Johanna Rolshoven

MOBILE CULTURE STUDIES
Reflecting moving culture and cultural movements

European ethnology in the twenty-first century will has to consider issues that affect all aspects of everyday life: only a few specialised German academic studies have so far explored mobility. In order to elucidate what European ethnology contributes to our knowledge of mobile life, I want to present my reflections on the relations between culture and movement. I open three relevant perspectives.

1. *Perspective of the present.* What has European Ethnology specifically contributed to the definition of social change? Change and movement are terms that are intertwined. In order to be able to describe and interpret modern ways of life, we have to consider movement and transport, on both physical as well as cognitive levels.

2. *Disciplinary perspective.* Notions of movement have had a place within European Ethnology for a long time, even if we refer here only to the tradition of German Volkskunde. The connection between movement and culture as phenomena for the renewal of societies was from the outset a central topic of the discipline (cf. Niederer 1986). The terminological dyad 'tradition' and 'change' led to the division of the social domain into the realms of the long-standing and of the appropriation of novel ways. But the world of tradition was not merely conceived as an antonym or of being opposed to the novel. Rather, it was conceived as being in a close relationship—sometimes with a painful tension[1]—as if again and again the object of study eluded the hold of research by undergoing transformation. Don't we try to catch and fix our research objects--not only through texts and museums, but also in our minds?

3. *Perspective of the cultural orders.* Lifeworlds are marked by increasing complexity. People experience them as utterly complex and react with suitable strategies. But contemporary

1 1 I refer to the dialectical cultural amalgam of the 'powers of persistence' and the 'powers of movement' that, according to Riehl, come into existence as a kind of a 'culture of friction' between nobility and bourgeoisie, who in the 19th century battled for social predominance. (Riehl 1894) 'The concept of a history of mankind that evolves dialectically from its environment has [... repeatedly, JR] been abandoned in favour of endeavours following the logics of natural sciences, aiming at finding reliable laws for human life, that would be more binding for its spiritual evolution than e.g. national originalities' (Weber-Kellermann & Bimmer 1985, 58, Transl. Justin Winkler.)

lifeworlds demand ever new **resources and infrastructures** that citizens have to adapt to and ever changing **terminologies and handling by scientific** actors.

At the present time, in late modernity, people test new cultural techniques that have movement as their essential feature. This allows for organising everyday life between movement and rest amidst a multitude of tasks subject to different time regimes.

If we concede to understanding movement as a dimension of cultural analysis, we are summoned not only to deal concretely with moving settings. It also demands that we admit mobility within our scientific notions, terminology and approaches. Cultural objectification, i.e. the historical materialisation of culture, happens as much in fugitive media, in movements and in re-formation as in static and lasting works and places.

Staying and walking

How does movement as a property of culture manifest itself? I answer this question by first sketching my idea of it and commenting on the example of a 'multilocal' way of living, a complex cultural and social phenomenon. It must be pointed out that there is, in my understanding, no antonym like 'monolocal', since this would be an ideological construction and reduction. I will get back to the process of normalisation of residentiality within the emerging nation-state.

In its most elementary sense, movement signifies the ways in which people get bodily across spaces of different scales by walking, gliding, drifting, driving or flying. Since man is a sentient being, he/she moves always with some degree of intentionality. Therefore, phenomenologists describe movement as a cognitive process, consisting of the three cornerstones of *intention, route* and *destination*. This means that movement is the thoughtful action of a cultural actor and, at the same time, a body technique and a way of life.

Youth culture research has shown how young people adopt and train for the adult roles of *vita activa* and leisure. Their movement in public space happens as part of a tension between advance and rest.

On one hand, there is a body technique that is enhanced to the point of Hip Hop virtuosity (including the corresponding graffiti skills), or 'spiderman skills, of surfing and gliding. A superlative form of it, very present in European cities, is the so-called 'Parkour', a challenging acrobatic walk through town. While walking, built obstacles of public space are, like a fortress, conquered. In YouTube we find countless video clips that refer to this practice in almost all European cities.

On the other hand, as a kind of counterpoint to the urge to move around, we notice the teenagers' loitering, immobility that adults label easily as idleness.

The tension between moving and resting, an important element of socialisation for youngsters, can also be found in the biography of things (Kopytoff 1986). The significance of single things—'Dingbedeutsamkeit' in the sense given by Karl-Sigismund Kramer in the 1960s—is pregnant with acts, handling and movement. The same is true for the 'commod-

ity character' ('Warencharakter', cf. Haug 1971) of goods, which is realised by circulation. Paradoxically, the movement immanent in things does not invalidate the static nature of things: their immobility serves the cultural actors in reassuring their identity. Under this angle every household can be regarded as a museum.

This applies also to 'messies', persons who to accumulate objects in their apartments until the rooms can no longer be entered. A messie (cf. Wettstein 2005) is a person who has become incapable of mastering things in all their abundance and variety. It is perhaps the climax of all consumptive trespassing in late modernity.

The tension between moving and resting is also contained in all technically sustained movement, both in transport modes and in electronic communication. There is a substantial simultaneity of moving and staying; of high mobility accompanied by physical immobility. For example, the computer mouse in the hand is, as it were, moving around the world, whereas the person remains seated, immobile.

If we define cultural movements as the sum of the trialectic interaction of intention, route and destination—the intention to go somewhere, the way itself and the aim/goal of where you want to go—we are able to read and interpret well-known cultural phenomena in new ways. The scope of these phenomena goes from individual mobility from the scale of everyday practices and movements to the scale of migrations on a national and world-wide scale.

Where are we in all this with our discipline? Tourism research, the study of a mature historical phenomenon, shows us the consequences. Due to the localising and static cultural perspective adopted twenty years ago, the critique of the impact of mass tourism on local cultures was at the centre of scholarly attention. Today, we understand that we have to take a look at the cultural processes on both sides, the travellers' *and* the hosts' cultures. Even migration research, which previously applied the sometimes doctrinaire push-and-pull paradigm, has relaxed its grip by leaving the scheme of pure North-South movements. The initial assumption that important migratory movements had only one direction is abandoned, and this has affected study of such movements as European emigration to the Americas in the late nineteenth century or the large workers' migration from the regions of Catania, Istanbul or Porto to West Central Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. We are about to re-formulate these migrations in terms of reversibility and multidirectionality of their functions, aims and movements. Late modern migrations manifest themselves translocally as much East-West-East as North-South-North.

Peoples' movements change in character along with their destinations. The latter have become more varied, albeit they still depend on economic feasibility and imagined possibilities: motility is about having the social capital to move.

The tension between moving and staying is also a stimulus for and an indicator of social change. Multilocal living is increasing. The examination of this topic has a heuristic value, since multilocality can be read either as evidence for new spatial and social mobilities or as a metaphor for the multilocality of cultural studies.

What can be understood about multilocality?

During the past decade, the absolute number of urban and rural second and third homes has increased in all European countries. The 'second' and 'third' homes or apartments reveal that many people spend their time divided between two or three locations. This way of living encompasses tourist practises as well as the living practices of very different mobile groups like students, truckers, sailors or seasonal workers. Migrants and commuters practice multilocal everyday lives, as do groups and persons who have dropped out of conventional social categories or do not appear in social surveys, such as wandering people, youth, the so-called divorce kids, trailer campers, allotment garden renters, homeless people, and, for example, those who squat in empty holiday homes during the winter.

All of these are people who move to and from different places and reference systems. With respect to their varying and even contradictory ways of life, the term 'multilocality' deploys its theoretical power by setting the taxonomical and terminological cornerstones. Yet the goal of cultural analysis is not to record a priori social or thematic categories of cultural life and to create types like sociology does. Cultural analysis wants, on the contrary, to stress the differences and to concede that every phenomenon has to be considered in its own context (cf. Rolshoven 2002, 2007). I define multilocality with the help of Arjun Appadurai's term of locality (Appadurai 2003). For him, it means a *strategy* of localisation, which is a cultural *process*, the outcome of man's continuous contextualisation and place-making.

A definition like this, based on actors and processes, enriches the term multilocality. It reveals 'living' to be more action than state. A form of living that is only *stasis* and *status* is a terminological instrument for the construction of statistics, which divides the population into supposedly settled and mobile people. The work to retrace the historical becoming of statistics and to uncover the filiations of this concept has yet to be carried out. Settled people are, from the nation state's viewpoint, reliable people, because they differ from the mobile groups of people. Through the statistical construction of a static 'population', the unity of the concept of a lifeworld is negated in a way unacceptable for Cultural Studies.

Multilocal ways of life are as numerous as there are people and groups within a society. The roots of this are historical, so that historical terms help us to understand how these forms of living came into existence.

The 'pyramid of multilocality' shows how social discourse, class and multilocal living are related to each other. The figure is not the representation of a real social space and of its precise attributes. Rather, it has to be taken as a tool, an epistemic foothold for ethnological imagination, visualising a discourse.

On the upper floors of the class pyramid, we find the sunny side of culture, with a bandwidth of multilocality that includes classical forms of refined and prominent *villegiature* or the luxurious winter holiday. Almost everybody knows about the pope's Castel Gandolfo and that he also used to work there in the summer.
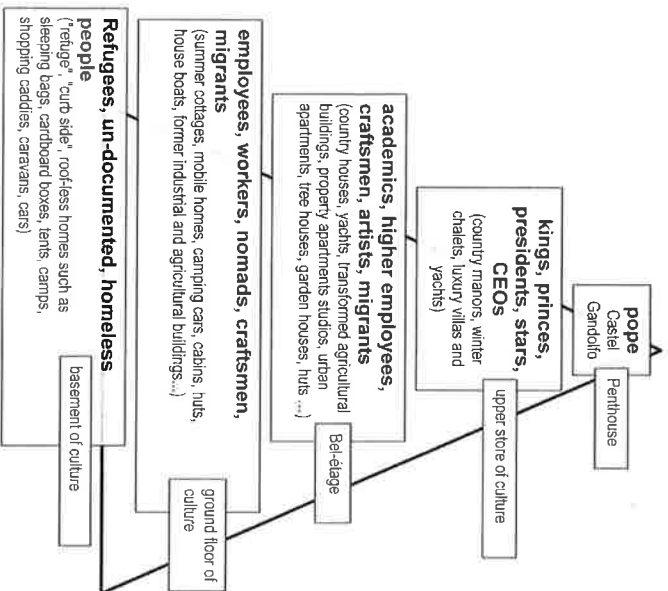
Most citizens know about their presidents' summer places: the Finnish president's official summer house is in Naantali; the Austrian president's summer cottage is the hunting manor of Mürzsteg, the Russian president's datcha is located in Sochi, the French president's summerhouse is Fort Brégançon. Or, they know where 'their' royal family spends its time outside the capital: the Swedish royal family spends its time in Öland, the British royal family spends its time in Scotland. And many have seen the pictures of gorgeous chalets owned by European princely families in the alpine ski resorts.

The mass mediated shiny images of star-habitus nurture dreams and desires. They document the residues of the powerful representational occupation of 'public' space and aim at stabilising symbolic power. In comparison, the manifold forms of bourgeois second homes offer less public visibility. The home of the teachers' family from Munich in Tuscany has a rather hidden social presence, such as the writer's summer cottage at Reposaari,

The pyramid of multilocality

Category	Living forms	Culture level
pope Castel Gandolfo		Penthouse
kings, princes, presidents, stars, CEOs (country manors, winter chalets, luxury villas and yachts)		upper store of culture
academics, higher employees, craftsmen, artists, migrants (country houses, yachts, transformed agricultural buildings, property apartments studios, urban apartments; tree houses, garden houses, huts ...)		Bel-étage
employees, workers, nomads, craftsmen, migrants (summer cottages, mobile homes, camping cars, cabins, huts, house boats, former industrial and agricultural buildings....)		ground floor of culture
Refugees, un-documented, homeless people ("refuge", "curb side", roofless homes such as sleeping bags, cardboard boxes, tents, camps, shopping caddies, caravans, cars)		basement of culture

the German attorney's house in Southern France or the Swiss entrepreneur's villa in Nova Scotia, which he has, perhaps, recently sold in order to buy a new 'object' in the Arabian Emirates.

Still less present and known are the forms of second homes of the so-called middle classes, the people of the 'ground floor culture'. The term has bee coined in the 1970s by Swiss European Ethnologist Arnold Niederer who said that it was our job to study 'ground floor culture' (Niederer 1975). We actually know about the apartment owned by the Turkish grocer from Strasbourg in Antalya, about the caravan of the locksmith from the Swiss Aargau taken on a camping trip in Central Switzerland, about the fisherman's shed in Southwold on the Northeast coast of England, rented by a nurse from London every year, or the houseboat of the registrar from Copenhagen, on which he used to spend his summers in Zealand (cf. Nielsen 1993). This knowledge is due to the work done by students completing their diploma and doctoral theses in European Ethnology, patiently engaged in exploring these popular forms of living.

A cornucopia of still unknown forms of multilocal living could be added. Do you know the diverse uses of those wooden cabins, which need neither plan nor building permit and can be bought in the do-it-yourself-superstore or via the Internet? Did you notice the growing demand for tree houses and mobile architecture in general? Have you observed the transformation processes in urban garden allotments, which are again enjoying an increasing popularity? Did you know that you can buy mobile living containers that are moved from roof to roof by a helicopter, in order to let you escape the endemic housing shortage in big cities?

The image of the 'class' pyramid suggests that the structural depth of the phenomenon is considerable: it cuts across the order of social styles. Yet national statistics reveal neither the depth nor the order of magnitude of the phenomenon. In 1995, French ethnologist Françoise Dubost wrote that more than half of the second homes in France were owned by workers, employees and retired people with a modest background (Dubost 1975). She inferred that a majority, two thirds, of the population of France practiced some kind of multilocal living. This kind of democratic normalisation of a practice of 'living-somewhere-else-too' is probably also the case in other countries. In Finland, it is simultaneously an old cultural practise and the result of the recent rural exodus. This statistical grey zone encourages cultural study researchers to look for corresponding zones in the lifeworlds, *spaces of possibilities*.

Culture, a result of historical experience

Who is the 'multilocalist', that person who not only inhabits this grey area but even realises it? Is she a migrant, nomad, tourist or simply mobile for personal reasons or economic constraints? Or does she combine elements of all these forms of mobility? And, finally, how much has her way of life in common with the observable forms of holiday living?

The multilocalist is indeed an imaginary person, even if she is very close to a real one: the stereotyped modern 'second-homer' with her seasonal bipolarity. She oscillates between the bourgeois imitation of the noble alternation between summer and winter domiciles, urban palazzo and countryside *villegiatura* or, in the lower-middle class, the continuation of rural practises of a winter and summer kitchen, from the farmhouse in the valley to the alpine hut in the mountains. She is also present in the urban proletarian population and commutes daily or weekly from the metropolitan rented apartment to the *dacha* or suburban *lotissement*. Forms and practises vary by regions and are class-specific models.

But, within her present practise, the multilocalist is also a product of the experience of migration of her generation and the generation of her parents. The idea of staying somewhere else is legitimised by historical background. Social patterns and belongings shape it salesmen, hikers, journeymen, pilgrims, nomads, emigrants or immigrants have socially accepted bases for their movements in foreign areas. Professional activity, family or descent are all legitimate causes for settling abroad (cf. Urban 2002, 297).

Compared to the historical models, the rank of seasonal 'primary' and 'secondary' domiciles fades with late-modern people, and the representations become more and more blurred, as do other dichotomous relations in late modernity. This can be tracked, for instance, in the decoration of the rooms: we still find classical 'counter-worlds', in which the stuffed and highly decorated first home in the city contrasts strongly with the aesthetically sober and functionally spartan interior of the second home. But we are observing an ever increasing number of homes that exhibit different patterns: the so-called 'Double Nesters' (Rich 2006, 1), the inhabitants of 'two nests', reproduce in their second home the same furnishings that are found in their first home.

We also observe the co-existence of two lifestyles, which at first glance are distinctly different, divided into a here and there, a kind of secret double life. Such interiors relate to each other like limelight and backstage, as window-dressing aims at doubling or hiding one's person, rehearsing or caring for aspects of the self that have no room in everyday life. New beginnings and 'changes of shift' seem to be possible, paths open in the in-between spaces of multilocality that promise to retire from old milieus and to participate in new ones.

Again, phenomenality and intentionality are mutually determined, phenomenal changes expressing cultural change and hinting at shifts in the system of significances used and defined by individuals.

Temporality and representation of mobile ways of life require a sharp and discriminating eye. The spectrum of values of Western society stretches from residentiality as the goal of social life to settling down as a counter-idea to someone's ideals or even as a stigma. This spectrum has to be shown in its temporal setting. Even as we watch multilocal living in the time span of a life, it is a provisional stage. This applies to holiday apartments as well as professional second apartments. Yet the provisional location can be an ordinary con-

stituent in the planning of the course of one's life, or have an existential dimension, such as with those homeless people who resist offers for social integration.

In the long run—the *longue durée*—we encounter on all continents historical forms of cultures ready to be on the move. In Europe, nomadic groups and the Jewish populations incarnate the obligation to move, having become a tradition of mobility (cf. Brenner 2003). Motility—defined as the disposition to move—is the third space, a stable element in the nomadic existence of Jewishness (Raphaël 1996).

In pre-modern times mobile subpopulations made up about a quarter of the total population (Bade 2002;, Sassen 1996). They have not yet received the full attention of scientific investigation. Non-residential populations like migrant workers, vagrants or beggars were completely left out when in the nineteenth century the nation-state identities were formed. 'Settledness' has become the prevailing cultural pattern and 'dream' for the ascending bourgeois society, a process identified by Konrad Köstlin in the 1960s in his doctoral thesis (Köstlin 1997).

The study of these populations highlights the enormous fear of the settled people of those on the move. The theorists of modernity have thought of this dichotomy as a *conditio sine qua non*. In his classic work on the stranger, Georg Simmel describes the fear and fascination exerted by the multilocal on the local: the other comes and leaves, and threatens to take your secrets with him (Simmel 1908). Fifty years later Claude Lévi-Strauss added that one risks that the stranger takes one's women with him—making particularly your wife follow him—and he interpreted this attribution as a strategy for sustaining and stabilising cultures within a system of endogamic norms (Lévi-Strauss 1967).

The question arises of whether or not, inferred from these insights, today's multilocalist has the capacity to *relativise* the circumstances of modern life? We imagine her not really being at home, neither here nor there, being capable of challenging the forgetfulness of settled monolocal people. Is this an intellectual Chimaera, or are we still on solid ground?

Settled people have learned to consider *identity, place* and *culture* as being congruent. This idea is the basis of the nation state, which aims at constituting and guaranteeing precisely this congruence as a 'natural' fact.[2] Similar facts that were integrated with this model of the 'natural' state are the models of *family, residence* and *workplace*.

When mobile people multiply their locations, they create an estrangement that helps the trans-local, -regional or -national carry over themselves, their identities, their goods and money to other locations. One can be in a place without having to be there bodily; one can just move ahead by communicating, thinking, or dreaming. Multilocality allows a person to use an apartment in one country, without letting anyone know his country of origin; and to work in a country without an identity card from his homeland.

2 In Switzerland, the acquisition of Swiss citizenship is expressed by the term 'naturalisation'. Cf. Centlivres 1990.

In these grey areas, multilocality becomes a subversive strategy which offers the individual free play within the nation-state line 'passport-job-money-apartment'. From this angle, the question of whether or not multilocalists have the capacity to *relativise* the circumstances of modern life has to be answered affirmatively. But relativisation, subversion and overthrowing are not only a matter of intentional and conscious states, but also of biographical, strategic actions with results that often differ from the goals. I am in favour of assuming a culturally acting intelligence, an embodied *vita activa*.

Conclusion: multi-locality as cultural mobility

Only a short time ago we have started cultural space analysis, combining mobility and locality and describing social accessibility in categories of experience and performance. However, we can rely on important works. Sociologist Bertrand Montulet has proposed an extensive notion of mobility. He defines it as a contextualising understanding of causalities and consequences in the process of moving (Montulet 1996, 17). Cultural studies can also draw on the insights of migration research, which leads us to understand the ambivalence of multilocality as a kind of normality.[3] The place of the migrant is not his house, with respect to the degree of his residentiality, but the space where his mobilities converge.

Migrant workers have integrated in the most stringent manner 'multipolar perspectives' in their ways of life. Their movements between their region of origins and the region of work 'abroad' become the medium for interweaving the two encountering spaces. They have become the very specialists for importing and exporting knowledge and for the strategies of its adaptation in practical everyday contexts. Epistemologist Bernard Andrieu describes these skills as cognitive mobility and stresses not only the active role of the migrant as a cultural actor, but also his active *and* activating role: 'His movement makes our mental categories move, within which we try to case his foreignness.' (Andrieu 2000, 118, 122.)

Cultural mobility is consequence *and* cause of movement and motility. It allows us to take a distance from internal and external models (cf. Cupa 2004, 25) and creates a 'knowledge about strangeness' which is part of the basic intellectual equipment of man at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Contemporaries notice how it is 'to be stranger and familiar in several places' (Wierlacher & Albrecht 2003, 280 ff.) and to compose everyday life from complementary elements offered by several simultaneously accessed places.

3 Cf. the impressive study 'Migration.' Hg. Kölnischer Kunstverein. Köln 2005.

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RURAL STUDIES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

I would like to start my presentation by quoting an opinion contained in the *Handbook of Rural Studies* by Paul Cloke, Terry Marsden and Patrick Mooney, which was first published in 2006. Paul Cloke notes that, despite the cultural turn as it relates to contemporary rural studies, a considerable part of such studies is conducted in a traditional manner that barely shows any influence from new, cultural inspirations. It is true that many investigations ignore the impulses of the cultural turn and remain faithful to the positivist model. Nonetheless, the atmosphere created by the cultural turn clearly impacts on the general approach to rural studies in the twenty-first century.

The rural community has been a subject of dispute for a long time. Putting aside the political and ideological reasons, which had a strong influence on the theory and practice of actions relating to the rural community—especially in Poland and the neighbour countries in the twentieth century, I would like to draw attention to the substantial premises of the conflicting positions.

A description of trends prevailing in the contemporary world points to a continuing deconstruction or even erosion of the rural community's constitutive foundations, such as family farms, economic ties and economic ethos. It is possible to ask a little bit perversely whether this has any meaning when the process of modernisation by nature deprives the rural community of importance as a significant object of research. The adoption of a post-modernist perception makes it even easier to invalidate those categories that belong to the body of characteristics that describe the rural community in a systemic way as a social-cultural whole, i.e. such notions as identity, tradition, place—as a space in which the farmers' families reside and, simultaneously, as a symbolically marked fragment of space developed through one's own effort. Of course, it can be assumed that the more seriously the postmodernist manner of description of everything that relates to the rural community invalidates the question of ties with the territory, cancelling the former isomorphism of place—people—and culture as incompatible with the tendencies of modernity, the more thoroughly this problem needs to be considered. For, after years of transformation and dilemmas faced by farmers trying to find their place in the world of the market economy and successfully navigate the pressures of globalisation, a suspicion becomes ever more strongly felt that it is not sufficient to merely describe the tendencies towards 'depeasantation' and 'defamilisation'. Also improper seems the 'supercilious stylistics' characterising the perception of the rural community within the exclusively urban rhetoric that is present in the concepts of modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation, transformation and, recently also, globalisation. It is worth asking whether the rural community actually does

ETHNOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Transnational reflections of past, present and future

Toimittajat – Edited by
Jussi Lehtonen
Salla Tenkanen

Tämä julkaisu on omistettu Turun yliopiston kansatieteen professori
Pekka Leimulle hänen jäädessään eläkkeelle 31.7.2010.

This publication is dedicated to Professor Pekka Leimu,
who retired on the 31st of July 2010.