if an attractive project came up, then I would move".

She explains that is important to her to travel to big cities a couple of times a year to experience the 'big city pulse' that she is lacking in this more remote setting. Their everyday life is associated with a lot of driving, so

their spare time is oriented towards the immediate surroundings in the village. Therefore, tourism becomes a way to negotiate and provide meaning to a life that is located in a village to which she does not feel any belonging. This informant represents a type of mobile belonging that can be categorised as *mobile alien*ated, and in which aesthetic mobility is the 'mode of centering'. In contrast with the two previous mentioned types, it is not here the rhythm of absence and homecoming associated with a mobile working, which play the important part in shaping meaning of place. Rather, the irregular forms of 'reaching out' in terms of travelling to big city tourist attractions become a way to cope with an everyday life in a locality from which she feels alienated. Therefore, she represents a type of belonging where the process and potential of 'reaching out' becomes more important than homemaking.

This example also highlights the conditions of mobility, as another important dimension to mobile belonging, since her engagement in mobile experiences is dependent on her ability to negotiate with her husband's lack of travel interest. In her narrative, negotiation gains a double sense in that travelling mediates her lack of local attachment, at the same time, as she has to negotiate her own needs for big city pulse with her husband's nature interests.

R3: We would like to go to New York, but I will have to wait for [husbands name]. He has a small transport firm; he is a truck driver, so he travels with his truck. He is not so keen on travelling. Therefore, I travel for example with [name] my small son. I have travelled a lot with [name on oldest son]… [Husbands name] likes it, but not as much as I do.

I: No, he travels a lot in connection with his work?

R3: Yes, so he would like to stay at home.

Her motility, her potential for travelling is dependent on her family and her ability to negotiate their needs with hers. Family negotiations are most likely an important part of the travelling choices of many families, but it

becomes important to highlight here, as it underlines how motility is shaped, not only by structural constrains of time, resources and mobile infrastructures, but also by social interactions in everyday life.

Another example of how dependency impinges on motility and local attachment is related to the same type of mobile belonging. This informant lives in a newly developed neighbourhood adjacent to one of the more wealthy parts of the municipality. He is an anaesthetist, who in the course of his training has had a very mobile life in terms of number of job related relocations in different parts of the country and abroad. Due to his divorce four years ago, he now feels like he has become stuck in an immobile position in an area to which he does not feel any sense of belonging. He has stayed in the very big and expensive house, but cannot move due to his familial obligations to his five children.

R4: I think for me it has been the story of a long journey…it has been the deferment of needs in many years and finally we find a place to settle, build a house and be a family, and then we became divorced…it is at if it was the journey that has kept things together. When the journey was over so was our life together.

What is important in this example is not only the question of having the resources to fulfil the potential for moving, as his mobility resources are bound to paying for the house, but also the experience of that potential (Fotel 2006, Freudendal-Petersen 2007). He experiences his dependencies, both financially and in relation to his family as reducing his potential for moving to another place.

R4: If I had not been married and had kids, I might as well live in Syria, Canada or Norway. I do not feel like I have friends or acquaintances that want me here, so it is the family relations that I have, which keep me here.

The scale of belonging is for these two informants oscillating between the dwelling and an orientation towards the world, although their freedom of 'reaching out' to this wider scale is conditioned by their obligations in

relation to family. Rather than viewing belonging and mobility as individualized, we should view them as relational, connected and embedded, and these relations and dependencies influence mobility choices, actions and experiences of belonging, which in this case is an experience of low place attachment (Larsen, Urry and Axhausen 2006). When we categorise aesthetic mobility as the mode of centering for this type, it is as much to do with the potential for this form of mobility as a way of achieving, what is considered to be, the good life, as it is to do with their actual travelling activities. Thus, the utopian vision of the good life, and how such a life entails different forms of mobility, is important for understanding mobile belonging in everyday life.

Mobility resources and belonging

In this section, we want to explore how resources connected to mobility and the potential for moving influence local belonging. As mentioned previously, we approach belonging as including the dimensions of people, place and mobility, and resources mediates in various ways on the relations between these dimensions. Network capital is one way of conceptualising mobility resources focusing on the ability to engage in and sustain social relations across distances. Larsen and Urry (2008) conceptualise network capital as comprising of access to communication technologies, transport, meeting places and the social and technical skills of networking. Network capital is a relational form of capital depending on the access and appropriation within one's network. In our material, access to communication technologies and networking skills are not the significant marker of different types of mobile belonging. Rather than this indicating the relevance of the concept, this finding might be related to the design of our study. What appear relevant for the variations in types of mobile belonging are the questions of access to other forms of mobile infrastructures, the meanings attached to place related to access and generated through mobile practices, and their relationship to different forms of resources. Kaufmann, Bergman and Joye's (2004) conceptualisation of mobility as capital, similar in many ways to the concept of network capital, can help us understand how access to mobility is important for mobile belonging. Their

conceptualisation is connected to the concept of motility, which comprise of the elements of access to different forms and degrees of mobility, competence to recognize and make use of access, and appropriation of a particular choice of mobility practice or non-action. They argue that mobility as capital is linked with, and can be exchanged with, other forms of capital (Ibid.). In a similar manner, Fotel (2006) argues that mobility capital refers to the internalisation of mobility conditions and an externalisation of these dispositions in terms of mobile competencies. Different combinations of capital will influence the handling of mobility conditions and the competencies of daily mobility practices.

What from our perspective is interesting about these conceptualisations of mobility capital is that access and appropriation can open for ways of explaining why we in our material, for example, find residents of more marginalised areas leading relatively mobile lives despite few economic resources. We find, like Fotel, that different combinations of economic and social capital make coping with mobility conditions easier. The combination of access, competencies and appropriation in the conceptualization of mobile capital tie resources closer to practices. In our perspective, this increases the explanative value of the concept as local belonging is tied to what goes on in our everyday lives and what we do in our local neighbourhoods. Therefore, the idea of mobility capital indicates complex ways of centering the reciprocal movement of reaching out and home making that would disappear if we only focused on aggregate possessions or socio-economic differences.

Connectivity is emphasised by many informants across different types of mobile belonging as important for their attachment to place since it makes it possible to handle an everyday life with chronic disease or small children. Easy access and appropriation of mobility are especially valued by a group of informants, which represents what we have coined *less mobile elective belonging* (Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst 2005). Their combined resources enable their narratives to be about their choice of neighbourhood, and their belonging is related to reflectivity

about neighbourhood image. The qualities of the dwelling, rather than local community, are important for the 'mode of centering' for this group. While their resources enable them to engage in aesthetic mobility a couple of times a year, they are less mobile in their everyday activities and it is the aesthetic value of the dwelling combined with the symbolic value of the neighbourhood that is important for their sense of belonging. The right combination of distance and connectivity play a crucial part in this. Below are two examples of this:

R6:"…then I think that it is situated perfectly. People who want to reside just outside the big city and then anyway close to shopping possibilities... I think we have some of the best connections… we feel close to the big city and so on. In some respects, that were also among the things, which we emphasized when we bought it...We wanted to live close to Aalborg where the possibilities are."

R7:"... yes, well that it is so relatively close to everything, that it is close to bus routes, and also if you want to get into town, and such things are important when you are on maternity leave. It is nice then that it is possible to get around, and it is easy to get to City South as well…and it is close to town and [centre of affluent area], so there are many good shopping possibilities in the area... So, it is the close proximity."

What is interesting about this last informant is that she in the next breath emphasizes the relative distance this neighbourhood have in comparison with living right in the centre. Therefore, belonging is a constant negotiation of proximity and distance, and the relationship between what is near and what is distant can change even in the same narrative about place depending on the degree of retrospectiveness or choice of comparative perspective (Bærenholdt & Granås 2008). Connectedness is valued for this type of belonging for the relative freedom it provides in terms of choosing mobility practices for daily errands and for the importance of feeling part of city-life. Easy access to mobility infrastructures combined with high level of resources of various types enables a

scope of belonging that can oscillate between the dwelling and the city, even for those who reside in areas or villages on the outskirts of the city.

Conversely, another group of informants who represents a type, which can be conceptualised as *less mobile rootedness*, articulate lack of access to public transport as the most prominent devaluating factor about the place they live. Diminishing public transport and especially few daily busses means a total dependence on automobility.

R8: The worst part [about living here] is that they closed our bus route down, and I have fought with the municipality over it, but they are relentless.

Int: so this means that you cannot get here with public transport?

R8: No, there is one bus in the morning to the businesses so people can get to work around 7 and 8 and there are a few in the afternoon.

These informants live on the outskirts of the city and they feel that their neighbourhood becomes isolated from the rest of the city, since there are no shops in the vicinity. Everyday life is associated with the dependence on the car and with transporting family members to various activities. The temporal dimension influences their sense of place in two ways. Firstly, in terms of the length of time it takes to get to other places. Secondly, since their residency has been imposed a set time limit associated with their physical mobility competencies, since, as they explain, they would be forced to move to somewhere with a better access to public transport when they are no longer able to drive. In this instance, the lack of access to mobility is somewhat paradoxically, since the area where these informants live is encircled by mobility infrastructure, with the motorway limiting access by bike or walking in one direction and the harbour in the other. This area, which was originally built in relation to the big concrete factory, has become victim of a political need to cut on public transport services and their experienced isolation is probably exacerbated by the lack of connection points to the highly developed infrastructure in the close vicinity. Their lack of motility constrains their ability to 'reach out', and because of this,

their ‘mode of centering’ is connected to the local social ties developed over a long period of residency and the value of this rootedness in place.

For people living in semi-rural areas motility is acutely connected to having the resources necessary to bear the mobility burden connected to place. One of the informants explain that if they lost their only bus it would be hard to sustain a living community in her village, since it would be impossible for young people and teenagers to go to the cinema or other activities in Aalborg. For others the dependence on automobility becomes part of the ‘package’ of choosing to live in this particular place. The mobility burden of having to transport all family members to school and other activities is outweighed by the benefits of living in this village. *“It is like that for most families out her, they all use tremendous amount of time on transport. They do, but other things outweigh it. Most people state that ‘I will become old here.’ That is also how we feel”.* These informants have the resources to bear the burden of the extra costs of being dependent on having at least one car per household. Such mobility resources enable them to appropriate the possibilities of place in a different manner than those, which are more dependent on public transport. Hence, the burden of lacking access to public transport does not diminish the local attachment of this group of informants. This highlights how local belonging takes on an exclusive element, since belonging to more remote rural areas becomes something that can only be practiced by those sections of the population that have the resources, financially and health wise, to access the associated compulsory automobility. Therefore, access to public transport and the financial constraints associated with car ownership are segregating forces at play in rural areas (Olivia 2010), and become deciding factors for which villages turn into settlements for neo-rural inhabitants as well as with which socio-economic background.

Concluding discussion

We have argued in the above that local belonging has to be understood as an on-going process connected to the historical context of the neighbourhood as well as the individual life path. In the same manner, the suggested typology of mobile forms of belonging is sensitive to changes in the biographies of the residents. People can be expected to move from one type to the other in different life stages. Marriages, divorces and children are a few of the examples of events that can change not only the perspectives upon and values associated with place of residence, but also the rhythms and conditions of their mobility. The strength of the perspective outlined in the present article is that it attempts to connect the dimensions of people, place and mobility. Rather than only focusing on the changing character of place, the changing demography of its residents or the changing nature of mobility, we have to focus on the complex and contextual interconnections between mobility, people and place.

We have shown how this perspective on belonging with the sub-dimensions of time, resources and structures of meaning result in different forms of mobile belonging. These forms of mobile belonging range from mobile rootedness, over taken-for-grantedness, mobile alienated, less mobile elective belonging to less mobile rootedness. Typologies always belie the complexities of everyday life. Therefore, such a typology of mobile belonging does not suggest that everyone can be placed neatly within one type. Rather, the different forms of mobile belonging indicate that it is impossible to ascertain a view of mobility as an antithesis of local belonging. Instead, we need to discuss how different rhythms of mobility, variations in mobility resources and conditions of mobility result in different scales belonging and different modes of 'centering' between the reciprocal movements of reaching out and home making.

It is an old finding that there is an interrelation between length of residency and the sense of belonging to a specific locality (Park & Burgess 1925, Lewicka 2010). Neighbourhoods can be very different when it comes to

the number of people migrating in and out of the area and these differences affect local social relations in terms of both content and stability (Jørgensen 2010). This means that residential stability is a tentative object for belonging to an area, and on the contrary high neighbourhood migration is a tentative object for lack of belonging. Residential stability actualise phenomenon like loyalty, solidarity, bonding and bridging relations, norms, sanctions, and closure in social relations (Putnam 2000). In the above, we have only indicated how group interactions and relations influence mobile belonging, for example, to the extent that the strength of local community mediates on the burdens of mobility, or establish particular traditions for practices of mobility in particular places.

Equally, we have argued that belonging is not simply connected to phenomenon associated with stasis and proximity, but also with the potential for moving and to the feeling and practices of being connected to other places. We have shown that mobility does not necessarily result in lack of local attachment. On the contrary, we will argue that one of the potentials of discussing mobile forms of belonging is to show how a mobile everyday life for many people necessitates varying forms of belonging to places. A further advantage of this perspective is moreover that one can distinguish between different forms of middle-class belonging. In this article, we only had limited space to elucidate how mobility interacts in different ways with people's resources and sense of place. Therefore, an agenda for future research could be whether and to which degree different types of mobile belonging would concentrate in particular places.

Notes

1 In a recent review of the place attachment literature by Scannell & Gifford (2009) suggest that person, place and process as related yet distinct dimensions of place attachment. In the person dimension, they distinguish between individual and collective attachment. The process dimension relates to the psychological processes of attachment, such as affect, cognition and behaviour. The third dimension is the nature of the place, which people feel attachment to, both in terms of its physical characteristics and as a social arena. They suggest that the three dimensions can be used as a methodological tool to examine the effect of the dimensions against each other.

2 Building on earlier writings on place attachment and territorial belonging, Gustafson develops this triadic pole to show that the various meanings attached to place vary, between not only the three poles, but also maps out in the relation between them. Apart from continuity and change, Gustafson points to distinction and valuation as important sub-dimensions of belonging (2001b).

3 Moreover, we have also here excluded the questions of transnationalism and immigration, although they for some groups are important dimensions of local belonging.

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