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Cover: Coat of arms of Äänekoski. “On blue field three flying silvery cranes, aligned like to the right pointing cusp. Originally Coat of Arms of Suolahti, but adopted by Äänekoski when Suolahti, Sumiainen and Äänekoski merged in 2007.” Original design by Olof Eriksson. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%C3%84%C3%A4nekoski.vaakuna.svg).

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Dedication

In memory of Perttu Vartiainen, former Rector of the University of Eastern Finland and Research Professor in Geography, Regional Policy, and University Development, who passed away at the end of July 2017. He warmly accepted our invitation to co-edit this special issue but withdrew months later because of his illness. May this publication remain as a testimonial of our deep respect for him as an inspiring researcher and colleague.

Guest Editors, Driss Habti and Tuulikki Kurki
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Editorial

In 2014, the *Journal of Finnish Studies* published a special issue entitled *International Highly Skilled Migration: The Case of Finland*, guest-edited by Driss Habti and Saara Koikkalainen (*JoFS*, Volume 17, Issue 1&2). In 2016, we were contacted by Driss Habti and Tuulikki Kurki, with an idea for another migration-related issue. A call for papers was launched by the guest editors, all manuscripts went through a blind peer-review and in-house editing process, and here we are now, with a “sequel” for the previous migration issue.

The current special issue, *Engaging the New Mobilities Paradigm in the Context of Finland*, brings to our readers twelve fresh examples of research about migration and mobility in Finland. The volume is divided into four sections: Social and Cultural Experiences and Meanings of Mobility (Part I); Everyday Life and Lived Places (Part II); Politizing Mobility and Mobilizing Policies (in Times of Crisis) (Part III); and Cross-Border and Transnational Mobility (Part IV). The articles introduce the reader to current topics about voluntary mobility and, in this case, Russians in Finland: Russians as second-home owners, Russian doctors in Finland, Russians as media users, and Russian media’s portrayal of Finland. We learn about art and mobility, mobility and belonging, and international mobility in an older population. We hear about the car culture as an inevitability in remote areas of Finland. Finland’s national interests and its security policy in the face of new mobilities are discussed in depth. Anssi Paasi’s afterword brings the various themes together and places them in the context of the new mobilities paradigm.

With this issue, *JoFS* is asserting its dedication to publish research not only in its traditional fields of humanities but also in the social sciences. We thank the guest editors for compiling this important collection and trust that our readers will find these articles informing.

*Helena Halmari*
Engaging the New Mobilities Paradigm in the Finnish Context

Driss Habti, University of Eastern Finland
Tuulikki Kurki, University of Eastern Finland

Introduction

Human mobility has always shaped and reshaped our social, political, cultural, and economic landscape, and it remains an important component of the world today (Adey 2010). Mobilities by nature involve the flows of people and different forms of capital across territorial borders, and the geographical imagining of mobility remains systematically embedded within nation-states. Cresswell (2011, 551) argues that mobilities stand at “the center of constellations of power, the creation of identities and the micro-geographies of everyday life.” Moreover, at the individual level, mobility affects people’s behavior and life course as well as particular life styles (Vannini 2012). Though mobilities have increased in recent decades, there are still multiple factors (for instance, visa requirements, lack of money, and political situations) that limit people’s mobility. Cross-border mobility, for example, does not usually result in full social interaction (Sigalas 2010), and regulated social “boundaries,” such as visas, passports, and other border authorities, may hinder interaction and decrease mobility (Adey et al. 2014).

Mobilities experiences and forms of boundaries regulated by “informal institutions,” such as gender, class, ethnicity, education, and religion, are still under-researched. It is important to study these boundaries and the experienced mobilities in the lives of individuals and groups as they tend to have enduring effects. Moreover, the increase in mobility is fueled by an increasing individualization of life and career (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), in a world of increasingly “free movement” (Recchi 2015), but a

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1 We, the guest co-editors of this special issue, Driss Habti and Tuulikki Kurki, would like to thank all the contributing authors to this special double issue Engaging the New Mobilities Paradigm in the Context of Finland. We would also like to express our gratitude for all the comments and improvements suggested by the journal’s editors, Helena Halmari and Hanna Snellman. Many thanks are given to Scott Kaukonen for editing the language of the final versions of the articles. We would also like to thank the referees of this issue for their insightful comments and the sacrifice of their time, which helped the authors to improve the articles. Last, our grateful acknowledgment goes to Anssi Paasi for his contribution with an afterword for this issue.
world characterized of risk society (Kesselring 2016) with rising compe-
tition and uncertainty (Blossfeld, Mills, and Bernardi 2006) and a chang-
ing global labor market because of the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” (Schwab 2016). Mobility intersects with the social world and appears to
conform to the standards of those who seek better living conditions and
well-being; those fleeing political persecution and environmental hazards
or wars; or those who pursue freedom apart from the political condi-
tions in their own countries. Assumed to be interrelated to late-modernity
and the end of the nation-state (cf. Sheller and Urry 2006; Sheller 2014),
 mobilities research is a major paradigm for investigating movements of
individuals, forms of capitals, knowledge, and goods on various scales,
be it global, regional, national, or local (Oswin and Yeoh 2010). Though
mobilities research has gained prominence, few studies have adequately
addressed cross-disciplinary and multi-faceted approaches to investigating
mobilities (Habti and Elo 2018). In addition, theorists of mobility
(see Sheller and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2006; Urry 2007) have tended to
ground their understandings implicitly on mobility schemes of humans
and capital. Therefore, questions arise on how different agents, structures,
and macro- and micro-level factors are part of broader regimes that foster
and affect mobilities.

In the last two decades, the conceptualization and empirical analysis
of mobilities have become a legitimate and central strand of the social sci-
ences (Urry 2000). Mobilities in their various forms have also become an
important research theme in the humanities (Wizgall, Vogl, and Kesselring
2013; Merriman and Pearce 2017), while research in the field has raised
important questions about not only how understandings of mobilities are
changing, but also how the field of mobilities research is itself on the move
(Cresswell 2006; Sheller 2014; Faulconbridge and Hui 2016; Habti and
Elo 2018, 12–15). A dynamic research agenda has given birth to what is
called the “new mobilities paradigm” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 2016) or
“mobility turn” (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2006; Urry
2008; Faist 2013), to understand human mobility empirically in ways that
allow for individual agency beside meso-structural and macro-contextual
factors. Mobilities paradigm developed as a result of the way social sci-
ences overlooked “the importance of the systematic movements of people
for work and family life, for leisure and pleasure, and for politics and
protest” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 208). Building on current scholarship
that looks at mobilities as actively evolving places through various orga-
nizational, individual, and structural agencies, “mobility turn” aims to
explain how mobility is a ubiquitous global fact with varying meanings,
practices, and politics. Social scientists have used the literature of the
mobilities paradigm by incorporating new ways of theorizing and analyz-
ing in such fields as anthropology, cultural studies, economics, geography,
migration studies, science and technology studies, and tourism and trans-
port studies (Sheller and Urry 2006, 207). For example, Sheller and Urry
(2006) addressed the challenge in using theories to unpack the changing
and pervasive nature of new forms of mobility, and Cresswell (2010) drew attention to the politics, representations, and experiences of mobility.

Because mobility, migration, and border studies are interdisciplinary fields, they are addressed from a range of paradigmatic assumptions and methodological trends across disciplinary boundaries, especially in research of specific geographical regions or specific social processes. Yet, the interdisciplinarity of these fields has not been fully extended through cross-disciplinary perspective. The cross-disciplinary mobilities paradigm appears to be the latest effort in analytical descriptions of modern societal problems. It tends to generalize aspects of contemporary society, including international mobility (and immobility) in different forms and spheres of life. While such a turn usefully highlights different forms of human mobility, it cannot be successfully used unless a social-science researcher working with this paradigm critically reflects upon the underlying social, economic, personal, cultural, and political embeddedness of mobility.

Analysis of international mobility and migration needs to go beyond descriptions and start accounting for the dynamic forces and underlying experiences of migrants or global “free movers” (Habti 2018, 110–13). For example, the dynamics and processes of migration have been explained through a narrow focus on origin and destination countries. Gradually, however, scholars have recognized the importance of historical, social, and cultural conditions of mobility, institutional frameworks and interactions, individual agency and everyday practices in their analysis of mobility and migration experiences. Any focus on a single aspect calls for more attention to other aspects (Viry and Kaufmann 2015). As Habti (2018) argues, analyzing mobility, migration, and border studies within the new mobilities paradigm, in their multi-layered implications, requires research enterprise taking an interdisciplinary, multilevel, and life-course approach because mobility trajectories are often more complex, fluid, and evolving. However, the factors that shape these trajectories remain little known. An understanding of international migration and mobility involves analysis of macro-, micro-, and meso-level factors as they interact and re-emerge in the practice of daily life. These factors are constantly interrelated through the practice of individual migrants in their personal and professional life trajectories, while the goal is to tell lived life stories of migration (see O’Reilly 2012) and “mobilities” (Faulconbridge and Hui 2016).

The Aim of This Thematic Issue
The departure point of this special issue is the context of “the new mobilities paradigm,” which focuses on the ways of life in a world of mobility, interconnectivity, and interdependence (Hannam and Butler 2012, 127). The aim is to push forward the boundaries of scholarly work on mobilities and to bring to bear the insights of the current “mobility turn” in the social sciences on the connecting strands of mobilities in the Nordic context of Finland. This issue provides an interdisciplinary collection of empirical case studies that examine a wide range of experiences for
individuals and communities, stretching from different forms of mobility in relation to places and spaces, the urban and rural, the central and peripheral, in the Nordic context and through a regional and intra-national lens within the Finnish-European context. The collection aims to deepen our understanding of the interrelationships between mobility and place in social, cultural, economic, and geopolitical contexts (see also afterword by Paasi, this issue).

The different forms of mobility are central in the social sciences (Urry 2000), but they are hard to conceive without relating them to the ways they are regulated and constrained by migration policies and bordering practices (Heyman and Cunningham 2004). Approaches that seek to examine mobilities across various research fields and to contribute to new conceptual and empirical theorizations of mobility form the theoretical departure point. This special issue gathers articles reflecting a range of disciplinary influences from across the social sciences to the humanities in order to explore different forms of mobility, migration, and border crossing, as well as border policies and practices, in both empirical and conceptual terms, and the ways these are being operationalized in terms of relational and spatial logics, actual mobilities and territorial reconfiguration, and the regulation of mobilities. These questions are located within the everyday life approach of mobile individuals and the governing practices linked to daily practices of mobility and border crossing.

Rather than restrict the studies to the field of geographies of mobility and place, the collection takes more a cross-disciplinary perspective that crosses the boundaries between the social sciences (e.g., sociology, economics, political sciences, ethnography, anthropology, and cultural studies) with scholars working at the interface of them. The overall aim is to stimulate debate at the intersection of these fields, to explore where parallel conceptual developments may be mutually intertwined, and, through this engagement, to reflect on the possible benefits for the social sciences and the humanities. The contributions collected here engage in a rethinking of how the cross-disciplinary nature of the studies could strengthen and broaden conceptualizations in mobilities research. In this respect, research across the social sciences might profit from engaging the fields of mobilities, migration, and borders. The issue opens up new perspectives about this missing research in an effort to plug this knowledge gap. It offers a forum for investigating, analyzing, reassessing, understanding, and expanding on different forms of mobility as an area of inquiry from different perspectives.

The articles inquire into and analyze a multiplicity of mobilities, building upon existing and novel theories and practices of mobilities, and they do this through the regional and intra-national lens of Finnish-EU borders. By mobility, we mean not simply geographical movements, but, importantly, the lived and experienced practices related to it, which in turn contribute to the production, reproduction, and contestation of various social, political, historical, economic, and cultural constructs. The special
issue addresses questions from different and illuminating angles: How do forms of mobilities emerge and maintain themselves? How do people experience mobilities and how relevant are these in the emergent national and regional systems of relations in the Finnish-European context? How do individuals and groups negotiate and contest the boundaries that cut through formal/informal and national/international/regional institutions of mobility? How do forms of mobility cross the disciplinary boundaries in the fields of the social sciences and the humanities?

The contributors are researchers, young and experienced, whose interests include conceptual development and empirical research in the fields of borders, mobilities, and migration studies. The authors address spaces of mobility practices, outcomes, and policies from historical, cultural, economic, and geopolitical academic perspectives in the specific context of Finland and in relation with the EU. They move toward open-ended questions and conceptualizations, broader and focused themes that explore mobilities and borders across different levels and intersectional disciplinary frames, using theoretical and empirical approaches in their respective thematic questions. Further, the critical question they share, which could be extended to mobilities and border studies is, “What can these studies provide as a means to problem-solving and as a means to raising consciousness, confronting and mediating the oppressive, productive, and pragmatic engagements between the attempts to govern borders and mobilities and the everyday lives of people?” We believe this issue could encourage researchers and concerned actors in the fields of mobilities and border studies to explore further the ways intersections are reciprocally enriching. At least, the new mobilities paradigm has provided researchers of mobilities, migration, and borders, through cross-disciplinary approaches, ways to reflect on the phenomena they delve into, and it encourages development of critical approaches in these fields.

This volume seeks to enlighten the evolving nature of mobilities as a way to expand the horizons of research in Finnish scholarship, drawing out new relationships between streams of mobility, providing depth and breadth in theoretical and empirical engagement, and contributing to policy interventions. It also seeks to contribute to the scholarly discussion about globalization, mobility, and migration in relation to place, space, society, and individuals. The special issue aspires to serve as a platform for stakeholders and policy-makers responsible for developing sustainable mobilities for improving the social and economic livelihood of communities and individuals, as well as the municipalities and regions of Finland.

A Mobile Field in Finland?
Curating Experiences, Trajectories, and Practices

In Finland, it seems that mobilities research has developed across the spectrum in the last two decades, as interactions between different subfields of mobilities, migration, and border studies have proved to be lively and productive. Many cross-disciplinary debates and much scholarship on
the subject of mobility have appeared in Finnish academia in heterogeneous contexts. This special issue provides a forum for further dialogue and scrutiny, as the *Journal of Finnish Studies* provides a meeting of research interests around the dynamics, incentives, and empirical study of mobilities, migration, and borders (see afterword). Especially since the introduction of the “mobility turn” in 2006, research in these fields has increased on issues involving different forms of mobility, border-crossing practices and border policies, and internal and international migration in the Finnish context. A legitimate question we could ask today is, “What is new in the field(s)?” However, the answer to this question inevitably seems impossible and untenable for the reason that the evaluation of such scholarly works in different disciplines (e.g., human geography, sociology, political sciences, anthropology, ethnography, and political economy) would not be easy given the increasing development within and heterogeneous nature of the fields. This could be evidenced in the diversity of contributions in this issue and the broader scope of mobilities fields.

The cross-disciplinary studies that have emerged in the last fifteen years or so show that there has been a “new mobilities paradigm” in Finnish research areas interested in these fields. An important question then arises as to what characterizes the state-of-the-art in Finnish scholarship in the different sub-fields. Again, it seems not an easy question to answer; however, the contributing articles illustrate the various areas of research that have engaged with questions pertaining to the position of mobilities in Finnish society, at least in the last two decades. Moreover, some of the issues addressed, invoked in the rise of the mobilities field here, look forward to future consideration, understanding, and interventions in an increasingly mobile society, embedded in transformations at the local, regional, and global levels. This introduction thus opens the door for reflection on mobilities in Finland as field of study, which emanates from the liveliness of the field. In other words, the productivity of mobilities research reflects not only the understandings and politics of the studies of mobilities, migration, and borders, but it also reflects researchers’ contextualized engagements within these understandings and politics. Mobilities research has become a strategic research area in Finnish universities for its interdisciplinarity, timeliness, and, more than that, its relevance to the changing society of Finland and the current condition of the nation-state.

The following is the structure of the issue’s contents, divided into thematic parts, with an introduction of the contributing articles.

**Social and Cultural Experiences and Meanings of Mobility**

While cultures have always been mobile, people now live in an unprecedented age of movement. Mobility has become one of the most important concepts in contemporary social sciences and cultural studies, capturing the idea that life is in flux. Not only are increasing numbers of people
moving across the world, but ideas, images, information, objects, cultures, and many other things are circulating rapidly, affecting people’s lives in many different ways. In the first article, Tuulikki Kurki and Saija Kaskinen share a common departure point in the intersection between literary, cultural, and cross-border mobilities. This article examines narratives of transgression and mobility experiences in visual artworks. The context in which these experiences are identified emerges from the relationship of movements embodied in different agencies of borders and mobility. The core discussion addresses whether the individual experiences of mobility could create hyperspaces that are not territorially bound or acknowledged by national borders. The purpose is further to question the role and function of the hyperspace and to observe whether mobility in this hyperspace can have an impact that either inhibits or strengthens individual agency. The authors claim that shared mobility experiences create hyperspaces where artistic expressions and performances can be recognized. Therefore, the hyperspace can serve as a basis for mobile identities and cultural forms which are not recognized in the context of “national order.”

The theoretical background of the article foregrounds literature research and cultural anthropology, which both include the discussions initiated by the affective turn and iconic turn in cultural studies. The analysis shows the importance of narratives of ambiguity, in-betweenness, and transgression in the formation of contemporary mobile identities. Examining mobility experiences through art has received little attention in research so far, although the art could offer various modalities of perception and reception of mobility and mobility experiences. In sum, Kurki and Kaskinen explore how the mobile people understand, conceptualize, and represent the mobility experiences through artistic genres that have both individually formed and culturally learned elements. They analyze the cultural representation of mobilities across geographical regions and provide a space of discussion on the keen theoretical and methodological framework they use. Their methodological approach aims at shaping the dynamic and growing field of literary-mobility studies. Late modernity is the process of “individualization” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) which is not a social condition that is needed because of the complex, non-linear systems of the contemporary world. Self-identity is shaped through “the reflexive project of the self” (Giddens 1991). Hence, the concept of lifestyle in contemporary society is elemental in this project. Giddens (1991, 81) defines lifestyle as “a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfill utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity.” This kind of lifestyle might be conceived as a type of model for the narrative of the self. Thus, the search for a type of lifestyle by which to make a statement about who one is or wants to be might be considered a major part of the late-modern social world. Besides, for privileged people, the spatial location of social activities is
a question of choice as it “becomes more and more bound up with the reflexive project of the self” (Giddens 1991, 147). Hence, deciding on a kind of lifestyle includes the decision as to which residential place might enable one to build a coherent narrative of the self and project the right kind of public presentation of the self, beside personal and emotional self-fulfillment.

As argued above, it is common that people unmoored from their local and particular origins—through colonialism, urbanization, industrialization, migration, travel, and the embrace of modern and globalized imaginaries—bring with them their notions of ancestry, history, memory, and identity, and, from these deterritorializations, the pursuit of emplacement, attachment, fixity, and meaning emerges. Mobility and displacement as the main constituents of present-day experience involve the sense and sensibility of belonging. While the “social” is no more understood only as “societal” but as “mobile” (Urry 2007), global mobility is instigated by economic migrants as well as highly skilled migrants. At the same time, these mobilities cause media fusses and politically motivated mobilization or “debates, challenges, and crises” in the European nation-states (Skey 2014). However, with the rising interest in digital mobilities (see Castells et al. 2006; Carrasco et al. 2008), individual personal experiences have been largely under-explored.

This question is at the heart of the second article, by Tuija Saresma, bringing together two main areas of scholarship: intersectional readings of digital narratives and the focal place of mobility as human experience, as well as their effect on belonging and identity. In this article, the focus is on affective accounts of mobility and belonging and how they are constructed and performed through autobiographical accounts published on the Internet. Saresma’s analysis sheds light on the processes of multi-sited place attachments and corporeal and digital mobilities. Analysis of intersecting mobilities rests on divergent experiences based on the geographical, gendered, ethnic, age-related, and class or economic differences of the bloggers, mainly Finnish exchange students, travelers, and (spouses of) expatriates. The main questions Saresma addresses are the following: How is belonging articulated in the blogs? How do the experiences of mobility vary between generations, geographical locations, and genders? What is the role of affects in the mobility narratives? Are new experiences of mobility and new ways of belonging generated in the contemporary digitalized culture? The main objective in analyzing these individual digital narratives published in the blogosphere is to bring forth the varying experiences and processes of belonging, and to emphasize the spatially, temporally, and experientially multidimensional character of mobility and belonging, the localities and situatedness of mobile actors, and, finally, new forms of mobile subjectivity.

Dwelling, or remaining in one place, connotes stability, “groundedness,” and permanence, whereas mobility connotes movement, change, and uncertainty. International lifestyle migration is often viewed as a
kind of escape, a “living of the dream.” As a social phenomenon, lifestyle migration might be situated within late modern, global, elitist, borderless, and mobile social practices. The ability to become a successful migrant of the international lifestyle depends, beside one’s economic capital, on having important “network capital” (Urry 2007), which produces the “real and potential social relations that mobilities afford” (196), and highlights the capacity for privileged groups to live “spread-out lives” that are, at the same time, relational, connected, and embedded (228). Yet, important questions remain unanswered: What is the role of local place in this kind of migration process? What is the relative importance of a particular destination place as a driver of mobility? Drivers and the decision process to migrate are important as they unveil the main characteristics of the intended lifestyle (King, Warnes, and Williams 2000). It is also important to explain the culturally framed meanings that specific destinations have for individuals (Salazar 2010). Lifestyle migrants’ aspirations for an improved life are triggered by their imagination, what a particular destination might offer them, and what life goals they might fulfill there. Salazar (2010, 56) argues that their imaginaries should be taken as a central characteristic of migration because “migration is as much about these imaginaries as it is about the actual physical movement from one locality to another and back.”

In mobilities research, the category of aged people has drawn attention, as they have been socially invisible and viewed as burdens, requiring non-reciprocal care regardless of generational differentiation, gender, class, and citizenship status, among other intersecting variables. Minna Zechner, in her article, invokes narrative analysis of aged people’s mobility narratives. These narratives expose and deconstruct their life stories through mobility experiences in the past and the present. While the culture founded on mobility and a desire for travel emerged in the historical period, the contemporary period reveals an increasingly mobile and, seemingly interconnected, world. Zechner analyzes the personal stories of elder Finns living abroad as well as the stories of foreign-borns who have lived in Finland. She also examines their international mobility and migration within their mobility life stories around the age of retirement. In their narratives on international mobility and migration, these aged people recount stories that are relational, since actions and choices are often explained in relation to other people (Mason 2004).

Zechner analyzes the relational nature of mobility life stories and focuses on moorings described close to the time of retirement. As Moon (1995, 514) indicates, moorings “not only allow a person to materialize his or her physical, psychological, and emotional well-being, but also serve to bind a person to a particular place.” Zechner focuses on the theoretical concept of moorings. These anchor an individual to a particular place through tangible and intangible elements, such as family members, housing, employment, and feelings of belonging. When an individual retires, moorings affect the individual’s decision-making process regarding
a place of retirement, as, importantly, kin-work is necessary to sustain families, emotionally and materially, over time and places (see Moon 1995; Conway 2007). Relational stories mean that people tell about their lives, choices, and actions often in relation to people who are important in their lives. A major research outcome is that mobility life stories are less relational at the beginning than at the point of telling the mobility life stories. Moreover, moorings may change depending on the stage of life. Children, grandchildren, and, sometimes, parents are given greater importance, over and against careers and adventure, at an old age. In her analysis, mobility life stories reveal the relational nature of international mobility and migration for highly skilled, middle-class individuals, not only of migrants from less developed to developed countries.

In relation to highly skilled migration, individuals who decide to move abroad often combine rationalism with existential questions about quality of life and self-achievement, in this “age of migration” (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014; Habti 2018), “high mobility” (Viry and Kaufmann 2015), ad risk (Beck 1992). Geographical mobility broadens one’s opportunity-space, be it a temporary, long-term, or permanent decision to stay in a specific destination for better work-life conditions, or new adventures and cultural exploration, or ecological exhilaration. However, a context of enduring economic depression, coupled with financial strains and the “institutionalized individualism” of life patterns (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), often frames the decision to emigrate as a criticism of the migrants’ origin countries for limiting their potential and as a rational choice to move to where aspirations for personal socio-economic development and career progression can be fulfilled. A micro-individual level approach to mobility can provide a deep understanding of the value-expectancy model suggested by De Jong and Fawcett (1981, 47–51), who argue that individuals assess personally valued goals, such as wealth, status, well-being, or upward-career mobility, when they decide to stay or to move.

International highly skilled mobility is an important means for economic growth, the knowledge economy and society, innovation, and development. While research on knowledge workers’ mobility spans a variety of different contexts, it is rarely sufficiently developed and explored (van Riemsdijk and Wang 2017; also Habti and Elo 2018), even if acknowledged. This is potentially problematic, because linking questions to context is crucial to theory building. In addition, contextual influences provide boundary conditions and highlight contingency factors that are essential for insightful and informative empirical testing. Driss Habti, in his article, touches on this gap by exploring the interactive, multi-level factors that influence the decision-making of Russian migrant physicians in Finland regarding whether to stay permanently in Finland or to return to Russia or to move to a third country. The article aims to generate a deep understanding of both the antecedents and implications of their post-migration experience and the prime factors that affect the
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migration pattern of staying put within the multi-level contextual framework of their migration process.

**Everyday Life and Lived Places**

Uniting temporal, spatial, and textual fields, this second part retains a core focus on the fluid, reciprocal, and often innovative relationships between mobility, place, transport, and the culture of lifestyle. Lifestyle migration, as O'Reilly and Benson (2009) define it, conceptualizes the movement—either part-time or full-time, permanently or temporarily—of relatively affluent individuals to places which, for different reasons, mean for the migrants something defined as “quality of life.” In past years, lifestyle migration has burgeoned into a widely used approach. The spread has been accompanied by the theoretical expansion of some of its underlying ideas such as individualism, imaginaries, happiness, and identity. During the early years of the industrial revolution in Europe, industrialization and international trade remained relatively limited in Finland, though living standards began to rise slowly from the beginning of the twentieth century with most of the population acquiring its income from agriculture and forestry up until the 1950s. Because of the long, harsh winters, farming and agriculture could not suffice in securing employment for the growing population in rural areas. This created an influx of many peasants to urban areas with growing industrial parks and factory centers, as well as better job opportunities, living standards, and lifestyles.

In her article, Eija Stark analyzes the life stories of more common, rather than affluent, Finnish people who lived between 1874 and 1939 and who were forced to move from their rural family communities to urban towns. This article investigates internal mobility from rural to urban areas as an involuntary experience. Stark’s main question is the following: What were the cultural models that guided people in resisting social mobility, which, in the long run and at the time of the research fieldwork, turned out to be beneficial for them? The common features of the respondents’ narratives are that the experience of social mobility and settlement affected not only their lives, but also the narratives of how mobility was recounted. Their imaginings of urban destinations and their future lives within those places might have been characterized by an idealization of a lofty lifestyle in cities and their prosperous living standards. However, beyond the significance of particular destinations and the potential future lives that they could hold, the question remains of the role that such imaginings have within daily life in the urban destination. Many migrants had difficulty integrating into their new environments, which resulted in the return of thousands to their rural countryside to build their own smallholdings. Ownership of a small farm, and the rural lifestyle it provided, represented for them the cultural norm, and the image of a farmhouse received the typical characteristics of a “key-symbol.” However, from the early 1960s onward, smallholdings rapidly declined as small farms did not provide high revenues, but rather unexpectedly
precarious conditions. Consequently, industrial growth started to replace agriculture and forestry, which in turn yielded to a service- and information-oriented economy.

Urry (2007) asks to “mobilize” social phenomena and to reflect on how this might be possible within the framework of traditional anthropological fieldwork. Lifestyle migration shows one of Urry’s (2007, 8) four forms of mobility, “a horizontal sense of being ‘on the move’.” This specific mobility experience is the interest of the respondents in Eija Stark’s study, as well as in the following article by Pilvi Hämeenaho. In this rendering, migration from rural to urban centers, in the former case study, emerges as a life-changing and evolving action through which these migrants hope to achieve what they consider a better way of life. Moreover, their recollections of the decision to migrate additionally reveal the extent to which their imaginings of their lives within the destination affected the actualization of their migration plan. Hence, it is evident that the act of migration becomes significant when understood within the context of the migrants’ lives in pre- and post-migration, and as part of their constant search for self-realization and a better way of life, even if in their imaginings only.

Research into lifestyle migration contributes to the new mobilities paradigm fresh insights into the intersections of daily mobility, place, and transports. With the increasing use of modern technologies and transport at the local and regional levels, life has become increasingly mobile and flexible in relation to time and place, shaping the experiences and expectations of people in their daily lives. However, the place of home affects strongly the course of daily life, as home determines the means and ways of performing daily activities and duties. In Finland, residents in rural areas, most often, go to work and use services in nearby towns. They potentially engage in different mobile practices, which include physical, communicative, and imaginative mobilities. With no public transportation available, to move long distances from one’s home village consumes time and money. Pilvi Hämeenaho, in her article, addresses the kinds of meanings that distances and daily mobility have for residents of rural areas. She examines the question from the viewpoint of private motorizing and its significance to local people. Her analysis surrounds the daily mobility of rural residents as a part of local “car cultures,” based on the work of Miller (2001). Hämeenaho grounds her study on Sheller’s studies (2004) on embodied emotions and care practices connected to driving a family car. She examines daily mobility experiences in order to illustrate the engagement of people with mobilities and daily life in rural areas. These mobile practices influence people’s lives individually and collectively. Not least, Hämeenaho discusses the question of rural (im)mobilities and the significance of the individual ability to be mobile (see Tedre and Pulkkinen 2011).

Hämeenaho discloses that success within the place of residence depends on the mobile individual’s achievement of a particular balance
between mobility and immobility. In this regard, immobility might not always be negatively valued, but rather can have positive attributes (see Salazar 2010), such as settlement and justification to stay and not move elsewhere. The question is whether mobility and immobility have a different meaning or a different role, and whether that balance is achieved or not. Hämeenaho explores the best practices for how to provide opportunities for people of all ages to live in a rural environment without being excluded or lacking support or feeling lonely. Finally, through ethnographic and anthropological studies, Stark and Hämeenaho highlight the importance of mobilities in shaping individuals’ daily lives. They present their reflections on using ethnography to study lifestyle migration and mobility. By following thoroughly the perspectives and practices of moving people through their life-course narratives, they investigate mobility in different ranges and its role in their respondents’ lives. Both Stark and Hämeenaho argue that mobility has real implications for their respondents’ success or failure at living in and moving to their place of destination.

**Politizing Mobility and Mobilizing Policies (in Times of Crisis)**

Despite increasing economic flows and the “fluid” mobility of tourists, businessmen, academics, and affluent people who cross borders quite freely, not everyone is welcome or enjoys such privileges. With the fall of the socialist block of Eastern Europe, the concept of a borderless world emerged with the aim of handling the growing globalized network flows of capital and information. However, parts of the globe have witnessed the building and fortification of borders to control some forms of mobilities, such as illicit smuggling and undesirable migrants, and the number of illegal migrants and refugees dominates discussions of borders and bordering. A body of literature has appeared engaging with the “borderless world,” and this has provided more nuanced views into both scholarly debates and social and political discussions regarding the topic of cross-borders mobility. Borders raise the specter of differentiated mobilities, of elites and non-elites (Birtchnell and Caletrio 2013). As Hannam, Sheller, and Urry (2006, 11) maintain, “the study of mobility also involves those immobile infrastructures that organize the intermittent flow of people, information, and image, as well as the borders or ‘gates’ that limit, channel, and regulate movement or anticipated movement.” Moreover, Rumford (2006, 156) underlines that “borders are central to the social theory agenda: to theorize mobilities and networks is at the same time to theorize borders.” Yet, Rumford also argues that there is tension between narratives “which emphasize the openness and/or the transcendability of borders as a feature of globalization and accounts which draw attention to massive processes of securitized rebordering” (157).

Mobilities as “boundaries” (Paasi 2002, 2009) are conjured up with types of social boundaries which are regulated by “formal” institutions like passports, visas, immigration restrictions, and other border authorities. However, less is known about the experiences and felt forms
of boundaries that are regulated by informal institutions which involve social markers such as class, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, educational attainment, and facilitators to well-being. These forms of boundaries result from social processes such as discrimination, inequality, dispossession, and poverty. The recent large movement of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants across the increasingly militarized borders of the EU has instigated a socio-spatial debate about the limits of human rights, national sovereignty, and continental values, causing what has been called a “refugees crisis.” In the era of globalization, borders represent porous passages for capital and commodities, while they have toughened as “new enclosures” trying to immobilize refugees and other migrants. “Fortress Europe” emerged as an ensemble of new state control mechanisms, established border fences, detention centers, and refugee camps (Celeta and Coletti 2016). A question arises as to whether technologies of migration management seek criminalization, classification, stigmatization, and/or bio-political control of moving people.

In this part, the first three articles discuss the human rights and cross-border mobility of international migrants and the securitization of borders. These issues involve nuanced and intangible levels of boundaries, which have long-lasting and profound impacts on specific communities and individuals, often minorities. In these articles, the political umbrella is a part of mobilities studies within the mobilities paradigm framework. An important corollary of this shift of emphasis could be a challenge to the prevailing view of borders as enclosures of “unwanted” mobilities. These authors argue that the institutional practices and narratives of relating the physical borders to the belief in security and control affect the process of building boundaries for and between communities. The construction of narratives and governing practices with regard to international migrants is often a response to pressures on governments from the political far right. The consequence is the marginalization of particular groups from the national polity.

The articles by James Scott, Jaana Palander and Saara Pellander, and Elina Todorov tackle timely, but thorny, questions. Moving people contest European border regimes by claiming spatial justice and political visibility, and they face, with solidarity, the humanitarian crises wrought by militarism, violence, and structural adjustment. This solidarity stems from a larger vision of sharing in each other’s struggles for survival, a better future, and social change. The articles focus on the issue of governing cross-border mobility and explore how interventions in mobility trigger new forms of bordering practices. They engage in the politics and policies of managing borders and mobility and the interactions between them. A common conceptual approach in these contributions, inspired by the new mobilities paradigm, is that of mobility regimes. Though they have converging concerns over cross-border mobility and border studies, the authors, belonging to different disciplines, aim to provide critical reflection and to analyze the social landscapes of border-spaces and their
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reverberations for anti-border politics. This section emphasizes multidirectional discussion and the open debate of contested, rather than settled, questions. Following Urry’s (2000) tenet that fixed border structures give meaning to and shape mobility, the articles aim to expose the complexity of the terrain and to pay much-needed attention to the ethics, moralities, and (in)justices in border struggles and mobility. In this respect, research need not consider territorial and relational views as normative givens, but rather may consider how the “geographies” of bounded and open spaces are realized in today’s world.

James W. Scott, in his article, addresses the question of mobility as a human right from a humanitarian and political perspective within the context of the current “refugee crisis” in Europe and North America. This “crisis” has triggered challenges to the political principles of human rights. European political debate has been dominated by a reconsideration of cross-border control within the Schengen space and by demands to strengthen control and surveillance in external EU-borders. National borders have turned into barriers, checkpoints, and control zones for incoming migrants. Scott highlights the emerging myths according to which to be mobile means to be itinerant, rootless, without grounding in community, lacking authenticity, and thus not trustworthy. Associating migration with risk and with security threats has become a feasible political loophole around which nationalist conservative and right-wing populists have gathered. The securitization of mobility, however, eventually threatens to impede multicultural convivencia by legitimizing a biopolitics of selection that could very much restrict free movement of “unwanted” individuals and groups. Scott underlines that such a biopolitics is harmful as national societies would stagnate and degenerate given the lack of intercultural exchange and renewal that immigration brings. He argues that the dilemma of “revanchist self-referentiality” points to the ethical significance of borders and the need to “desecuritize” thinking about mobility and migration. He adds that the ways in which mobility is framed in public debate needs deeper rethinking and more scrutiny to achieve this aim.

Jaana Palander and Saara Pellander, in their article, contribute to the topical discussion on borders, security, the nation-state, and international migration from the Finnish view. With the surge of the “refugee crisis” in 2015, political debates in Finland regarding Russian and Swedish borderlines dominated the political scene because of “dysfunctionalities.” Combining political history with legal analysis, this paper takes a transdisciplinary approach to mobility and its limits. The authors provide a historical account of the way in which security has been involved in the governance of immigration; the authors analyze laws, court cases, parliamentary plenary speeches, and security reports. The article analyses the question of the way Finnish state borders have been conceptualized with the inception of the refugee “problem.” They argue that in recent times, national security concerns have outweighed individual security concerns,
and they provide empirical evidence that, over time, there has been a clear movement toward increased securitization. They illuminate how these borders have been fortified as filters and security barriers of sovereignty and nation, and interpreted as a solution for the “refugee crisis.” Considering the way in which mobility and migration are related to security in Finnish policies, they suggest that the mobilities paradigm should be complemented by the inclusion of a security paradigm. Theoretically, the article addresses borders as constantly changing processes and socio-cultural constructs, and it identifies competing interpretations of state borders as “management tools” of global mobility.

In the following article, Elina Todorov examines how Finnish national legislative and policy changes narrow the space of regular cross-border mobility and residence and potentially result in forms of irregular migration and residence. In the Finnish context, irregular migration can be assessed as migration from third countries, and, in that sense, people move from countries outside the EU area and enter the EU. Beside its legal-political reflections, the article probes into legal-cultural and legal-sociological dimensions of the main question. National immigration legislation is a result of the sovereignty of Finnish immigration policies that emanate from the human rights perspective of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and its doctrines. Yet, restrictive legislative amendments in a general European context are often validated with state argumentation concerning the state economy, the alleged favorability and attractiveness of Finnish legislation, and the management of migration, while, at the same time, limiting rights to regular mobility and residence. Todorov addresses these amendments and demonstrates how they have restricted regular mobility and residence for migrants coming mostly from third countries. She aims to analyze systematic changes in the national Aliens Act and other related legislation up to this date to see whether those changes potentially generate an outcome where migrants find themselves in an unregulated position and how this may be critical from the perspective of human rights. The question then is how human rights considerations may challenge these restrictive state policies and their side effect of irregular migration and international migrants’ rights.

Global highly skilled migration and mobility is another form that is increasing worldwide (Habti and Koikkalainen 2014; Favell, Feldblum, and Smith 2015; van Riemsdijk and Wang 2017). With their career capital, these migrants seek to progress their careers and find better work conditions as well as a preferred lifestyle by mobilizing their competencies and credentials across borders, and drawing on their cultural, social, economic, and human capital (Habti and Elo 2018). Scott (2006, 1105) maintains that it “has become a ‘normal’ middle-class activity rather than something exclusively confined to an economic elite.” Next, Melina Aarnikoivu, Sirpa Korhonen, Driss Habti, and David Hoffman offer a novel perspective of the interrelationships between international mobility, migration, and integration challenges within Finnish society and the labor
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market. Drawing on four empirical works that discuss the characteristics of different groups/workers, they explain the difference between policy-based evidence (PBE) and evidence-based policy (EBP) and argue that each is needed as a basis for action. The authors also argue that better, evidence-based understanding, explanations, and questions can be sought by problematizing the challenging forms of twenty-first-century migration and mobilities. Bringing up the power dynamics in achieving career and personal life aspirations, the authors aim to conceptualize intersecting multi-level goals in the migration experiences of highly educated people. The authors underline the social dynamics that are unfamiliar to many policy actors, professionals, and stakeholders who rely on scholars for actionable analyses. Overall, the study aims to articulate the relation between contemporary migration challenges in Finland and the better policy questions that the “new mobilities paradigm” brings into view.

Cross-Border and Transnational Mobility

Human mobility is closely related to immobility, to places and dwellings, and, importantly to daily life, to the development of an attachment to more than one place of residence. Leisure-time mobility has increasingly become a part of everyday life. With an increasingly changing and frequent mobility across borders, leisure practices in the form of second-home (recreational) property ownership is growing (McIntyre 2009). As Müller and Hall (2004, 273) note, “second homes indicate the development of new, more fluid patterns of mobility and place affiliation which, rather than setting the rural and the urban as opposing categories, position them as part of an interrelated and networked whole.” Second-home ownership in neighboring countries is one of the established patterns in this globalized tourism mobility (Woods 2011). Cross-border second-home ownership is geographically unevenly distributed in different regions and countries. The most common trend is that second-home properties are located largely in border regions in a neighboring country as a result of the time-distance constraint (Hall and Müller 2004; Woods 2011).

In many parts of the world, rural second homes belong to cultural tradition and are a particularly common way of life in the Nordic countries (Marjavaara 2008). Finland is one of the leading countries in terms of second-home ownership and tourism. It has become a destination for this kind of property ownership in recent decades, mainly by neighboring Russians, following Finland’s admission to membership in the EEA and the EU in 1994 and 1995, respectively. As the property market for foreigners was liberalized in 2000, Russian recreational-property ownership subsequently started over a relatively short period (see Hannonen, Lehtonen, and Toivakka 2016). The pattern of leisure second-home mobility of Russians in Finland is different from internationally established patterns, when well-off Westerners buy cheaper recreational properties in Southern and Eastern Europe as a result of economic disparities. The Finnish-Russian border characterizes one of the biggest economic discrepancies
in the world between the neighboring countries. Rather than Finns moving to Russia to shop for cheaper properties or land resulting from the lower cost of living in Russia, Russians represent the first foreign-borns to own second-home property in Finland in the last decade (Hiltunen and Rehunen 2014).

Olga Hannonen’s article addresses the cross-border second-home mobility characterized by Russians who have made property purchases for leisure purposes across the Finnish-Russian border. This mobility is focused upon physical (corporeal) human mobility, which refers to individuals traveling between places and across borders where movement is not simply occurring but actively producing multiple, dynamic spaces (Urry 2007). Mobility here is understood as “socially produced motion” through observable, measurable, and empirical reality on the one hand, and practised, experienced, and embodied reality on the other (Cresswell 2006, 3). The article takes the new mobilities paradigm in relation to trans-border second-home mobility across Finnish-Russian borders, and investigates how the new mobilities paradigm helps in understanding contemporary trans-border movements. Hannonen argues this paradigm does not adequately address the role of borders in relation to contemporary mobilities, nor does it examine the changing direction of mobility flows. Thus, the article aims to highlight the role and understanding of borders in contemporary mobilities in the case study of Russian second-home mobility in Finland, and to expand the scope of the new paradigm with the mobility trend from East to West—from Russia to Finland. The study focuses on interpreting Russian trans-border second-home mobility in Finland based on elements from the new paradigm’s framework. In addition to its theoretical contribution, this empirical study provides a deeper understanding of one form of contemporary mobilities.

As another level, communication systems and media are an important area of mobilities research. Since the 1990s, scholars across disciplines have sought to understand the intersection of physical and virtual mobility as well as the wider social effects of being constantly connected. The use of small mobile devices (e.g., cell phones), with an increase in different communication platforms, blurs the boundaries between the domains of home, work, leisure, and cross-border mobility, both for good and bad. This increasing connectivity has implications for identity and belonging in a transnational space of migration. Issues of gender and age are also implicit in these debates, especially for those transnational citizens who use digital media and whose mobility is validated in the digital world. Transnational digital-media research is an interdisciplinary field that focuses on current media practices “in motion” and in situ. Researchers engage with locational and situational analyses, and they develop new methods for the analysis and design of mobile digital media. They explore the growing mobility and distributed spatiality of media, including transnational media practices. The digitalization of media and many other functions of society drive mobility and migration. Moreover, mobility is
usually triggered by people on the move or those settled in new destinations, as they build platforms for the ever-developing transnationalization of media and its use.

The fragmentation of media use is widely discussed in Western societies. Viewed through the prism of mobile migrant communities, it gains new features: the level of fragmentation becomes higher when transnational media use produces communities, belongings, and ideascapes that transcend national borders. Olga Davydova-Minguet, Tiina Sotkasiira, Teemu Oivo, and Janne Riiheläinen, in their article, explore the intersection of migration and media use in contemporary digitalized society and address the implications, challenges, and opportunities of being simultaneously physically and digitally mobile. In the context of Finland, the Russian-speaking immigrants could be considered as a ground for informational influence from their country of origin. The established paradigm of migration research, especially the integration process, obviously does not recognize such factors. The authors investigate the various ways Russian-speaking immigrants use media in the situation of mediated conflict between the EU and Russia, the factors that stimulate Russian-speakers to engage with Russian media, the response of Finnish media produced in the Russian language, and the ways Russian-speakers’ involvement in the Finnish mediascape can be adjusted to their everyday lives. The article examines transnational media use under the circumstances of conflicting media models from Finland and Russia. The crisis of Russian-European relations and strong nationalistic discourses in the Russian state-controlled media puts Russian-speakers in Finland under pressure to negotiate their media use with everyday life in Finland. The study aims to understand the way Russian mainstream media seeks to attract, reason with, and identify with its audiences. The study also seeks new insights on the multicultural Finnish society that is affected by the mobile digital media used by mobile people.

Conclusion
This issue brings together empirical and theoretical reflections from a range of mobilities research fields in order to explore the various forms in which these intersect. It organizes the articles around thematic lines weaved around Finland within its neighboring spaces and corridors, considering specific cases as well as theoretical takes on cross-border mobility, migration, and borders. The articles address questions of what kinds of social and spatial connections, experiences, knowledge, imaginaries, social memories, and ideas are generated through forms of mobilities and how these aspects affect mobility practices. The articles address different concepts related to mobilities, and engage in intersections of individual subjectivities, experiences, trajectories, and social relationships that result in different kinds of mobilities, migration, and border issues. They track topics ranging from migration theory, communications and media, transnational social spaces, law and policy on borders and security, migrants’
integration in labor markets, identity and belonging, migration and lifestyle, leisure mobility, return migration, tourism, migrant patterns, and cultural and artistic exchanges with the origin homeland. The issue considers the consequences of such mobilities for people and places, as well as other social and spatial aspects. Furthermore, the articles explore mobilities from the perspectives of the actors involved, the implication of social networks, their importance and frequency, and the effect of the current dynamics of the contemporary world in these movements.

The questions raised are mostly relevant to universities and research centers, academics and university students engaged in contemporary Finnish studies in issues related to mobilities research, in general, and cross-border mobility and immigration. This collection is also a valuable reference for policymakers and other actors, including stakeholders and associations, in enhancing their understanding of the dynamics of cross-border mobility and migration. The editors hope to bring new knowledge about new research questions on the Finnish experiences of mobilities. Moreover, the issue appeals to national public institutions to guide and inform national and supra-national policy and practice, possibly to develop and put into practice effective management policies and strategies according to their objectives. The articles scrutinize the complex contestation that lies behind the governance of mobility, migration, and borders. The contributors do not shy away from being explicit about the practical parts that policy actors and practitioners need to know, despite the fact that some of the authors are young researchers. The implications of their findings lead us to reflect upon and provide insights into borders and international migrants’ mobilities as mechanisms of connectivity and encounter, rather than of separation and division, where connection does not occur at the expense of borders, but rather as an outcome of them.

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Mobility Reports: Artistic Representations of Mobility Experiences

Tuulikki Kurki, University of Eastern Finland
Saija Kaskinen, University of Eastern Finland

Abstract
The new mobility paradigm has expanded from geographically related mobility to various forms of sociocultural and intercultural mobility, which are studied through multidisciplinary approaches. This article focuses on the individual experiences of mobility and various embodied border crossings represented in artistic genres and performances in the context of Finland. The theoretical background of the article draws on literature research and cultural anthropology, which both include the discussions initiated by the affective and iconic turn in cultural studies. The affective turn promotes the move from constructionism to the broad framework of new materialism that links critical theory and cultural criticism to bodily matter and matter in general. The iconic turn seeks to acknowledge that artistic and visual cognition of reality is to be understood as equal to scientific forms of representation. People’s understanding of the world is based on experiences that have a bodily and material foundation and consist of both individually formed and culturally learned elements. Because artistic genres constitute a specific form of knowledge that has its foundation in (bodily) experiences, this article claims that studying artistic genres in the context of mobility can provide a new understanding and ways of conceptualizing of a mobile subject and mobility experience.

Keywords: mobility, affective turn, border, literature, film, art

Introduction
Mobility and its relation to the contemporary society, as well as mobility’s impact on individual and collective identities, goals, and aspirations have become increasingly serious issues in multidisciplinary academic discussions. In these discussions, mobility experiences, especially those based on the life stories of migrants, have facilitated much of the analysis of...
mobility. While the topic in itself is not new, as it has been widely discussed since the 1990s, in the Finnish context there have been but a few ethno-graphically oriented studies of the topic (Kazmierska 2003; Eastmond 2007; Cederberg 2014). Examining mobility experiences through art has received even less attention, although art could offer various modalities of perception and reception of mobility and mobility experiences. Therefore, this article proposes to examine individual as well as collective experiences of mobility through verbal and visual narratives that emphasize affects, feelings of in-betweenness, and “otherness” in the context of Finland. The claim of this article is that artistic narratives can express such viewpoints, affects, and emotions connected with mobility experiences that are difficult, if not impossible to express in everyday forms of communication. This makes the study of artworks relevant also in mobility research (Witzgall 2013) as these artworks reveal previously unrecognized dimensions to mobility. The first research question addresses the issue of representation. How is the mobility experience represented narratively in the artwork? How does it express such emotions as in-betweenness, belonging nowhere, and “otherness”? The second question investigates the significance of transgression revealed in the primary materials. Finally, the article evaluates why it is relevant to study artistic mobility narratives.

The article connects with the new mobility paradigm. First, it aims to study the relationship between the static structures of the modern world (Sheller and Urry 2006, 210) and its “liquid” flows (Bauman 2000)—the condition of constant mobility of people, identities, and symbols. This relationship forms a dialectical tension that prioritizes neither territorially fixed nor de-territorially defined categories and concepts as instruments for analysis (Sheller and Urry 2006, 209). In other words, mobility experiences cannot be realized without taking into account immobility, and vice versa. Second, the article studies intangible forms of mobility, such as communicative, imaginative, and virtual travel (Urry 2007, 40–41).

The philosophical stance of this article builds on the affective turn, introduced in cultural studies. The affective turn refers to a move away from exclusive social-constructionist models of social reality (e.g., language) and argues that affect, emotions, and feelings are real experiences that should be taken into account in meaning-making. Therefore, it is important to address the material and bodily foundations of social reality as well (Sharma and Tygstrup 2015, 2).

In its theoretical and methodological framework, this article utilizes post-classical narratology (Bal 1997; Jahn 2004) and the anthropology of experience (Bruner 1986). Apart from written and verbal narration with its restricted research focus on structural elements and the content of narratives in classical narratology, post-classical narratology has shifted the focus to also include non-literary and non-verbal narratives with an emphasis on the context and function. Thus, it expands the ways in which the experience can be expressed and researched.
Brinker (1986, 6–7) has perceived the difficulty in studying individual as well as collective experiences because of unavoidable gaps between reality, experiences, and their expressions. Based on Turner’s (1986) view of the anthropology of experience, Brinker argues that these gaps can be closed if an account of experience is approached through socially constructed units of meaning represented in individual and culturally coded verbal and visual narratives. These narratives enable the mobile subject to “re-experience, re-live, re-create,” and “re-tell” the experience (Brinker 1986, 7). Through these re-processes, the narratives reveal previously unrecognized dimensions to mobility (Witzgall 2013) and concretize the multilayered structures of experience, making it possible to investigate their significance and meaning. By bringing these theoretical frames together, it is possible to study visual artworks as narratives of the mobility experience.

In this article, the analysis focuses on those elements in individual and collective narratives where the mobile entities, such as people, affects, and symbols, are recognizable and able to cross, question, and mitigate various types of borders. The mobility narrative and its significance are studied through the mobile character’s reflection on the consequences of the mobility experience. On one hand, the narratives may represent their creator’s own mobility experience if the mobile person is also the author of the artwork. On the other hand, the artworks can represent culturally coded narratives of mobility that are expressed through the artist’s performance. Then the artist appears as a transmitter or narrator of the mobility experience as well as an evaluator of its significance.

The characteristic, common to all mobility narratives in this study, is a transgression. In the studied artworks, people, objects, or symbols, move or are forced to move into and between new, unexpected, and unknown contexts. When seen through the context of national order, these mobile entities seem sometimes out of place or even transgressional; they belong nowhere, and are in between culturally, ideologically, or religiously determined categories, or they are in the “wrong” place because they violate the sociocultural expectations of the place (Cresswell 1996, 5–9). The idea of transgression refers to Cresswell’s (5–9) formulation, according to which transgression “violates the laws of place” maintained by, for example, the dominant social and cultural ideology. Therefore, transgression does not mean only physical or geographical transgression, but more importantly, transgression of sociocultural expectations (8). Furthermore, according to Cresswell, the margins of ordered place and space serve as a critical lens through which the ideas about accepted normativity, that is, the prevailing order, can be studied. In this article, transgression can be further connected with the concepts of liminality and ambiguity, introduced by symbolical anthropology (Turner 1977; Douglas 1966). Liminality and ambiguity are the results of transgressive mobility, and they can serve as critical viewpoints through which the prevailing order can be scrutinized (Weber 1995).
The narratives of mobility experience and the significance of transgressions are studied in two different historical contexts. The first historical context, the Finnish national order, takes place during the wartime period of the 1940s, and the second historical context, the so-called mobile order, during the 2000s. The national order is defined as the contemporary order of sovereign nation-states, which is taken as given (Malkki 1995, 502). In the national order of things, for example, identities are tightly connected with a territorially bounded homeland (502). Furthermore, Malkki (515–16) states that sovereignty is part of the “natural” order of things, and, therefore, often invisible. In the context of this article, the national order guides dominant, exclusive thinking-categories of “us” and “them,” and narratives of a nation's history and national culture. Thus the national order can function as a mobilities regime, because it represents “specific sets of principles, norms, and rules that regulate, in a fundamental way” all kinds of movement (Kesserling and Vogl 2013, 20). In this way, national order provides tangible, “hard structures that regulate movement in space” (20), and thus determines the significance of the movement. Set in this historical context, our article studies representations of mobility experiences in a wartime film *Yli rajan* (Over the border, 1942).

The second context of interpretation is the mobile order. It is formed by global movements, such as flows of people, ideologies, and objects. The mobile order is a globally recognized order that emerges from mobility experiences and is experienced simultaneously next to the national order. The mobile order is the unexpected order of things, deviant from the expected national order, and, therefore, often visible. In this order of things, for example, identities are de-territorial and at least partially independent of the nation-states. The mobile order questions the dominant, exclusive-thinking categories of “us” and “them,” and the narratives of a nation’s history and national culture. In the context of the mobile order, this article studies visual art by two contemporary international female artists from Finland: Anna Puhakka and Rosa Liksom. The studied artworks are Puhakka’s photograph triptych *Birth Words* and Liksom’s *Burka Project* incorporating media arts and photographs.

The overall claim of this article is that the narratives of mobility experiences and transgression in these artworks can function as a critical lens through which the prevailing national order, social and cultural expectations (such as culturally defined thinking categories of “us,” “them,” “familiar,” “alien,” and “otherness”) can be challenged. Furthermore, these artworks, with their various representations of mobility, render visible the cemented, “normalized,” otherwise invisible national order and, thus, make it open to criticism.

**Mobility Experience and Transgression in the Context of a Fixed National Order**

Premiering in 1942, *Yli rajan* adheres to the main tenets of the Finnish national order that revolved around the ideology of war and, consequently,
around Finland’s effort to preserve the nation’s sovereignty. At the time of premiering *Yli rajan*, Finland had just survived the Winter War (1939–40) but had started a new war, Continuation War (1941–44), against the Soviet Union. *Yli rajan* was the first internationally awarded film in Finland. It received a Biennale Medal at the Venice Film Festival in 1942 (*Elonet, Yli rajan*; Internet Movie Database, *Yli rajan*). The European film world noted the film as a collectively acknowledged representation of the difficult relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union.

*Yli rajan* represents a typical wartime drama film in Finland, although it does not explicitly show the war itself but alludes to the growing antagonisms between the Finns and the Soviets and the approaching Continuation War. The absence of depictions of war was typical for the era because the wartime audience did not wish to see and experience the brutality of war in the cinema (Csoma 2012, 85). Instead, the film provided viewers with a comforting feeling of national spirit. To accomplish this, *Yli rajan* applied propaganda for uniting the people against the common enemy, the Soviets, whom the film caricatured with strong racist overtones (Csoma 2012, 85). While reviling the Soviets for their repressive, ill-mannered behavior and aggressive posturing, the film highlights the familiar Finnish nationalistic values, such as the ideas of home, Lutheran Puritanism, and an ethos of the fatherland, and ensures the absolute supremacy of those values against the Soviets. With its strong overtones of triumphant, Finnish nationalistic values, *Yli rajan* resembles other well-known Finnish drama films of the 1940s, such as *Oi kallis Suomenmaa* (Finland, our dear native land, 1940), *Rantasuon raatajat* (The toilers of Rantasuo, 1942), and *Kirkastettu sydän* (A woman’s heart, 1943).

*Yli rajan* was chosen for the analysis because it focuses on border crossing and border transgression more closely than many of its contemporaries. In addition, the director of *Yli rajan* was a well-known theater director and actor, Wilho Ilmari. Ilmari’s background in theater brought strong theatricality and emotionality that helped stir up national spirit, and his melodramatic approach to the motif added heroic elements to the border-crossing theme. The film also comments on the faith of Ingrian Finns in the Soviet Union. Ingrian Finns are a Finno-Ugric people, who are ethnically Finns but have lived in Russia since the seventeenth century. During the twentieth-century war years, the destiny of many Ingrian Finns was to be deported to prison camps in Siberia or to be killed by Soviet persecution (Flink 2010).

The film *Yli rajan* describes the life of two protagonists, an Ingrian Finn, Eliisa Raaska, and her Finnish fiancé, Mikko Vanhala, in the late 1930s. Eliisa and Mikko live on different sides of the national border between Finland and the Soviet Union. Eliisa wishes to move to Finland to marry Mikko, but does not want to leave her old father on the Soviet side of the border (*Elonet, Yli rajan*). The argument is that the national order, imbued with unyielding patriotism and resolute wartime solidarity, did not allow any mobility narratives that could directly challenge or criticize
the prevailing national order. As suggested in these materials, the critical voice, often embedded in the subtle transgressions investigating the national order, was overlooked, and its significance as a transformative power was diminished. The contemporary audience was persuaded to interpret these transgressions as representations of “potential us” that in the end strengthens the national order and the national hegemony.

The title of the film *Yli rajan* in itself implies border crossing. First, it suggests that the Finnish-speaking populations, straddling both sides of the national border, feel an affinity for and an interconnectedness to one another. The cross-border contacts that had been neighborly and ordinary were endangered by rising political tension between Finland and the Soviet Union. Both nation-states started to strengthen their sovereign national orders by “hardening” the established border to the point where cross-border connections became forbidden. The film shows how the border operates as the outer defense wall that not only controls access to its demarcated national space but also strictly separates and defines its own human and cultural characteristics, values, and laws from the “other.” Both sides, locked to their own fixed definitions, make the state border the impenetrable political, cultural, and social divide that promotes the idea of distinctive national orders. In this way, it functions as a mooring element for any kind of mobility. However, the protagonists defied the national order through their illegal cross-border movement.

In the beginning, the film displays the verbal and visual narratives that aim at maintaining and securing the national order. The opening scene introduces the national border between Finland and the Soviet Union as physically marked with border poles, barbed-wire fence, and two imposing signs indicating the legitimate power of two sovereign nations on each side of the border. The camera stays on the Soviet side to show a border-guard station with a sign—“For the homeland, for Stalin”—reproducing dramatically the discourse of the prevailing Soviet national order. However, as the scene moves to a Soviet border guard on patrol, keeping a watchful eye on any possible intruders, a blizzard starts shaking the sign of the hammer and sickle, eerily foreshadowing upcoming events that will transgress the national order.

The second scene, in which Eliisa crosses the border to Finland to meet Mikko, stresses illegal, transgressive, and invisible (not authorized) cross-border mobility motivated by affect and emotion (0:02:34–0:03:50). Eliisa’s stealth movements of creeping and crouching, as well as her evasive manoeuvrings indicate that Eliisa knows that the border is not open for crossing anymore. To Eliisa and Mikko, the border had become a barrier, “a cursed border” (0:04:26), that either forces them to end their relationship or makes them criminals if they cross it. They also know that if they are caught, the tightened border controls will mean the application of harsh methods for punishing illegal border crossers. Eliisa and Mikko’s romance does not only defy the authority of the border guards but, more extensively, it violates the prevailing national order manifested
by the border. Because their action transgresses the national order, the border becomes deceptively porous and the national order debatable, although both the border and the national order should be unyielding and impenetrable from a political perspective. Eliisa’s actions signal that people have to take coercive actions to continue their contacts across the border and that their daily lives at the borderlands have become uncertain and guarded.

The “cursed border” also refers to the symbolic, cultural, and social borders between Finns and Ingrian Finns. Eliisa, as an Ingrian Finn, negotiates her position in two different nations and cultures, as well as their respective national orders, when she crosses the border. As an Ingrian Finn, her legitimacy both in the Soviet and Finnish national order is under suspicion. On the Soviet side of the border, Eliisa is at home with her father, but as an Ingrian Finn with affective connections across the national border, she violates the established Soviet order. In Finland, although she wishes to become a member of the Finnish social order by marrying Mikko, as an Ingrian Finn, she also transgresses Finnish definitions of nationally determined categories of “us” and “them.”

In the next two scenes, Eliisa transgresses the symbolic borders of the Finnish national order when she enters a vicarage and meets the priest (0:45:35–0:48:42) and later on when she visits Mikko’s home and his mother (0:49:09–0:51:02). On a societal level, the vicarage and the priest as well as the home and the mother are the cornerstones of a fixed national order that also dictates the specific gender representations and social positions. The vicarage, and the religious order represented by it, is an organized, administrative, and masculine space. Certain objects, such as massive church registers, symbolize the established administrative and social order that the church had in the Finnish national order. Mikko’s home is presented as an orderly and clean, private, feminine space emblazoned by a large stone oven, cooking utensils, and a dinner set placed on the kitchen table (cf. Saarikangas 1993; Vänskä 2006, 144–49). This scene emphasizes the mother’s power and her skill in creating a home, which is the woman’s greatest duty to the national order in Finland. The trinity—home, church, and homeland—became an emblem of anti-Soviet and anti-communist values in the 1930s in Finland (Silvennoinen 2015).

In the contexts of the church, home, and Mikko’s homeland, Eliisa appears as an “alien.” Her efforts to become part of the Finnish national order are intrusive because, coming from the other side of the “cursed border,” she with her “otherness” transgresses the symbolic borders of the nationally ordered spaces and sociocultural expectations that these places signify (Cresswell 1996). The insidious rejection of, even passive-aggressive attitude toward, the significance of Eliisa’s unintended transgression is shown when the priest disapproves of Eliisa’s intention to marry Mikko. Eliisa does not have the proper documents required by Finnish law. Strict national laws, represented by the priest, immobilize any effort to deviate from the established national order. Therefore, Eliisa cannot access the Finnish national order. The church’s rejection arouses
Mikko’s defiance against his own national order. “We already dared to cross the border,” he says, “and we are not afraid of breaking the law if the law robs what belongs to us” (0:48:10–0:48:15).² Mikko also states that they do not need the church’s acceptance for their marriage (0:48:28–0:48:35). His readiness to break the national order and, subsequently, the religious order makes him the partial “other” in the Finnish context.

Eliisa’s hopes of accessing the Finnish cultural and national order are defeated again when she and Mikko arrive at his home to meet Mikko’s mother and announce their engagement. The mother’s confused and worried expression and her cold silence clearly express her resentment and fear of Eliisa who inadvertently interferes in the mother’s own designs for Mikko’s future marriage. The emphasis on this scene is on a reciprocal but uneven level of apprehension on the part of Mikko’s mother and with Eliisa’s self-conscious recognition of it. Because of the mother’s rejection, Eliisa feels doubly unfit for the Finnish national order. Consequently, she wishes to return to the Soviet side of the border. “I should not have left. I am from the other side of the border. I am not eligible here. Not for the priest, not for your mother. I cannot stay. I just make your mother sad” (0:59:39–0:59:55). Eliisa is not just the geographically dislocated “other” from the Soviet side of the border but also an “alien” within the family space within the Finnish national order.

The last transgression occurs toward the end of the film (1:18:31–1:21:00) when Mikko crosses the border to the Soviet side with the intention of “rescuing” Eliisa and returning her permanently to Finland. Meanwhile, Eliisa’s father has committed suicide, cutting Eliisa’s affective family ties to her home. Only when Gregor—the Soviet border guard—helps them, can Eliisa and Mikko escape other Soviet border guards and cross the national border into Finland. The finality of the last border crossing makes Eliisa part of Finland’s national order, and this is implied by showing her and Mikko leaning against a large pine tree on the Finnish side of the border, a symbol of the homeland (cf. Malkki 1992, 31). After the final border crossing, the film shows the border as an uncompromising and unyielding power structure that forbids any further questioning of the national order and one’s national or cultural identity.

In the framework of the prevailing wartime Finnish national order, Eliisa’s transgressive border crossings make her a hero. She has testified of her loyalty to Finland by defying the Soviet national order. Secondly, she can be considered a hero because she fulfills the requirements of ideal womanhood and gender roles assigned to women in the 1940s (Saarikangas 1993). Her obedience and passivity comply with the prevailing patriarchal order as she becomes a wife, obedient daughter-in-law, and, presumably, a mother for future Finns. The film epitomizes Eliisa as a Maiden of Finland—a well-known metaphor of the Finnish nation. Eliisa and the Maiden of Finland are parallel heroines for they both were saved

² All translations from Finnish into English of the dialogue in the film are by Tuulikki Kurki and Saija Kaskinen.
by Finnish heroes: Eliisa by Mikko and the Maiden of Finland by Finnish soldiers. Their parallelism strengthens the grand narrative of Finland as a unified nation. In the end, national unity is fortified in the Soviet Union and in Finland. The national borders are sealed, the potential, transgressive “others” are either killed or returned and assimilated into the correct national order.

However, the film shows how human resiliency acts as a counterargument against the rigidity of the national order. In addition to Eliisa and Mikko’s border transgressions, Eliisa’s father and a Soviet border guard, Gregor, transgress the national order through symbolic mobility. In the 1930s, the Soviet national order with its increasingly harsh demands for clear-cut identities denies any ambiguity regarding national identity. Although Gregor and Eliisa’s father are Ingrian Finns whose homeland is located in the Soviet Union, they are lumped together with Finnish people across the border. Their politically “wrong” ethnicity transgresses the Soviet national order and, consequently, raises suspicion of their loyalties toward the Soviet Union (Statiev 2013, 4; Chandler 1998, 5–6). In the end, the father refuses to choose between the Finnish and the Soviet national orders, because choosing would destroy not only his own identity, but also betray his loyalty toward his Ingrian homeland. Consequently, he kills himself (0:20:29–0:21:06). Gregor also regards his national identity with ambivalence. He tries to define himself simultaneously as a Finn and as a Soviet. Because of his sense of solidarity with Finland, Gregor helps Eliisa and Mikko escape and, in principle, betrays his own country. He becomes a traitor who cannot survive in the framework of the Soviet national order.

The faith of Eliisa’s father and Gregor shows the rigid nature of the national order. Each national order creates its own system that has the ultimate power to define the correct and suitable identities. Yet, because this national order is unable to recognize cross-border affections and mobile identities typical at various national and cultural borderlands, it invites transgressions (Statiev 2013, 2–4). In contemporary times, transgressing the national border can be seen as illegal mobility. In today’s Finland, however, these same transgressions could be interpreted as “embodiments of remembrance” (Raivo 2000, 154) that remind post-war generations about the difficult times of the late 1930s and the 1940s.

**Artistic Mobility Experience and Transgression in the Context of Mobile Order**

Anna Puhakka and Rosa Liksom are associated with a larger global trend—border art—that has become popular, especially in relationship to the U.S.–Mexico border. Through their art, border artists problematize the themes of mobility and immobility, borderland identities and cultures, border crossings, and the use of power (see Voon 2016; Falke, 2012–18, 2015). These themes are central to the works of Liksom and Puhakka as well.
In the context of mobile order, Anna Puhakka is a contemporary Finnish visual artist with diverse international exposure and experience. Her photograph triptych *Birth Words* has been chosen for the analysis because it reflects her process of searching for her roots in the Finnish-Russian national borderlands, and she expresses her identity development through visual narratives. Puhakka’s artwork highlights the dialectic relationship between mobility and mooring in the formation of identities by evolving between her desires to continue a mobile way of life but at the same time to connect to a place.

Liksom, with her mobile life, is a versatile artist, who has won the acclaimed Finlandia Prize for Literature. Therefore, she can be regarded as an acknowledged commentator on Finnish culture and society. Liksom’s *Burka Project* has been chosen for analysis, because it problematizes the culturally “normalized” ideas of the “familiar” and “alien” by introducing a mysterious element, the burka, in an unexpected milieu (Liksom 2014, 10).

Anna Puhakka’s installation, *From Karelia Now and Before*, is connected to her identity-formation process, ignited by a mobile way of life. She has lived and worked all over the world, including in Finland, the United States, Australia, France, and England (Anna Puhakka’s website). With her mobility-related feelings of “not being enough Finnish” and her sense of “belonging to nowhere” (Interview July 31, 2012), Puhakka has searched for her origins and reformulated her identity in the Karelian borderlands on both sides of the Finnish-Russian national border—where her family comes from.

The installation, *From Karelia Now and Before*, was exhibited in 2012 in a local prayer-house close to Puhakka’s family place in Finnish North Karelia (www.annapuhakka.com/project/1/birth-words; exhibition by Anna Puhakka). In the installation space, the main wall held three images—*The Hag’s Change*, *Duality*, and *Iron Blood*—that formed a triptych titled *The Birth Words*. The room also displayed large basins with dirt and replanted trees, which originally came from her family place. In the background, several speakers played chants and the sounds of nature while a non-stop video installation of the artist’s performance also played. The three photographs of the triptych portray the artist herself and her ever-evolving narrative of finding her birth words, which contain the knowledge of her identity (Interview July 31, 2012). When interpreting the triptych, the viewer faces the photos that represent a sequence of scenes that are not explicitly causally related (Verstraten 2009, 155; Bal 1991, 166–67). However, viewers are able to fill in the gaps of missing information if they are familiar with similar story patterns from other artworks (Verstraten 2009, 155). In the case of the triptych, the missing information can be found from two different types of narratives that are connected with religious and local folklore traditions.

In the context of the exhibiting room—a prayer-house—the triptych refers to religious art that is recognizable in the context of religious
narrative forms, for example, in traditional altarpiece-style presentations in a Protestant church. The composition of the triptych guides the viewer to read the images as one narrative where the center image bears the greatest importance in the same way as in the traditional church display. The triptych narrates Puhakka’s view of identity process as a never-ending cycle of suffering, death, and rebirth, which could parallel religious narratives of Christ. When studied individually, the photographs resemble visually the composition of religious iconography, because the photographs show only the artist’s torso painted in a few colors against a black background. Thus, the photos resemble some color schemes of religious icons. Through religious references, the triptych and its narrative gain meanings of universality and spirituality.

The first image, The Hag’s Change, placed in the center of the triptych, shows the Hag (the artist) facing the camera. She is performing a lament (itkuvirsi), gazing upward outside the image, and looking for her birth words. She is wearing black animal fur around her chest and a painted blue collar (symbolizing metal) around her neck, which seems to suffocate her. When interpreted in the context of a religious triptych, the image refers to the death of her old identity. In the context of the local folk tradition, the image refers to two different traditions. First, the image of the Hag refers to lamenting, which traditionally expresses extreme emotions of separation and death (Tenhunen 2006). The Hag’s face, twisted in pain and with tears running down her cheeks, resembles the traditional performance of lamenting. Second, and more importantly, the Hag searching for her birth words refers to the shamanic tradition of accessing the secret knowledge, the birth words, that can be used in controlling the creation of the human world (Siikala 1994, 81). Following this idea, by chanting, the Hag tries to find the words of her own origin to control and reformulate her identity.

The second stage illustrating the Hag’s search for her identity is shown in the image Duality. This image pictures the Hag as two torsos positioned side-by-side, painted in black and red, and positioned against the black background. The image depicts two different sides of the Hag’s personality. With closed eyes, the one figure is looking slightly upward and the other slightly downward. The image suggests movement in the space, where the Hag’s body is swaying forward and backward, falling into a state that resembles a shamanic trance that provides access to the knowledge of her origin (Siikala 1994, 206–13).

The third image, Iron Blood, represents the moment when the Hag seizes the birth words of her origin. Visually, this moment is crystallized by the Hag’s metamorphosis into a bear, which has a strong symbolic power in the Finnish folk tradition. The bear is regarded as a mythological animal, the worshipped and feared king of the forest with great supernatural powers (Haavio 1968). In addition, the bear belongs to a group of mythical animals who help the shaman in various rituals (Siikala 1994, 198–99). The Hag’s metamorphosis into a bear fulfills her task in
finding her origin. As the bear, the Hag wears black animal fur around her head. Her face is painted with stripes of red and black. The Hag as a bear looks confident and intensively present when gazing directly at the camera.

Mobile people worldwide share the feelings of homelessness and in-betweenness as well as ambiguous identities. Yet, mooring—the need to belong to a particular place and to local traditions—is also universal. These dialectical elements constitute a mobility experience and are an integral part of the so-called artistic hyperspace. A hyperspace is a de-territorialized space, where new cultural traits can be shared and identities can be formed (Thompson 2013, 169). The hyperspace is not a territorially bounded unit but can be shared virtually through the Internet (169) or, as in this article, through works of art. In this article, the artistic hyperspace is a space where universal elements of the mobility experience can be expressed or voiced and shared. Therefore, the hyperspace can also serve as a basis for new mobile cultural traits and identities.

In the installation space, various elements—texts, images, recorded sounds, soil, and trees—are brought together to represent the artist’s identity narrative created by her mobility experience. The installation space transgresses the fixed chronological timeline by moving between different eras of time, such as ancient pre-Christian time, official Christianity, and the present; the space transgresses immaterial and material elements of folk and religious traditions, and the physical environment by molding all the elements into an amalgamation. The installation space is shaped by the artist’s mobility experiences, her wish to belong, and her need to connect with earth and soil without which the person cannot exist (Interview July 31, 2012). Simultaneously, when creating an amalgamation of distinct, immaterial belief traditions and material elements, the artist connects universally with other border artists who share the same individualistic and intimate need to belong to and connect with a home place, borderland area, and its soil (Falke 2012–18). As a result, the exhibition room constructs an artistic space that can be defined as a de-territorialized, multivoiced hyperspace that creates a dialectical relationship between mobility and mooring.

This hyperspace functions as the basis for the artist’s mobile identity narrative that is not restricted to one single national narrative nor connected to just one single historically existing place. Unlike the national order, the mobile order allows the formation of a hyperspace that refers to universal experiences of mobility, such as experiences of not being at home, being incomplete, or belonging nowhere. The viewer can also share the mobility narrative as presented in Puhakka’s artwork. By recognizing the sameness of mobility experiences, a person is able to share the mobility narrative and gain access to the hyperspace. Consequently, in the hyperspace, viewers may go through a similar identity formation process as suggested in the triptych. The triptych invites viewers to question their own identities, look for the “birth words” of origin, and reformulate their
relationship to place (Interview July 31, 2012). These kinds of mobility experiences in hyperspace can empower and help articulate new mobile identities (cf. Aldama, Sandoval, and Garcia 2012).

Transgression in Puhakka’s triptych installation refers to the traditional cultural gender representations of the wartime Finnish national order that the film Yli rajan highlighted. The transgression can be recognized because Puhakka’s artwork appropriates the traditional and nationally oriented representations of women that stress passivity, obedience, and a strong bond with home (Vänskä 2006, 141–53). For example, the Hag transgresses these conventional representations by stepping outside her traditional social function as a lamenting woman, who, using the female powerful agency, becomes a shaman. The Hag appears as an active and autonomous actor who defines her own identity by claiming her birth words. Thus, the Hag’s search for her identity, which requires her to seize her own agency, functions as a counter-narrative to the traditional, conventional, and fixed gender narratives. Furthermore, in the Finnish folk tradition, possessing the knowledge of origin of things was attributed to the male shaman. Thus, by challenging the sole agency of men, she questions one of the profound cultural expectations embedded in the Finnish national order.

In its ability to create a critical gaze toward the viewer’s own culture, Puhakka’s triptych is comparable with Rosa Liksom’s Burka Project. The Burka Project includes thirty-two photographs of burkas, each photograph taken in the context of a Finnish landscape, including suburban landscapes and Finnish national monuments, such as the statues of Jean Sibelius and Alexander II. In addition, the project includes three online films: Finlandia: National Landscape (00:42:00), Finlandia: Suburban Landscape (00:32:00), and Finlandia: Historical Monuments (00:11:30) (Rosa Liksom’s website). This article focuses on the film Finlandia: National Landscape.

The idea of the Finnish national landscape evolved throughout the early nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the relationship between the Finns and nature was thought to express something unique about Finnishness (Meaningful National Landscapes, http://www.nationalparks.fi/destinations/historyandculture/nationallandscapes). Representations of the national landscape were produced by visual artists and photographers of the golden era of the Finnish Romanticism, such as Albert Edelfelt, Eero Järnefelt, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, Pekka Halonen, and I. K. Inha. The elements that portray the “essential Finnishness” in these paintings and photographs received inspiration from Karelia on both sides of the Finnish-Russian national border, the region that was made a symbolic place of origin for Finnish national culture. Paintings and photographs were created in a romantic fashion, drawing upon myths, folk tales, and the legends of Karelia, but at the same time, these works of art portrayed scenes of daily life with people doing their daily chores and living a simple, industrious life (e.g., I. K. Inha’s photographs; Akseli
Gallen-Kallela’s *Shepherd Boy from Paanajärvi*, 1892, and *Old Woman with a Cat*, 1897). The majestic natural landscapes with their rugged scenes of dense pine and birch forests, lakes and rivers, sometimes covered by snow, imply the untamed power of nature. Together with everyday life, themes and visual motifs of isolated and rough surroundings create an image or an idea of strong, unyielding, mythical people in the midst of wilderness. These images were repeated in other arts, such as in literature (Hatavara 2002) and music (Korhonen 2007, 33–39), and they formed the basis for the national narratives of Finnish culture and identity, and shared, national memory.

The idea of national landscape was revived again in 1992. When Finland celebrated its seventy-fifth birthday, Finland’s Ministry of the Environment paid tribute to the nation by naming twenty-seven national landscapes, many of which had already been immortalized in artwork from the golden era of Finnish Romanticism. These landscapes were declared culturally highly significant, and efforts were taken to preserve them unchanged (Finland’s environmental administration). Landscapes are still a significant part of Finnish national consciousness and identity.

The *Burka Project* makes the narrative of nationalizing one’s landscape visible and engages a viewer in a discussion of a culturally preconditioned gaze that always determines a power relationship between the viewer position and the object of the gaze (Macey 2001, 154; Vänskä 2006, 15; Lähdesmäki 2009, 6). The purpose of the *Burka Project* is to question the commonly held cultural expectations and the validity of nationally oriented categories of “us” and “them” (Liksom 2014; Seppä 2014). Furthermore, the *Burka Project* invites the viewer to recognize the rigidity of a national order that functions through exclusion and inclusion. Liksom questions these binary oppositions by presenting a distinctive, foreign cultural and religious symbol—the burka—in unexpected contexts, in Finnish national landscapes.

When set against this background of Finnish national landscapes, and thus as part of the contemporary Finnish national order, burkas may seem out of place, even transgressive, or at least belonging to the category of foreign or “them.” Unlike Elisa in *Yli rajan*, who is trying to make herself invisible when confronted by the dominating cultural and national powers, the burka-clad women are powerfully present and courageously visible in the Finnish landscape. This audacious presence is set against general expectations because the burka carries strong connotations of the political and cultural invisibility of women. In the film, burka-clad women occupy the whole space of the screen, moving slowly and quietly through the landscape. The viewer’s nationally oriented, predetermined expectations of the Finnish landscape are confused by these unexpected apparitions. They could not possibly be associated with the romantic image of Finland as a nation or Finns as people represented in national landscapes. The burka-clad women’s “otherness” is further problematized when the parallels between them and the Finnish national symbols
start emerging. The deep-blue color of the burkas against the dazzling white of snow evokes the vivid image of the Finnish flag. Furthermore, their fearless assertiveness and purposeful directness in their movements in the midst of Finnish nature creates a sense of familiarity that parallels the traditionally assumed close relationship between Finns and nature. However, even though these parallels between Finnish national symbols and burka women are recognizable, this familiarity taunts the viewer’s ability to interpret the connotations suggested in visual elements about the Finnish national order.

Like Anna Puhakka, Liksom succeeds in creating an artistic hyperspace where burkas are subject to new interpretations and meanings. In the hyperspace, the conventional or even stereotypical Western way of thinking of burkas is challenged. The viewer becomes aware of the limits of one’s own cultural categorizations of “us” and “them,” guided by the dominating national order. The hyperspace formed by the Finnish landscape with burka-clad women does not appear as an area of collision of two distinctive cultures, nor as a marginal area within the dominating culture. These hyperspaces, suggested in Liksam’s Burka Project, can be articulated as independent culture spaces of their own that could co-exist with the main hegemonic culture (Aldama, Sandoval, and Garcia 2012, 1–27; Vila 2013). The hyperspace can form the basis for new, imagined mobile identities that transcend nationally constructed cultural norms. The Burka Project is not only an antithesis to a patriarchal gender project, but also to a rigid, unyielding national order. The Burka Project prompts the idea that traditionally immobilized identities can break free from the bondage of ideological and religious systems of power and move into a hyperspace where they can suggest an emancipatory potential beyond the rigid and discriminating politics of national exclusiveness.

Conclusions

In this article, the purpose was to examine individual as well as collective narratives of mobility experiences in the Finnish context. By utilizing post-classical narratology, the anthropology of experience, and the affective turn, we have examined the artistic representations of the mobility experience, transgression created by mobility, and the significance of the transgression in the contexts formed by the national order in the 1940s and the mobile order in the 2000s. In the studied artwork, these transgressions questioned and criticized the cultural expectations created by the dominating national order and its established norms, values, and fixed stereotypical ideas.

The film Yli rajan showed how material mechanisms of national order—the national border—and immaterial mechanisms of national order—territorially defined and nationally based, polarized cultural categories—create limited, fixed ideals of homeland and its rightful citizens. Consequently, this led not only to exclusion but also to the political persecution of those people who did not abide with the new emerging national
order. The national order in *Yli rajan* allowed no space for ambiguous national identities to emerge. The affinities across national borders and the feelings of homelessness and “otherness” within the dominating culture could not form the basis of an identity for the border-crossing individuals. The dominating interpretive frame of the national order silenced and neglected individual needs for articulating affinities and identities outside the frame of the national order, the nation, and its ideology. Instead, the national order demanded clear-cut, territorially bound definitions of identities. Therefore, the overall narrative of the film enforces the idea of potentially ambiguous individuals returning to the national order. In this way, the film tries to enhance the idea of a nationally defined idea of “us” during a time when the existence of Finland as a nation had come under threat.

When the context of interpreting mobility experiences changes from the rigid national order to the mobile order, it is possible to recognize the ambivalent, contradictory, and unfinished identities that the mobile experience may create. As the artwork of Anna Puhakka shows, these mobile identities can be articulated, and they can exist in the artistic hyperspaces where experiences of ambiguity, ambivalence, and in-betweenness become the normalized basis for the identities. Consequently, the mobile identities strongly contrast with identities based on shared ideas of language, culture, history, and territory (Hall 1999, 16). The artistic hyperspace, which is a de-territorial, unmappable space (Smith 2000, 56), also invites viewers to dialogue with the artwork. Participating in the dialogue enables re-telling, re-living, and re-creating the mobility experience and recognizing the reality of hyperspace where one’s mobile identity is ever-evolving.

In Rosa Liksom’s *Burka Project*, transgression occurs when an unexpected, highly intrusive, foreign element enters the well-defined and recognized milieu of the Finnish national landscape. The burkas function as a critical lens through which the traditional and dominating cultural ideas of the national landscape and the nation’s idealized citizens can be studied. The *Burka Project* also continues the idea of creating an artistic hyperspace. Hyperspace in the *Burka Project* introduces the co-presence of seemingly contradictory national narratives. It “remolds” the national landscapes into a hyperspace that, in this case, can be described as “new, textual, subjective and political spaces” (Smith 2000, 1). Furthermore, in hyperspace, mobile entities, in this case burka-clad women, suggest that they would appear as normalized elements of the prevailing order. However, the mobile order, which enables the articulation of hyperspace, is not the new dominating order of things, but rather, serves as an alternative order of things to the national order.

Mobility experience, such as ambiguity, displacement, liminality, is a shared experience in hyperspace. The hyperspace, thus, forms a new type of imagined, de-territorial community (Anderson 2003), where visual and oral narratives of the mobility experiences can co-exist and be shared.
These narratives can also serve as the basis for new traditions, culture forms, and identities that do not connect to just one place, nation, or territorially defined culture (Thompson 2013, 168). These identities are one conceptual step further from transnational identities that are defined in relation to two or more nations (169). These new identities can also be seen as newly acknowledged identities in the hyperspace. Hence, the genres of art representing mobility experiences can give voice to mobility experiences and articulate the mobile identity of thousands of people worldwide.

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Intersections of Mobility and Belonging: Blogging Subjectivities of Finns on the Move

Tuija Saresma
University of Jyväskylä

Abstract
As components of the contemporary experience, mobility and displacement (Appadurai 1990; Said 2002) are accompanied by our need to belong: while global mobility is encouraged by and expected from the educated ex-pats and temporary workers, the “flows” of migrants cause “debates, challenges, and crises” in the European nation-states (Skey 2014). Yet, in the novel interest in digital mobilities, the analysis of personal experiences has been left aside. In this article, the focus is on affective accounts of mobility and belonging. The autobiographical narratives published in the blogosphere are analyzed to shed light on the processes of multi-sited place attachments. The analysis of intersecting mobilities rests on the divergent experiences based on, for example, geographical, gendered, ethnic, age-related, class, or economic differences of the bloggers, mainly Finnish exchange students, travelers, and (spouses of) ex-pats. Analyzing individual digital narratives brings forth the varying experiences and processes of belonging and emphasizes the spatially, temporally, and experientially multidimensional character of mobility and belonging and the localities and situatedness of mobile actors. This analysis of mobility blogs emphasizes the increasing role of the Internet in producing translocal belonging and the centrality of places in self-understanding and meaning-making.

Keywords: affects, autobiographical narratives, belonging, blogs, gender

Introduction
Mobility and displacement are said to be the key constituents of late-modern experience (Appadurai 1990), so much so that in research, a “mobility turn” has been identified (Cresswell 2010, 551). To Urry (2007, 2010),

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who emphasizes the diversity of mobilities and their complex interdepen-
dencies (2010, 348), the “social” is essentially “mobile” in contemporary
culture. There is now a need to acknowledge the new forms of mobility
tied to technological advancements that enable diverse forms of agencies
online.

Global mobility is expected from both educated and highly skilled
expatriates (Koikkalainen 2014, 156) and low-paid temporary workers
(Anthias 2012; Passerini et al. 2010). Recent events in the Middle East
and Africa have significantly affected our understanding of mobility
(Rolshoven and Schlör 2016). Migration from the Global South, labeled
the “refugee crisis,” has challenged European societies, including Finland.
The heated political debates and the media encourage hostility by using
the rhetoric of catastrophe in describing the “floods” or “swarms” of
migrants entering Europe (Devereux, Haynes, and Power 2016).

Acknowledging the different kinds of mobilities in different historical
times (Rolshoven and Schlör 2016, 11), the focus of this article is on con-
temporary migration and the “debates, challenges, and crises” allegedly
inflicted upon the European nation-states (Skey 2014). Immigration
stokes emotional anxiety and extreme political activity and is leading to
the success of right-wing populist parties throughout the continent, with
their demands to “close the borders” to protect Europeans (Saresma 2019,
forthcoming). In this situation, the fact that Europeans themselves have
always emigrated, and that the flow of migrants away from Finland, espe-
cially to the Americas and to Sweden, has only recently receded enough to
make Finland now a net receiver of migrants (Martikainen, Saukkonen,
and Säävalä 2013; Habti and Koikkalainen 2014, 3–4), seems to have
been lost, giving way to hostile and aggressive anti-immigration rhetoric
(Lähdesmäki and Saresma 2014).

In the sociological study of mobilities (see, e. g., Urry 2010) and the
more recent interest in digital mobilities, which refers to the ways infor-
mation and communication technologies and social-media applications
affect the formation of social relations and interactions, interdependent
with corporeal mobilities to communication (Taipale 2014; Castells et al.
2006), the analysis of personal experiences of mobility and migration has
been largely ignored.

In this article, the focus is on how mobility and belonging are described
and constructed in and through autobiographical writing published on the
Internet. The aim is to reach the “universal but always particularly con-
structed” experiences of moving (Cresswell 2010, 550) through blogs writ-
ten by Finnish migrants. These fragmentary autobiographical narratives are
analyzed to shed light on the processes of corporeal and digital mobilities,
as well as negotiations of belonging and how they are expressed.

Elsewhere,2 I emphasize the need for the analysis of intersecting
mobilities, which refers to the diversity of migrants’ experiences. Urry
(2010, 348) emphasizes the workings of power in positioning migrants

2 The project website www.intersectingmobilities.org will be updated constantly.
Hierarchically on the basis of their gender, country of origin, skin color, or religion, and he argues that the “geographical intersections of region, city, and place” need to be analyzed “with the social categories of class, gender, and ethnicity.” For Lykke (2010, 9), gender intersects with “power differentials based on class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, geopolitical positioning, age, dis/ability, and so on.” In the blogs studied in this article, the identity markers are notably homogenous: all the blogs are written by supposedly white, mostly young, and educated Finns. However, I wish to show that even in such a homogenous group, the experiences of mobility and belonging vary.

My aim is to identify and explore the new forms of mobility by focusing on the blogs of mobile people. Blogs, as autobiographical narratives, are read here as cultural texts that represent and produce the subjectivities of the writers in interaction with the contemporary social atmosphere. Analyzing these texts sheds light on the processes of corporeal and digital mobilities. The objective is to emphasize the spatially, temporally, and qualitatively varying experiences of mobile actors and to explore the processes of belonging.

The main research questions are the following: How are mobility and belonging articulated in the blogs? Do the experiences of mobility vary in this relatively narrow set of texts? Does contemporary digitalized culture, which offers new forums of agency on the Internet, allow for the creation of new experiences of mobility and new ways of belonging? And finally, based on reading a selection of blogs written before and another set written after the watershed of the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, has the “crisis” affected the contents of the blogs?

In what follows, I present an analysis of blogs written by mobile people based in Finland. First, the key concepts and theoretical background of the analysis are explained. Then, by interpreting the blog texts and the meaning-making processes that are deployed in relation to mobility and belonging, six subjectivities constructed by writers in and through their writing are formulated. After introducing the various subjectivities and discussing the manifestations of the intersecting categories of power that are deployed in the process of writing, I address the possible effects of the so-called refugee crisis on the construction of mobile subjectivities based in Finland. Finally, I place this analysis in the broader context of contemporary mobility to see whether and how the performatives of mobility and belonging have changed in the digital age.

**Concepts, Methods, and Materials**

As defined by Devereux, Haynes, and Power (2016), migration in a globalized world means “the process of moving across symbolical or political borders” (xv). It is a material and symbolic action of dislocation and relocation that requires the constant performing and narrating of belonging. Lähdesmäki et al. (2016) noted in their meta-analysis of the uses of the concept belonging in recent scholarly articles that while mobility indeed
enables and demands manifold belongings, it may also arouse feelings of non-belonging and experiences of exclusion and hostility.

Exploring the concept of mobility entails analyzing various forms of migration without separating or categorizing hierarchically the various subject positions of mobile people, as do the concepts of migrant, emigrant, immigrant, refugee, expat, or “external citizen” (about the migrant hierarchy in Finland, see Koskela 2014, 21). Mobility refers to a free and self-initiated move, whereas migration in certain research paradigms is understood as a forced movement from one country to another. Migration is also perceived as longer in duration than mobility, which can include shorter or longer stays abroad (Habti and Koikkalainen 2014, 7). Cresswell (2010, 552) advocates an approach to mobilities that considers all forms of mobility and not only particular forms of moving like migration research. In this orientation, the concept of mobility is “as much about meaning as it is about mappable and calculable movement,” which makes mobility “an ethical and political issue” (552). The term migration has acquired a pejorative connotation in Europe since the 2015 refugee “crisis.”

Belonging is simultaneously an affective experience, a material connection, and a shifting process that must be constantly negotiated (Lähdesmäki et al. 2016; Probyn 1996). The intensity of the feeling of belonging may vary, but the need to belong simultaneously to several places is not exceptional. Belonging is multi-sited and relational: individuals simultaneously belong “here,” to their beloved spaces and relationships, and “there,” to the places of their memories or the places from which they have been dislocated. One way in which the negotiation between feelings of belonging and non-belonging, so characteristic of mobile people, can take place is through autobiographical writing.

Sharing one’s life experiences and thoughts through autobiographical writing has always been a fundamentally social act, but in the context of social media the sociality is emphasized. Blogging is a social process in which individuals and groups construct shared meanings through contents, communities, and Internet technologies. The blogosphere as a scene of representations of digital mobility is a tempting arena for both bloggers and readers because blogs can be published and accessed from anywhere. Blogs are a forum where one can answer the need to reflect and process one’s personal experiences and share them with others.

Blogs are an influential site of contemporary agency in the online public space. Blogs, as Wallsten (2007) claims, are one of the most important applications of social media: they influence media coverage of politics, and bloggers are influential agenda setters (Larsson and Hrastinski 2011; Saresma 2017). Blogs as sites of agency are typical of civic society, providing tools for communication and networking in digital environments with fewer gatekeepers than in traditional forms of civic activity (Sunstein 2001). This sense of freedom and anonymity has encouraged a growing amount of hate speech, and several reactionary ideologies, such as anti-feminism, racism, and xenophobia, thrive on Internet discussion forums and blogs;
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immigration is also the object of hostile comments (Saresma 2018). This article, however, focuses on the more positive sides of the blogosphere, namely, the sense of belonging that blogging makes possible and the potentially new forms of subjectivity formed in and through blogging.

Personal blogs as spaces for identity work are mostly single-authored and typically personal in tone (Blood 2002, xii). As a type of autobiographical life-writing, they can be situated in the larger historical continuum of life-writing that is published in the semi-public arena of the blogosphere (Pole 2010). They are inherently social and present a relational mode of subjectivity construction (Jäntti et al. 2018), emphasizing the social existence of humans as profoundly relational, as being-with-others.

Subjectivity as a philosophical term refers to the quality of being a subject. In considering the constitution of contemporary subjectivity, feminist philosopher Braidotti (1994) emphasized the concept of difference and more specifically of gender, ethnic, and cultural difference as the basis of subjectivity in the globalized and technologically mediated world. In her nomadic ethics (2006), difference and diversity are the prerequisites for an ethical approach. Following Braidotti, I take subjectivity as an inherently social mode. Unlike her, my interest lies not so much in embodied subjectivity but in the textual subjectivities formed in blogs. For me, subjectivity is a textual position the writers occupy in the blogs. In negotiating their mobile agency in blogs, writers construct a textual environment where they can deal with the pressing questions of mobility and belonging. Subjectivity is a process of self-reflection and simultaneously a relational mode of being, a way to claim agency in the eyes of readers.

Blogs are a means of constructing certain kinds of subjectivity. An analysis of the mobility blogs emphasizes the increasing role of the Internet in producing transnational belonging. Besides being a textual construction of agency, subjectivity is also an analytic category: reading the blogs that comprise my material, I distinguish and identify six different subjectivities, which cover all the blogs I have analyzed. These categories are in no way exhaustive.

In addition to the notion of subjectivity in my analysis of mobility and belonging, I apply intersectionality as a theoretical and a methodological concept on which to build my analysis. The concept was introduced by Crenshaw (1989). Drawing from Black feminist thought, she refers to the multiple subordination of poor black women, also pointing out that questions of ethnicity and race were not sufficiently discussed by white feminists. In European feminist research, inspired by postcolonial thought, similar criticism has been directed toward the blindness of hegemonic white/Nordic feminism to race and ethnicity. Accompanying this heated discussion, there is an increasing dedication to intersectionality as not only a category or a metaphor, but also a theory or a methodology (Carbin and Edenheim 2013). In this tradition, it is not only groups of oppressed and marginalized people who are studied: since nobody is merely privileged or subordinated, unmarked categories of power and of
the normative and powerful groups also need to be analyzed (Choo and Marx Ferree 2010, 133).

Acknowledging the criticism that despite the number of identity markers, researchers subscribing to intersectionality are still only adding more categories (Carbin and Edenheim 2013, 239), my starting point is not a structurally oriented sociological categorization of power and subordination based on gender, race, and class, but a subtler take on differences in the experiences of mobile bloggers. This requires not only sensitivity to the different aspects of identity and social status, but also an analysis of negotiations of difference and sameness as they are deployed in the blogs, without presupposing that certain power differentials (e.g., whiteness, wealth, economic and educational status) are more important than others (e.g., being a “foreigner”).

Theoretically and methodologically, a multidisciplinary approach to mobility is not bound exclusively on any of the “separate fields of conventional exile studies, migration studies of all shades, diaspora studies, urban studies, and tourism studies” (Rolshoven and Schlör 2016, 11), even though all have inspired the idea of intersecting mobilities. Instead, in emphasizing biographies and “the complex lifeworld” of people on the move (11), this approach draws from cultural studies, gender studies, and autobiography studies; it highlights the productivity of autobiographical narration and the meaning-making processes in blogs, and also recognizes the relationship of personal stories to the social context, including the cultural moment and its political atmosphere. To me, blogs are both cultural spaces of interaction and visually, verbally, and graphically constructed artefacts (Driscoll and Gregg 2010). As a cultural studies scholar, I utilize textual analysis (Frey, Botan, and Kreps 1999): in interpreting the narratives and categorizing the variety of subjectivities constructed by bloggers, I pay attention to the societal change that has taken place in Europe and in Finland during the last two years, namely the “refugee crisis.” I contemplate the possible changes the suddenly increased number of immigrant refugees to Europe has had, if any, on the blogs of mobile people based in Finland.

In the emergent field of blog studies, most of the empirical articles that have been written so far have been quantitative (Larsson and Hrastinski 2011). Here, a qualitative approach is applied that makes it possible to analyze the meaning-making processes that are involved in blog writers’ construction of certain subjectivities. Classifying the subjectivities draws attention to differences between the various narratives and narrators. Utilizing intersectionality as an analytical tool means sensitivity to all kinds of differences, not only to the most obvious ones (gender, skin color, and economic position). It means focusing on the unmarked categories of power—whiteness, middle class status, and education—and highlighting the differences that can be found in even the relatively homogenous set of mobility blogs written by bloggers based in Finland.

The blogs analyzed here are fragmentary autobiographies that have not been published in the literary world or collected in any national archives.
but have been written by a random range of mobile people. The corpus selected for close reading comes from a list of Finnish blogs called Blogilista.fi (http://www.blogilista.fi), comprising more than 60,000 blogs. When collecting the first set of material in the spring of 2015, I came up with twenty-three blogs that explicitly dealt with migration. From this corpus, I selected the ones that had an autobiographical quality, had recently been updated, and were written either by an (im)migrant or from the viewpoint of someone close to one. My first set of materials was made up of nine blogs by Finnish migrants, most of them last updated during 2014 and 2015, with some blog entries dating from as far back as 2011 or 2012.

Suspecting that the so-called refugee crisis of the fall of 2015 might have changed people’s attitudes not just toward immigration but also toward migration on a larger scale, I then renewed my search. Taking the first thirty hits, I narrowed down the corpus by excluding advertisements, blogs that were only visible to invited readers, and clearly racist blog posts. I ended up with seven blogs, which was more or less the same as in the first set of material I had analyzed. In what follows, I present sixteen blogs that make up the material analyzed, categorizing them under six types of subjectivity. These cannot be considered fixed and absolute; instead, this approach demonstrates that the bloggers’ different experiences affect the subjectivities constructed. I will now proceed to introduce the blogs under the six subjectivities I identified.

Pre-“Immigration Crisis” Blogs:
Subjectivities of a Drifter, a Temporary Resident, and a Stranger
Reading the first set of blogs led me to identify three types of mobile subjectivity. The first is the drifter who travels around Europe or the globe. The blog Kohti ääretöntä ja sen yli (To infinity and beyond) and the blog Nana represent this type of subjectivity. Belonging is constructed not so much through an attachment to place as through a relationship to significant others or certain lifestyle choices. In Kohti ääretöntä, the young Finnish female blogger describes her life in the Netherlands with her Dutch boyfriend. She writes about her travels with him and her friends to nearby countries and about the dream she and her boyfriend share of setting up a hostel for surfers in Portugal. In this blog, belonging is mainly constructed through activities, traveling, and surfing.

The ecological and ethical life style in Nana’s blog is used to connect the young adventurer, formerly living in Germany and now in Argentina, to the world: she explicitly refuses to settle down or adjust to the demands of society. Instead, moving around, she remains faithful to her ecological ideology and philosophical soul-searching. Both bloggers are “allergic to possessions”3 and claim that they want to decrease the number of personal belongings they have.

3 The double quotes mark direct citations from the blogs, most of which were originally published predominantly in Finnish. The author has translated the citations from Finnish into English.
The second type of subjectivity is that of the temporary resident. The blogs *Talvi Prahassa* (The winter in Prague) and *Satu Aachenista* (Satu from Aachen) describe the construction of a sense of belonging and feeling at home in situations where the writers have temporarily moved to another country either to study or to live with a partner working abroad. Mobility is thus not a chosen way of life, as in the moving-around blogs, where a drifting subjectivity is attached mainly to significant others, but mobility is rather something determined from the outside, either because of studies or because of life choices made by the partner and followed by the blogger. In formulating this subjectivity, a relational mode of writing is deployed, characteristic of most autobiographical writing (Miller 2000). The partner in these blogs is the significant other, the one “through whom, to whom, or about whom the life narrative is narrated” (Smith and Watson 2001).

In the case of the subjectivity of a temporary resident, belonging in the new environment seems to be constructed by highlighting the importance of significant others, for instance, by discussing the adjustment of the family to the new neighborhood or by describing the daily routines of the family in the new country. These blogs emphasize the provisional nature of mobility, which is shown in the way the bloggers are bemused by the strange habits and practices found in foreign lands and in contrast with those at home. This, as I interpret it, allows one to keep a certain distance, highlighting the temporary nature of the migration. However, even the blogs that mainly describe temporary residences demonstrate, and explicitly discuss, how the need to write decreases as one adapts to the new country.

These blogs contain tourist-like photographs of sights, parks, and statues; descriptions of sightseeing, visits to museums and other tourist attractions; and the documentation of everyday study or work-related activity. Thus, the materiality of belonging as well as the subjectivity of a visitor are emphasized.

The third type of subjectivity is tired of non-belonging: the subjectivity that is in the process of becoming estranged from one’s home country—either because one lives abroad or sees one’s home country in a different light after marrying an immigrant. This estranged subjectivity is, unlike the previous types, about the wish to belong and about the difficulty of achieving the sense of belonging. This feeling of non-belonging is aptly described in the blog *Cartaverde/Visa Journeys*, which I will return to at the end of this article.

Blogs performing estranged subjectivity differ from the two previous types of subjectivity in their affective tone: whereas the previous ones are filled with mostly positive emotions, such as joy and excitement, interspersed with surprise and amazement, the blogs that deal with the dream of settling down include disappointment and even anger toward those who are getting in the way of the sense of belonging, be it immigration officials or anyone else with hostile or even racist opinions. For example,
in the blog *Mustavalkoisia tapauksia* (Black-and-white incidents), a white Finnish woman describes how, now that she observes life through the lens of her African-born black husband, she sees life differently in her own country. She narrates how her husband came to Finland almost five years ago, with his “guiding light to be able to work and create a life in a safe environment.” That, however, proved impossible because of the racist attitudes of many Finns.

The blogs analyzed within the first set of material are, despite the three different forms of subjectivity (moving around, temporary residence, and estranged subjectivity), surprisingly homogenous. From the perspective of the intersecting positions of power, all are written from the viewpoint of white, middle-class women: from unmarked, yet explicit categories of power, not from a position of subordination (Choo and Marx Ferree 2010). The writers possess a certain level of education or cultural and economic capital. This becomes evident in the resources that enabled them to travel and to live abroad, to have constant Internet access, and—especially—to have the ability to reflect on their choices and attitudes. They had moved abroad temporarily to “find themselves,” to study or work, or to follow their husbands. Some were married to immigrants, which had opened their eyes to white privilege. This is an issue the expatriates did not reflect upon at all.

All in all, the landscape of mobility described in the Finland-based transnational blogosphere is white. The subjectivities in this set of blogs are quite conventional—young girls seeking to discover themselves, students, housewives—although they are built on migration and mobility. Already a certain racism found in Finland is brought out. Nevertheless, predominant is a mindset that does not recognize its privilege, that takes it for granted that white Western migrants are welcome everywhere. Let us now look at the second set of blogs and try to find out whether this changed after the so-called refugee crisis, which has shaken the self-understanding of Europe as a tolerant, open society.

**Post-“Immigration Crisis” Blogs:**

**Sensitive, Reflective, and Aware Subjectivities**

The seven blogs that comprise the second set of material were all written sometime after the fall of 2015. Again, three types of subjectivity were identified in this more recent set of material. Every single one of the blogs could be positioned quite clearly at one end or the other of a continuum ranging from very matter-of-fact, educational blogging to affective, emotional blogging. To start with the more emotional ones, I will describe the *sensitive subjectivity* that is performed in two of the blogs, namely *Keijukammari* (Fairy chamber) and *IrtoNainen: Kohti uutta minua* (Lady adrift: Toward the new me).

The writer of the blog *Keijukammari* describes herself as a young woman, an artist and illustrator “obsessed by mythology,” who has emigrated from Finland to Wales. Her blog posts deal with topics ranging
from Finnish mythology to how sensitive people often wind up in creative professions to Disney animations. The blog is interesting in the way it constructs the subjectivity of an artist who lives in a fairy-tale world of mythology and magic and writes mostly on these topics, paying little attention to more mundane issues.

Immigration is a topic discussed explicitly by IrtoNainen, whose blog is full of nostalgia and yearning to be somewhere else. In her blogger profile, she even describes herself as “an individualistic person who longs.” Her post titled “Immigrants” tells the story of her parents, who emigrated to Canada as a young couple and returned two decades later but considered themselves to be “stuck between two countries and continents, not feeling well anywhere, missing something else for the rest of their lives.” Their strong feelings of homesickness and melancholy are conveyed via pictures of an old tumbledown cottage, soon to be demolished.

Both of the subjectivities constructed above can be classified as sensitive subjectivity, since they are both affective in tone, performing a sense of yearning or a nostalgic relationship either to a lost past or to a fictive world filled with imaginary creatures that have their origins in ancient mythologies or in fairy tales.

The second type of subjectivity, which I call reflective subjectivity, is typically performed in the blogs Outi’s life; Elämää Tanskassa (Life in Denmark); and Eau de Cologne. This subjectivity is simultaneously affective and analytical. Emotional in style, the feelings described in these blogs range from enthusiasm to despair. Despite the emotional turmoil depicted in the blogs, the tone is in essence matter-of-fact as the blogs aim to teach their readers something or to enlighten their readers.

In Elämää Tanskassa, the blogger describes her experiences as an emigrant: she migrated because she fell in love with a Danish man. She analyzes her feelings of separation from the loved ones she has left behind in Finland and what it actually feels like to live abroad. The blogger, who calls herself Daness (Tanskatar, a modification of the gender neutral Tanskalainen [a Dane], which emphasizes her femininity), illustrates vividly her fearless leap into the unknown. One exception to her fearlessness was her last night in Finland. Then, she says, realizing that she had practically no experience of living abroad, she started to panic: her language skills were poor, she had neither a job nor her own apartment, and her boyfriend was her sole safety net.

Her emotional turmoil stabilized as she settled down in the new country. She says that she now has a job, friends, and hobbies. Still, she sometimes gets very homesick and misses especially her friends, who seldom come to see her in Denmark. She does not regret moving abroad and, indeed, expresses her determination to stay, despite being frequently asked when she plans to return to her home country.

In an entry posted in September 2015, she reflects on her experiences as an immigrant against the backdrop of the media panic on immigration and the “flood” of asylum seekers from the Global South to Northern
Europe. She describes the questions she constantly gets about when she is going to leave, whether she has a job, and whether she pays taxes in Denmark. The rudest comment she reports hearing was to the effect that she was an imported wife, bought in Finland, and the most ignorant one was about Finland being a part of Russia. All this hostility makes her realize and think deeply about the heartless response that meets refugees fleeing from war.

In the blog *Eau de Cologne*, the writer, describing herself as a novice blogger and a novice emigrant, reflects on her writing skills and the level of publicity and privacy involved in sharing her experiences about moving to a foreign country in this way. She received negative feedback from some Finns in the blog’s comments section when she wrote about her feeling of belonging in Cologne, where she had then been staying for less than a year. She asks whether she should only pour out her homesickness and longing for Finland and not share the feeling of being at home in Germany. “Why shouldn’t I feel good about living in another country? When am I allowed to say that my home is in Germany?”

These existential contemplations on belonging seem to turn into feelings of exclusion and displacement, as invoked in an incident that she eloquently describes: when she puts some of her spare dishes on offer on a public Facebook group in a message written in a mixture of English and German, she instantly receives mean comments, including a demand that she learn proper German. She is also told that immigrants like her should just go home. As a result of this episode, she says, her image of “Cologne as a liberal, tolerant, and exuberant city suffered a severe blow.”

She describes being the target of hostile, racist comments, sharing the experience of many contemporary migrants and refugees in Europe. She finds this “outrageous” and “unbelievable.” But the xenophobic attacks also make her reflect on the experiences of “those who have to listen to this hatred on a daily basis and face-to-face.” She refers here to her own whiteness, which normally renders her invisible to racists and distinguishes her from those who are racialized on the basis of their skin color.

In the blog *Outi’s life*, the situation in the fall of 2015 has stimulated Outi, who, emphasizing her relationality, describes herself as “a mother of two and a wife to a wonderful husband,” to post an entry titled, “Let’s get the concepts clear—and my personal meditations.” In the post, she first explains the differences between the concepts of migrant, returnee, guest worker, asylum seeker, and refugee very informatively and then reveals that while writing this, she is crying and feeling utterly dismayed by people’s thoughtlessness and lack of empathy. She is distressed and feels anxious because of the racist hate speech directed at migrants and refugees. She writes,

Every day I’m scared.

What insults have been shouted at my husband and children?
Do I have to wash spit out of my family’s clothes?

Have they already encountered someone who has gone further than just spitting on them?

Living in Finland, she shares the experiences of Daness in Denmark and Eau de Cologne in Germany, asking: “What has happened to this nice country? How did racism become tolerated? Where has all the humanity disappeared to?”

I call the third type of subjectivity in this set of material aware subjectivity. The blogs under this title are reminiscent of the previous subjectivity in their certain, matter-of-fact tone, but they are the least affective or emotional in this set of texts. There were two blogs in this category, Sirkka Helenan blogi (Sirkka Helena’s blog) and Aiheita (Issues/Reasons, where the title Aiheita can refer to both issues and reasons in Finnish).

Sirkka Helena blogs about the question of family reunification which, as a result of the refugee crisis, became a fiercely debated issue in Finnish politics after the government tightened the requirements for asylum seekers who were hoping to join their families. Indeed, numerous deportations, or the removal or forced exile of family members, have been carried out by the present government. She relates current cases, noisily debated in the Finnish media, to her own experiences when she was the newly wedded wife of a Swiss man. When they married, she was told that the most important thing was for the married couple to share a nationality. She therefore took Swiss citizenship and claims that in so doing she lost her Finnish citizenship without even realizing it. Their children became “truly international,” and everything worked well—until the divorce. Then, the blogger wanted to leave Switzerland, but several countries refused her a residence permit. Eventually the Finnish president granted the blogger and her young daughter Finnish citizenship. She shares her story in order to teach the importance of citizenship to people who expect to be able to move freely around the world.

Aiheita is a blog that covers a vast range of topics, from Finnishness, travel, and culture to the Swedish-speaking minority of Finland (including the lively discussion on the compulsory study of Swedish in Finnish schools), immigration, religion, and the environment. Photographs and the personal details that are given indicate that the blogger Dominik is a middle-aged man who was born in Finland, is married and lives in Finland, and travels extensively. He blogs about his journeys, describing his destinations and adding texts and pictures to his observations, and, in doing so, effectively maps the globe. There is a certain educational and informative tone to his blog, but he sometimes expresses opinions that betray at least a hint of opposition to immigration.

Mostly, the xenophobia in Aiheita is carefully disguised under the educational and no-nonsense tone. This is exemplified in the blog post dated 6 December 2015, Finnish Independence Day. In the entry, Dominik,
writing in what I call the aware subjectivity, analyzes a question put by an Iraqi immigrant, Aso Aziz, who is married to a Finnish woman, has two children with her, and earns his living as a small entrepreneur, running his own pizzeria. Aziz asks in an interview published in that day’s newspaper, “What more do I need to do in order to become Finnish?” Dominik has a clear answer, which he prefaces with a long and detailed introduction to the history of the Finno-Ugric people and their differences from Sámi and Roma people, and even differences between people living in Eastern and Western Finland. The answer Dominik then gives is simple: Aziz can never become a Finn in the ethnic sense because of his genetic heritage, but he can become a member of the national state through marriage and reproduction.

Common to almost all of the blogs in this second set of material is that they comment on the refugee crisis either in terms of being shocked by its effects (as do Elämää Tanskassa, Eau de Cologne, and Outi’s life) or by joining the immigration-critical voices (as does Dominik).

New Digital Mobilities?
Above, I introduced six subjectivities—those of a drifter, a temporary resident, a stranger (the first set) and sensitive, reflective, and aware subjectivity (the second set)—that I constructed on my reading of sixteen blogs. The list is only one example of how to categorize the variety of subjectivities formed in the blogs. It does, however, illustrate that even in a relatively homogenous group of Finnish bloggers, there is diversity in the experiences of mobility. The blogs also show that current anti-immigration attitudes in Europe, including xenophobia and racism, are not limited to people with a certain ethnic background or skin color but are encountered by white Finns in Germany as well as black immigrants in Finland.

The blogs analyzed here consist of autobiographical fragments of the mobile lives of a narrow selection of Finns. They are filled with observations about living abroad or seeing the home country through the eyes of an immigrant. The texts express a variety of emotions: there are affective descriptions of joy, excitement, fear, and frustration. My reading of the material suggests to me that, with their affective and relational quality, these blogs function as blogs of mobility and belonging: they represent and reproduce both being on the move and affectively attaching to new places.

A relational mode is embedded in autobiographical writing and is present in both of the sets of material analyzed here. Belonging is expressed and created by the different subjectivities not only by talking about significant others or their lack as a result of mobility, but in a variety of other ways: some emphasize places and material objects, others foreground affective experiences. Following Jokinen’s (1996) idea about diaries as a holding environment—a term borrowed from Winnicott—for stay-at-home mothers who sometimes feel lonely, it could be argued that the blogs analyzed here serve as a holding environment for their writers and simultaneously as sites for constructing new, mobile subjectivities.
Juxtaposing the two sets of blogs, collected before and after the watershed formed by the 2015 “refugee crisis,” shows that, in the first set, subjectivities are more individualistic as they focus on the personal relationship of the authors with their spouses or their need to find themselves philosophically. The blogs in this first set contain a significant amount of existential contemplation, while the second set of blogs is more concerned with social and political realities. Society, with its structural racism and people’s attitudes, hatred and the like, becomes more visible and the formulated subjectivities turn from the bloggers’ inner life to social reality. In this sense, a new quality of awareness of the wrongs and inequalities is present in the later set of blogs: the pre-2015 innocence has given way to social consciousness and a need to comment on the new situation.

I suggest that in this new awareness there is potential for opening space to (self-)reflection, an ethical stance toward migration, and empathy. It is a relational position: mobility can and should be understood not only through one’s personal experiences but also through those of others, even if they differ. In the end, nowadays, in the face of the alleged “crisis” and the attitudes behind the media panic, being white or middle class does not save mobile people from encountering hostile attitudes toward foreigners.

Especially the second set of blogs is involved in this kind of politicized writing. However, the blogs demonstrate that Finns, even mobile ones, are perhaps only half-way through in their attempt to “re-think whiteness” and in “re-locating the nomadic European identity,” which is the ideal of Braidotti (2010); they are not yet the “new, alternative, trans-cultural subjectivities” that Braidotti calls for in this new phase of globalization (34). The bloggers show genuine disbelief when they become the targets of racist attacks. In such situations, they cannot help but ask—perhaps slowly becoming aware of the (white Western) privilege that they are now in danger of losing—“How can this be happening to me?”

Analyzing the variety of subjectivities formed in the blogs has some theoretical implications for research on corporeal and digital mobilities. I chose to analyze the publications of bloggers based in Finland because I wanted to explore the heated controversy over immigration here, characterized by strong emotions and the mobilization of aggressive anti-immigrant attitudes, from a different angle (Saresma 2019, forthcoming). Turning to the blogs by mobile people based in Finland enabled me to bring out the reverse side of the blogosphere and to carry out an act of “reparative reading,” instead of the “paranoid reading” (Sedgwick 2003) encouraged by the new media environment. Reparative reading refers to the choice open to the researcher between the agency and willingness to engage in dialogue of the former and the often negative, suspicious, and perhaps even aggressive approach of the latter.

The study has shown that in the blogosphere, an increasing variety of mobile subjectivities is emerging. Nevertheless, I must ask, what exactly is new about digitally constructed narratives of mobilities? Do they really
produce new forms of subjectivities? Or are they, rather, just another medium through which mobile people can channel their affective experiences of mobility and belonging?

**A Dream of Belonging**

An entry (posted on May 7, 2009) in the blog *Cartaverde* (later re-named *Visa Journeys*), which was mentioned earlier as exemplifying estranged subjectivity, captures the dynamics of mobility, belonging, and displacement:

Is normality too much to ask?

Being able to feel home and safe anywhere, or at least somewhere.

Being able to live every day with the person you love (—). Going somewhere with the company you like (—) instead of feeling trapped where you are now as you can’t go anywhere.

Closing the eyes in the evening when falling asleep, and then waking up rested in the morning with no nightmares. When I feel unrested I just want to go. And I no more know where to go next. Away.

As if I ever belonged anywhere.

According to my interpretation, in this, normality refers to feeling at home and living a harmonious life with a loved one. In opposition to this is a certain restlessness, anxiety, and the sense of being imprisoned. In the text, a sense of non-belonging is linked with aimless drifting from place to place, desperately longing for a place to attach oneself to.

This excerpt reminds me of the autobiography of the Jewish writer Janina Bauman, titled *A Dream of Belonging* (1991), which describes eloquently her experiences in searching for a place in the world after surviving the Second World War. What seemed to me to be a universal need to belong made me think about the homogeneity of the Finland-based blogs analyzed above. The blogs have a lot in common: they are all written by white, Western, middle-class, young(ish) people, mostly women. However, there might be some connections to the blogs of belonging, written as they are from the position of unmarked categories of power, with other, perhaps not-so-privileged subject positions.

It is not difficult to imagine that a Jewish woman under Nazi rule in the 1940s or a modern refugee fleeing from her or his country of origin, not knowing where to settle and where to feel safe, might feel exactly like Cartaverde. Perhaps it does not actually matter whether the narratives of belonging and displacement are published in the social media or as a traditional book. What connects the biographical fragments of mobile
subjectivities is perhaps the negotiation between mobility, displacement, and belonging that is common to them all, regardless of the intersecting differences of the writers, such as the historical and geographical location, gender, nationality, or skin color.

And yet, reading the contemporary blogs, one cannot help but wonder who exactly is allowed to dream about belonging. Is it only white, educated Finns who have the privilege of belonging, or can people with other ethnic backgrounds, social statuses, and countries of origin belong, too? Is there any possibility that the hostile attitudes to immigrants caused by the current refugee crisis will soften when “we” as mobile people realize that we too are encountering increasing hostility? Could blogs written by the privileged, where similar experiences of displacement and exclusion are described, provide the foundation for an ethical stance? Could these blogs open a space for thinking seriously about the profound questions of mobility, migration, and belonging in general?

References


Relational Narratives and Moorings in International Mobility and Migration at an Advanced Age

Minna Zechner
University of Lapland

Abstract
This article focuses on personal stories of international mobility and migration as told close to the age of retirement. Talking about past international mobility and migration, people tend to tell stories that are relational; choices and actions are often explained in relation to other people (Mason 2004). I map the relational nature of the mobility life stories in the beginning and at the end of the stories and focus on moorings described close to the time of retirement. Moorings reflect the value that individuals place on locations, and which might influence their migration decisions (Barcus and Brunn 2010). Moorings anchor a person to a specific place through a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as relatives, property, dwelling, employment, and networks of connections. At the time of retirement, moorings influence decisions concerning not only a place of retirement but also the kin-work and care that is necessary in maintaining the emotional and material well-being of families (see Conway 2007; Moon 1995). My analysis shows that mobility life stories told at an advanced age tend to be less relational at their beginning than at the point when the mobility life story is told. In a similar manner, moorings, which include other people and things such as housing or health-care availability, may change depending on the stage of life. Children, grandchildren, and sometimes parents are given great importance at an advanced age, whereas studies, career, and adventures are emphasized during youth.

Keywords: moorings, transnational, care, mobility life story, aging

Introduction
Looking back on international mobility and migration, people tend to tell stories that are relational, that is, their choices and actions are often explained in relation to important people in their lives. In this article, I analyze personal stories of international mobility and migration as mobility
life stories told from the vantage point of advanced age. Additionally, I focus on the moorings that the interviewees describe. Moorings anchor a person to a specific place through a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as family members, housing, employment, and feelings of belonging (Moon 1995). At the time of retirement, moorings influence decisions concerning not only the place of retirement, but also the kinwork necessary to sustain families emotionally and materially over time and places (see Conway 2007; Moon 1995). International mobility in this article means short-term trips such as holidays and business trips, while international migration refers to longer-term residence abroad (see also Habti and Koikkalainen 2014, 7). The analysis focuses on migration since interviewers talked more about it; however, short-term mobilities were also discussed, and they were recounted as meaningful.

This article follows the mobility paradigm in social sciences with a transnational approach, hence not only dealing with the causes and consequences of migration, but also focusing on settled migrants. The transnational approach also considers short-term mobility, circulation, and the influences mobility has on people’s lives—including those who stay put (see Faist 2013). A common assumption in the scholarly literature is that people who cross borders are young and able-bodied (Dossa and Coe 2017). When advanced age has been included in transnational studies, the focus has mainly been on transnational migrants involved in elder care, on retirement migrants,1 or on aging labor migrants (Walsh and Näre 2016, 3). It is important to study the everyday lives and experiences of aging transnational individuals and their families whose relationalities and interdependencies, which are embedded in complex historical processes, are changing. Focus on relationships and moorings offers a dynamic starting point for analyzing narratives of migration (Casey and Maye-Banbury 2017). Research focusing on relational aspects is beneficial for examining migrants’ experiences in the light of agency and structure (Gold 2005). I explore ways in which the lives of migrants are relationally constructed, paying special attention to a mobility life story in which the narrator does not have very close family members, in order to determine specifically whether this life story could also be relational. I also illustrate how migration is linked to various mooring points that have arisen over time.

Relational Stories with Multiple Moorings
In the Western world, individual uniqueness and independence are appreciated, but psychological or emotional interdependence is also valued (Kağitçibaşi 2007). Migration is inherently relational because people live their lives in connection with others and embedded in various networks (Gold 2005). In international mobility stories, which are told in the context of life experiences, events and circumstances, issues of context, contingency, and opportunity seem to be significant for the narrators (Mason

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1 The term retirement migrants refers to people who migrate mainly after they retire; retired migrants, on the other hand, are migrants who have retired and then may migrate or not.
International mobility and immobility are explicated as a result of complex considerations, reasons, coincidences, and continuities. Having only one reason for settling somewhere can be seen as a miscalculation or a wrong decision, suggesting that it is a moral virtue to have a multilayered and relational existence (Mason 2004, 166).

A relational existence in mobility life stories means that people often explain their choices of mobility and immobility in relation to family members, kin, and friends. In turn, these contacts can be seen as part of the moorings that are present in the person’s life, and that form the elements that motivate them to want to remain in or return to an area (Golledge and Stimson 1997; Longino 1992). Moorings are often based on one’s own experiences of living in a specific place. However, my informants also had moorings based on the experiences of significant others living in particular places. In international mobility and migration, moorings can also be transmitted or imaginary, based on stories told by transnational communities or family members, or as products of marketing activities (e.g., tourist destinations) (Portes and Rumbaut 1990; O’Reilly and Benson 2009).

The concept of moorings captures the intrinsic value that individuals place on locations, and which might influence their migration decisions (Barcus and Brunn 2010). Dennis Conway (2007, 423) developed four main groups of moorings based on the work of Moon (1995, 515): life course, cultural, spatial, and temporal. Life course moorings have to do with specific times of life such as education periods that are usually completed during the years of youth, or grandparenting which often takes place during later years. Cultural moorings include social class, shared ideas, values, and beliefs in one’s community or reference group, and attachments to places. Spatial moorings relate to the possibilities and barriers that individuals experience in certain settings, for example, social networks and employment possibilities. Finally, temporal moorings are related with lengths of stay in different countries and the ties that strengthen and weaken as a consequence of these stays. Technologies that allow affordable interaction across long distances tend to cushion the effects of temporal moorings. However, moorings represent place-specific arrangements, and have meanings attached to them, which people use to help organize their lives.

People whose lives are characterized by international mobility have multiple moorings, and this is reflected by their having several places of residence or several places to which they feel they belong (Cohen, Duncan, and Thulemark 2013, 4). The concept of place is based on the location of action and social contacts (Pred 1984, 283). A place is especially an entity containing particular activities, physical circumstances, people, and atmosphere (Relph 1976). People attach emotional qualities (such as feelings of belonging) to places. These emotional qualities are developed across time when individuals or their family members live in a specific place. Moorings represent ties that bind, and these include care responsibilities. The participants in this study had moorings in several locations, and around the
time of retirement, they weighed these moorings in various ways and often attempted to maintain multiple moorings. This emphasis on multiple moorings is to great extent driven by kinscripts that are understandings of the proper roles of older adults and grandparents (Stack and Burton 1993).

Moorings, interdependencies, and relational dimensions can be narrated in different ways. Mason (2004) has identified four main narrative styles for telling relational life stories that reflect a narrator’s experiences of kinship, friendship, and sense of self. A common narrative style is that of relational inclusion and co-presence, and it is highly inclusive of family and kin (167). In these accounts, the co-presence, inclusion, and the perceived needs of kin are taken for granted.

Narratives of relational participation represent a narrative style in which members of kin have a participatory role, and decisions are told as a result of discussions and explicit negotiations with key actors (Mason 2004, 169). Shared decision-making and a consideration of a wide variety of moorings are presented as positive ways of making choices, although sometimes one partner may have a more pressing desire to move, for instance in order to advance a career or learn new skills. However, when present, the views of the children are not necessarily sought (ibid.). If the negotiating positions are not equal, the end result is not necessarily a mutual agreement, but rather some type of balancing of moorings.

Narratives of relational constraint and conflict are stories of relationships that are restrictive in some way. The choices made by the significant others seem to limit the possibilities that the narrator has in terms of mobility, and consensual family interests, common acceptance, and participatory rights are not very visible in these narratives (Mason 2004, 174).

Finally, in narratives of relational individualism, people explain how they exercise individual agency regarding mobility while also taking the interests of significant others into account. Accounts following a narrative style of relational individualism convey a recognition that individualistic decision-making is not necessarily culturally acceptable, and therefore justificatory claims can be made, for example, by claiming to be selfish for the right reasons (Mason 2004, 175).

Analyzing Mobility Life Stories

The data for this study consist of eleven interviews conducted with twelve people (six women and six men, all white) aged fifty-seven to eighty-seven. Most were in their fifties and sixties. Five of the interviewees were retired, six still worked full time, and one was neither working nor formally retired. Two of the retired interviewees worked occasionally. All but one interviewee had adult children, and many of them had grandchildren. The interviews were conducted between November 2014 and January 2015 in Finland, with one interview conducted as a video call between Finland and the United States.

The interviewees were recruited using the snowball method through friends and acquaintances of interviewees and me. Snowball sampling is
designed to identify people with particular knowledge or members of a community (Atkinson and Flint 2001). The interviewees were so-called privileged migrants (see Fechter and Walsh 2010, 1199) who are European or North American professionals moving abroad (to Australia, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom), mostly for professional reasons. They were middle-class transnationals: nine had a university-level education, three had occupational training, and they found their income levels satisfactory. All of the interviewees had lived abroad at some stage of their lives, ranging from two to fifty-four years. Most of those who had lived abroad for fewer than six years at a time were Finnish-born with Finnish spouses, and they were sent abroad by their company (interviews 2, 3, 4, and 9). This made their migration initially temporary.

Seven interviewees had lived abroad for periods longer than six years at a time and had migrated to or from Finland (interviewees 1 and 10 had returned to their countries of origin rather recently). The reasons for moving abroad included education, employment, and a desire to live abroad or to maintain close proximity to a family member. Four of those who had lived abroad longer than six years met their partners while living abroad (interviews 1, 6, 7, and 8), and two (interviews 10 and 11) met their partners in their birth countries, prior to migration. All of the interviewees were accustomed to traveling for business and pleasure, with and without family members. Their adult children—according to the interviewees—also had complicated histories of international travel, migration, and mobility. I deliberately included participants with a variety of backgrounds in order to study whether shorter and longer periods of residence abroad shaped the relational nature of mobility life stories and had an impact on the moorings that were created.

The open-ended interviews lasted between fifty and eighty minutes, and during that time some basic background information on the participants and their family members, such as their ages, occupations, nationalities, economic situation, education, and present place of residence, was collected. Most of the time was spent on constructing a mobility life story, which meant that when the interviewees told their life stories (and partly those of their children), they constructed them in the context of their international mobilities. This was done with evident ease, and they were able to link the reasons and events of their mobility and immobility into a coherent narrative. The telling of a life story is an act of interweaving the events of their lives with themes of personal causation, value, and interest, using the present as a lens and relying on memories (Jonson, Kielhofner, and Borell 1997, 50). Interviewees anticipated what I, as an audience, wanted to hear, and this influenced their telling (see Wortham 2011). Autobiographical memory is unstable, and the factual errors increase with the temporal distance to the event to be remembered (McAdams 2008, 246).

Faltering memory, however, did not impair the analysis that was done by narrative methods. These methods seek to interpret the ways in
which people perceive reality, make sense of their worlds, and perform social actions (Riessmann 1993). A life course approach was followed, thus requiring a holistic view of the life stories. Interpretive processes occur throughout one’s life and form the context for lived experiences in advanced age (Grenier 2012, 21). Narratives provide an excellent medium for investigating the similarities and differences of human aging over the life course. Narratives also allow the study of how the family patterns and traditions are reflected in the lives of the storytellers, and how the narrators adapt to and expand the possibilities and limits set by the historical time they live in (Ruth and Kenyon 1996). In narrative analysis, it is important to consider both what is said and how it is said, and this initiates reflection on the performative dimensions of the stories (Phoenix, Smith, and Sparkes 2010). In this study, the questions being asked were how the relational migrant was being constructed in the telling and which relational narrative styles were used in telling the story. Instead of analyzing the entire story, I focus on relationality, which was very much present at the beginning and at the end of the stories, and how the participants’ lives were shaped by the experiences of significant others, such as parents and grandparents. The analysis emphasizes the performative dimensions of the stories, but also pays attention to the story content, by asking what kind of moorings have been accumulated and possibly lost across time. The analysis highlights the processes of responding to the world and connecting with it (see Tamboukou 2010), through significant others and moorings.

Beginnings of Mobility Life Stories: Conflicts and Individualism

A sixty-year-old Finnish woman who lived in Germany for nineteen years before returning to Finland for her children’s schooling told a mobility life story that starts with relational constraint and conflict. When I asked for her initial reason for going abroad, she responded: “I figured it out over there, after a long time, the reason why I left. I wanted to get rid of my mother’s grip that was too tight” (Interview 6).² The interviewee has been reflecting on her reasons for moving abroad, and a relational conflict that is presented as a reason for migration is induced by a particular mooring, her own mother. Interestingly, it was her mother who found for the interviewee a first summer job abroad (in Sweden), before she moved to Germany. The mother’s motivation was given to be that she herself never had had the chance to work abroad for more than short periods of time.

Relational individualism is present at the beginnings of half of the mobility life stories. A sixty-eight-year-old American man who lived in Finland for forty-two years describes the beginning of his mobility life as follows:

² The interviews were conducted in Finnish and English by the author and audio-recorded. Recordings were transcribed by Pia Auvinen and Susanna Peuronen. The Finnish interview citations in the text have been translated by the author and modified by cutting out repetition, mumbling, and other features of spoken language. They are still true representations of the original dialogue. Some details in the excerpts have been changed as a means of anonymization. My sincere thanks to all the participants in the study.
I was studying at an American university, and, in 1966, I was awarded this scholarship to go to Egypt. Then, the next year I decided to apply to the University of Stockholm and went there to do a yearlong degree program. Then, I went back to Egypt to work in an archaeology expedition. I then went back to the United States to start a graduate program. After a year, I was looking around for some place to go. I was bored with my studies so I ended up coming to Finland in 1970. (Interview 8)

The story is filled with individual ambitions of travel, seeing new places, and gathering new experiences.

Youth tends to be the time to create many life-course moorings that relate to important life events, such as the end of obligatory schooling, the beginning of further education, first employment, and relationships (see Mortimer and Larson 2002). In this individual’s story, the relational manner of decision concerned his mother’s fear of his being too close to the Soviet Union when he was in Sweden. At the time, the narrator’s older brother (by thirteen years) tried to convince their mother that it was probably safer in Sweden than in the United States in the event that anything should happen between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In these two beginnings of mobility life stories, the impact of moorings that affect how people feel anchored in a specific location is rather vague. The narrators are young, and things at home, such as parents, siblings, and study places, seem to push the narrators into international mobility and migration, rather than to keep them in place. Future alluring moorings in other destinations include employment, new skills (such as languages), study programs, and the experiences of living somewhere else. These spatial moorings are imagined expectations that are not based on personal experiences of living in a specific place. Moorings are often seen as considerations between the place of departure, the home, the place of destination, and the (future) home away (Conway 2007, 422).

Relational Participation in the Mobility Life Stories
Relational participation reflects how negotiations and joint planning are presented as ways to make mobility-related decisions. Relative participation is a prevalent style of narration throughout two of the mobility life stories. Both are told by Finnish men, aged sixty-seven and sixty-one, married to Finnish women, and working for a large international company. Both worked as expatriates in Germany, and one also worked in the United States. One studied in Germany and stayed there to work, but when a Finnish company offered him a job in Finland, “my wife and I decided that we would come to Finland” (Interview 2).

Their move to Finland is presented as a joint decision. They had one child at the time, and, in the coming years, they lived twice for two years in Germany with two children. I asked him how the boys liked the moves:
They liked it a lot; we had a really good time all those years over there. The boys were rather small then, so they could not really compare the differences between here and there. Of course, when we came back, our clothing was different, nobody had Adidas button sweatpants. Bicycles were different and other stuff. The harsh everyday reality of Finland hit them; it took a bit of time to get used to life over here. (Interview 2)

The decisions are presented as being jointly made, and the we-talk (see Mason 2004) indicates the alikeness of the emigration experience for the entire family. The daily life of the children, run by the wife, is assumed to have gone smoothly in Germany, although the need for adjustments after their return to Finland is recognized. It is portrayed that the children did not yet have cultural moorings (style of clothing) in Finland that would have made the return easy for them. The positive sides of international mobility for the interviewee’s young children and his wife are somewhat taken for granted despite the fact that mobility stemmed mainly from the career advancement of the narrator. The power imbalance probably benefitted him as the main provider, and not asking the views of the children is justified by their young age.

A relational participation style of narration continues throughout the mobility life stories of these men, and can be further seen in this extract:

If you asked my wife, she would say that if we were to move to some European country, it would probably be Germany. Maybe when we are retired, we will reside elsewhere for the winter, and in Finland for the summer. (Interview 3)

Again, there is much talk about “us”: him and his wife. They have three children and five grandchildren, and both the narrator’s and his wife’s mothers are alive and in good health. The relational aspects of the mobility narrative in the context of retirement tend to focus on him and his wife, and the other members of kin are not brought to the fore (see also Mason 2004, 169). The care needs of grandchildren and parents are discussed elsewhere in the life story, but kin-work is not presented as a strong mooring influencing his mobility and immobility. Instead, climate, language, and ways of living in European countries or the United States are represented as potential cultural and spatial moorings, pulling them toward certain locations outside Finland when they retire.

Two other Finnish men, aged fifty-seven and fifty-eight, who worked abroad as expatriates, showed a narrative style of relational individualism at the beginning of their stories, but as their life stories approached retirement, the prevailing style was one of relational participation. The beginning of one of the mobilities started as a career move:
I hinted to my boss during feedback discussions that I was interested in possibilities to work abroad. Half a year later, he told me that there were plans to start up an office in England and asked if I remembered the earlier discussion. That is how it started. (Interview 9)

When asking about the schooling of their three children in England, the first response was, “You should ask my wife about that—she was dealing with that stuff, but it all went well.” His focus seems to be on his career, and the routine of everyday life rests on the shoulders of his wife. However, the narrator is very much aware of this fact:

When I think of the culture shock, it must have been a bigger challenge for my wife than for me since she did not have a work routine. I went to the office every morning and came back late in the evening, but she did not have that. (Interview 9)

The time spent abroad is mainly recounted as his project. In Mason’s (2004) study, those using a narrative style of relational individualism tend to balance their selfishness with the benefits that they provide for the close ones. In the case above, those benefits include the language skills, cultural competence, and the courage to travel and live abroad, all of which were explained to be beneficial for the children in later life.

Approaching retirement, the narrative style of the story becomes the one of relational participation. This is especially visible when plans and aspirations regarding mobility and immobility in retirement are considered. Moorings are also being assessed—for example, a summer house in Finland against life abroad:

We do not own a summer house; it is one thing that has been to some extent planned. Of course, my wife and I like to travel, and we have not ruled out the possibility of living abroad for a longer period of time when we are retired. (Interview 4)

Having a pension as a source of income, as opposed to income linked to employment, tends to loosen certain moorings. Employment as well as income benefits such as a housing benefit or income maintenance are usually tied to a specific place (Zechner 2010). The source of income may be a decisive factor in international mobility and migration. Also, the arrival of grandchildren may create new moorings:

My dream could be, for example, a summer residence abroad. At the same time, I understand the rootlessness that might then occur. It is nice to go and live by the palm trees, but what would you do there? Where are your friends and relatives and hobbies?
Children are here, and that has to be taken into account. Our place is here in Finland. (Interview 9)

A summer residence is not a mooring in its own right; instead, it needs social ties, meanings, and activities to become a mooring. The interviewee’s first grandchild was due to be born in a few months, and he said that his wife had been limiting his enthusiasm over any travels. This might have been because of care responsibilities toward her mother, although these had lately diminished since the mother had moved into serviced housing. However, even when receiving services, the need for care, emotional support, and company do not entirely fade away (see Graneheim, Johansson, and Lindgren 2014). Aging parents and parents-in-law, especially those who need care, tend to be fixed moorings, whereas children often change their location when they grow up. This may make decisions on a place of residence rather difficult for retiring parents.

A Relational Mobility Life Story as a Single Person?
One of the informants was an American woman aged sixty-three with a history of living for thirty-five years in Finland. She was single, and her story does not include any references to her having had a partner at any stage. The beginning of her mobility life story contains a number of ambitions concerning languages, study, work, and life abroad. The predominant narrative style is one of relational individuality: “The first reason why I wanted to live abroad was just to be abroad” (Interview 5).

When talking about the mobility and immobility of the present, the relational aspects of the story are somewhat hard to find:

Interviewer: Who do you consider as your close ones at the moment?

Well, that is difficult. I mean my family is in the US, and my one brother has two young children. When they lived in the US, I visited them twice a year because the kids were very little. Now they have been away, and I have not talked with them so much. My other brother has a step-son, and usually when I go there I stay with that family. I see my friends from college and high school. (Interview 5)

Various scattered moorings are present in the narrative, relatives and friends, but it is difficult for her to evaluate how strong they are. She attempts to tell a relational story reflecting the moorings that she considers when planning her retirement:

I have never thought I am here for the rest of my life. I have this feeling that I would like to be in the States where my family is. That they could somehow help me, more than my being a burden
on some friends or something. I think it will be other factors beyond my control that will decide that. I am drawn to the idea of going back there, but if I cannot afford to live there, it means mostly health care. (Interview 5)

Anticipating future care needs, she balances between two different moorings: family and friends. She would prefer being cared for (if needed) by her family, but the excerpt shows her difficulty in defining those family members she could rely on. Without living parents, a spouse, or children, who often are thought of as being the closest family members, building a relational life story requires effort. Family members, the brothers and their families, have been living far away for decades, and yearly extended visits (temporal moorings) do not necessarily create or sustain bonds that are strong enough to count on when different moorings and sources of help and care are weighed at the time of retirement.

Not only social contacts wither, as a result of international migration and mobility, but also the eligibility for some benefits.

I appreciate that I get much better coverage and care here than I would in the States when I retire or get older or whatever. Until recently I could not move back to the States because I have no health insurance there. I have diabetes, high blood pressure, all these things. Before Obamacare, if I moved back, they would simply say: “we do not cover you for that.” (Interview 5)

She presents health care as such a strong spatial mooring that it takes the power of choice over her retirement location from her hands. In Finland, health care is based on publicly arranged national insurance that covers all permanent and legal residents and is primarily funded through taxation (THL 2014); therefore she would not have private health insurance to take along from Finland. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act 2010 (known popularly as Obamacare, see U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) is a policy reform that ensures that all legal American residents have health insurance. It has enabled this specific mooring of health care in the United States while making it possible for the interviewee to move to the U.S. when she retires. This is an essential mooring for her, especially given that with a history of various illnesses and advanced age, her need for health and possibly social care is likely to increase.

Relational Inclusion and Co-Presence in Mobility Life Stories
Two (or rather three, because one interview included a couple) of my informants told mobility life stories with a constant narrative style of relational inclusion and co-presence. Basically, all aspects of mobility and immobility are encountered in relation to the needs of significant others,
from the beginning to the end. The story of an elderly American couple (aged eighty-seven and eighty-four) starts like this:

Our son came here about forty years ago, I guess as an exchange student, and he ended up marrying a Finnish woman. So he lives here and teaches at the university, and they have a child who is over at another university, and that is why we came to Finland in the first place. Because of our son, his family is here, and we visited several times before we decided to move. (Interview 11)

Here, family is portrayed as the main mooring that led to the move from the United States to Finland. Interestingly, the couple also has a daughter who lives in the U.S., and she has three children, some of whom also have children (three great-grandchildren altogether). When asked why they did not move closer to the daughter, they said:

Actually, they encouraged us to come and live here [Finland] for a year and see how we liked it. We already knew about that time that we did like it here, and our daughter would have her own life [in the U.S.]. She probably would have liked us to move closer to her, but we finally decided to look upon it as an adventure. We’ve never really been abroad. (Interview 11)

The couple ended up balancing the two spatial moorings against each other. The son and his wife in Finland encouraged them to move, and the daughter is described as having been rather preoccupied with her life at the time. Later on, they explain how the daughter realized that they were not going to come back after they bought an apartment. In owning a property, a certain kind of fixity (see Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006) is established, and the daughter seems to have understood property ownership to be such a strong mooring as to keep the parents in Finland.

Another story laden with relational inclusion and co-presence was told by an American woman, aged sixty-three. She had lived in Finland for twenty-six years, after which she returned to the United States, a few months before the interview. Her mobility life story starts with a description of how her husband was looking for two jobs in Finland, for himself and for his wife (the narrator). Their two young sons were considered in a specific way when living in Finland:

Our boys finished school [in Finland] but went back to the U.S. for university. It was really important to us that they had that choice. I mean, that we took them out of their culture and nationality, and we kind of played gods with their lives and brought them overseas. But in the end there was really no question in both of their minds, or in our minds. I mean they have had incredible
opportunities in the U.S., and I just do not see that that would have happened in Finland. (Interview 10)

The assumed needs of the two sons, regarding the choice of study place, were taken into account when leaving the United States, and also during the time when the family lived in Finland. When the time came to make a decision on where the sons should study, the narrator was unsure whether the sons, the parents, or all of them had actually made the choices. She presents two cultural moorings that they detached their sons from: nationality and culture.

The ending of this mobility life story is also a prime example of relational co-presence and inclusion:

I always knew I wanted to move back, and it was a matter of when. My husband died. Of course, I had good friends in Finland, but I do not really have close family connections. I just wanted to be closer to my grandchildren and part of their lives. Once Obamacare was passed, I was able to get health insurance; that might have been a showstopper. I have no identity in the U.S. I have not had a credit rating here and having a Visa-card in Finland does not count. (Interview 10)

In her story, family is portrayed as being a more important mooring than good friends. The death of her husband, the child care needs of her children, and her aging father (not mentioned in excerpt) caused a decisive change in the balance of her moorings from Finland toward the United States. The possibility to get a health insurance was again another essential mooring that made her migrate. As she had suffered from cancer, she anticipated needing medical follow-ups and possibly future treatments. Her story shows that national policies on welfare and employment, in addition to the laws and policies that govern immigration, are essential spatial moorings for mobile individuals (see Zechner 2010).

There are two mobility life stories (one of a British woman and another of a Finnish woman) that start with a narrative style of relational individualism and end with one of relational inclusion and co-presence. Both women (now aged seventy-six and sixty-eight) were single at the time they moved abroad for the first time. Their reasons for leaving were somewhat similar. The British woman went to Switzerland at the age of seventeen, in the mid-1950s:

I was interested in other people’s points of view of life, not just the English one. I was born just before the war and all this patriotism and hate. I didn’t quite like it. (Interview 7)

The Finnish woman went to the United Kingdom for a year to “sail bigger seas” (Interview 1). Both women portray their migration as being
necessary to broaden their scope of thinking and to learn new ideas, languages, and ways of living (cultural moorings). Both were single at the time of first departure, and they met their husbands in countries where they lived for decades: Finland and Germany, respectively.

The individualistic style of narration disappeared from the story of the Finnish interviewee when she talked about her latest move back to Finland from Germany:

I never had any intentions to move back to Finland, but when the grandson was born, it gave this kind of a push that I should be closer. One just loves the small one so much that one has to be closer. (Interview 1)

The birth of a grandson directly created such a strong mooring that it outweighed the alternative of staying with her husband, who stayed in Germany with no intention to move to Finland.

The British interviewee decided to stay in Finland after her husband had died. Her two sons live in Finland, and she has four grandchildren. This is how she relates her decision to stay:

I did consider going back to England because I still have some family there. My cousins are very close, one of my cousins was widowed about the same time, and we traveled together. But then I thought it is likely I would go through the same process, you know this shock, cultural shock almost. (Interview 7)

The death of her Finnish husband broke one central mooring that ultimately kept her in Finland. At first, her children in Finland and cousins in England are considered differently as moorings, although the importance of being close to grandchildren is later recognized in her story. It was a cultural mooring that finally made her choose to stay in Finland: the wish to avoid the strain of resettling after having lived for fifty-two years in Finland. As a young woman, the desire to see different ways of life offered a reason to leave her home country, but in advanced age, keeping the same way of life offers a reason to stay. Thus, the same (or similar) moorings may be given different weight, value, or importance at different stages of life.

Changes and Continuities in Mobility Life Stories and Moorings

In my data, narratives of relational constraint and conflict are present only at the beginning of some of the mobility life stories whereas narratives of relational individualism are rather common at the beginning of the mobility life stories. The narrative style of relational participation seems to be maintained throughout some of the mobility life stories, while narratives of relational inclusion and co-presence are mostly present toward the end of the mobility life stories. Relational aspects thus tend to become more
apparent in mobility life stories the closer the telling comes to the present time of retirement.

One explanation for why relationality in mobility life stories is common at the time of retirement may be that people’s motivations, life goals, and social positionings change (see Conway and Pleydell-Pearce 2000). In addition, memories and the interpretations of the importance of moorings and meaningful life events change over time while people accumulate new experiences, some of them so important that they change the narrated life story (McAdams 2008). In mobility life stories, past actions and choices were narrated as they are understood by older adults, and thus the reasonings given in the mobility life stories may differ from those that would be presented if the stories had been told decades earlier. Fitzgerald (1996) notes that when telling their life stories, older adults tend to report a large portion of memories drawn from an age range of fifteen to twenty-five. He assumes that this large proportion of youthful memories reflects the wide availability of identity-related memories, which occur within this age range. Therefore, including mobility stories that start from an early age is essential in understanding the mobility and immobility choices and considerations around the time of retirement.

Around the time of retirement, the interviewees are all seen to have several globally dispersed moorings and places of attachment that create a map of their possible places for retirement, and, as such, they need to choose where they will stay. Evaluating each mooring leads to its acceptance, rejection, or demotion as an attachment to peopled places (Conway 2007, 421). Many of the interviewees attempt to moor themselves in multiple locales, as well as to places where they have never resided, through the presence of kin. Multiple moorings kept them traveling internationally, even on short-term visits to provide care for, or simply to maintain relationships with, kin (see Baldassar, Wilding, and Baldock 2006, 146–47). The wish to continue international mobility is a kind of cultural mooring, a way of life (Zechner 2017). Visits also serve the purpose of sending the members of kin a message. This message says that wherever the close ones settle, the rest of the kin are able and willing to place their own moorings in that same location too. The emphasis on multiple moorings at an advanced age is to a great extent driven by kinscripts that are understandings of the proper roles of older adults and grandparents (Stack and Burton 1993).

As seen in this study, people try to match the timing of their life course transitions with those of significant others (see Moon 1995). Family commitments may either prompt a migration or make older mobile individuals more likely to stay in a place where their children and grandchildren live. When parents’ mobility decisions hinge on their children’s location, children’s impermanence in the marriage setting, together with issues of employment and lifestyle, may leave parents unsettled about their own planning. The only interviewee without children or a partner seemed to
have fewer or weaker moorings, which made it difficult for the interviewee to decide whether to go or stay.

As a person reaches an advanced age, international mobility and immobility become conscious decisions, and it is unlikely that relocation will be possible later on. Not only the care needs of the older and the youngest members of kin, but also one’s own present and future care needs form a part of these considerations (see also Bolzman 2013, 71). The influential determinants in these decisions have been seen to be family obligations, generational ties, divorce from or death of a spouse, and children’s social adulthood (Conway, Potter, and St Bernard 2013, 90–92). Parallel to these run structural barriers and possibilities such as day care, citizenship, and health care, and these influence not only family commitments but also the possibilities to be mobile and to migrate. Belonging to a rather privileged group of people with high levels of education and various resources offered the interviewees a number of choices that are not commonly available to many migrants. Although immigration policies are often considered to be the most significant factors in constraining and enabling mobility, it has become evident that issues such as pension plans, daycare availability and expense, and healthcare policies also have similar effects.

Aging changes the lives of individuals through retirement, ailments, frailty, widowhood, and the presence of more free time, as well as the loss of friends and relatives. Ill health may make individuals compromise their quality or choice of life with their potential for international mobility. People’s ailments, as well as the difficulties of getting insured and transferring health benefits across countries, may result in unwanted mobility or immobility. Thus, as individuals grow older and their financial, emotional, and bodily resources change and often diminish, their chances of maintaining mobility decrease. This probably is one of the reasons why mobility life stories seem to include increasing amounts of relational aspects, and more emphasis is put on certain spatial moorings, such as health and social care services.

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What’s Driving Migrant Russian Physicians to Stay Permanently in Finland? A Life-Course Approach

Driss Habti
University of Eastern Finland

Abstract
This article addresses driving forces that influence Russian migrant physicians in Finland to stay permanently or return to Russia in post-migration. Despite many studies on Russian migration to Finland, little is known on the topic of highly skilled migration and especially the migration process of healthcare doctors. I argue that a blend of factors incites Russian physicians to stay, and these factors affect both present and future migration prospects. Using a qualitative life-course perspective and grounded on interactive migration theories, this study provides new empirical evidence of why Russian physicians decide to stay permanently in Finland. This study adds new knowledge on an under-researched immigrant group and in a less theorized research area in Finnish scholarship. Different social markers form contingent relationships with multiple objectives and implications in the personal and professional life-course of these migrant professionals, and the strategies they employ are analyzed within the context of a Nordic welfare country that is increasingly adapting policies to attract foreign-born health professionals. The study uses semi-structured interviews to provide empirical findings and evidence. The results inform us about important interactive multi-level factors that meet these migrants’ negotiated aspirations and expectations to stay in Finland.

Keywords: Russian migrant physicians, migration process, Finland, decision-making, life-course approach

Introduction
The international migration of healthcare professionals has markedly increased in the last decades, with emerging new complex migration and

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mobility trends and patterns seen across the world (Hawthorne 2013). Statistics show an increase of foreign doctors in OECD countries between 2000 and 2010 (Iredale 2012; OECD 2015, 106). Conceptually, these developments would influence the rates, forms, and destinations of mobility and migration, opening opportunities and challenges in the doctors’ migration experiences. The scope and rates of this phenomenon will increase in the future as part of global human mobility (Connell 2010; Iredale 2012; Hawthorne 2013). The effects of this global migration are specifically well documented in Central and Eastern Europe, where great emphasis is placed on medical specialties (OECD 2015, 135). The migration of Russian-speaking 2 health professionals to Western countries has been motivated by an expectation of better career prospects and quality of life in the destination countries (Iredale 2012, 16; Bradby 2014, 2016).

Aalto et al. (2013) indicate that foreign-born physicians have mostly moved to Finland from Russia and Estonia. Finland is among many countries that currently face impending shortages in the workforce, especially in rural and remote communities (OECD 2012; Kuusio et al. 2014). Because of an increasing demand for services and an aging staff pool, the recruitment of foreign health professionals is one solution to address the deficit situation and territorial imbalances. For that purpose, Finland began cooperation agreements that involve the recruitment and training of health professionals (OECD 2015, 108). Even though the number of practicing foreign doctors in Finland is comparatively small in relation to Finnish-born doctors, this number, nevertheless, increased from 575 in 2000 to 1,454 in 2010 (113). Between 2000 and 2007, the number of migrant health professionals in Finland increased by 60 percent (Kuusio et al. 2011), while in 2010, 7.6 percent of physicians were of foreign origin (Ailasmaa 2013). Migration of Russian physicians to Finland is important because they represent the second-largest group of foreign health workers in Finland, after the Swedes. The number of recruited physicians increased to nearly 7 percent in 2007 (OECD 2012, 95). Data from the Finnish Medical Association (FMA) on registered Russian physicians in Finland show that their net immigration is annually increasing. In 2013, a total of 357 physicians were licenced to practice in Finland; by 2016, this number had risen to 644 (see FMA 2016).

Focusing specifically on this group, this study examines why Russian physicians who migrated to Finland decide to stay permanently and how this influences their personal and professional life-course. The choice appears to be bi-dimensional as I try to understand the extent to which professional opportunities and better living standards influence international migration patterns of such immigrant group for higher returns (see

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2 Migration from Russia to Finland is often studied using the language criterion as an indicator of population: the number of Russian-speaking residents in Finland. This study considers Russian-speaking doctors who migrated to Finland in last three decades or so, including those who moved during the Soviet era in the 1980s; those who migrated to Finland from other countries (mainly Estonia); and those who migrated from Russia but whose mother-tongue was Finnish (Ingrian Finns).
What’s Driving Migrant Russian Physicians to Stay Permanently in Finland?

Viry and Kaufmann 2015; Habti 2012, 2018). Studies on Russian health professionals in Finland have so far focused on their integration into the labor market, their working-life conditions, and the regulatory mechanism of their recruitment (Kuusio et al. 2014). The process and patterns of the actual migration of Russian physicians from a relational micro-individual approach and the complex process that shapes their migration decisions have remained under-theorized and under-researched in the Finnish literature. It is important to understand the migration behavior itself: these migrants, their career prospects, and the family circle all feature in the negotiation and assessment of any decisions related to their migration trajectory. As King and Skeldon (2010) emphasize, international migration forms an integrated system where neglecting one element leads to a partial interpretation of the whole panorama.

In this article, I explore what lies behind the physicians’ decision to stay, their specific individual characteristics and conditions, and the costs and consequences of their migration. This sheds light on the diverse incentives and the potential setbacks that affect their migration trajectories. The study aims to develop this broader picture by looking at the perceptions of personal and professional life experiences of a representative sample of physicians living and working in Finland. Conducted in 2014 and based on the life-stories and experiential conceptions of these physicians, this qualitative study was motivated by an interest to gain a deeper understanding of how the migration of Russian physicians to Finland affects their personal and professional life-course. Whereas quantitative frameworks tend to over-emphasize economic-related outcomes of migration, this qualitative research provides a window into different aspects shaping their migration decisions and patterns.

While it is obvious that macro- and meso-level processes drive international mobility and migration behavior, micro-individual factors are also important in the process (Habti 2018, 115–16). Hence, this study considers migration through the lens of micro-individual and life-course approaches (Ryan and Mulholland 2015; Findlay et al. 2015). Given the broader disciplinary context whereby researching migration decision processes has largely been concentrated in the discipline of social-psychology, sociologists have started problematizing migration decision-making as a possible empirical object of study from the individual perspective. I assume these physicians have an immigration history and, at various stages in their life-course, have assessed their lived “social world” and negotiated the often-interactive, multi-level factors in decision-making. For this purpose, I focus on the theoretical underpinnings of current migration theories, under the umbrella of the new mobilities paradigm (see Habti and Kurki, this issue). I partly establish the dimensions of a new mobilities paradigm as a linking component in analyzing the main question, providing a theoretical breadth that links this theory and the doctors’ migration within migration dynamics and societal, political, economic, and historical developments in Finland and Russia. This theoretical linkage will
develop an adequate knowledge on the study’s main concern. The study also uses migration theories that account for migration processes, so the implications of the findings are linked within that frame of reference. I also address the following sub-questions: Are these physicians more likely to stay in Finland, return to Russia, or move to a third country? Do personal and professional factors interplay in shaping their decision-making process? How do they relate migration experiences to their personal and professional expectations and aspirations? How do emotions surrounding their imagined futures—including risks and uncertainties—influence the decision-making process?

This article contributes to the increasing literature on the drives and patterns of the global migration of health professionals. It situates this research within the framework of descriptive theories of the migration process. In the Finnish context, it sheds light on the migration outcomes of the physicians’ personal and professional lives. The results inform us of the significance of these major outcomes and the effect of policy measures toward the attraction and retention of international highly skilled migrants in the Finnish labor market and society. Below I present a short history of migration from Russia to Finland and address the theoretical literature that highlights relevant international migration process theories. Then, I present the research methodology of this study, followed by a data analysis of collected qualitative interviews. Finally, I provide a synthesis of empirical findings and conclusions.

Migration from Russia: A Brief Historical Review

The Russian-speaking population has been a part of Finnish immigration history. The first migratory wave of Russians occurred in the early eighteenth century. Between 1809 and 1917, Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire. During this period, thousands of Russians, mainly soldiers, merchants, civil servants, and tourists, lived in Finland as permanent or temporary residents. The presence of Russian troops in Finland significantly increased the number of Russians in Finland, and once they retired, many decided to stay in Finland (Nylund-Oja et al. 1995). Before the Russian Revolution in 1917, Russia was traditionally a country of emigration with an estimated 20 million emigrants worldwide. Upon Finland’s independence from Russia in 1917, 6,000 Russians lived in Finland, and, by the 1930s, this number had increased to 15,000. The Russian community, however, has not generally been included among the ethnic minorities of Finland. Up until early 1970s, Finland remained a closed society and a non-immigration country, primarily because the number of immigrants was low. The reasons for entry were centered upon studies, temporary work, or marriage to a Finn.

Historically, Finland has been primarily a country of net emigration. The turning point came in the 1980s when immigration was high, mainly consisting of Finnish returnees. In 2006, immigrants from Russia formed the largest foreign group in Finland with 25,000 persons, followed by
nationals from Estonia, Sweden, Somalia, and Iraq. Importantly, marriage and family ties are common reasons for Russians to obtain a residence permit since marriage between Russian women and Finnish men has been common (Statistics Finland 1980–99). In 2003, there were 3,500 marriages between Finnish men and Russian women. Russian migrant women constituted 61 percent of all Russian immigrants in 2006. Moreover, the end of the Cold War in 1991 and the collapse of the Soviet Union led to a rise in Russian emigration to Western countries such as Finland. However, contrary to predictions, the Russian law of free movement abroad, which has been in place since 1993, did not result in a high increase in Russian emigration to Finland. Still, since then, nationals from the former Soviet Union have formed the largest immigrant group in Finland.

An important marker of many of these immigrants is their Finnish origin; they are known as Ingrian Finns. They form the majority group of returnees\(^3\) of Finnish origin; they are descendants of Finnish people who inhabited the former Ingria, which is located nowadays partly in Russia and in Estonia, but which had been, from the early seventeenth century, part of the Kingdom of Sweden (Matley 1979, 2). Nationals of Finnish origin have lived in this area for thousands of years, but in the eighteenth century, control over the territory passed fully to Russia. According to the census of 1926, there were 135,000 Ingrians living in the Soviet Union, out of whom around 60,000 moved to Finland during the Second World War (Nevalainen 1989, 59). Yet, they were forced to return to the Soviet Union between 1944 and 1947 and prohibited from returning to their home places (Flink 1995). At the end of the 1980s, there were about 61,000 Ingrian Finns in the Soviet Union. Later, the Alien Act of 1991 introduced a Return Migration Program of Ingrian Finns, which granted them the right to immigrate to Finland and to have Finnish citizenship based on ethnic origin. Approximately 30,000 ethnic Finns migrated to Finland from the territories of the former Soviet Union, mainly from Russia and Estonia. However, the exact number of returnees who currently live in Finland on a permanent basis is unavailable because official statistics do not collect population information on ethnicity.

Another major turn that influenced migration from Russia to Finland is the membership of Finland in the EU beginning in 1995. A new border regime characterized by an increased cross-border mobility between Finland and Russia emerged. Another major factor that has affected Russian inflows to Finland is the economic, political, and societal crisis of the 1990s following the fall of the Soviet Union. Among the consequences of this crisis were high unemployment rates, economic recession and austerity, rising poverty and inequality, as well as restricted professional development opportunities (e.g., Davidova et al. 2009; Georgieva 2011). Within this crisis, an EU-Russia partnership agreement was made in 1997;

\(^3\) The terms *paluumuutto* (return migration) and *paluumuuttaja* (returnee) for migrants with Ingrian Finnish origin are widely applied in both Finnish media and official documents issued by the Finnish government.
this allowed Russia to develop cross-border connections with Finland in different domains (Eskelinen 2011, 575). Subsequently, Finnish-Russian border-crossing intensified from 1.3 million in 1991 to 7.7 million in 2008, which is one reason for the growing migration from Russia, including work-related migration (576).

The Russian-speaking community in Finland included only 4,000 members in 1990, but that increased to 28,000 in 2000, 55,000 in 2010 (Eskelinen and Alanen 2012, 45), and 75,444 in 2016 (Statistics Finland 2017). Most Russian immigrants live in cities, mostly in the Helsinki area and the eastern border cities, where the Russian-speaking community is large and contacts with Russia are maintained because of geographical proximity. There are also Russian immigrants who have moved to Finland for other reasons than those mentioned above, such as work, business, and professional/higher education. Finland and Russia have different healthcare systems, professionalism practices, labor-market structures, and a mismatch between education and production systems (see Popovich et al. 2011). Hypothetically, since the 1990s, Finland has been among the favored destinations for emigrating Russian health professionals for a number of reasons: a shared history, geographical neighborhood, bilateral agreements, regulated mobility policies, ethnic belonging, Finnish welfare system, and marriage, for example. Historical and economic factors, together with the long eastern border with Russia with its increasing border-crossings, are likely to perpetuate the inflow to Finland. Thus, it seems that immigrants with a Russian background will remain significant and continue to form the largest immigrant group in Finland, at least in the near future.

Theoretical Ground

*The New Mobilities Paradigm*

The study of international migration is an interdisciplinary field, and it is addressed through a range of paradigmatic assumptions and methodological trends. Migration intersects with the social world and appears to appeal to those who seek better living conditions and well-being, those fleeing political persecution, environmental hazards, or wars, or those seeking freedom from political instability in their own countries. As the interdisciplinary nature of migration studies has not been fully extended through different interactive disciplinary perspectives, a dynamic research agenda has lately given considerable attention to what is called the “new mobilities paradigm” (Sheller and Urry 2006; Creswell 2006; Habti and Elo 2018); researchers seek to understand human mobility empirically in ways that acknowledge individual agency in relation to meso-structural and macro-contextual factors. The paradigm emerged at the turn of the new millennium as a reaction to the emergence of new forms of mobility and migration and, importantly, a new set of academic interests in these fields. Sheller and Urry (2016, 11) argue that this new paradigm seeks the fundamental recasting of social science (also Habti and Elo 2018, 12–16).
The mobilities paradigm, as theoretical platform, provides analytical descriptions of modern societal problems, mainly the mobility of individuals, ideas, goods, and capital, and their implications for the modern world. Social scientists have started incorporating new ways of theorizing (Sheller and Urry 2006, 207) because previous migration theories have failed to account for the diverse categories of migrants and the actual migration process—a serious weakness if one considers that the migration process has become increasingly complex. An explicit gap that research has yet to address adequately is a cross-disciplinary and multi-faceted approach to studying international migration. Additionally, as O’Reilly (2012) advances, questions arise on how different agents, structures, and macro-level factors are part of the broader regimes that foster and affect global migration. More than this, the determinants of international migration have long been debated in the literature from economic, demographic, and socio-political perspectives, in both the sending and receiving regions. Yet, the real factors that shape and reshape migration processes remain little known. For example, it cannot be explained why some people emigrate from developing to developed countries while the majority remain (see Arango 2004; de Haas 2010b). In the spirit of the “mobility turn” (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006), research needs to generalize the aspects of international migration in different forms and spheres of life and to examine “ways of life” and “walks of life” in a world of mobility and immobility, interconnectivity and disconnectivity.

The paradigm cannot be successfully used unless a social scientist critically reflects on the underlying social, economic, personal, cultural, historical, and political embeddedness in migration experiences. De Haas (2010b, 2011) explains that analyzing international migration needs to go beyond descriptions and start accounting for the dynamic forces and underlying experiences of migrants. The dynamics of migration processes have been explained through a narrow focus on origin and destination countries. However, in their analysis of migration experiences, scholars need to recognize the importance of embeddedness in historical, social, political, and cultural conditions of mobility, institutional frameworks and interactions, and individual agency and everyday practices (O’Reilly 2012; Habti 2012; Ryan and Mulholland 2015). In undertaking international mobility, highly skilled migrants engage in a more personalized ongoing assessment and negotiation through their evolving migration and career trajectory, and bear the consequences of their implications and outcomes. Research needs to focus on both personal and professional life aspects (Habti 2014; Viry and Kaufmann 2015).

In the same vein, because migration and career trajectories are complex, dynamic, and multi-layered, I argue that analyzing highly skilled migration and its multi-layered implications requires research that adopts a life-course approach (Findlay et al. 2015; Erel 2015; Ryan and Mulholland 2015). The literature has emphasized the theoretical and analytical importance of a micro-level life-course approach. However, the
real-life contexts where these migrants live and work play a crucial part in structuring their social life, personal-family well-being, and career progression. Hence, the migrants’ decisions on where to move, or whether to stay put or leave, are based on these dimensions. A micro-individual level approach to migration can provide a deep understanding in line with the value-expectancy model suggested by de Jong and Fawcett (1981, 47–51) because individuals assess personally valued goals when they decide to stay or move. Individuals tend to reach maximum fulfillment in as many areas of value as possible. However, meso-structural and micro-agentic processes are always and continually interrelated through the practice of individual migrants in their personal-professional life trajectory, while the goal is still to tell stories of actual practice of migration (O’Reilly 2012).

Looking outside the “traditional” paradigm of the leaving-arriving-integrating/belonging migration trajectory that still underpins most scholarly and economic/political thinking of mobility/migration, this study problematizes the issue by demonstrating that migration can be thought of as part of an individual’s “mobilities map,” created when the individual looks back to the past, experiences the present, and imagines (plans) the future. The dimensions of this “map” vary from the physical (local, international/transnational), the social and professional (horizontal and vertical), and the cultural and political. Research has shown that highly skilled mobility is overwhelmingly determined by interactive multi-level factors beyond the traditionally assumed push-pull model (de Haas 2010b; Ryan and Mulholland 2015). This evidence suggests that complex embeddedness is always playing an elemental role in highly skilled mobility experiences that either facilitate or hamper the personal-professional life course.

Social Networks and Transnationalism

The international migration literature has tried to provide an integrated theoretical framework for empirical investigation to fathom migration as a dynamic ongoing process through which forms of capital are mobilized (Nohl et al. 2006; O’Reilly 2012; Ryan and Mulholland 2015). Arango (2004, 19–20) asks why neoclassical theory failed to explain that few people actually migrate, despite apparent incentives to do so, and why some countries have high rates of emigration, while others with the same structural economic conditions have low rates. Current theorists advocate that migration is so complex that following the binary push-pull model of economic theories in studying forms of migration is too simplistic and untenable (see de Haas 2010b; O’Reilly 2015; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014). Moreover, these approaches fail to explain the dynamic nature of the migration process and to uncover the various interrelated factors driving migration and related to sending and receiving countries. Being critical of the weak and fragmented theorization of international migration, Arango (2004, 28) shows that “the importance of networks
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for migration can hardly be overstated. [...] [They] rank amongst the most important explanatory factors for migration.”

Migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, non-migrants, and former migrants in webs of kinship, friendship, and shared origin. They can be a form of social capital stretched across the migrant space, and, therefore, facilitate international migration because they provide information which lowers the costs and risks of migration (Massey et al. 1999, 42–43). Earlier, Massey et al. (1993, 449) explained that “every new migrant reduces the costs of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and some of these people are thereby induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad.”

Migration is a process wherein migrants are located within networks and relationships. Social ties play a significant role in the migration process because migrants are not isolated individuals within isolated groups, making isolated decisions (O’Reilly 2012), and thus possibilities of a more successful integration are increased (see Haug 2008; Habti 2018).

Ryan et al. (2008) underline that social networks (or social capital) can be valuable to migrants for enhancing their position, at least in the early phases of the decision-making process of migration to and settlement in a destination country. Such social ties include the household, friends, and old and new colleagues. Grasmuck and Pessar (1991, 13) indicate that social contacts and households simultaneously “mediate macro-structural changes, facilitate the migration response to these changes and perpetuate migration as a self-sustaining social process.” These social ties mobilize resources and support, and they importantly influence the migration process (Haug 2008). Hence, migrant networks tend to have a multiplier effect and to perpetuate migration (Arango 2004, 28). Some empirical literature has broadened this circle and included other units, such as ethnic groups (Bauer, Gang, and Epstein 2009; Haug 2008; Ryan 2011; Molina et al. 2015). Network migration also depends on the closeness and information exchange between its members.

While a lot of empirical research has focused on the strength and density of family networks and other close personal ties in reproducing migration, Granovetter’s (1973) notion of the “strength of weak ties” has also been shown to be instrumental in facilitating migration. Weak ties, based on (perceptions of) common cultures or ethnicities, or even fleeting friendships between migrants in vulnerable positions can generate a sense of mutual trust or empathy, and, thereby, as Tilly (2007) holds, result in forming bonds and providing forms of assistance. According to Boyd and Nowak (2012, 83–86), there are three main types of migrant networks: family and personal networks, labor networks, and illegal migrant networks. They highlight the gendered nature of networks and the active role of women in developing and sustaining personal networks. An early study by Massey and Espinosa (1997) explored the role of social networks and combined the new economics of labor migration and neoclassical economics with social-capital theory. They used a complex
analysis to examine the role of social capital on emigration and return migration. They explained that while wage differences do not trigger migration, social and cultural capitals, that is, network and credentials in Bourdieu’s sense (1986), are important in the migration process. In the context of their study, the former explains that migration is more likely to occur with relatives living in the US, and the latter explains that migration increases after multiple mobility and migration experiences.

Thomas Faist (1997) advances that social networks are relational, and constitute the “crucial meso-level” between micro- and macro-formulations of migration, helping us to move beyond the push-pull theory and to connect individual and socio-structural factors for migration. Migration networks contribute three further important insights into theorizing the migration process: they allow us to understand the dynamics of differential migration; to predict future migration, since networks “reproduce” migrants through time; and to resolve the theoretical distinction between initial causes of migration and its perpetuation and diffusion in time and space (Fussell 2012). Yet, literature on highly skilled migration (de Haas 2010b, 2011) shows migration to have multiple determinants beyond the social network factors. However, recently, migrant social networks have taken a more “transnational turn” (Brettell 2008, 125; Faist 2007).

An analytical theme that has dominated international migration research is its conceptualization as a transnational process. In the study of international migration, settlement, and integration of migrant communities in receiving countries, the transnational turn has been advanced since the 1990s in the contributions of Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992) and Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994) (also Portes 1999; Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt 1999). Studies on transnationalism have exposed the increasing possibilities for migrants and their families to live transnationally and to adopt transnational identities. This could be made possible through developed communication technologies that enable migrants to build connections with their origin countries. Increasingly, this enables migrants and their families to foster double loyalties, to lead transnational livelihoods on a daily basis, to travel back and forth, and to relate to people in different places. It is assumed that the migrants’ ties with their origin country do not break in the case of a permanent stay in the receiving country (Ryan, Klekowski von Koppenfels, and Mulholland 2014). Furthermore, migrants’ contributions to development in their origin countries do not necessarily involve return migration, especially for highly skilled migrants. De Haas (2010a) mentions that migrants’ engagement with their origin countries can be maintained through knowledge and skills transfer, financial and social remittances, and circular mobility.

The sustainability of transnational ties is also exemplified by social networks and family ties which potentially instigate further emigration by family members, friends, or ex-colleagues from the origin country. However, Faist (2000) underlines that overrating the importance of the transnational perspective to migration research and presupposing that
every immigrant leads a transnational life or occupies “transnational social spaces” should be avoided because a “transnational life” applies only to a limited number of migrants (Portes 2003, 876). Finally, the main significance of the transnational approach in reformulating migration theory is that it questions the linear, push-pull, no-return model, it builds on the theories of migration networks, and it questions the plethora of literature devoted to integration/assimilation of migrants in receiving countries.

**Prospect Theory and Personality Traits**

New Social theories of migration, such as prospect theory and personality traits, with their social-psychology approach, emerged with contributions offering alternative explanations of migration processes. Research literature in psychology has been concerned with understanding individuals’ future behavior by looking at their past-life events and current circumstances. Seligman et al. (2013, 119) emphasize the importance of “prospection” as the mental simulation of future possibilities, which plays a significant role in organizing perception, cognition, affect, memory, motivation, and action. Czaika (2015) thinks prospect theory relies on probability to describe outcomes, rather than assuming that people will always know all possible outcomes when seeking to select the most optimal. This theory holds that people are afraid of losses more than they appreciate gains, and they assess the probabilities of adverse outcomes more severely than their actual possible cost. De Jong’s (2000) research has shown that the expectations related to living in a receiving country, such as living standards, social and family norms, and support networks, are critical factors of migration decision-making. Van Dalen, Groenewold, and Schoorl (2005) suggest that by extending this argument to studies of the return migration process, migrants weigh the expectations attached to their decision to stay against those attached to returning to origin countries. Hence, in this study, I examine whether the interviewees prefer to stay in Finland because of better career prospects, family relations and well-being, or the Finnish lifestyle.

Boneva and Frieze (2001) focus on characteristics of an individual’s personality (also Frieze and Li 2010). Their study of Eastern European students found that certain personality characteristics predict future desires to emigrate. High achievement and power motivations, especially when combined with high work-orientation, predict international mobility while high affiliation motivation and family centrality tend to predict staying rather than leaving. They argue that “unfavorable economies in the country of origin, emigration and immigration policies, network support in the receiving country, and other environmental factors create the conditions for wanting to leave, but desires to do so are based on the personality of those who make the choice” (Boneva and Frieze 2001, 478). “Personality” involves an ensemble of ready-made orientations and mental shortcuts to the way one imagines future motivations and actions.
People use it to foresee and imagine their future actions within a wide array of social conditions and cognitive challenges. Taking account of these allows the generation of a full understanding of human mobility and individual-level aspects of migration.

Scholars have explained migration through different theoretical windows, such as the push-pull model of economic theories (Zolberg 1987) and rational choice, and cost/benefit analyses. However, these overlooked the actual migration process and its dynamic nature and failed to uncover the various interactive factors driving migration (Massey et al. 1993; Brettell and Hollifield 2008; de Haas 2010b; O’Reilly 2015; Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014; Habti 2018). Studies often focused on macro-level approaches to migration, but have neglected micro-individual factors such as an individual person’s agency (de Haas 2011), the surrounding environment and non-economic motivations (Halfacree 2004; Schewel 2015), transnationalism (Faist 2000), social networks (Ryan et al. 2008; Ryan, Erel, and D’Angelo 2015), the role of individual hopes formed by images of a better future (Hagan 2008; Carling 2002; de Haas 2011; Czaika and Vothknecht 2014), emotions (Lerner et al. 2015), the different historical and geographical contexts that incite and sustain international migration (Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014), and the extent to which policies affect migration outcomes in sending or receiving countries (Cerna 2014).

In this context, this article privileges individual migrants’ perspectives and builds on the acknowledgment of their individual agency in the migration processes and their career trajectories. The question of how the possibilities that migrants imagine for the influence of their current and future decision-making remains empirically under-researched. Results from some studies give importance to an individual person’s agency, especially in psychological theory, which considers it the driver in the decision-making process. Sociological studies, however, tend to highlight the meso-level and networks (Faist 1997, 2007). Based on the outlined theoretical ground, I explain how Russian physicians form reference points to help them determine where positive outcomes lie. I also explore why most of them intend to stay in Finland.

**A Qualitative Life-Course Approach**

Biographical life-course research is relevant for current scholarly debates in mobility/migration research, especially if career and everyday lives are the research focus (O’Reilly 2012; Kōu et al. 2015; Ryan and Mulholland 2015; Findlay et al. 2015). This approach allows new insights into the embedded complexities of interrelated factors at play in the migration experiences of Russian physicians. The life-course approach is used to draw out complex motivations in the interviewees’ life-work interface. This approach emphasizes the range of mechanisms that interplay over time in the physicians’ migration experiences. A life-course perspective can account for the continuity and transformation of migration as a life-course. This qualitative approach has been attractive specifically because
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of the existing research stream that focuses on life trajectories and the transition between different phases of the migration experience. This allows us to situate the various migration trajectories of migrant Russian physicians, and to understand migration processes from the migrants’ perspective. This individual perspective seeks a deeper understanding of the dynamic factors influencing the migration process, as well as the embedded interrelationships of those factors. Understanding migration processes from an individual perspective can help identify, untangle, and transform those processes and their effects in the practices of individuals in their lived social world. The biographies reflect their thoughts, attitudes, aspirations, and expectations, and are used in analyzing their experiential perceptions.

I conducted this case study in 2014, based on biographical narratives of open-ended semi-structured interviews, specifically focusing on the processes and patterns of migration with twenty-six registered and accredited physicians living and working in Finland as specialized or general physicians (GPs). I retrieved a list of registered physicians from the Finnish Medical Association (FMA), in order to recruit participants. I also used a snowball strategy in the process. The geographical locations of these physicians’ workplaces are diverse, ranging from big cities to peripheral towns, which gives a broad representation and geographical mix. The interviewees had emigrated to Finland since the 1980s, which reflects the slow increase of their inflow to Finland. Self-initiated mobility is seen mostly in early- or mid-career stages. The duration of their residence at the time of data collection varied between eight and thirty-five years. On average, they had lived in Finland for more than fifteen years and had been working around fourteen years, and most of them held dual citizenship. Their ages ranged between twenty-eight and sixty years. Most physicians were over forty years of age (n=17), ten among these were aged between fifty and sixty, and the rest were aged between twenty-eight and thirty-nine (n=9).

At the time of the interviews, most (90 percent) of the respondents were employed at public institutions while the remainder worked at private institutions (10 percent). The overwhelming majority of the twenty-six interviewees were female (n=22) and the rest were male (n=4), which indicates a highly feminized migration of Russian physicians to Finland, according to FMA statistics (2016). More than half of the sampled physicians were general practitioners (n=15) and the rest were specialized doctors (n=11). Almost all of them were married (95 percent) and more than two-thirds (68 percent) had offspring. The true names of the institutions, cities, and specializations of the interviewed doctors are anonymized. The interviews were conducted mostly on the phone and a few face-to-face. Generally, the interviews lasted between one-and-a-half to two hours. While some were in Finnish, the interviews were held mostly in Russian to allow interviewees to describe in full their life-stories and to produce rich data, thus assigning value to the experiences and events they considered
important enough to relate (Wengraf 2001). Transcripts were sent to the interviewees for review and validation before use. The first cycle of coding involved the identification of both inductive and deductive codes. In the second cycle, the codes were grouped together in code families. A thick description was made based on the code families and their relationships. This led to the identification of important themes on migration process: well-being, career progression, and future prospects.

The goal of qualitative studies (unlike their quantitative counterparts) is to provide an understanding of the shared human experiences through qualitative analysis of a small number of interviewees. Nonetheless, a larger mixed-method study is needed to make a generalization on the migration trends and patterns of Russian physicians in Finland. The interview questions involve subjective evaluations of the migration and career trajectories from Russia to Finland. The collected data concern interviewees’ main socio-demographic, educational, and professional features, their situation prior to emigration, their family dynamics, their reasons for leaving Russia, their post-mobility experience, and their future prospects. As van Laer and Janssens (2011) argue, this perspective allows new insights into the complexities of the migration experiences of a highly skilled group and emphasizes the interacting forces that shape and reshape the participants’ personal and professional trajectories (i.e., past and present working life, career progression, personal-family life, and future prospects regarding these fields). Of the thirty-two main questions in this study (excluding demographics), two questions specifically relate to the focus of this article: What factors influenced your migration to Finland as a place to work and live in? Are you going to stay in Finland, and for what reasons?

Working in Finland, Staying in Finland
This article addresses the prime factors behind the migration pattern of Russian physicians remaining in Finland, as well as their future life prospects. I explore whether the Finnish-Russian context magnifies the interplay between different motives and show the characteristic trends in their views on the migration experience. I also look at these physicians’ characteristics based on the career-stage of their moves and their fields, age, and gender. The overall goal is not to measure the direction or to quantify their migration experiences since these are always under ongoing negotiation and transformation and involve various interrelated and multi-layered factors that direct the migration trajectory and the personal life-course of these migrants.

Different factors lure different categories of highly skilled people to migrate. At the individual level, personal characteristics, attitudes, and family- and career-related factors shape decisions to move and settle down in a destination country. The existing literature shows that policies on skilled migration, the education system, the social welfare regime, economic growth, and political changes and migration systems are meso- and
macro-level factors that affect decisions on global mobility and migration patterns. Finland has been affected by these developments, conceptually in policies to encourage the inflow of a foreign health workforce, especially from neighboring countries. Thus, studies have attempted to explain the reasons behind people’s migration decision-making through two different kinds of theories: (1) those that assume the important influence of rational individual agency to estimate the benefits and drawbacks of migration, and (2) those that emphasize important meso- and macro-level structures that directly affect this process (see Bakewell 2010; Morawska 2012).

Assessing the Socio-Economic Conditions of Russia and Finland
The emigration of Russian health professionals to Western countries is not a new phenomenon, and their mobility might be attributed to the post-1990s crisis in Russia (Davidova et al. 2009; Connell 2010, 58; Kuusio et al. 2014). The expectation that work conditions and wage prospects in a receiving country will be better than in the origin country has long been acknowledged as core determinant in a physician’s cost-benefit analysis when deciding whether to stay or not. Likewise, the highly selective nature of migration has also been underlined, as physicians with better labor market prospects and high levels of career capital have more competing alternatives (Hawthorne 2013). Precarious working and living conditions increased to unprecedented levels in Russia with the fall of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and during the 1990s. Russia witnessed a poor drive for social reform, weak institutions in the social field, inadequate incomes, and other factors that have impeded economic growth since the 1990s (Davidova et al. 2009, 2). Experiencing these has had important effects on the personal and professional lives of Russians. It has reduced lifetime earnings, increased the precariousness of employment, and resulted in poor health and well-being through the working life and beyond (Bell and Blanchflower 2011). The subsequent economic reforms brought social costs with a 50 percent reduction in Gross Domestic Product and a deterioration in health systems, welfare, and the quality of life for an important segment of the population. For many health workers, employment prospects in Russia were not a reason to emigrate (as reflected by the interviewees), but rather the working conditions. The quotes below by Vladimir, Marina, and Slava depict the conditions of the time that act as a stick factor in Finland:

The year 1990 was terrible, with the fall of the Soviet Union. For me, it was more the influence of the economy than the thought about professional progression. However, after moving to Finland, I undoubtedly developed professionally. (Vladimir, 53, M, specialist)

4 All excerpts from the interviews have been translated into English from Russian and Finnish by the author.
I know that in the hospital where I worked in Russia, everything was getting worse. [. . .] It’s a bit hard to explain, but during the Soviet Union, everything worked quite well. (Marina, 59, F, specialist)

People of my age and those who lived the 1990s crisis or those older than me, experienced emotional exhaustion (burnout) at work: there were high requirements and an absence of the possibility to have a rest because people had to combine five, six, seven, eight jobs. People did not feel job satisfaction because, in Russia, there is a drastic decrease in the occupational prestige of the physician profession. (Slava, 40, F, specialist)

Central government decentralized the health sector by transferring responsibilities to regional governments (Davidova et al. 2009, 5). This exacerbated the conditions in this sector as local governments faced a rather difficult financial situation to efficiently support their facilities and services. Subsequently, this led to a visible decline in the level of public health in the late 1990s (Brainerd and Varavikova 2001). Igor points out that his concerns about work conditions involved the lack of core research support to cover the costs of sophisticated materials on a routine basis. Generally, the interviewees exposed the drastic problems Russia has in infrastructure investments and conditions. There is a range of structural determinants that they see as essential to efficient performance and quality services, including access to optimal human and physical resources, a better work environment, access to facilities and infrastructure, and a high level of autonomy. Many echo that working life in Russia lacks these conditions. They also mention a lack of prestige and opportunities for career progression (Alexei, Slava, Galina). According to Ivan, the majority thinks that better career opportunities and working conditions are major factors in migrating to and remaining in Finland.

I had a desire to work in a professional field, which I did not find in Russia. In order to find more professional fields in Russia, you need to live in a big city. I did not have such opportunities. (Ivan, M, 52, specialist)

In Russia, there are no special medical facilities [. . .]. It was in the beginning of the 1990s, I was twenty-five years old and I saw that if I wanted to work and develop professionally, I would have to run from Russia. (Igor, 50, M, specialist)

There are many reasons that play an important role and affect the daily work of doctors. Most of them are the standard of living and wages, poor organization and management of the activities of medical institutions, corruption, bureaucracy, a failure to
comply with generally accepted medical diagnosis and treatment, and a low respect for the profession. (Galina, 33, F, generalist)

The literature of healthcare professionals’ migration generally focuses on integration processes and less frequently features an institutional meso-level analysis. Diallo (2004) distinguishes between migration decisions and the actions of physicians, and the contextual factors and forces affecting their integration into the local labor market. He explains that their stay evidences their integration since opportunities for career progression usually limit the possibility of return migration. Moreover, as Galina indicates above, physicians would find it difficult to re-integrate into the Russian health sector if they return, especially when a number of anticipated risks are involved. She expresses that such risks involve decreased access to convenient employment and work conditions, which would undermine their professional authority and performance. In their narratives, most physicians claimed that work-related factors in Russia are dissatisfactory, in addition to the problems of quality of life, and the political-economic situation of Russia, and a lack of opportunities for career progression. Few, however, emigrated with aspirations for new life prospects where security and stability were to be found.

A significant finding is that most physicians are less worried about their future prospects in Finland as they feel fully satisfied with living and working conditions. This is understandable if we take into account that these highly skilled migrants work in a Nordic welfare country where satisfaction with life is among the highest in the world (Habti and Koikkalainen 2014). However, they are concerned not just about their work conditions, but also their career future and their family’s prospects in the near future, if not the long-term. Obviously, there is a fear that the macro-level conditions of Russia are not in a good shape at present. Recent research into migration decision-making challenges the rational-choice tenet. Czaika (2015, 59) explains that a decision to emigrate to, return to, or stay in a country is contingent on the changes in rational beliefs about the current and future economic conditions in origin and receiving countries. Yet, the assessments of future prospects are not restricted to rational choice grounded on developments in the socio-economic condition or employability, but involve other spheres of personal life such as the family (see Halfacree 2004; Köu, Mulder, and Bailey 2017).

**Between Career Prospects and Life Aspirations**

As this study recognizes migrant agency in migration processes, emigration generally comes as an individual or household strategy to improve one’s condition in academic, professional, financial, or personal terms. Following this conceptual framework, and centered on notions of “aspirations and capabilities,” along with key indicators of structural macro- and meso-level conditions, I consider the important links between aspirations and opportunities, and structural macro-level determinants. Indeed, many
human decisions do not often stem from a migrant’s rational agency with a careful evaluation of economic and psychological drawbacks and the benefits of one’s decisions. However, such decisions form an intricate process of decision-making, importantly, to prospect a future change in one’s social and professional position, well-being, and self-satisfaction. De Haas (2011, 16) underlines the importance of researching aspirations and capabilities, and he argues that “People will only migrate if they perceive better opportunities elsewhere and have the capabilities to move.” Furthermore, Czaika and Vothknecht (2014) and Carling (2014) show the role of aspirations in migration decision-making, because the experience of migration supports higher aspirations. Importantly, Schewel (2015) explains that the capacity to aspire can be related to an aspiration to stay (also Carling and Schewel 2017).

The accumulation of career capital is a significant motivator in the migration of physicians, while international education has been seen as a strategy to raise “employability” and secure “positional advantage” (Waters 2012). After making assessments, an individual often enters a process of selecting the best attainable option and contemplating future possibilities. The interviewees considered the individual factors and opportunity structures that influence their decisions on future personal and professional life. This can be framed alongside socio-economic, demographic, security, and career prospect factors that are recurrent in international migration literature (see Castles, de Haas, and Miller 2014; Favell, Feldblum, and Smith 2015). The fact is that they often think about their immediate personal well-being, in parallel with opportunities for career progression in their place of residence (Maria, Marina, Milla, Anastasia, Slava).

A physician’s salary is very low [in Russia], I mean, most of them get a small salary that is not quite enough for living. They have to work in two, three different jobs; it is a huge burden for people, of course. It is quite difficult to develop professional skills because specialization, for example, is very costly [. . .]. (Maria, 31, F, specialist)

Everyone moving from Russia is driven by concerns about a better income. Another reason for those who were studying with me is a better career, and also their children’s future. [. . .] In Russia, unfortunately, social benefit is not so good. (Milla, 41, F, specialist)

The main problem is that people aged between thirty and forty emigrate. These people have good qualifications, and they did not leave their occupation at the first stage because they had hopes for the best and hopes for the future. (Slava, 40, F, specialist)
Most developed countries that have invested in the education and training of foreign health professionals strive to retain them within local labor markets. The interviewees’ biographies show that they had short-term and open-ended contracts in Russia before moving permanently to Finland. The decision to stay in Finland correlates with the quality of their occupational position and career opportunities, which are crucial in their migration trajectories as foreign physicians. They believe that career progression would allow them to have better work conditions and higher income. For example, Elena (39, specialist) thinks that Finnish people and Finland are more tolerant toward Russian physicians as the procedures of accreditation of diploma and employment are smoother and easier. Hence, an objective and transparent system of employment and occupational mobility in Finland is a major stay-factor. The interviewees also refer to work-related factors that improve “employability” through more specialized training and education. For some, choosing Finland was determined by their previous mobility for internship and traineeship, or by previous living experience in the country. These mobility schemes allowed them to gain personal and professional development, and reduce the costs of future migration through the acquisition of transnational and transversal skills (e.g., Finnish language, adjustment to new environment, and integration) and building social networks.

[In Russia], people who are not accepted for internship bare it at their own expense; consequently, parents provide financial support for their sons during six years of studies in medical university and also support the seventh year [. . .]. It is wiser to move to Finland right away after graduation and go through the accreditation process here. (Slava, 40, F, specialist)

First, if we compare the physician occupation in Russia and Finland, in Finland emphasis is laid on providing training and qualifications for physicians. Here, there are good possibilities for self-achievement if physicians have aspirations for it. Certainly, in Russia, if you really want to achieve something concrete, you have to do everything at your own expense and put in immense effort. (Irina, 36, F, generalist)

A question remains whether the decisions by physicians to stay permanently in countries like Finland risks becoming a brain drain from Russia. The resulting effect of emigration would not, in general, result in workforce shortages, considering the low rate of emigration. As such, recent studies indicate that it does not constitute a concern for the state (Tjadens, Weilandt, and Eckert 2013; OECD 2015). Since Russia does not suffer shortages in its healthcare workforce, international migration may actually be beneficial. Vladimir shows his self-satisfaction in Finland because his priorities are usually career achievements and productivity,
not necessarily financial returns, and he expresses the improbability of a negative effect of his migration to Russia.

I have been working here for twenty-five years. It is unlikely [that I return] [. . .]. Well, I am citizen of Finland, I am satisfied that I am living here. I am satisfied almost with everything and I do not think that I would be in demand in Russia as a specialist [. . .]. (Vladimir, 53, M, specialist)

It’s hard to return to Russia. After getting your degree, they offer you a specializing position for free in Russia. If I want to return now I have to pay for it myself. I guess it’s not an impossible sum but it would be a bit strange to pay for something you can get for free. Second, medical details are different in different countries. [. . .] The standards and values are all different [. . .]. (Alexei, 28, M, specialist)

If they return, however, physicians like Vladimir and Alexei might face difficulties adjusting to the Russian health system and work organization, owing to differences between the Finnish and Russian health systems. However, it is noteworthy that these two male physicians are the ones who think about a possibility of return, while the female physicians had categorically decided to stay in Finland. A question arises whether gender plays a role in these varying migration patterns. In Russia, the management of human resources and policy initiatives are not very effective as a number of professionals emigrate every year. The outflow of physicians from Russia remains low compared with the increase in the tertiary-educated population. While in Finland a medical residency program for a specialist does not require exams and expenses, many of the interviewees (Alexei, Milla, Olga, Larisa) mentioned the lack of quality standards in higher education in Russia, as well as the high expenses that trainees have to pay for specialization.

**Ingrian Finns, the Presence of Family, Marriage, and the Children’s Future**

Gardner (1981, 63–65) highlights that migration decision-making is not an isolated event, but rather a process. Halfacree and Boyle (1993, 337) further explain that “a specific migration exists as a part of our past, our present, and our future; as a part of our biography.” A life-course approach potentially offers a holistic view into migration as part of an individual’s life-course, and it acknowledges that the decision-making process is affected by various interrelated factors rooted in everyday life, the family history, or family relations. Historically, Finland has been a choice of migration for many Russian nationals because of its geographical proximity and the shared history. For Ingrian Finns in Russia, their ethnic origin and family ties also influenced the migration decision: almost half of the interviewed physicians migrated to and decided to stay in Finland.
because of their Finnish roots as Ingrian Finns in Russia. This is the case of Vladimir (52, specialist), Anna (60, generalist), Larisa (36, specialist), Ljudmila (47, generalist), Marina (59, specialist), and Inga (55, specialist):

I am paluumuuttaja (returnee). My mother is from Finland, so I have Finnish roots. She is a native Finn from Lahti and all her family is Finnish. When my father [Russian] died, my mother decided to return to her motherland Finland and that is why our whole family moved here. (Inga, 55, F, specialist)

I decided to move to Finland to study medicine and work as a physician because of my Ingrian background. Almost all my relatives are here. (Ljudmila, 47, F, generalist)

Marriage migration and the presence of a large Russian immigrant community as a niche for social networks (e.g., relatives, friends) may facilitate mobility and migration to Finland. For example, Alla (47, generalist) moved to Finland because she has Finnish stepbrothers, while Maria (31, specialist) moved because her friend and her husband, who had both been living in Finland, provided her with ample information on residence and integration, which influenced her decision to emigrate. Moving to Finland seems to be planned and determined through family circle negotiations. The interviewees’ decisions to stay permanently in Finland, in those cases, was not work-related but driven by family factors. Because her mother lived in Finland, Ksenia (42, specialist) emigrated and plans to stay in Finland, while Yulia (55, generalist) and Natalia decided to stay because their husbands are Finnish citizens. Other physicians settled down, had children, and purchased houses in Finland, which they view as reasons enough to stay.

I chose Finland as a place to study medicine and work as a physician because my spouse was Finnish. (Natalia, 46, F, specialist)

The propensity to return to Russia may be reduced over the life-courses of those whose spouses make for dual-career situations and who have children. Most interviewees view their stay in Finland positively in terms of career progression, family stability, and lifestyle. Their social ties and family circumstances do not allow their return in the near or even far future. This finding is supported by other studies which evidence the linked lives of migrants that directly influence their migration patterns (see Boyd 1989; Ivlevs and King 2012; Habti 2014; Kõu, Mulder, and Bailey 2017). In their narratives, other interviewees see the general conditions in Russia as not encouraging enough to return. Moreover, those in mid- or late-career stages do not wish to return as they plan to pursue professional careers in Finland until their retirement.
I had an invitation for work [in Finland] and I accepted it. I think that the reasons were worries about family and an aspiration to provide better opportunities in life and better living conditions for my family. (Vladimir, 53, M, specialist)

I never thought of returning to Russia to work and spend my late career there. The reason is there are no guarantees for a safe and secure life with three children in Russia. (Galina, 33, F, generalist)

Settling down is an important way to meet one’s aspirations and expectations. Most physicians think of a permanent stay in Finland unless unexpected developments occur, such as a failure to get accreditation in Finland (Inga 55, F, specialist), or finding a position with a high salary in a large, metropolitan city like Moscow or St. Petersburg (Ivan, 52, M, specialist), or having an ailing parent in Russia (Anatoli, 35, M, specialist). Julia (31, F, specialist) indicated that a settled family life is her major stay-factor: “We feel comfortable here and don’t want to make a change; that’s difficult for the child and for us as well. I’d say we got used to our new life.”

Safety, Risk, and Uncertainty
The decision to migrate abroad is often considered in the context of possible resulting effects. The ability to evaluate future risks and to cope with uncertainty is closely related to migration decision-making (Williams and Baláž 2012). The decision is often made with the partial knowledge of what kinds of risks moving abroad will entail and what the future life in the new destination would be like. The interviewees were motivated to stay permanently in Finland, or at least their intention to stay was stronger than the intention to return to Russia. Following the lines of prospect theory, since these physicians positively framed the decision of a permanent stay as a “gain,” they did not consequently consider that their decision involves any form of risk. For them, a decision to return was perceived as risky, especially given the reference points mentioned earlier. Maria explains that life in Russia was “unstable and often unpredictable” and she could not foresee what the future there would bring. For Ksenia, low income and instability in Russia, and a desire for the safety of her children are main stay-factors because she does not know “what will happen tomorrow.” Julia highlights the same reasons and perspective: “It’s not only about salaries, but the overall situation in Russia isn’t as good as in Finland.” Anna voices her fear of meeting hardships if she returns, while Tatjana’s marriage, family life, and social contacts are factors that deter her return.

Because I have had a long medical experience for many years and I want to work in my specialty, it is not necessary to move to another country to work as a cleaner. (Anna, 60, F, generalist)
I don’t know what the situation will be tomorrow, but today I don’t think so, because my family is here, my relatives are here, and my friends are here. (Tatjana, 55, F, generalist)

Thus, the findings show that return is improbable for all of the interviewed physicians, whether married to Finns or Russians, although the two male doctors hinted at the weak probability of a return. Understanding these aspects also requires a deeper look at the nature of their occupational career stage and their accumulated career capital. They mostly seek employment positions where they can fully benefit from a good environment and remuneration, and live a comfortable family life.

The Role of Emotions
Lerner et al. (2015) stress the importance of analyzing the relation between emotions and decision-making. Loewenstein and Lerner (2009) indicate that emotions play a role in decision-making in two ways: as expected emotions—predictions of the emotional consequences of one’s actions, and as immediate emotions—experienced when the decision is made. Research insights in this field potentially provide deeper understanding about the role of prospection in migration decision-making, especially when migrants think about their future personal-professional lives. When reconstructing past events, individuals often make “educated guesses” about what must have happened. In contrast, imagining the future tends to be more optimistic about reaching personal goals, and people tend to neglect many contextual details of the future realities. Newby-Clark and Ross (2003, 807) indicate that people spontaneously remember an affectively mixed past, which contains both ups and downs, but they anticipate an ideal future, as shown in the cases of Slava and Elena:

I knew that I was emigrating from the country forever [. . .]. Probably I planned that I would not return. [. . .] when we studied at school, we were all already dreaming to move to Finland, and those who studied the English language were dreaming to move to the United States. (Elena, 39, F, specialist)

When I moved to Finland, I did not speak Finnish at all. I effectively realized that it is almost impossible to learn Finnish and find a job if you do not have any basics of language [. . .]. I was on maternity leave, which was a “parachute” for me. (Slava, 40, F, specialist)

Individuals are psychologically predisposed to choose the best possible scenarios over more problematic versions of a prospective future. In this respect, Cerulo (2006, 6) advances that those considering migration in the future may be trapped in a “positive asymmetry” and choose to see a positive future as the one most likely to come true. Culture controls the
brain’s tendency toward asymmetrical thinking and converts that process into a much more targeted experiential bias. Depending on the situation, seeing the future positively may thus obscure either the risks involved in a possible return migration or in staying in Finland, as Anastasia’s comments show:

I did not have a desire to return. I had fear. [. . .] I am a human and, of course, at some point, I felt that it is probably too difficult for me. An obligation to take exams is a challenge for every doctor. I was lucky or, maybe, I worked hard enough, because I passed all the examinations. It didn’t take a long time for me to pass the exams if compared with how much time it might have taken. (Anastasia, 43, F, specialist)

When migrants make decisions for their current and future lives, they consider the emotional and psychological consequences of their behaviors. The decision to move entails thinking over and pre-experiencing the possible future life, which also involves an affective expectation by envisioning various situations. This could help migrants define what they would feel in a given context in the future. However, this process might also lead them to opt for other alternatives (especially those who wish to stay in the receiving country), which might suggest that leaving in the near- or far-future is a wrong choice. My previous research on highly skilled Arabs in Finland showed that many intended to do nothing but stay, as in the cases of some Russian physicians here:

I have never had these kinds of thoughts [to return] (laughter). [. . .] When I was invited for work, I was on maternity leave. My friend, working here in the hospital, came in the summer for a visit and asked me if I could move to Finland. I declined, saying, “I don’t speak Finnish, I don’t need this.” Another friend tried to persuade me that I would like the experience. First, what happened is that I took maternity leave for three years [. . .] and moved to Finland. I was thinking, “Would I like it or not? If it works—I will think what to do.” [. . .] I worked from March until June, and at that point, I realized that I did not want to return after I saw how people worked in Finland. I quit my previous position [in Russia]. In June, I brought my child to Finland. It appeared that after a year-and-a-half, the decision was made that we would not return. (Milla, 42, F, specialist)

I planned to move permanently. The whole process—moving from my own country was such a big thing. Love is like that. I was also scared, by then. I couldn’t imagine [now] how it is possible to live somewhere other than in Finland. (Natalia, 46, F, specialist)
Research on the migration process has considered the role that emotions and aspirations play in migrants’ decisions about their current and future life, and the way the real-life context in Finland affects these outcomes. This study finds that almost all of the physicians who moved to Finland do not plan to return to Russia. The narratives show that physicians seek to optimize benefits while minimizing costs as they have knowledge about the possible outcomes if they return to Russia. To stay permanently in Finland does not seem to have any level of risk or uncertainty for them. They negotiate their future in their two social worlds of personal-family and professional-occupational, and the emotional states they experience in-between converge around Finland, which is perceived as a major facilitator for their stay and the best choice for their current and future life. Their narratives are constructed around how their life is likely to proceed in relation to the conditions they aspire to. Interestingly, while the migration of Russian health professionals to Finland is highly feminized, this study notes no significant gender differences in their reasons for stay. Men and women are equally motivated by similar drives and considerations, and these are mainly non-economic and family-related motives, generally referred to as post-materialist concerns, such as lifestyle choices, professional emancipation to achieve a sense of personal fulfillment, security, and family well-being. The broader background of an increased uncertainty and insecurity regarding Russia, and the individualization of work and lifetime choices interplay with the physicians’ aspirations, and these shape their individual satisfaction, such as career progression, secure employment, and, importantly, better living conditions and family well-being.

Discussion and Conclusions
It is important to recognize that all individuals in their migration and career experience are unique for various reasons and that the drivers of migration and the contextual circumstances that surround it, can, and often do, change over the course of an evolving migration process. When new experiences are acquired, dispositions are developed and adjusted, and migrants’ knowledge of their social world develops as well as their individual drivers. Migration is not always a one-off event which ends in settlement, but a constant process that is re-assessed many times over the migrant’s life-course.

Migration decision-making is influenced not only by the individual’s ability to envision a prospective future but also by the complexities of deciding whether to migrate or stay. Traditionally, existing migration research tends to overlook how immigrants imagine their future life and what could happen in post-migration if they decide to migrate. In this regard, studies in cognitive social sciences and social psychology are relevant to international migration scholarship, particularly in looking at how one views and decides on future choices and how this process shapes the personal and professional life-course. The fact is that migrants
often think of their personal life well-being, in parallel with their career progression in the receiving country (cf. Habti 2012). Different factors were under constant negotiation and assessment, and they shaped the interviewees’ alternatives to choose the paths with the highest value that worked for their professional-personal life aspirations. They seemed to be dissatisfied with the quality of life and job prospects in Russia, as they aspired for self-realization. They often referred to the challenging issue of an adjustment to daily realities and work environment. In evaluating their decision-making, the interviewees apply rationality to options of either a return to Russia or a permanent stay in Finland.

The study explores local issues of global significance with theoretical and empirical implications, thus providing it with national and international relevance. This case study contributes to research on highly skilled migration in the Nordic region and to understanding Finland’s position as a receiving country of highly skilled professionals, amidst the globalization of labor and economy, human capital development, and technology. It places the findings in the context of scholarship on “new mobilities paradigm” and offers an opportunity to think through an integrated framework that facilitates a new way of understanding the migration process of highly skilled migrants. Further, this study attempts to synthesize a range of interactive theoretical approaches, which may potentially lead us to expand our understanding of the nature and complexity of the migration process. This study also helps to develop a new theoretical framework for understanding the interrelated nature of the research participants’ migration, along with the underlying dynamics that come into play in their embodied personal-professional life experiences, in their practices and strategies, and the various factors shaping and reshaping their migration experiences and life-course.

Further research is needed to focus on the various phases of migration decision-making, especially exploring the way “the future” shapes our present just as much (or possibly more) than the past. It is also important to apply the empirical findings from different disciplines of international migration through a cross-disciplinary approach that investigates the ambiguities and complexity involved in the migration process, and the meanings and imaginings attached to migration by migrants and their significant others. This would provide tools for further theorization to understand the dynamics of the global migration process better, and to clarify different aspects of the migration phenomenon. Generally, highly skilled migration is seen as diverse (van Riemsdijk and Wang 2017; Habti and Elo 2018), and I would argue that given the findings of this study, permanent forms of migration should be investigated alongside temporary forms of migration. A thorough analysis of the migration process might add new dimensions to understanding the motives that trigger people in similar situations to move or to stay. Migration is a social, psychological, emotional, and cultural process which is, in reality, hard to disentangle. A combination of different factors clearly explains what drives Russian
physicians to stay in Finland, even though additional research is needed to support these arguments. In the current situation, however, we still do not know much about highly skilled Russians in Finland.

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A Farewell to Involuntary Mobility:
Narratives on Homeownership in Mid-Twentieth-Century Finland

Eija Stark
University of Helsinki

Abstract
Until the Interwar period, the majority of the Finnish population lived in small peasant communities in remote parts of the country. Since the growing season was short, much of the country was unsuitable for arable farming, and, in the beginning of the twentieth century, traditional agriculture was not able to employ the increasing population. People moved to towns and industrial centers to seek better economic opportunities and lifestyles and to find employment. In this article, I will analyze the life stories of the common Finnish people, born between 1874 and 1939, who felt compelled to move from their rural family communities. Many of the narrators had integration difficulties in their new environments; for example, living as a tenant in a block of flats was depicted as difficult and, therefore, many of them returned to the rural countryside in order to set up a smallholding of their own. For many, ownership of a small farm and the rural lifestyle it provided represented the cultural norm, and the images of a farmhouse received the typical characteristics of a “key-symbol.” The article discusses mobility within a nation-state as a cultural involuntary experience.

Keywords: life stories, personal narratives, Finnish peasants, rural culture, urbanization, homeownership

Introduction
In early twentieth-century Finland, a specific view of the good society emerged, emphasizing the home as the core unit of society. A permanent dwelling began to signify a locale from where all the good things would radiate into the community and, more broadly, a place where the nation’s moral basis would be created. It has been claimed that especially the bourgeoisie and the members of the social movements of the time had “invented” such an ideology and had propagated it among the masses, the
poor strata of the Finnish population (Ruonavaara 1996, 89−92; Ollila 1993, 62−65; Saarikangas 1993, 65−75). Many scholars have dismissed the view as the perception of a narrow, educated elite. A permanent dwelling symbolizing distinctive homeownership has thus been studied through the sources that were produced by the wealthy and educated members of early twentieth-century Finland, seldom by the people who suffered from an itinerant way of life. Therefore, it is important to expand the scope and consider the actual interests, goals, and strategies of ordinary people who had difficulties settling down or buying their own dwellings.

In the present article, I analyze the life stories of Finnish commoners who in their youth and early adulthood felt compelled to leave their rural family communities to find work. The term ‘commoner’ refers to those individuals who performed physical labor for a living, either in agriculture or the lumber industry, or as skilled craftsmen. The lack of a permanent dwelling, the shortage of rental dwellings, and weak tenancy rights were familiar to the narrators in my analysis as they also were to the majority of the commoners in mid-twentieth-century Finland. It has been argued, however, that having a dwelling of one’s own was not as highly valued among the rural migrants as it was for the nascent middle class in towns (Ruonavaara 1996, 92; Lönnqvist 1986, 12−13). Lower-class people have been presumed to be accustomed to their meager life and satisfied with little. Nonetheless, we do not know exactly what the common rural people’s personal strategies for individual social mobility were during the rise and formation of the modern welfare state in twentieth-century Finland. One answer could be in the analytical concept of “history from below” which re-evaluates individual experiences by searching for the personal and private views among populations (Lyons 2013, 16; Thompson [1966] 2007). The life stories of ordinary Finns, which in this article are under scrutiny, represent narratives from below, an emic genre which many of the narrators themselves also regarded as authentic and true.

The common features of these autobiographical narratives are that the experience of geographical labor mobility as well as social mobility and settlement affected not only the life of the narrators but also how mobility was narrated. Many of these people have articulated the negative aspects of living an itinerant life and how they experienced difficulties integrating into ever-changing environments: for example, being a day laborer and living as a tenant cottager were depicted negatively, and therefore hundreds of thousands wanted to set up their own smallholdings when the government-initiated land reforms of 1918, 1922, and 1945 came into effect. The setting up of new smallholdings was seen as necessary, and by increasing the number of independent farmers, the Finnish governments enhanced the position of smallholders in general, and also improved rural housing conditions, which had long been characterized by poverty (Alapuro 1988, 205; Saarikangas 1993, 84).

Although Finnish homeownership had a rural background because the majority of the houses were first built in the rural countryside, it
was similar to the mobility processes which had occurred earlier in more
industrialized societies, such as Britain and the United States, particularly
the expansion of home-owning in suburban areas (Hollows 2008, 37–42).
In Finland and elsewhere, too, the idea of homeownership later became
so widespread that it could be seen as the dominant cultural ideology.
Therefore, it is important to consider the point of view expressed by the
commoners and to examine how people narrated the peasant ideal that
stood in contrast to the way of life that they themselves were growing
accustomed to, that is, moving from one place to another and from one
job to another.

It is the holistic descriptions of tacit cultural knowledge in these life
stories that are particularly valuable and that can provide insights into the
culturally shared meanings of “home ideology” and mobility behind it. In
this article, I analyze the dynamics of historical experience “from below”
and cultural ideals and the ways they are intertwined.

Narratives from Below and Aspects of Mobility

I base my discussion on sixty-five autobiographical narratives that are cen-
tral of understanding the lives of rural people in the twentieth century. The
body of my data consists of two types of life stories. The first set of life stories
came from the Finnish Literature Society’s Traditional and Contemporary
Culture Collections (KRA, i.e., “Perinteen ja nykykulttuurin kokaelma”).
These materials originate from the autobiographical writing contest, a
method that encourages so-called ordinary people, as opposed to celebrities
and professional writers, to write about their lives. The autobiographical
contests were originally set up through newspaper advertisements; the first
one was held for Finnish women in 1991, and a second one was held for
Women’s Association organized the women’s contest (“Satasärmäinen
nainen”), and there is a total of 567 life stories in the data. Of these, twen-
ty-one narratives serve as my primary data. Likewise, the Finnish Literature
Society, together with the Council for Gender Equality, organized the men’s
writing contest (“Eläköön mies”). This resulted in 360 texts, out of which
thirty-six are used as primary sources in my analysis.

The participants in both competitions were born between the years
1900 and 1980, but the narrators I analyze were born in the first four
decades of the twentieth century. I chose these particular life stories
according to the age of the author, the older the better, and according to
the length and depth of their poverty narratives. Simply, these authors
wrote more extensively of an economically unstable life and rural poverty
than most of the other writers in the data. I have analyzed poverty narra-
tives elsewhere in greater depth (Stark 2011), but here I concentrate only
on the topics of regional mobility and homeownership. These data, that is,
the autobiographical narratives stored by the Finnish Literature Society,
have been studied frequently (e.g., Apo 1995; Stark 2014; Ojajärvi and
Laukkanen 2015).
The second type of data consists of the life stories produced by the Labour Archives and the Commission of Finnish Labour Tradition (TMT, i.e., “Työväen Muistitietotoimikunta”); these narratives are from individuals who had been active in the labor movement. The lumber industry and the expanded production of forest products at the end of the nineteenth century were accompanied by the emergence of a working class in Finland. The living and working conditions of the new industrial laborers were poor, and large numbers of workers had a rural background. The autobiographical narratives from the Labour Archives consist of both written and interviewed life stories, which amount to eight texts. Altogether, the Commission of Finnish Labour Tradition collections contain 10,000 oral history interview recordings and partial transcripts of interviews. The objective in the 1960s, when the collection activities took place, was to collect oral history about the 1918 Civil War from “the Reds” who had been defeated in the war. Later, the collection came to include oral histories about aspects of the lives of the Finnish working class and important events in their family histories. The explicit aim was to collect oral histories and folklore that the existing archival establishments, such as the Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, were not interested in receiving. This was the reason why I added a few life stories to my other materials. My hypothesis, based on my knowledge of Finnish working-class and welfare-state history, was that mobility and homeownership as narrative themes were similarly featured in the materials preserved in the Finnish Literature Society. Finally, both sets of data depict in narrative form how different historical events affected people’s lives as well as the kinds of social and cultural developments that occurred.

The oldest of the narrators was born in 1900 and the youngest in 1939, and all of them had direct insight into the agrarian practices and ways of life in Finland. Although the age gap between the oldest and youngest narrator is forty years, they are treated in this paper as a generation; the term refers to a group of individuals of similar ages, but more importantly, whose members have experienced a noteworthy historical event within a set period of time (e.g., Mannheim 1956; Roos 1985; Virtanen 2001). This is because of the early development of the Finnish welfare state, which was slow and gradual and occurred in different phases. The southern and southwestern areas of the country developed some thirty years earlier than the eastern and northern parts (see Haatanen 1968; Stark 2011).

The narrators were people who had witnessed an impoverished Finnish peasant state transform itself into a modern, technologically advanced welfare state. They are the sons and daughters of crofters, smallholders, or agricultural workers. Only a few were born into a farming family—their parents had started farming in the narrators’ youths—and consequently almost all the narrators repeatedly describe the traditional peasant ideal and family ownership. Together with poverty, one of the major discourse themes in these autobiographical narratives is, in fact,
the lack of a smallholding or a simple, but owned dwelling place, and later the setting up of one. Therefore, to understand the role of mobility in these narratives, we must also explore the concept of home that wove strong emotional ties between the land and the family, on the one hand, and the idea of possession that reinforced and justified family strategies, on the other. In the past, place of residence, work, and family were all closely linked (Segalen 1983, 65), and, unlike urban life, rural life was generally considered to blend the ties of family, community, place, and ethnicity (Bell and Osti 2010, 199).

Forms of mobility within the discourses of rural poverty and ownership of a dwelling place are examined as forms of culturally expressed speech, namely autobiographical narratives. By definition, an autobiography is “a retrospective account in prose that a real person makes of his/her own existence stressing his/her individual life and especially the history of his personality” (Lejeune 1989, 4). In the autobiographical narratives examined here, people recount their life from birth to the time of writing; they include recollections of poverty in the past that had long ago been left behind. Until the Second World War, most Finns lived in a society with few institutions to guarantee their safety and well-being. Poverty was eventually reduced because of economic growth within the process of modern industrialization and consumerism that raised the standard of living even for those who were otherwise too poor to afford consumer products. A dwelling place—or in modern terms, housing—along with the home loans it involved, is a key theme in the authors’ narratives, among other things such as family, marriage, children, education, and work.

In the material analyzed in this article, the life stories begin in the author’s childhood family and involve growth and expansion in the early years, in order to trace later adversities back to earlier problems (McAdams 2008, 246–47). This was also expected in the autobiographical writing contest guidelines, which encouraged the authors to begin with their childhood and their family background, and then cover their later adult life up until the time of writing (Nätkin 2010, 99). The autobiographical narratives that were compiled in interviews conducted by the Labour Archives’ representatives followed a similar pattern. The life stories as narratives reflect cultural knowledge that is always strongly linked to historical processes and contexts. Each culture also has its own standards for telling tales and narratives. For example, Finns often narrate about the importance of warm shelter and proper clothing in winter weather conditions. In addition, at the time of the narrators’ youth and early adulthood in the mid-twentieth century, travel by car in Finland was difficult because of inadequate roads; this meant that people generally traveled on foot, by train, or even by horse-drawn vehicles. Hence, the common feature of these life stories is that the experience of mobility stems mainly from first-hand experiences of poor, undeveloped infrastructure and poverty. Stories and experiences are not, however, the same, because, to be precise, stories are constructions of experiences (Shuman 1986, 20; K. Douglas 2010,
Although some of the narrators occasionally tell of the experiences of their parents, too, the stories in the autobiographical narratives have, as their primary focus, a point about the speaker, not a general point about the way the world is (e.g., Linde 1993, 21). When citing the stories, I use pseudonyms for the narrators mentioned in the analysis.

The narratives have the potential to inform us about the individual level of mobility in past peasant societies. Forms of mobility are examined with an approach “from below,” thus considering ordinary readers and writers as active agents in the shaping of their own lives and cultures (Lyons 2013, 16). Rather than being passive victims of their lives, the narrators looked for alternatives to move ahead and to make life more bearable. In this fashion, they, as people who did physically demanding rural work, can be treated as the rural working-class that expresses itself “in happening,” that is, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared) which make them feel and articulate the identity of their interests between themselves and against other people (Thompson 1963, 9–10).

Therefore, mobility has to be viewed within a historical relation to immobile systems which were typical for the Finnish rural poor. To understand what characterized people’s sense of home-dwelling, we need to take into account their routes to and within places, and the practices involved in both (e.g., Arp Fallov, Jørgensen, and Knudsen 2013, 471). My understanding of the concept of mobilities concerns here not only physical movement from one place to another (when seeking work) but also the meanings the narrators attach to forms of dwelling and place-making.

Although the material has been “filtered” by the narrators who selectively chose the elements of the narratives, there remain several key elements dealing with the concept of mobility that are distinguished by central topics, typical contexts of expression and emotional entwinement. In combining the narratives into a historical contextualization of Finnish land tenure, I suggest that there existed a three-staged pattern of the idea of home with regard to ownership. I label these patterns as “drifting,” “diligence,” and “haven.” All of these patterns involve the elaboration of a “mobile idea of home” into a social history of Finland.

**Drifting**

The vast majority of the peasants were itinerant agricultural workers who moved from one place to another (with slightly different growing seasons) to find work. Having the status of being landless meant “drifting,” that is, geographical labor mobility and ever-changing employment and, thus, numerous tenant farm accommodations. Permanent shelter was the most acute need of everyone, and explicitly for the poor. The need as well as longing for smallholding ownership was rooted in the low status of the landless population and its need to ascend the social ladder (Juntto 1990, 61). Although many of the narrators lived for years in rented cottages, they emphasize how it did not feel like one’s own home; lacking a building of one’s own, people had no sense of permanence, no status, and no clear
identity. The landless are depicted as ‘refugees’; not having a house of one’s own represented a lack of human dignity. The life of constantly changing dwellings was not easy, as Tania states:

Our next home was in the center of the village in a structure owned by the Ahlström Corporation, a rotting wooden house made for three families and overrun by rats. Our room was so small that when the bed was unfolded there was not enough space to move about. The environment was noisy: traffic, fighting neighbors, and noisy drunks in the labor hall next to us. (Tania, b. 1933)1

Drifting, in other words, frequent moves, was caused by continuously changing employment, as the following excerpt from Johanna’s narrative points out:

During her marriage, my mother lived in housing shared with others. Our housing changed frequently, depending on employment, because my father was a laborer and mostly in casual work. (Johanna, b. 1907)

The itinerant poor, whose lives were based upon “restlessness and mobility” (Urry 2007, 21), were not, however, the only social group in such circumstances, because the forest workers also moved frequently. Contrary to the rural working class, whose mobility was interpreted as obligatory, the more educated foresters and their wives did not see their moves as ‘drifting’ but rather as positive challenges that a husband’s work offered (Paaskoski 2008, 153–65). Therefore, moving houses, changing jobs, and associating with new people in a new environment all signified a better social status: for individuals in a higher position in society, mobility offered an opportunity to upgrade, but for the poor, mobility was interpreted as occurring out of necessity and thus viewed negatively. When moving to a new abode, the educated foresters were positioned high in the local social hierarchy, with the landless poor at the lowest level. In spite of the low social position of the poor, however, mobility as a coercive transition sometimes enabled a better standard of living, as Tania concludes when discussing her own parents:

These two people [the narrator’s parents], originally from the lowest social class, went far away from their birth place to look for a better future. They did not want to settle for the same thing. They had seen the fate of poor people at the beginning of the twentieth century. (Tania, b. 1933)

1 All excerpts from the narratives have been translated from Finnish into English by Eija Stark.
Without one’s own dwelling place and often being forced to move, stability and longing for a permanent home became the most important values, as the next narrator, Arne, who was born in 1914, reflects:

I believe that anyone who has lived their childhood in a poor but owned home does not understand what it means to move into one’s own house, if you have lived in a space owned by others or in the cottages of the logging sites. (Arne, b. 1914)

Building one’s own house was justified by the lack of self-determination that the landless felt when they did not have their own dwellings and when they became tired of drifting. Living in close quarters in other people’s properties, the poor found it hard to tolerate other people’s behavior. This is how one male narrator, Otto (b. 1924), described the circumstances of these kinds of people: “We lived in a tightly squeezed rented dump, where endless bickering and fights kept people antagonistic toward each other.”

Land reforms secured land for tenant farmers and farm workers and, as a result, hundreds of thousands of small farms were established, but these could support families only if they had the extra income from forest work (Hjerpe 2008). Smallholdings were usually farms supporting a single family; hence, the increased state intervention and new social policies protected traditional small-size family farming as a way of life, and, for example, almost every farm had a cow as late as the early 1950s. Finnish governments pursued a policy of establishing agricultural self-sufficiency, and the food shortage following the Second World War made rebuilding agriculture a post-war priority. The main aim of Finnish housing policy was to resettle landless persons, and vigorous building in hinterland areas commenced as land was cleared for cultivation. The Finnish peasant and rural traditions were seen as native values, as they had been during the nineteenth-century period of National Romanticism (Saarikangas 1993, 54–55).

Agricultural life that was based on individual ownership of land, as encoded in the law, displaced many peasants from the land and compelled them, often unwillingly, to become urban factory workers. Working in a factory, however, sometimes brought a kind of stability, because the rented apartment offered a sense of home. In the following example a male narrator, Arne, describes dreaming about a home:

Even in my childhood I dreamt of my own house, no matter how bad. I didn’t like the constant moves and always being in the way of the better people. My dream came true already at the beginning of my adult years even though it required persistence and saving money. (Arne, b. 1914)

In other words, Arne understood his earlier mobility as an itinerant manual worker who was disturbing a rich man’s life. People dreamt of
a stable and even immobile life, but their frequent moves carried biased social implications. As one can read from Arne’s narrative, twentieth-century Finland was as “a gigantic machine for uprooting countrymen” (Hobsbawm 1977, 231).

For a long period of time, the high rate of mortality kept the number of heirs to property low. However, as a result of better infectious disease control, family size began to increase rapidly, and transferring wealth within families became a problem (Gaunt 1987, 136). Because the number of average family members rose, especially after the Second World War, many recently set up smallholdings were too small for the big families. The new housing was satisfactory for the older landless generation but not for younger persons who had no first-hand experience of landlessness. Poverty, poor housing, and large families living in small quarters had an influence on many levels. Matti describes his feelings of making a breakaway from his parents’ place when he was able to move in to a new rented apartment with his newlywed wife:

We managed to get one room with an alcove on the upper floor of a house in what we called Kotiranta (‘Homebay’). It became our first home, and we stayed for many years. There weren’t many facilities. Water came in and went out if one could carry it from the well. A privy was located in the backyard. We were satisfied with this. Those years we lived in this imperfect lodging were somehow some of the happiest in my life. There was a shortage of everything and we received food coupons. But we had something else, we got on together well. We both were accustomed to having little. Was that love or something else? (Matti, b. 1928)

The following narrator, Calle, who left an inherited small farm for industrial work and company housing, had a similar experience. He was content even though he had little:

I again had a reason to live. I had an apartment and my family with me. The first night we slept on the floor because we had no beds. The next day we went to buy a bed made of iron, a coffee table, a kitchen table and four chairs. Some of these had to be bought on credit since we did not have enough money for everything we needed. So we started from the rented apartment, but so did most of the working men in the factory. (Calle, b. 1931)

Home is a site of belonging but also a place of leaving and returning as well as movement and fluidity (Johansson and Saarikangas 2009, 18), and becoming independent meant a breakaway from the childhood home and the burden of a small, poor farm.
Diligence
Building one’s own dwelling, which also had to be functional, required years of physical work, savings to continue the work, and the paying back of state loans. Farmhouses—on either large farms or extensive land holdings—had formerly, in the nineteenth century and before that, been built by talkoot, mutual voluntary aid from villagers (Talve 1997, 182), but the land reforms resulted in thousands of individual builders who did the job themselves with members of the nuclear family. The uniform houses that were designed by the government for the landless population had to be built quickly when many required rehousing, and each peasant house was a self-sufficient unit (Saarikangas 1993, 84). Arne did not calculate the working hours he spent on the construction of his house:

There were no caterpillar machines then, all the stumps had to be cleared manually by simple brawn [. . .] there was enough work. Later I cleared all the fields with hired help. I never had time for a holiday. (Arne, b. 1914)

Folklorist Satu Apo has pointed out that many landless families, as the result of the twentieth-century Finnish land reforms, were infected by ergomania, an excessive devotion to work. A small house had to be set up even in austere, middle-of-nowhere circumstances, and even at the expense of one’s health (Apo 1995, 219). This was particularly a dream of men: building a small house with one’s own hands, sweat, and blood, an idyll that included a wife and a place to work. These aspects were crucial in gaining self-respect. One of the narrators, for example, mentioned how owning a house was “a sign of masculine power.”

Home-ownership, which required years of hard physical work and the saving of money, was an ideal that was mostly shared by women, too—but not always, as in the case of Jokke and his wife:

I was keen to go, and thought that finally I, too, had a permanent place that I could feel was my own and safe for my children. I told the news to my wife but got a cold answer: “I won’t walk with my backside naked.” Of course, building our own house would have meant tight finances in the following years but would have brought our family more together. I knew what kind of complaining there would have been had I started to build, and therefore I gave up of the idea. Fine, damn, I thought. (Jokke, b. 1926)

The couple divorced a few years later. Jokke’s narrative reflects the general attitude in which farming and the household economy should be harmonious and represent a traditional lifestyle (Östman 2009, 21). It also reveals how a landless man expected his wife, too, to take part in his dream and to understand the honor of a man and, on a broader level, how social life presupposed issues of movement but also non-movement (Urry
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2007, 17). Later, Jokke found a second wife who shared his ideas about a decent life that included homeownership.

The next narrator, Anna, identifies farming and a farmhouse as representing a cultural norm. In the 1930s, Anna and her husband were able to build their own farmhouse:

After sorting things out and the negotiations, we finally got the money we needed and so we had a home! And then came the day when I had a chance to milk my own cow. With the help of our relatives, we made all this happen. Somehow I felt like now we were equal to other people. We were not itinerant cottagers but instead, a normal logger family. (Anna, b. 1901)

As Anna’s narrative reflects, homeownership represented individual autonomy, and, by having a home of one’s own, it was possible to gain full selfhood (Apo 1995, 222). A peasant—no matter how small the arable land he had—could for the first time experience the rural idyll (Silvasti 2003, 145; Blakesaune, Haugen, and Villa 2010, 225). For Anna, homeownership was a question of equality. She continues her story: “It was like a miracle. We didn’t have to be in the same circles anymore. We felt like we had equal status with the other people in the countryside.” It was obvious that the psychological aspect of becoming an independent farmer was more important than the economic aspect. Above all, their new independence conferred greater self-esteem, and with their new status as farmers, these formerly landless people expected better treatment. The small, 2.5-hectare farms alone did not provide a sufficient livelihood but nonetheless instilled a sense of pride, as in the case of Laura’s (b. 1926) parents in the 1930s: “Until then my father’s status had been that of a farmhand or laborer or something like that, but once we got that piece of land, there was on every document a title ‘farmer’.”

On a large scale, the widening of the farmer/peasant class by the mid-twentieth century played a crucial role in developing the Finnish welfare state. The wood-processing industry was an important link between the peasant-owned forests and the seasonal demand for labor in logging, and therefore it gained a hegemonic role in the general national project (Kettunen 2001, 226). For many, gaining the status of an independent farmer and therefore becoming a homeowner was satisfactory although livelihoods and conditions were still meager, in many cases even poor. But building a house of one’s own, in other words a permanent home, was a dream of urban workers, too, whose roots were in the rural countryside. Many industrial workers in fact returned to the countryside from the towns in order to settle down, even though the organized labor movement’s attitude in the first decades of the twentieth century toward working-class aspirations for homeownership was less than enthusiastic (Markkola 1994, 40). Nevertheless, because of the urgent need for housing after the

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Second World War, houses were built in rural and urban districts alike, and many urban workers gained ownership of their dwellings.

Sometimes an owned house proved to be something other than what had been dreamt about. It was not unusual that the new farms meant only a few hectares in the middle of nowhere, such as male narrator Kauko recounts:

The established farms were called ‘cold farms.’ When the counsellor and I got out of the car, I said that this must be the wrong place since there was no farm there at all. I’d imagined that because we’d talked about a farm, then there would have been somebody there before. In this place, there were no signs of settlement at all, only dark forest right from the side of the road. We couldn’t get through the forest to see the plot that had been planned for my house. Luckily, the plot was quite near the road so we did get there. (Kauko, b. 1922)

After the Second World War, many small farms, “homes,” were created out of very little. This was the result of the particular historical situation—both the state and most of the population were poor—but also because the hinterland of Finland had not been systematically “developed,” as a result of sufficient production systems not yet being in place. Practically, it meant that people suffered from a lack of building materials such as bricks, planks, and nails. Small farm houses literally popped out in the middle of nowhere.

Haven

For the narrators, living a mobile life in poverty was expressed with metaphors such as “vulnerability” and “homelessness,” and the underlying idea was that living in rented accommodations meant not having authority over one’s own life. In contemporary and more affluent societies, the concept of home has wider connotations than just that of a house or a building; it also means social relations and matters of domestic culture such as comfort, security, and warmth (Johansson and Saarikangas 2009, 18). In the narratives analyzed in this article, however, a dwelling of one’s own is a prerequisite for a home to have true meaning. Setting up a home, sometimes more of a cottage than a proper house, was expressed as a desire or basic need, and, without it, there could be no domestic culture either. As a result, when construction work began, the joy and happiness was said to be unlimited. The narrators emphasized how the dwelling might have been very simple as a building, but still, it was one’s own; to own a house symbolized the capability to master one’s life, and homeownership raised the landless poor to a level more equal to better-off people, that is, it undoubtedly diminished the sense of social class.

The other side of the coin was that an owned home became a norm that every decent person should aim at. Living in his senior years in Helsinki, a male narrator, Topi, tells how people wanted to take out loans in order
to own a home, which he sarcastically refers to as “a standard of living competition.” For Topi, those who did not participate in this competition and who did not want to own their dwelling place were an anomaly:

I go back to the period when we built this home. We lived in poverty, in real need, like many others. Often when I heard my colleagues’ stories about spending their days off, how they had been on the dance floor in a bar, I asked myself why on earth should I be building a house and miss all those things. Today, these other people enjoy housing benefits, I don’t. We were so foolish that we even took money from our work-pension contributions in order to pay off our mortgage. Those who can use the system, go first abroad and then on the dole. (Topi, b. 1920)

Although Topi is critical of his ostensible gullibility and of being too honest, the example is narrated only to show his actual feeling of moral superiority over those who did not own their homes, in other words, “people on the dole.” At the same time, the example reveals the reason why an owned home is so revered: it has been built by one’s own hands and by sacrificing savings and years of free time.

When a new house was ready, it was described in the narratives as a “haven,” as in Sonja’s (b. 1911) example: “The new house there, up on the hill, sheltered by the forest but near the village road; it was now our home, where we came back from the world in order to vent angst; home that we constructed all together.” Mary Douglas (1991) has pointed out that although a home is not necessarily located in a fixed place, it needs a space that is considered to be under control. Home represents an organization of space over time: each type of building implies a capacity to plan, to allocate materials, and to anticipate needs (289, 295).

A place becomes a home through the feelings that are connected to it (Olsson 2009, 41). For the narrators analyzed in this paper, an owned dwelling was treasured for the sake of selfhood, and having a real home meant fulfilling oneself, as Olli’s example depicts:

It was the most glorious moment in my life when I became the owner of the house. In April, we moved into it. I fixed this and that; the floor was cold so I insulated it. Nonetheless it was fun to be busy with my first home. In the summer, I brought over our well water in a barrel that was fastened to a buggy. In the winter, when the well water froze, my wife melted ice for the laundry and sauna. The cottage was small, only about twenty square meters, but I was happy there. (Olli, b. 1938)

For the formerly landless population, a real home was considered as such by the status of ownership, as “a haven,” a place of security, no matter how challenging the outward circumstances were. For the narrators,
the term “home” was the antithesis of all other places: home stood for calmness and warmth while the outside stood for excitement but also danger (Gullestad 1993, 66–67; Johansson and Saarikangas 2009, 17; Vacher 2010, 55). In a similar fashion, a home could be small and look uncomfortable to outsiders, but still, it was owned by oneself, such as in Laura’s (b. 1926) case: “We managed to build a small cottage with a kitchen; it wasn’t the biggest of the big but still we owned it.”

I argue that it was only after the Finnish rural smallholding boom—from the 1920s to early 1960s—when the home began to gain a new significance and came to represent a distinctive place apart from the work sphere and public life. The idea of an owned home that was a place where individuals could have a secure and stable life (Ruonavaara 1996, 93) was reinforced by the factual state of exercising possession over the dwelling. The wealthier the narrators became during the course of their lives, the more they began to reflect the idea of the bourgeois family model. In it, the family consisted of a married couple with children and was characterized by a private, intimate parent-child relationship, and also by a strict awareness of the gender-specific roles of men and women (Löfgren 2003, 148–49). The ideal home was an owned home with a father who earned money outside the family and a mother who took care of the children and domestic chores (Ollila 1993, 56; Ruonavaara 1996, 93). A first home of one’s own was described as a nest that shut out everything dangerous and bad in the world, as a female narrator, Inka (b. in the 1930s), describes: “All were now so well, we got our new house that was nice and modern. Money stretched better although I was not in paid work. At that time, mothers usually stayed at home. It was the best time of my life because everything was so good.”

The new dwellings were usually simple and austere. The same room was frequently used for different purposes such as eating, working, entertaining, and sleeping (Löfgren 2003, 150). The old and poor rural lifestyle was described as disorganized and chaotic, that is to say, in negative terms, as it often did not match the ideal family model that had found favor with people better off. In addition, when a new home was built or bought after years of hard work and saving money, the role of women in it changed as well. Women began to approximate more closely the ideal roles of bourgeois wives who did not go to salaried work but instead stayed at home with the children. The difference, however, between the better-off and the working-class women was that whereas working-class women were responsible for the domestic chores and the children as were the bourgeois mothers, too, they still continued working outside home. This upward mobility was by no means altogether pleasurable since the women’s daily lives were full of work.

Conclusions
During the first half of the twentieth century, rural people’s lives in Finland were itinerant because of poverty. In the course of time and as part of the historical process, at least two kinds of explicit mobility affected people
and their ways of life: geographical labor mobility and social mobility. Narratives “from below” reflect the interests and priorities of rural working-class people who moved to towns or industrial centers in search of employment and better economic opportunities, and these narratives provide a broader picture of the cultural knowledge the people possessed. The life stories of the Finns who were from either a landless or smallholding background indicated that although various forms of mobility were experienced over the course of a lifetime, these mobility practices were often seen as an unwanted but necessary evil and hence as something negative. At the same time and perhaps because of their negativity (McAdams 2008), they formed the central narrative elements, the most fundamental aspects making up an individual’s life story.

The narratives repeatedly articulated the uncertainty of a past rural life without secure accommodation, where individuals were very dependent on one another and social contacts were close but often oppressive. In the narrators’ new lives, the traditional rules of hierarchy and social control no longer seemed to apply (Löfgren 2003, 149). The ideology of homeownership was more firmly rooted in their minds. Just how ideological this filtering down from the bourgeoisie to the lower strata of the population was is arguable and needs to be analyzed from the perspective of poverty that the commoners experienced. By definition, poverty means a lack of food, clothing, and housing. Furthermore, and in the narrated form, poverty instantiated social and cultural consequences, too, such as moving or being moved and changing social roles.

For the older generation, landlessness meant having no permanent dwelling; thus, “drifting” emerged as one of the major cultural themes in the narratives. Living without a house of one’s own was expressed this way, a metaphor used for an unsettled life and the inability to enjoy the customs of domestic culture. The second theme in the narratives was diligence. That, too, was linked to the twentieth-century land reforms which resulted in hundreds of thousands of Finns building their own houses. This required years of hard physical work since the means of construction were rudimentary and the work had to be done mostly by the people themselves, a factor that also intertwined with the concepts of peasantry and home. For many, a farmhouse represented the ideal home. The ideal representation of a farm—an owned house and separate barn—was regarded as the basis of a better life. The third theme concerned shifting from the ideal of owning a dwelling to the actual norm of ownership, and everything it implies. In its normative representation, the home was described as a warm, stable, and permanent place that was built and maintained with love.

An itinerant life was viewed as an obstacle to living a life of fulfillment. Life satisfaction depended on stable and settled living conditions, which, according to the narratives here, meant the ownership of a house. For the homeowners, the newly built dwellings represented individualism, private ownership, and upward mobility—qualities that were familiar from the upper strata of the early twentieth century. At the ideological
level, homeownership became normalized, but it did so because there was, behind the ideal, the real itinerant lives and involuntary mobility of the poor. In this sense, the ideology of homeownership cannot be argued to represent only “an invented” top-down bourgeoisie project but rather as commonly shared, a cultural practice.

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Daily Life on Wheels: 
Global (Car) Cultures and Local Living

Pilvi Hämeenaho
University of Eastern Finland

Abstract
Ordinary tasks, like working, taking part in social events, leisure time activities, and consumerism create a need to move. The location of residence determines the means and ways of performing these activities. When studying life in remote rural areas, researchers inevitably confront the question of daily traveling. In Finland, remote rural areas are truly distant from municipal centers and far from cities, workplaces, and public activities. Distances are long, and it takes time and money to move from home villages with no public transport available. How can we analyze the meaning that these distances have for the people living their everyday lives in remote rural areas? In this article, I analyze the most common feature of mobility in rural Finland: private motoring and its multifaceted meaning to residents of rural places. My research, conducted via fieldwork, shows how the body of a car becomes a confluence for daily activities and emotions, a private space where duties, leisure, caring of family members and neighbors, and pleasure gained from the living environment join. By focusing on private motoring, I am also able to open up the wider picture about rural (im)mobility, the nature of rural life, and significance of rural environment as a source of well-being.

Keywords: private motoring, remote rural areas, Central Finland, everyday life well-being, (im)mobility.

Mobility and Everyday Life

These distances, you always have to go by car. You really need the license. I think that is the most negative thing about living here. On the other hand, it’s positive to have your own peace. (Liisa, F, 43)²

¹ This article is based on research funded by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Finnish Cultural Foundation.
² All excerpts have been translated from Finnish into English by Pilvi Hämeenaho.
Of course, when you have many kids, there’s lots of driving around, taking them to places. Now the oldest son is getting his driver’s license and our daughter her moped license, so it will ease our life, really. But still, every night, driving in some direction. (Elina, F, 42)

This is how two mothers, living in remote rural villages in Central Finland, pondered the role of private driving in their families’ daily lives. Their accounts reveal the significance of private driving and being mobile as a part of daily living. Regardless of their desire to live and enjoy a peaceful rural environment, the need for daily driving caused by the location of the home was emphasized during the interviews. The daily task of combining various time structures in a certain activity space is characteristic of our contemporary lives (K. Davies 2001; Sheller 2004). Mobility and the need to be mobile can be considered crucial to our daily lives, and this affects our practices, thoughts, and being in our daily environments (e.g., Sheller and Urry 2000; Featherstone 2004; Urry 2007).

Ordinary tasks, like working, taking part in social events and leisure activities, and being consumers, create the need to be mobile. As Sheller and Urry (2000) have argued, the increasing need for private mobility and flexibility in relation to time and place has been shaped by modern technological innovations. These tools and devices enable us to cope with the challenge of adopting the mobility patterns caused by constant flows of people, ideas, and objects. At the same time, these technologies make us dependent on them, and the tools become companions that enable us to work, care for others, and be social. Among the technological innovations that address the challenge posed by increasing mobility, a private car has a special role (Sheller and Urry 2000). According to Urry (2004; see also Featherstone 2004), our lives are currently shaped by the global “system of automobility.” The system of automobility covers, for example, industries, environmental resource use related to cars and driving, and individual consumption related to (auto)mobility. Within this system emerges also culture, which sustains major discourses and perceptions of what is good and necessary for people with mobile lifestyles (Urry 2004).

Within this culture, closely connected to cars and driving, mobility is more than just moving between A and B. Within the system of automobility, being social and acting as a parent, worker, and citizen are interwoven with global mobile practices that enable us to overcome challenges posed by our spatial and temporal environment. On the individual level, traveling and transportation intertwine with daily chores and motivations, and with feelings and emotions (K. Davies 2001; Sheller and Urry 2000; Sheller 2004).

Mobile practices are closely connected to time usage and scheduling. As Karen Davies (2001, 135) emphasizes, daily mobility occurs in a certain time-space, which consists of place of residence, places of daily work, consumption, and leisure, among others. Negotiating daily tasks requires planning and adjusting one’s own schedules to those of one’s
surroundings and society. The baseline for scheduling daily life practices is provided by national temporalities, that is, the schedules of activities in which every citizen is expected to participate (Edensor 2006; Jalas 2006). Society provides people with norms that prescribe time usage and the execution of their duties—for example, the length of the working day, public holidays, opening hours of service centers and shops—and these norms affect how we use and organize our time.

Accordingly, the location of the home has a decisive effect on the course of everyday life, as it determines the means and ways of performing daily activities. Questions of time usage and its effects on daily life practices increase in significance when research on mobility is conducted elsewhere than in urban, densely populated areas. As Sheller and Urry (2000, 740; also Thrift 2004, 46) have noted, city space is organized to serve mobility: it offers pathways, instructions, and signs that direct the movement of pedestrians and drivers. In a rural environment, the effects of mobility and global “car culture” are also present, but they are not built into the physical environment as in cities. Yet in rural areas, cars may have an even more prominent role in daily living than in urban areas. This is especially true for those residing in rural areas in Finland, because most often they commute to work, use services in nearby towns, and travel lengthy distances on a daily basis. In the absence of public transportation, private driving is usually the only way to travel from rural areas to urban centers (Lehtola 2008; Hämeenaho 2014).

The need to be mobile affects communities of local people on the level of practices, values, and lifestyles (Urry 2004). As such, even as the need to be mobile touches everyone, practices related to private mobility vary. The global “dominant culture of automobility” has its national and local variations, which are bound to local environment and local living (Edensor 2004, 102–3). In order to understand everyday life practices related to mobility and private car usage, these cultural differences within the global system have to be studied at the local level. Studying geographical differences, such as distances, does not reveal the impact of the need to be mobile on people’s daily lives and practices. According to Rau (2012), research on mobility should focus on the meanings and the resultant practices that the imperative to be mobile has for people’s lives in different living environments.

Rural car culture has specific local characteristics that distinguish it from urban car culture. For example, a lack of jobs in rural areas forces people to work in nearby towns and cities (e.g., Nieminen-Sundell 2011). Another major contributing factor in the need for mobility is the use of services. The restructuring of local services in Finland in recent decades has led to a concentration of public services in town and city centers, thereby compelling rural residents to seek services outside their home villages (e.g., Lehtola 2008, 26; Virkki et al. 2011, 131; also Woods 2005, 104). Sheller (2004, 222) has also noted how exploring driving as a mere form of transportation is too limited a view to understand the multifaceted

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3 On car cultures, see also Miller (2001).
meanings attached to it in everyday life (also Miller 2001). If driving is considered to be merely a means of locomotion, the sociable, caring, and consuming aspects of driving are neglected. Why people drive and where they drive are but two questions; however, in this article, I ask what is felt and achieved on the road and through driving. This is important from a cultural perspective and in exploring the significance of private driving as an everyday practice.

Understanding local car culture entails an analysis of the emotional geographies, affective and embodied relations between people, dwellings, and environment (Sheller 2004, 223). This article focuses on local variations of the system of automobility, and on analyzing how the need to be mobile (by car) affects daily living. I scrutinize the practices and experiences of daily mobility and the private driving of mothers living in remote villages. How is daily driving perceived by those who live in these remote areas and provide their children and elderly relatives with daily care? In the following, I first describe the practices of local driving in a given environment. Then I contemplate the embodied emotions and practical skills related to driving. Finally, I explore the relationship between the local car culture and traditional elements of the rural lifestyle from two perspectives: gender roles and collaboration among local people. My analysis sheds light on the embodied emotions, feelings, and social practices related to mobility and local car culture in a rural environment.

Data and Methodology

Emotional geographies and car cultures have to be studied on the local level, by observing daily practices related to private driving. My primary source of data is fieldwork conducted during 2009 in Central Finland. These fieldwork data consist of fourteen thematic interviews and “daily mobility” diaries kept by informants during the week preceding the interviews, as well as my own fieldwork diary. I also kept a record of distances and time when driving the informants’ daily routes.

All my informants were women, and my research thus illustrates the daily life mobility of families from the perspective of mothers. That was also the main topic of the interviews, in which I explored mothers’ perceptions of rural living, family life, daily schedules, and the practices related to their private mobility. The age of my informants ranged from thirty to fifty-five years. Four of the women were farmers while three others ran small businesses with no connection to agrarian primary production. Five of them worked in the public sector, in the fields of healthcare or education. All were able to drive and used their cars on a daily basis. The data thus reflect the viewpoints of those with no physical restrictions on their mobility. The questions of immobility were elicited via the analysis of the mobile practices and the reasons and motives for these.

The interviewees had different relations to rural living, but they all had also lived in cities at some point. Most of the women interviewed had been born in the countryside, and some had only spent a few years in an
urban area, mainly while studying in vocational schools or college. Two of them had worked for several years in the cities of southern Finland and moved back to the country to raise a family. Five of the informants were in-migrants, as they had been born in the city and moved to the country as adults. The data thus represent perceptions of people with experiences of different kinds of living environments. The women I met had close ties with their current home environment, and living in the country was a personal choice for all of them.

Paying attention to the daily lives of people living in rural areas reveals the meanings attached to the countryside as a daily activity space from the viewpoint of rural residents (see Hamilton 2016, 298). The need to collect data from people living in rural villages and remote areas arises also from the special characteristics of rural Finland. When daily mobility and commuting are studied at a national level, sparsely populated areas always remain on the margins: mobility patterns in towns and cities are taken as the norm. Personal mobility practices, the experience of traveling, and the accessibility of destinations cannot be discerned by simply examining maps. Distance considered simply in terms of the number of kilometers traveled fails to take into account the local infrastructure or the relationship between weather and road conditions (Lehtola 2008). For example, distances from my informants’ homes to the nearest grocery stores varied between 4 and 18 kilometers; to the nearest towns, between 4 and 32 kilometers; and to the nearest hospitals with emergency units, between 55 and 153 kilometers. Such distances are typical in rural areas in central Finland, where villages are scattered and many people live outside the village centers. Although these distances were considered typical by my informants, they were considered long and significant from the viewpoint of daily schedules.

The qualitative study of distances, time usage, and the experience of driving, reveals how people view mobility as a part of their everyday lives, as well as the emotional geographies of their living environment. This study combines the application of ethnological perspectives with rural-studies research and the sociological research of mobility, which focuses on the role that the movement of people, ideas, objects, and information plays in social life, and how it affects daily living demarcated by the need to be mobile (see Urry 2007, 17; also Büscher, Urry, and Witchger 2011, 2). As an ethnologist, I focus on the personal, individual level of meanings while exploring societal and cultural patterns or paradigms of everyday life and mobility (see also Clifford 1986; C. A. Davies 2002; Honkasalo 2008; Wollin Elhouar 2014; Hämeenaho 2014). Research on mobility combines analysis with empiricism (Büscher, Urry, and Witchger 2011, 6–7; D’Andrea, Ciolfi, and Gray 2011, 150), thereby bringing it close to an ethnographic approach, exploring daily living patterns via fieldwork. A mobility approach also offers tools for studies of everyday life practices related to care, as a mobility approach seeks to capture motives, responsibilities, and practices related to mobility patterns (e.g., K. Davies 2001, 135).
Ethnographic fieldwork and the multifaceted data it produces enable the researcher to identify the key elements of local car cultures. Driving to meet my informants was not merely a matter of getting from my home to theirs, but also a part of the fieldwork and data collection. (On mobile methods and observations, see, e.g., Büscher, Urry, and Witchger 2011; also Laurier 2004; Wylie 2005.) To achieve a better understanding of the activity spaces of my informants, I drove their daily routes, for example, to the nearest town, shops, or gas stations, according to the descriptions they had given me during the interviews. I also kept travel logs and a diary about distances, time usage, and notes on weather conditions as I was driving from villages where my informants lived to places they commonly visited. The analysis thus arises from “grassroots” experiences and individual viewpoints, both my own embodied experiences and the accounts of my informants. Therefore, I follow the stream of research that emphasizes bodily experiences, senses, and emotions as sources of knowledge because of their close linkage to thoughts and practices (see Büscher, Urry, and Witchger 2011; Pink 2009; Tiili 2016).

My own experiences and the learning process during the fieldwork influenced both the interview situations and my analysis. My own experiences of rural driving set the data collected in the interviews in a wider perspective. Combining the observational data on driving with the results of the semi-structured interviews enhanced my understanding and gave me a better opportunity to understand mobile practices and their significance from my informants’ perspectives (Frykman and Gilje 2003, 39; on using semi-structured interviews, see C. A. Davies 2002). This enabled me to dig more deeply into features of car culture than if I had relied solely on my informants’ words (also Suthers, Bourgeault, and James 2014). For example, as my informants were accustomed to their living environment, driving as practice was somewhat imperceptible to them.

Living and Dwelling with Cars
The daily routines, specific time structures, and mobile practices have to be organized and reconciled in the course of everyday life. In rural areas, mothers’ reasons for driving are similar to those of urban mothers. The major reasons for daily mobility are work, consumption, socializing, and childcare. Conducting daily tasks also entails juggling time and space. From this, it follows that drivers have to adjust their routines to the local environment (Sheller and Urry 2000, 743; Featherstone 2004, 2). This means coping with the challenge of daily scheduling and covering distances between activity venues, such as home, workplace, or places for consumption. City-dwellers usually have several transportation options, and services and places for consumption, for example, are more accessible. Rural residents, however, not only have to cope with officially prescribed hours within which they can operate, but they may also need to calculate considerable travel times between their homes and the sites of activity.
Analyzing mobility patterns in a rural context also serves to shed light on how private cars have an even more crucial role in daily living in rural than in urban areas. Whereas city-dwellers may leave the car at home or even choose to live without a car, a rural family must have at least one car to accommodate family members’ transportation needs. One of my informants noted: “Yes, a private car, yes. You cannot cope here without it. You must have a car of your own” (Sari, F, 36). With this notion of the absolute necessity of having one’s own car, Sari, a working mother with a busy schedule, pinpointed an essential feature of rural mobility. Because of the lack of public transportation, the means to travel are limited. To accomplish her daily tasks, she needed a car. As she explained to me:

I guess you can cycle, or walk, or use a kick sled or moped if you want, but you can’t take a bus. The nearest bus stop is three kilometers away, and during the school year there are two buses to town in the morning, at seven and at nine. And if you want to come back by bus, there is one at two or at five past four. So those who work until four can make it to the bus. But then I would still need to have some means of transport to get home from the village center where the bus stop is. And when there is no school, during holiday seasons and so on, then there are no buses at all. (Tuula, F, 41)

From an urban perspective, rural villages situated far from cities and services are often seen as places too remote for dwelling. As Cloke (2003) has argued, rurality as a cultural conception carries multifaceted precepts which present lifestyle in the country as different from the city. These perceptions emphasize the significance of nature and traditional ways of living as distinctive features of rural living (also Hämeenaho 2014, 201; on “urban gaze,” see also Williams 1985; Macnaghten and Urry 1998, 187). With no functioning public transportation, services and help are far away, and organized leisure activities are difficult to reach without a private car. This lack of services underlines the significance of private mobility for rural residents. Private cars enable drivers to reach remote wilderness territories (Urry 2004; Sheller 2004), but from the viewpoint of a rural resident, a car is a means of getting out of the countryside—or indeed of doing anything outside the immediate home environment (also Tedre and Pulkkinen 2011, 307–8). I learned at firsthand about the necessity of having a car and being able to drive during my fieldwork trips. When I negotiated with my informants about my visits to meet them, it became clear that I would not be able to reach their places of residence in any other way than by driving myself—or asking them to pick me up, which I considered to be too much to ask because it would have caused them lengthy drives.

The fieldwork also made me understand daily mobility in rural settings as being much more than just “driving a car.” The fact that my
research field was only accessible by private car initially caused me many concerns. While driving to meet my informants, I observed my informants’ daily driving routes through the windshield of my car. I achieved firsthand experience of the interaction between the driver and her car (on the “driver-car” assemblage, see Dant 2004), and my lack of experience of driving in a rural environment made me conscious of my deficiencies and uncertain about my skills.

Rural surroundings create an idyllic environment for living (see, e.g., Hämeenaho 2012), but the obverse of this peaceful atmosphere is residents’ daily struggle with the roads. At the beginning of my fieldwork, it was still winter, and I was not accustomed to driving along rural roads but had more experience on paved streets in urban areas. The dark, icy roads caused me stress, and I had to concentrate on handling my vehicle while glancing at the map at the same time in order not to take the wrong turn on the long roads through the forest. During the first interviews, I mentioned to my informants how, to my mind, the driving conditions were quite bad, and the women agreed with me. While pondering the best and the worst features of rural living, one informant noted the following:

What is not well organized in the countryside? Well, in spring there is a problem with the roads: they are very poorly maintained. In winter, when you set off first thing in the morning, they haven’t cleared the snow, or the roads may be slippery with ice. (Elina, F, 42)

Despite this, my informants found my fears and questions related to driving practices strange and slightly amusing. Because I was not very experienced as a driver, I was surprised to learn that the women I met had a very casual attitude to the adversities or even claimed to enjoy driving. For the women I spoke with, driving was just a part of everyday life and so mundane that according to their accounts it is not even thought of in the daily routine. As Dant (2004, 62) has noted, human collaboration with a technical device, such as a car, turns into routines and habitual practice in the course of time. In such a process, driver and car combine to attain capabilities to meet the routine mobility requirements that the daily living imposes. The women I interviewed lived within the local car culture, and (rural) driving, as well as the emotions related to it, had become a normal and unnoticed part of their lives (also Sheller 2004, 229).

Although driving goes largely unnoticed as a part of daily living, it still has a marked effect on the women’s daily scheduling and their coping with rural time and space. Indeed, it is likely that without my questions related to difficulties, fueled by my own negative experiences and outsider viewpoints, the significance of the environment for daily driving and its effect on mobile practices would not have been mentioned at all in the interviews. As I will show in my analysis, the rural environment and the need to be mobile affect individuals as they acquire practical skills to cope
with that environment. However, it also affects the level of community and the local lifestyle.

Driving is affected by the natural conditions, most notably by the distance and conditions on the roads. Harsh winters and changing climatic conditions are notable features of rural driving in Finland. On rural roads, the time spent traveling to work may vary greatly depending on the weather and the season. In winter, the time of day also makes a difference (whether the snow has already been cleared) or the depth of the mud on roads in spring. Drivers’ skills in coping with the rural surroundings increase with time. These skills include driving and handling the car, but also understanding weather conditions and finding the fastest routes. During my own fieldwork, I invariably found my way more easily when I followed the instructions provided by my informants. Although Internet route-maps provided the shortest routes in terms of distance, these by no means resulted in the shortest traveling time. Choosing the right routes is especially important in spring, when sandy roads may be in very poor condition because of melting ice and snow.

Adjustment to driving makes coping with long distances a normal part of life. The mothers I met with also accepted long distances and the necessity of driving one’s own car as a part of their living. The benefits of living in the country outweighed the negative aspects of living far from work and places of consumption. Conversely, the mothers emphasized the peacefulness of their living environment and perceived the countryside as a safe place in which to raise children. They also adjusted children’s hobbies and the family’s other leisure activities in a way that enabled them to enjoy what the rural environment has to offer (see also Lanas, Rautio, and Syrjälä 2012). These ideas emphasizing the benefits of a rural environment in comparison to urban areas are not just adults’ perceptions of rurality. As Leyshon (2008) has shown, young people also articulate views of rural areas that are consistent with the rural idyll (also Pini, Morris, and Mayes 2016, 469–70).

The mothers’ daily living patterns partially corresponded to stereotypes of the Finnish idea of an idyllic life: a detached house by a beautiful lake (e.g., Nieminen-Sundell 2011; Håmeenaho 2012). However, within a system of automobility, along with the house, the lake, and the omnipresent berry bushes, comes a car or two parked in the yard, waiting to give residents a ride out of the rural when needed.

Local Living in a “System of Automobility”

Daily driving may be necessary, but, for drivers, it can be much more than just a simple matter of transportation, a means to get “out of the backwoods.” As one of the mothers said about her relation to driving, “Driving is no problem for me. Actually, I kind of like it. I can clear my thoughts during the drive by listening to music. Well, the kids keep making a noise there on the backseat, but still” (Sari, F, 36).
As Sheller (2004) has noted, the significance of private driving cannot be limited to transportation alone. Private cars enable rural residents to accomplish their daily tasks, but driving also becomes a meaningful activity from the viewpoint of emotions and feelings, as well as participation in daily social practices. An experienced rural driver can forget the fears and practical difficulties and enjoy the ride—not just on the road but within the beautiful landscape that brings well-being to the mother’s daily life. Analyzing the emotional geographies of rural areas evokes the deeper meanings of daily driving, as well as the cultural adjustment of modern technology to former ways of rural life.

What is experienced during the drive itself? How is time in these “in-between” places used for something other than driving? During the journey, drivers have time to rest, think, study, or be social either with fellow passengers or by using a mobile phone (e.g., Laurier 2004; Hämeenaho 2014, 91). Rural drivers can take pleasure in traveling through the familiar landscape, or they can use their travel time for remote working by means of modern information technology (also Dant 2004). The car itself, the little “hut on wheels,” offers solitary movement and can become a site of personal well-being, a cozy place for respite during a hectic day. Time spent in the car may serve as a much-needed moment during which one need not be effective or productive (Sheller and Urry 2000; Bull 2004).

My informants likewise emphasized the role of the car as a private space. One of the mothers explained that a car serves as a means of transition between her various daily roles and responsibilities: “During the drive you have time to put your mind in a certain mood. When you leave work, you can think through work stuff and then move on to domestic things. And, of course, the same thing in the morning” (Tuula, F, 41). Driving that is based on routines and responsibilities (such as consumption or work) also affords flexibility and freedom to travel according to one’s own schedule and route preferences (also Sheller and Urry 2000, 743–44; Urry 2004, 28–29.) This is extremely important for mothers whose daily chores and tasks create a complex combination of work, consumption, care, and mobile practices. One mother said, “I am so used to driving. You can go when you need to, and you don’t have to be tied to the bus timetable, like ‘Oh my, the bus is coming in five minutes and I’ll miss it.’ Yes, it’s easier to use your own car” (Sari, F, 36).

The freedom that a private car affords, however, concerns only those permitted to drive. And the need for daily mobility is not just an issue for adults: children are also on the move, attending school or daycare and participating in leisure activities (also Sheller 2004; Bushin et al., 2007; Barker 2009). The lives of young people living in rural areas differ from those of their urban counterparts. A more limited range of hobbies can be pursued, and opportunities to meet friends are more restricted. Children (or, indeed, anybody without a driver’s license) cannot travel long distances on their own, and villages have few facilities for sports, music, or other organized activities. For rural parents, the task of offering
their offspring a chance to be mobile becomes an essential part of daily routines but also an important way of caring. Some parents try to provide their children with the same opportunities as those enjoyed by their urban-dwelling peers, but this requires a considerable amount of time, money, and, especially, scheduling.

The viewpoint of those with few or no opportunities to drive themselves sheds interesting light on the question of immobility and its effect on one’s life. Research on (im)mobility has previously shown how, within a society based on a culture of automobility, social exclusion and disempowerment may easily be exacerbated by the lack of a car or the ability to drive (Milbourne 2004; Sheller 2004; Woods 2005; Ferguson 2010). For those who are dependent on private or public help with mobility because of old age or disabilities, for example, life in a rural setting can become restricted and isolated. It is argued that the ability to be mobile by driving (a private car) is one of the key factors that make it possible to live in the remote Finnish countryside (Tedre and Pulkkinen 2011). It is the responsibility of those who are mobile to offer such people a chance.

The daily challenges of schedules and distances shape local practices of mobility. In a local car culture, providing daily mobility is not just a private task but also has a social dimension. Rural areas are socially connected through a network of local people who share the same burden of coping with long distances. For example, as going anywhere requires a vehicle, if your car breaks down or is being repaired, a neighbor’s car may be the only hope of getting to work. My research brought to light many daily practices where the community helps its members to cope with their manifold tasks and schedules and to overcome distances in the required time (see Hämeenaho 2014).

Dependence on a technological device, with its potential technical flaws and unreliability, emphasizes the value of more durable social networks. To cope with the dependence on cars, rural inhabitants adopt a strategy of mutual help in order to meet the requirements of daily travel. This practice connects neighbors and their vehicles within a functioning network of mobility. The challenge posed by busy schedules becomes apparent in the lives of working mothers with children. In the Finnish countryside, school and daycare schedules seemed to be the most important factor in determining the family’s daily routines (also Edensor 2004, 2006; Barker 2009). In some families, they were also one of the main reasons to cooperate with neighbors. The trip to school may be too long for children to walk or cycle, and even if there is a bus ride to school, the stops may be far from the family’s home. One mother explained, “The bus stop is so far away. The road isn’t safe. There are no street lamps or anything, so we have decided to help the children [with their daily travel]” (Liisa, F, 43). She explained further how families living in the same area had formed a car pool in order to provide a safe trip to the school(bus) for children of the village:
We have to drive the children five kilometers every morning [to the bus stop]. We take turns; we have four families that do this. Today it was our turn. We drove them to the bus stop in the morning. And then on Tuesdays it is our turn to pick them all up. (Liisa, F, 43)

It is noteworthy that the local car culture does not exist in a vacuum but intertwines with other, more traditional ways of living in rural surroundings. Dependence on cars combines the modern culture of automobility with more traditional ways of living together that characterize daily life in the countryside even today (e.g., Pihlaja 2010; Hämeenaho 2014). Neighborly help, as a practice of working together and helping others in the local community, is seen as a traditional and still vital part of rural life in Finland (e.g., Kuisma 2005; Hämeenaho 2014). Giving someone a ride or lending a car are common ways of helping others in rural areas. Nor has the idea that the whole community looks after its vulnerable members died out. One mother told me that she drives her neighbor, an elderly person without a driver’s license, to the shops and to see a doctor. Sometimes the women drove to the bigger city, 130 kilometers from their home village. This kind of help with mobility significantly enhances elders’ opportunities to live at home (e.g., Pihlaja 2010, 47). Most of my informants also had elderly relatives living nearby, and helping them was part of their daily or weekly routines.

The care provided is one feature of rural car culture that stresses the durability of traditional ways of living. On the other hand, it affords insight into the process of cultural adjustment, how traditional ways of living intertwine with modern technology. The car is often viewed as an extension of masculine identity, but as this study of daily life in rural areas shows, it also plays an important role in the more feminine practice of caregiving. For giving a ride to an elderly person or driving your children to school and to hobbies a (family) car becomes a tool for caring (also Sheller 2004).

This aspect of driving as caregiving was highlighted during my interviews, which largely dealt with mothers’ daily routines. My fieldwork indicates that the traditional division of family labor, which assigns housework and childcare to women, still persists. Both the expectations and practices related to care followed the normative thinking on care as women’s duty. Despite women’s occupational roles and activities in non-profit organizations, for example, the responsibility for caring was mainly theirs to bear. This was particularly the case in those families who derive their income from farming and forestry (Hämeenaho 2014, 83–84; on gendered division of care responsibility, see Gordon 2008, 27; Craig and Mullan 2010, 1345).

Traditionally, the home was not only the site of women’s work, but it essentially defined women’s spaces of activity (also Jokinen 2005; Olsson 2009; Noack 2010). In modern society, women’s spatial presence
has expanded beyond the home. Within the system of automobility, the
immutability of gender roles does not mean that women’s space is limited
to the farmyard or inside the house. On the contrary, in today’s rural
Finland, women’s caregiving responsibilities are one of the main reasons
for their extensive mobility, and thus those responsibilities widen their
activity space. Driving children to daycare, to school, and to leisure activ-
ities gives women a reason and need to be mobile. Driving daily on these
caregiving journeys confirms the traditional division of labor, but it does
so within the new settings of mobile lifestyle and a local car culture.

Local culture and the prominent role of private cars should not be
understood only as something that derives from global and national
systems of automobility. The daily practices and living environment in
rural areas serve to strengthen a lifestyle based on mobility and driving.
Children in rural areas spend a considerable portion of their days sitting
in private cars, school taxis, or buses (Hämeenaho 2014, 138–39; also
Bushin et al. 2007). Thus, at a very early age, they observe and learn
that daily life is dependent on private driving and having one’s own car.
Children live a mobile lifestyle but still have restrictions with their private
mobility because of their age and skills. After getting a driver’s license and
a moped or a car, they will be able to follow local mobility patterns and
enjoy the freedom private driving affords.

As my research has shown, in the course of daily life one’s car becomes
a tool enabling people to live in the country. At the same time, a car is a
place where mobile people spend a considerable portion of their time. In
daily life, cars play an important role in the social and also the emotional
spheres of everyday life. Private driving enables families to live in sur-
roundings they consider idyllic and which provide them with the things
they appreciate most: peaceful dwelling in beautiful natural surroundings.
Daily mobility also enables rural residents to care for their children and
other vulnerable members of the local community. Long distances and
dependence on private cars result in village life being shaped by the car
culture.

Conclusions

Being mobile can be seen as a culturally pervasive and ordinary part of
Noack 2010, 80). As Sheller and Urry (2000) argue, the innovations in
modern technology shape and refigure our everyday lives by providing
tools to cope with a need to be mobile, and, among these tools, private
cars have a special role. Dependence on the ability to be mobile is high-
lighted in a rural environment. The residents of remote rural areas have
to adjust their daily life practices to meet the requirements of the global
system of automobility and nationally provided schedules. During the
course of my fieldwork, it became apparent that the need to cope with
long distances determined the daily life practices of my informants. This
puts mobility at the core of today’s rural lifestyle in Finland.
In this article, I studied private driving and local car culture in rural Finland, its motivations, and the various meanings attached to routine mobility in daily life. The main features of Finnish rural car use are shaped by long distances and Finland's extreme climatic conditions. However, people living in rural areas do not consider long distances problematic. This viewpoint differs from the common perception of rural environment only as a challenge for daily living (on negative perceptions and stereotypes, see, e.g., Marsden 2009, 119). On the map, the remoteness may be true, but when rural mobility is studied from the viewpoint of rural residents and emotional geographies, the picture changes.

Contrary to the negative visions, the mothers I spoke with had a different perception of rural living. They emphasized the significance of rural surroundings and peacefulness—provided by the long distances from densely populated areas. Within the system of automobility, these factors of a good quality of life are made possible by private car use. When a local driver becomes accustomed to daily travel and has acquired the skills to cope with the local driving conditions, various meanings emanate from practices related to daily mobility. Time spent in the car becomes significant in its own right and is filled with feelings and emotions related to driving and its reasons, such as caring. A rural mother lives with her car, and she also experiences the Finnish four seasons and adventurous road conditions through it.

The analysis shows how driving is also a way of providing care and well-being for families and for the wider community. Drivers and their passengers are able to conduct their daily tasks and enjoy their time and rural environment because of the private car. When studied from a wider perspective, the local car culture enhances rural residents’ well-being and their attachment to the traditions of a communal lifestyle. Research shows how rural mothers help one another and offer care for vulnerable members of their community. Caring is not confined to one’s own family and kin but also extends to other locals. Ways of helping and caring range from occasional rides from villages to centers and services to the daily helping of children with challenging journeys to school or long distances to hobbies. All these mobile practices are rendered feasible by private car use during the daily routine. It is fair to claim that in rural Finland, busy mothers live their daily lives on wheels.

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Mobility, Border Ethics, and the Challenge of Revanchist Identity Politics

James W. Scott
University of Eastern Finland
and University of Gdańsk

Abstract
The main objective of the essay is to argue that a powerful revanchist and self-referential narrative of authenticity and autonomy is influencing the securitization of mobility. Cultural nationalism, coupled with elements of a new sovereigntism that reifies national interests and unilateralism, is a direct challenge to globalist assumptions that privilege mobility and cosmopolitanism. Discussion begins with a consideration of securitization and the perceptual, socio-cultural, and attitudinal foundations of security. The concept of ontological security is particularly salient in this context, as it emphasizes aspects of national identity that are prone to radicalization as well as relates socio-political bordering processes to securitization. As recent events have made abundantly clear, democratic impulses co-exist with illiberal understandings of belonging, citizenship, and culture. This is manifested by political and social imaginaries of security that are based on what appears to be a reinvigorated cultural nationalism, and as a direct consequence, racial and ethnic autarchy. In contrast to the Nordic examples developed in the present collection, the case of Hungary is elaborated as a perhaps extreme example of revanchist identity politics that is impacting European societies more generally. In concluding, the essay outlines potential consequences of revanchist securitization which in several ways threaten the European Union as a political and multicultural community. Desecuritization will be suggested as an alternative; this is understood as a means of changing the ways in which mobility and migration are discursively framed, and contextually broadening debate on the significance of open borders for European Union.

Keywords: bordering, Hungary, mobility, nationalism, ontological security, revanchism

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Introduction
In their introduction to this special issue, Driss Habti and Tuulikki Kurki have indicated that mobility is not merely a question of geographical movement but is also composed of an assemblage of different political, historical, socio-economic, and cultural contexts. As Cresswell (2011, 551) argues, mobilities are “at the centre of constellations of power, the creation of identities and the micro-geographies of everyday life.” Mobility reflects interactions, everyday perceptions, representations, and popular imaginations that construct regional spaces and borders. Mobility is thus a form of borderscape in the sense evoked by Brambilla (2015): a process of border-crossing and border-making that connects the realm of high politics with that of communities and individuals who negotiate borders on an everyday basis.

Against the background of this complex reality, mobility, as an ability and a human right and not a privilege, appears to be a prominent victim of the current phase of political retrenchment and foundationalist thinking in Europe and North America. This is evidenced by Europe’s ongoing refugee and migration “crises,” which, in addition to dramatizing geopolitical stability, indicate that democratic impulses co-exist with illiberal understandings of belonging, citizenship, and culture. Furthermore, social imaginaries are resurging in political and public discourse that associate migration with acute security risk and that racialize migrant groups (Gerard 2014; Ibrahim 2005). Targeting migrant communities within securitizing discourse, for example in the Netherlands and the UK, has become a viable political strategy around which national conservative and right-wing populist movements have rallied. However, this also implies that mobility itself is suspect. In an extreme reading of this notion, to be mobile means to be itinerant, rootless, without grounding in community, lacking authenticity, and thus not to be trusted (see Deneen 2009). As Stjernborg, Tesfahuney, and Wretstrand (2015) demonstrate, mobility is an important factor in the stigmatization of specific people and places.

In essence, mobility is about transcending borders. As a result, borders are at the core of discussions of security and the control of mobility at the national, European, and global level. In terms of received understandings of security, borders represent an interface between domestic concerns and wider interstate and intercultural contexts. At the most basic, borders serve to protect national societies from external threats while maintaining conditions for their economic sustainability. Beyond this, however, the functions and social significance of borders not only reflect the means in which security risks and challenges can be articulated and acted upon but also ethical questions of considerable importance. In tandem with the securitizing discourses that stigmatize mobility and migration, political pressure has increased for more formidable and militarized borders in order to defend national cultures, even at the risk of reducing cross-border mobility for everyday citizens and curtailing democratic rights (Jones 2016).

Border studies research has taken up the ethical debate by questioning the realpolitik of selective and restrictive mobility and by interrogating
the dilemma of bordering liberal societies (Elden 2009; Jones and Johnson 2016). Despite the European Union’s visions of open borders, Europe’s boundaries are in many ways markers of inequality, exclusion, and, as such, symbols of unfairness. The European Union engages, for example, in humanitarian aid and conflict resolution in order to promote conditions for more equitable development on a global scale. But at the same time, it has markedly restricted the possibility of asylum while invoking police powers and state violence in order to prevent, at a very high human cost, irregular entry into its territory. Through visa regimes and border politics, the EU thus defines the ground rules of access for different groups depending on origin, citizenship, material situation, and socio-professional background (Mau et al. 2012).

While the humanitarian perspective dominates border studies research, equally complex ethical questions are raised by culturalist perspectives that emphasize strong borders as a means to protect the coherence and sustainability of national societies. As Vertovec (2011) indicates, cultural arguments are powerful instruments with which to marginalize accommodating political positions regarding asylum and migration. And this despite the fact that understandings of national culture are often based on highly questionable notions of homogeneity and singularity. Consequently, the main objective of this article is to indicate ways in which powerful self-referential narratives of authenticity, national belonging, and autonomy are influencing the securitization of mobility. Identity politics have become a volatile element in security discourses because of their non-negotiable and foundational nature. Moreover, I argue that this form of identity politics contains revanchist elements that promote a vigorous re-assertion of cultural chauvinism and political xenophobia. Such revanchism reflects a “cognitive liberation” (Kallis 2013) of nationalist and right-wing ideologies that feed cultural nationalism and directly challenge globalist assumptions that privilege mobility and cosmopolitanism.

The approach taken here is not based on an in-depth empirical study, nor does it engage primarily with governmentality or the biopolitical techniques of border management and personal controls that affect mobility as such. Instead, it approaches the issue from an ethical and philosophical perspective, questioning assumptions that inform security-oriented thinking. The arguments developed here are based on a review of critical work from mainly academic sources and a brief case study of recent Hungarian political discourses and border control practices. Building on positions developed by Rumelili (2015), Browning and Joenniemi (2017), and others, I make the point that ontological security (that is, the integrity and stability of group identities) is intentionally conflated with physical security for political reasons. Discussion begins with a consideration of the perceptual, socio-cultural, and attitudinal foundations of security and their links to the securitization of mobility and to the strategic use of national borders. The discussion of revanchist identity politics that follows exemplifies ways in which ontological and physical security are
conflated and mobilized in terms of border politics and, more specifically, in the case of Hungary. In the concluding section, this essay will outline potential consequences of revanchist securitization which in several ways threatens the European Union as a political and multicultural community. Desecuritization will be suggested as an alternative; this is understood as a means of changing the ways in which mobility and migration are discursively framed. This suggested alternative also contextually broadens the debate on the significance of open borders for the European Union.

Ontological Securitization and Borders of Mobility

According to Rumford (2006, 163), “[b]orders and mobilities are not antithetical”:

A globalizing world is a world of networks, flows and mobility; it is also a world of borders. It can be argued that cosmopolitanism is best understood as an orientation to the world which entails the constant negotiation and crossing of borders [. . .]. Borders connect the “inner mobility” of our lives with both the multiplicity of communities we may elect to become members of and the cross-cutting tendencies of polities to impose their border regimes on us in ways which compromise our mobilities, freedoms, rights, and even identities. (2006, 163)

Through border-making (bordering) processes, identities, values, and interests of local communities are defined, often in relation to the “other” and that which is perceived as “external” (Scott 2009). Differentiation and exceptionalism, in addition to more existential understandings of threat, make geographic, socio-cultural, and, hence, national and wider European definitions of that which is to be defended possible. On the other hand, borders are not static. They are subject to transformation as environmental conditions change and are thus also a reflection of societal capacities to accommodate change and react to new security challenges. Through border-making, geographical and socio-cultural notions of security community can be expanded, restricted, or otherwise flexibly adjusted.

Links between mobility, security, and borders are not always self-evident. Borders are not of necessity closed, nor do they inherently represent barriers. Political, cultural, and cognitive borders can also be broadly understood to be resources in the organization of everyday social relations. However, it is also clear that borders have ambivalent impacts and that the ambivalent nature of borders stems, among other things, from difficulties in reconciling public life with the private sphere, and a simultaneous need for closure, openness, and connectedness. Furthermore, borders can be conceptualized as practices that are constituted in the political and everyday negotiation of passage from one particular space to another. Borders also shift depending on grouping-specific appropriations and contestations as well as in the constructions of individual subjectivities. In other
words, borders do not simply exist, but must be considered as products of bordering, that is, the everyday institutional and discursive practices that construct and reproduce borders (van Houtum and van Naerssen 2002). Nevertheless, in terms of traditional security-oriented understandings, borders are largely interpreted as an interface between domestic concerns and wider interstate and intercultural contexts (Rood 2014). As Rumford (2008) points out, borders function in ways similar to computer firewalls; they perform an “intelligent” filtering of immigrants, allowing passage for the attractive and restricting entrance to the unwanted. In this view, borders serve to protect national societies from external threats while maintaining conditions for their social, political, and economic sustainability. The ways in which both state security organizations and ordinary citizens most often encounter these risks are, however, not on the level of abstract global processes, but on the level of local communities, economic interaction, social communication, and everyday life.

The contemporary analysis of border politics and border-making processes is largely influenced by the security paradigm in which biometric technologies and the biopolitical controls applied to individuals create selective mobility (Popescu 2012). Furthermore, within bordering processes, borders are becoming territorially displaced, and border controls can, in principle, be carried out by anyone anywhere—by citizens who inform police when they spot illegal trespassers, by airline companies, and by public agencies, such as health organizations and places of education. Mobility, which is in many ways an achievement of modernity, is hence a clear target of bordering and securitization practices. Indeed, it is not without a certain degree of irony that such a basic human need as mobility should be the subject of negative securitization narratives. Mobility is generally perceived to be positive to the degree that it is not coerced, freeing populations from stifling local attachments and opening up new opportunities for self-realization (Doughty and Murray 2016). Mobility, moreover, is a powerful counterforce to autocracy and traditionalist authoritarianism that seek to restrict the exchange of ideas, practices, and people. However, globalization and the increasing role that security plays in everyday life have highlighted the vulnerability of mobility—and open borders—to critical scrutiny.

Mobility can appear threatening to many because it also defies traditional forms of social control. Cresswell (2009) points out that too much mobility can reduce a sense of place if transience dominates public life. Similarly, Holston (2009, 3) argues that “if cities have historically been the locus of citizenship’s development, global urbanization creates especially volatile conditions, as cities become crowded with marginalized citizens and noncitizens who contest their exclusions. In these contexts, citizenship is unsettled and unsettling.” Bauman (1987, 40) reminds us that in the Middle Ages, the appearance of “masterless men” and itinerant, vagabond groups as a result of social upheaval challenged the “inflexible world of communities” from which they were excluded.
Conflating Security of Identity with Physical Security

An all-too-neglected aspect of security as a public good is its socially embedded nature. States are no longer the only political subjects that produce security (Fierke 2007), and the practical inseparability of state-centered, militarily defined, and more holistic understandings of security requires greater acknowledgment in policy and academia (James 2014). Security is not a given; it does not exist independently of perceptions and feelings of relative safety. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which threat and security are framed are not only of a formal political character but are more widely embedded in society, in daily practices and public discourse. One major insight of the Copenhagen school of peace research is that in order to matter in terms of security policies, specific objects or phenomena must be transformed into security subjects. This process of securitization is expressed by speech acts and discursive framings (see Wæver 1995; Balzacq 2005) but also by concrete policy practices (i.e., visa and border regimes) that reinforce the security relevance of specific issues. However, states and state-like institutions have no monopoly over securitization processes. One of the most salient and potentially problematic aspects of securitization is the framing of threat in ways that emphasize national and cultural uniqueness in everyday terms (Larsen et al. 2009) and through the appropriation of vocabularies of “popular geopolitics” (Shim 2016; Williams and Boyce 2013). As Matthes (2012) suggests, citizens contribute to the framing of political issues with considerable impact. The Dutch referendum of April 2016, which rejected the EU-Ukraine Trade and Cooperation Agreement in process of ratification, is but one example. Everyday geopolitical imaginations are also evident in perceptions of mobility and migrants as potential threats.

Partly as a result of long-term migration pressures and the more immediate refugee crisis in Europe, threat scenarios have proliferated in which asylum-seekers and migrants are portrayed as not only challenging the political bases of European Union but the very foundations of European civilization itself (Vertovec 2011). As a result, mobility and migration are now prominent geopolitical categories in terms of popular discourse and media representations (Vollmer and Karakayali 2018). However, popular imaginaries of mobile migrants are often based on assumptions of threat to national identity and local ways of life. Indeed, the securitization of mobility and migration is not a derivative of strict political rationality alone but is also a function of ontological notions of security (Giddens 1991; Rumelili 2015). In this way, the regulation and governance of mobility is narrated as necessary for preservation of the identity of the self and self-referential ways of seeing the world. Ontological security is a question of identity and the stability of ideas, values, and points of common reference that create a sense of group belonging (Mitzen 2006). It involves cognitive-affective resistance to identity change and, thus, describes an unwillingness to part with available certainties and assumptions because of the potential disruption this can cause. Rules, values,
conventions, and formal and informal institutions are among the basic structural elements that are constantly produced and reproduced within systems. These basic structural elements create boundaries around societies, making national societies recognizable. More than merely an abstract concept, ontological security is observable in concrete situations, such as the self-referential nature of political agenda-setting and implementation. The salience of the concept is evidenced by attempts to achieve “epistemic coherence in times of uncertainty” (Natorski 2016, 649). This signifies a form of behavior that favors continuity in situations of deep uncertainty or in the exclusion of alternative policy options and a risk of misrecognition and misleading understandings of reality (Browning and Joenniemi 2017; Chernobrov 2016).

More importantly for this discussion, Rumelili (2015) has warned against the conflation of identity-related issues with physical and human security. When the ontological takes precedence in ways that promote exclusion and selectively limit mobility, potentials for conflict reduction and resolution are drastically diminished. At the same time, the notion that cultural difference is a barrier to co-existence creates obstacles to measured debate—among others regarding traditions of migration, the root causes of forced migration, and the importance of migration in constructing Europe. Moreover, rather than adopting a systemic view of ontological security, that is, as an embedded form of control, a critical but broader focus on the ideational bases of social action is needed. More specifically, social action builds on imaginaries that provide orientation and reduce complexity (Jessop 2012). By the same token, imaginaries also provide insights into the realm of the everyday and practical clues as to how specific issues are socially interpreted. Social imaginaries tell us, for example, what might be understood as a common-sense solution to a problem according to rationales which are immediately intelligible and acceptable to specific groups.

Consequently, one of the most remarkable aspects of culturally based threat discourses is their reliance on socio-spatial imaginaries and politics of identitary bordering rather than on more rational assessments of risk and social burdens. Identitary bordering is not only fed by social media and populist discourses but also by intellectual and philosophical arguments that, for example, interpret liberal, humanitarian understandings of mobility and migration as naïve and misguided. Following Rumelili (2015), therefore, if understood in foundationalist and nativist terms, ontological security can limit understandings of how identity can be expanded to facilitate desecuritization without resulting in a loss of “self.”

Revanchist Identity Politics
The questions addressed above are, ultimately, ethical ones in which very different understandings of mobility, identity, and borders are involved. Specifically, the impacts of identitary bordering on ontological security pose the EU with concrete dilemmas where collective values, liberal ideas, and ethics are put to severe tests that could have considerable domestic
social and political repercussions. In contemporary Europe, it is clear that everyday xenophobia has deep roots and that anti-immigrant sentiment is often starkly opposed to the official status quo supported by the state, its institutions, and the mainstream political parties that represent it (Fassin and Windels 2016). Nationalist populism has achieved a degree of common-sense status through threat scenarios of terrorism, increasing social burdens, and Islamophobia, as well as a general dislike of the European Union. Partly as a result of this, the reclamation of national identity and sovereignty and the emphasis of cultural-civilizational difference in defining Europe compete rather strongly with more inclusive notions of Europeanness.

Junco (2017) has defined populist nationalism as a social imaginary based on a form of “collective narcissism.” And indeed, cultural nationalism, coupled with the politics of new sovereigntism that reifies national interests and unilateralism (Spiro 2000), presents itself—and gleans much of its popularity—as a counterweight to globalism and alienation of national culture. Put in more pointed terms, I argue that we are witnessing the resurgence of a revanchist identity politics that not only repudiates liberalism but frames cosmopolitanism and, with it, mobility, as antithetical to “true” freedom. The revanchist view is nativist and foundationalist, and it thrives on the idea that the real world is made up of countless monocultures; both European and national identity are understood as organic and primordial rather than constructed. Identity is destiny rather than choice. In addition, much national conservative sentiment closely associates Christian faith with cultural concepts of Europe. Historical experience, including the emergence and spread of Christendom, as well as the common experience of the Enlightenment, defines what is, what is not, and what can never be Europe.

The revanchist link between identitary bordering and ontological security involves an amplified insistence on the ethics of the particular—“a metaphysical struggle for the meaning of space and locality,” to quote Drenthen (2010, 323). In accordance with the resurgence of revanchist identity politics, a new conservative appreciation of nationalism and attempt to objectivize it have emerged, supposedly rediscovering the strength of the idea that was always there. In other words, revanchism promotes a narcissistic self-referentiality—the notion that certain group-specific ways of being or seeing the world are inherently correct but have been unjustly suppressed or falsified, and thus require more forceful representation. In this vein, Mitchell (2017) suggests that this new appreciation of nationalism is the result of the left-wing emphasis of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism and the rebuke of national pride and religious faith.

National identity and patriotism are not by definition negative sentiments. However, nationalism becomes a problem when, exacerbated by socio-economic stress and geopolitical instability, it results in obscurantism, identitary bordering, and the accentuation of perceived difference
between people, cultures, and states. As such, in the current context of multifarious challenges to the European Union as a political community, security policies must deal with subjective perceptions of threat at the same time that they attempt to base concrete responses to threats based on objective assessments. With revanchist identity politics, and the potential upgrading of cultural supremacism in terms of everyday politics, Mitchell’s conservative defense of nationalism risks becoming a vacuous concept. It is not resistance to globalism and its impacts that motivates revanchist sentiment but, to quote O’Meara (2013, 168), a follower of identitary ideas, the “democratic levelling of liberalism” that “suppresses very healthy expressions of authority and superiority” and that robs national societies of “the collective liberty of a people of nation to pursue its destiny as it took cultural, historical, and biological form rather than merely economical.”

The revanchist identity is highly dependent on negative interpretations of modernity and very narrow socio-cultural categories that focus on the singularity of identity (see Sen 2006). It is based, furthermore, on a foundationalist-nativist notion of identity and citizenship that resides in membership of an Urgemeinschaft. The impacts of identitary bordering on ontological security pose the EU with concrete dilemmas where collective values, liberal ideas, and ethics are put to severe tests that could have considerable domestic social and political repercussions. The revanchist impulse resonates with the illiberal populism that has repudiated many of the basic premises of European Union, particularly more cosmopolitan ideas of shared European citizenship and cultural tolerance. Playing on a politics of national alienation, illiberalism seeks to change the rules by which questions of migration, citizenship, and, ultimately, mobility are discussed and dealt with politically. Particularly in national conservative circles, internationalism and globalization are seen as threats to cultural diversity, drivers of a global monoculture that is wiping out diversity rather than increasing it (see Deneen 2009).

Hungarian Identity Politics and the Securitization of Mobility
The electoral victory of Hungary’s national conservative government in 2010 was a watershed in the emergence of contemporary culturalist politics and an apparent vindication of foundationalist understandings of nation. It was also facilitated by a deep sense of disillusionment with liberalism and EU membership (Pataki 2013). The Hungarian case reveals a politically effective mobilization of identity politics that has also benefited from a “cognitive liberation” (Kallis 2013) from liberal pro-European ideas.

As the national-conservative ideologue Gyula Tellér (2004) has argued, because the nation is a value in and of itself, “god-given,” the idea of multiple identities is a fiction. In this context, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s skilled use of the “illiberal” idea provides a concrete example of how revanchism is put into political operation through
an extreme self-referential view of Europe. Hungary’s contestation of European Union attempts to find a community-wide approach to deal with the needs of refugees and migrants has received much attention. With the installation and reinforcement of barbed-wire fences and internment camps along its border with Serbia and Croatia, Hungary’s mobility-control practices since 2015 have achieved a new intensity. In legitimizing border closures and with a dismissive approach to Europe’s refugee crisis, the present Hungarian government under Viktor Orbán has stylized itself as a guardian of Europe’s historical legacy and Christian culture.\(^2\) It has warned constantly of the dangers of “unnatural migration” and the emergence of parallel (Islamic) societies that will threaten Europe’s welfare, security, and identity.\(^3\) This discourse is supported by the constant negative coverage in the Hungarian media of Europe’s refugee crisis as well as conspiracy theories that suggest an “externally” driven exploitation of Europe’s open societies. Pointedly, in mobilizing support for fences, Hungary’s prime minister suggests that “illiberal” values are needed in order to protect national societies and to guard against naive notions of openness and tolerance (Zalan 2016).

Hungary, as dominated by the present national conservative (FIDESZ) government, is a key example of how revanchist identity politics serve as a (geo)political resource. In this case, the national-conservative government has positioned Hungary as a major player in its quest to promote traditional values and as a defender of national sovereignty and identity (Butler 2017).\(^4\) Hungary is portrayed not as a follower, but as an innovator and maker of Europe, according to notions of “national Europe” against the “political correctness” of Brussels bureaucrats and other major politicians (Szarka 2017). The revanchist impulse is furthermore reflected in a repudiation of several major achievements of modernity and liberal society—achievements that can be associated with secular humanism, tolerance, and mobility. Indeed, one important element of Orban’s “anti-politics” of Europe is the use of borders—physically and symbolically—in ways that resonate with popular fear of migrants and conservative skepticism of multiculturalism and open borders. The relation to mobility is clear: the closure of borders and the installation of “transit zones” cum


internment camps along the southern borders are expressions of hostility to the change and encounters that mobility engenders: these are seen to dilute the authenticity of national culture and ethnic purity. With its border politics, the Hungarian government seeks, furthermore, to reduce the mobility and the visibility of refugees.

Commenting on his government’s “zero refugees strategy,” Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán argued in 2015 in following words:

[. . .] the basics are that each nation is defined by its borders. Borders must be respected. And borders must be defended by the state. [. . .] And if you are a member of the European Union, especially the Schengen Area, you have an obligation to defend your national border, which is the European border, to stop them. Everybody who would like to cross the border in an illegal way: stop them and defend the border to defend your community and to defend Europe.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó has argued that German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s welcome culture has in fact been self-serving, opening up Germany at the expense of smaller member states through which refugees and migrant transit.\(^5\) Hungary’s open animosity toward the welcome culture idea is, of course, shared by many political groupings within the EU. The basis for the antagonism is the fear of socio-ethnic and religious tensions as well as the increased social costs of caring for refugees. On the other hand, crime, terrorism, and insecurity are openly associated not only with refugees but also with illegal migrants (Fekete 2016).

The Hungarian government’s securitization of mobility has culminated in the creation of four “transit zones” on the border with Serbia and Croatia in order to “fix,” as it were, asylum-seekers in time and space and make them invisible to mainstream society. Since 2016, applications for asylum can be processed only at the border camps, and anyone apprehended crossing Hungary’s borders at other points will be immediately sent back to Serbia. The immobilization of refugee flows is both a deterrent as well as a clear expression of the government’s resolve to reject any EU-level quotas or regulations that impinge upon national sovereignty. This policy is seen by critics as tantamount to imprisonment and a blatant violation of human rights.\(^6\)

Popular Euro-skepticism is not strong in Hungary but there is strong underlying agreement with the government’s refusal to accept refugees

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\(^6\) See “Hungary’s Transit Zones are Actually Prisons Where Even Pregnant Women are Handcuffed.” \textit{Hungarian Spectrum}, June 14, 2017. \url{http://hungarianspectrum}.  

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and asylum-seekers. The October 2016 referendum against EU-wide resettlement quotas was not voted on by a majority of the population, but its results did reflect overwhelming support. As such, while the revanchist discourses of the Hungarian government are for the most part a product of ideology and national conservative party politics, they resonate with everyday fears of the “other” and a sense of imminent threat to national identity. Groups protesting Orbán’s hard-line nationalism and treatment of refugees have become more visible and vocal but are still marginalized within the domestic political landscape.

The forceful nature of the Hungarian government’s arguments against refugee and migrant mobility is based on a deft strategy of invoking the inviolability of national borders and exaggerating threats to national cohesion, identity, and sovereignty. As a result, the Hungarian government’s politics of contestation could have the effect of making xenophobia less objectionable, particularly within the context of securitized understandings of mobility and migration. Kallis (2013) has warned that both right-wing contagion as well as weakening mainstream resolve to combat anti-immigrant sentiment are hindering a more open European debate about accommodating mobility, migration, and asylum. This contagion effect is visible in the case of Hungary’s border politics, which have achieved general acceptance in Central Europe and elsewhere (see Hockenos 2015).

Concluding Thoughts: On Desecuritizing Mobility and Migration
The current situation in Europe points to a heightened need to desecuritize thinking about identity, mobility, and migration. The imaginary of mobile-migrant threat which has emerged in much populist discourse in Europe threatens to poison intercultural relations by severely curtailing the freedom of movement of “suspicious” groups and individuals. At the same time, securitization policies that target mobility and conflate migration with threat could, in fact, affect the stability of the European Union by constantly recreating situations of tension, mistrust, and conflict. Securitization practices have gained favor as a political expedient, but they are also a rallying point for extremist views that stridently challenge the European Union and its central premises. Anti-migrant securitization and the populist contagion it supports cast an ominous shadow over multicultural conviviality as well as everyday forms of border-crossing (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy 2018).

As Sen (2006) urges, political debate must resist singular and civilizational understandings of identity and their reductionist treatment of complex social realities. The political expedient of social classification reduces the wealth of entanglements, social situations, and identities that characterize real life to highly schematic and misleading forms of political and social bordering. Sen (2006, 45) warns that the doctrine of singular
identities, such as that promulgated in the Hungarian case, is a crude classification instrument that is also “grossly confrontational in form and implication.” The idea that choiceless identity forges an individual and national destiny lurks behind identitary bordering. Similarly, Taylor (1991) argues that great political and social harm resides in the unreflective confusion of authenticity of manner (self-identity) and matter (e.g., defining social goals).

In addition to more critical debate regarding national identity, mobility and its consequences need to be understood in more objective terms. Mobility is freedom, but it is inherently subject to manipulation, control, and punitive regulation. It is within this context that the positive characteristics of mobility have been questioned and subject to a highly politicized interpretation. On the other hand, as Massey (1993) has argued, mobility, such as that originally promoted by the EU, is a central element of a progressive sense of being that is at once robust because of its openness to the outside world and ability to connect with other cultures and other areas of the world.

One major problem is the lack of EU-wide migration and asylum policies based on grounded factual knowledge of migration and a resulting emphasis on racialized stereotypes, threat narratives, and the politics of exclusion. Nevertheless, the EU, despite its contradictions and crises, is perhaps one of the few potential actors that might provide scenarios of desecuritization based on a holistic understanding of human security and a truly cosmopolitan understanding of political community. In seeking ways to move beyond simplistic threat narratives and foundationalism, desecuritization would involve a conscious decoupling of identity- and security-related issues in political discourse (Rumelili 2015). A potential way forward is offered by the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt, the reappraisal of which is indicative of the ethical issues involved in the securitization of mobility. Arendt (1968) has warned of world alienation and “losing a sense of being in the world” and with it, identity. Identity is disclosed in the public sphere, the exclusion from which results in a loss of identification with the political system. Alienation also gives rise to the deterioration of the public sphere itself (d’Entreves 1994). Borren (2008) has, in fact, suggested that Arendt’s political philosophy can be adapted to criticize European policies that disenfranchise non-citizens through exposing them (as threats) or obscuring their claims, problems, and motivations. Bauder (2014) proposes that instead of regulating mobility with borders and arbitrary politics of inclusion and exclusion, a constructive alternative would be to link mobility (and migration) to the possibility of acquiring certain rights, including domicile-based citizenship, thus avoiding a future of uncertainty, statelessness, and increasing social tensions. While such scenarios seem distant from political reality, at least at this point in time, desecuritization would be an important first stop in opening up notions of community, belonging, and citizenship to include ever larger cross-section of humanity. As Nunn et al. argue:
In contrast to the insecurity of forced migration, formal state citizenship provides a privileged mobility that enables refugee-background youth to maintain and create transnational identities and attachments and to be protected while doing so, while also granting a secure status within the nation-state and insurance against further displacement in an uncertain future. In offering these forms of mobility and security, formal state citizenship contributes to a sense of ontological security among refugee-background youth, providing an important foundation for building national and transnational futures. (2016, 382)

References


Mobility and the Security Paradigm: How Immigration Became Securitized in Finnish Law and Policy

Jaana Palander, University of Eastern Finland
and University of Tampere
Saara Pellander, University of Helsinki
and University of Tampere1,2

Abstract
Alongside the emergence of the new mobility paradigm (Sheller and Urry 2006), especially in the social sciences, the security paradigm has gained importance as well. It is said that “the security paradigm is now becoming so ingrained that it is impossible to ignore the impact of security concerns on the development of migration policy” (Collyer 2006, 255). The mobility of people is shaped by a variety of formal and informal institutions, such as laws and policies that influence which groups have the right to travel to and reside in a certain country. This article is concerned with Finnish border and immigration regimes and the interplay between mobility and security within law and policy. The paper offers a historical account on the way in which security has been involved in the governance of immigration in Finland. We analyze policy reports, legal texts, case law, parliamentary plenary debates, and minutes of committee hearings that shape and define mobility. By combining political history with legal analysis, the article takes a transdisciplinary approach to mobility and its limits and sheds new light into the discussion of the mobility paradigm.

Our analysis provides empirical evidence that there has been a clear movement toward increased securitization over time. In political speech, restrictive measures are justified by a presumed threat to Finland’s national security. The individual rights of migrants and notions of the human security of migrants appear in these debates on the other end of the spectrum.

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2 The authors appear in alphabetical order to indicate equal contribution.
Keywords: mobility paradigm, security paradigm, immigration governance, immigration law, securitization

Introduction
From the perspective of mobility studies, migration law and policy are many times seen as the regulation of boundaries (Adey et al. 2014) or a representation of power (Skeggs 2004, 49; Morley 2000) functioning as a hindrance to mobility (Urry 2007, 36). Forced migrants, in particular, encounter growing restrictions and limitations on their possibilities of moving and staying in another country (Urry 2007, 36). Restricting human mobility through political or legal means is often justified with calls to maintain public order and national security. In this paper, we will describe and analyze the interplay between mobility and security within law and policy, contributing to the growing scholarship of what has been called the mobility turn (Creswell 2006; Urry 2000).

While law and policy are often seen as a hindrance to human mobility, different regulatory paths may either hinder or enhance mobility (Spijkerboer 2009). It is important to note that legal and political concepts embracing mobility, such as cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism, have developed in parallel to the mobility paradigm. Alongside scholarship that captures developments toward more mobility in migration governance, some scholars, however, have argued that immigration policy has been securitized (cf. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998), and they refer to the way that security is ingrained in immigration policies as “the security paradigm” (Collyer 2006). However, there is no consensus on the security paradigm, and many observers are critical of the claim that immigration has been securitized (Boswell 2007; Baele and Sterck 2015). Thus, it is vital to analyze whether a securitization of immigration is empirically justified.

Our empirical contribution lies in the combination of political and legal data, as well as in taking a longer perspective and starting our analysis from the enacting of Finland’s first Aliens Act in the beginning of the 1980s. We combine a content analysis of political speech with a study of the way in which security is defined in administrative and legal practice. We ask if and how Finnish immigration policy and legislation became securitized between the 1980s and the present day, and we furthermore ask what meanings security is given by Finnish politicians and the judiciary. By combining an analysis of political speech with the analysis of legal texts, the paper takes a transdisciplinary approach and can shed new light on the discussion of both the security and the mobility paradigms. We have found that within the studies of the securitization of immigration, human security and national security usually represent different and opposing approaches, reflecting dichotomies familiar to many disciplines.

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3 We use ‘migration’ when the term has a general meaning and ‘immigration’ when especially referring to inbound movement. The word immigration is a translation of the Finnish word maahanmuutto, which is the word that is used in our data.
In this article, we confirm that in recent times, national security concerns have outweighed individual security concerns.

We will first offer an overview of the most central theoretical concepts from the literature on migration and security studies that are relevant for this analysis, after which we will provide a detailed description of our methodology for gathering and analyzing our various types of data. The analysis is organized chronologically, and we have divided our research findings by decade: 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and the period from 2010 to the end of 2016. We focus on the points in time when the Finnish Aliens Act was first passed and when it has been renewed, which has been approximately every ten years. Each analytical sub-chapter begins with parliamentary debates, followed by the law and court cases, and closes with an analysis of governmental reports and strategy papers on security. We then, before our brief conclusion, analyze and discuss how securitization and balancing played out in our material throughout the period.

**Mobilities, Securitizations, and Immigration: Existing Literature and Perspectives**

The sedentary bias in thinking has been the paradigm not only in sociology, but in legal and political studies as well (Castells 2000; Sheller and Urry 2006; Sheller 2013, 45). However, the emergence of the new mobility paradigm in sociology (Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007) has been accompanied by similar theoretical developments in law and policy studies. The legal development around the EU is, of course, a prime example of a change in paradigm toward the normalization of certain forms of migration as a social phenomenon. The free-movement regime enshrined in the EU treaty has made the mobility of some citizens normal and even desirable. The “mobility turn” caused by the free movement of EU citizens was predicted to also affect the field of EU immigration law concerning the entry and rights of so-called third-country nationals. However, the spill-over from free movement to immigration policy did not seem to happen, as the free-movement regime has its own logic, separate from migration law (Thym 2013).

Security professionals and researchers have become interested in migration through a broader security concept (e.g., Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). According to scholars of the Copenhagen School of security studies, immigration is framed as a security threat that demands exceptional measures (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). Bigo (2000) had already stated, even before 9/11, that in relation to immigration, the threat is not always seen as coming from outside national borders, but that the sphere of internal crime-fighting and external war-making have become blurred. Collyer (2006) indicates that the security paradigm is now becoming so ingrained that it is impossible to ignore the impact of security concerns on the development of immigration policy, and that any understanding of human movement must therefore incorporate notions of security at both an empirical and a theoretical level. However, critics of
the securitization argument have pointed out that not every sub-category of migration does or should face securitization (Baele and Sterck 2015; Messina 2017).

Bigo (2002) reminds us that securitization does not always lead to exceptional measures, but that most of the securitization of immigration takes place through routinized and standardized everyday practices, such as the mechanisms of border control. Guild, Groenendijk, and Carrera (2009) refer to Bigo et al. (2007) when they describe illiberal practices, such as extraordinary rendition, indefinite detention, border controls, and conditionality of integration, as evidence of the securitization of immigration. They say that these illiberal practices are challenging liberalism and the rule of law (Guild, Groenendijk, and Carrera 2009, 2–4). Dauvergne (2007, 535) points out that the security aspect has become normal rather than exceptional. In addition, the security paradigm itself may be a threat to security as it undermines the liberal principles on which society is built (Goodwin-Gill 1999; Collinson 2000). The securitization of asylum seekers has diminished the eagerness to protect refugees and advanced a move away from a rights-based approach (Goodwin-Gill 2001; Squire 2009).

Within security studies can also be found a human security discourse, in which individuals, and not just states, are referents for considering security issues, and in which the point of view of migrants and a human rights perspective are considered (Hoag 2011). This notion is employed, for example, by Lazaridis (2010) when she investigates the possible threat that irregular immigration poses to human security, rather than to state security. Bigo (2002) has identified securitarian and humanitarian discourses, where the humanitarian and human rights discourse is a by-product of the securitization process. Sasse (2005) has suggested that the security-rights nexus in European law and policy needs to be reframed, so that the question would not be polarized between security and securing rights for individuals. According to her, security and individual rights are two sides of the same coin.

We find some scholarly literature on Finnish migration law and policy debates (Lepola 2000; Salmio 2000; Leitzinger 2008), but what is missing is a comprehensive overview of the way in which immigration and security play out in Finnish political and legal regulations and implementations. There has been some limited discussion of the security and migration nexus in Finland. Raitasalo and Sipilä (2007, 3) have given the refugee issue as an example of an area that could be securitized in the future. Kanniainen (2010) has surveyed Finnish MPs regarding their perceptions of immigration as a threat or opportunity, and he later pointed out the security aspect (2011, 15). Keskinen (2014, 479) has shown that the securitization of asylum seekers occurred in Finland in connection with the public discussion around a shooting in a shopping mall by a Kosovar refugee. Pyrhönen (2015, 71–72) has noted the juxtaposition of national security and immigrants’ rights in parliamentary debates. In addition, there is research on criminalization of immigration law and
Mobility and the Security Paradigm

court practice, also referring to a strong security aspect in immigration policy (Kmak and Seilonen 2015).

Viljanen (2007) has pointed out that the courts are expected to evaluate the Finnish Security Intelligence Service’s confidential information on the applicant and to balance national security interests with human rights. Human rights as part of guiding principles have been emphasized in legal studies on migration law (Kuosma 1997, 116–39) although some observers do not see such a prominent role for human rights (Halme-Tuomisaari 2016). Legal scholars describe the level of human rights afforded to immigrants as the minimum in relation to international obligations (Pirjatanniemi 2014). Kanniainen (2011, 16–17) also argues that, while the discussion in migration studies has focused mainly on human rights, the human security aspect should also be considered. Ollus (2016, 232, 58–59) has described how the issues of labor exploitation of immigrants and human trafficking have been shifted from the realm of human rights to security through criminalization, mainly emphasizing other security issues than the security of the victims. She argues that when dealing with these types of crimes, the state has not given enough attention to the protection of victims (Ollus 2016, 72–74; also Roth 2016, 101–2). In this study, we will complement this discussion of human rights and security by considering the possible securitization of Finnish migration law and policy and by depicting the different security aspects present in the material.

Speech and Practice: Methodology and Research Materials

Speech act in political science and in security studies, especially in securitization studies, is understood as a discourse where the term security is used for moving a topic away from politics and into an area of security (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998). While security studies have been criticized for an overemphasis on the speech act (Huysmans 2006; Burgess 2011) and on dominant actors such as political leaders (McDonald 2008), we believe that, in the Finnish context, this aspect needs to be taken into account, but it should also be expanded by other fields of analysis. Boswell (2007) has written that securitization may occur both at the level of political discourse and at the level of administrative practice. We address these two aspects by looking at political speeches as well as legal texts and court cases. Court cases shed light on administrative practice by showing patterns of argumentation used in administrative decisions. We take a longitudinal and historical perspective on changes and present a conceptual history (Koselleck 2006) of the concept of “security” in connection to immigration.

We apply content analysis (Krippendorff 2004) to policy papers on security, such as security reports and strategies, as well as to the parliamentary plenary debates on the Aliens Act. The actual political content of policy papers is usually crafted behind the closed doors of standing committees, and the legal and political weight of parliamentary plenary debate is weak. Yet we find it important to look at the ways in which
the members of Finnish Parliament (MPs) publicly defend their policies, as this is where they potentially try to convince the electorate that a certain topic should be dealt with as a security issue. The research data thus include parliamentary plenary minutes related to the Aliens Acts passed in 1983, 1991, and 2004, as well as amendments made to the 2004 Aliens Act up until 2017. We filtered the data for speeches and texts that used the various grammatical forms of the Finnish word *turvallisuus* ‘security’ or ‘safety’, including the adjective *turvallinen* ‘secure’ or ‘safe’. Security strategies were scanned for words *immigration*, *terrorism*, and *refugees*, and the phrase *illegal immigration*, in order to analyze the presence of different categories related to immigration.

From a legal perspective, the most relevant materials for research are government bills, legislation, and court decisions related to migration law. We scanned through the materials, searching for the word *security*. The use of these materials sheds light on the phenomenon of the securitization of immigration from a legal perspective, although our approach is primarily empirical, rather than legal-dogmatic. However, a legal approach is relevant when analyzing the development of balancing as a decision-making method of the Supreme Administrative Court. The legislative material includes the texts of all three Finnish Aliens Acts in the form in which they were passed (400/1983, 378/1991, and 301/2004), as well as the current form of the latest act (301/2004) as of September 20, 2016. It is worth noting that previous to the first Aliens Act in 1983, many legal rules in the form of governmental decrees already affected immigration, but the first Aliens Act represents the start of the era in which migration issues, and especially the rights of migrants, have been elevated to the status of a law with proper legal protection.

Another set of legal data comes from court cases from the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland, which is the highest court of appeals for issues concerning migration administration. We have analyzed all relevant cases that are electronically available in the Finlex database. The database includes those significant cases published in the Court Yearbook since 2001, as well as short summaries of important court decisions from the 1980s and 1990s. The total number of analyzed cases is sixty-five, giving a comprehensive picture of the development of court practice in the interpretation of migration law. The term *security* appears in three different contexts characterized by the type of decision: international protection (twenty-two cases), deportation (twenty-four cases), and family reunification (nineteen cases).

In order to analyze whether issues related to mobility and migration have featured in Finnish security policies, we considered security strategies from approximately the same periods as the laws, legal practice, and political speeches that we analyzed: 1995, 2004, 2012, and 2016. In the 1980s, security policy was mostly concerned with defense policy and, therefore, not considered in this analysis, but later we can find separate reports on foreign and security policy, as well as on defense policy. In
addition, the government published a new report on internal security in 2016 and also produced the Security Strategy for Society, which prescribed security cooperation between different governmental and non-governmental actors.

Decades of Securitization: Conceptualizations of Security in Migration Policy and Law

The Aliens Act of 1983: Security Concerns and Rights for Foreigners
Finland used to be a country of emigration, rather than a country of immigration. Finland’s structural change and the peak in unemployment in 1967–68 caused mass emigration to Sweden. By the 1980s, Finnish return migrants from Sweden made up 85 percent of those moving to Finland from abroad. Finland had received its first groups of post-World War II refugees, from Chile and Vietnam, between 1973 and 1978. In 1981, this recent arrival of refugees in Finland became a topic in the parliamentary debates.

The stated objective of the government bill for the Aliens Act of 1983 was the fulfillment of international obligations on asylum and the legal rights of migrants (HE 4 186/1981). When discussing security in the parliamentary debates, several MPs suggested that the Aliens Act should be well balanced between protecting the rights of individual migrants and protecting the national security interests of Finland, a statement that is repeated five times at different points in the debate. Thus, it seems that the nexus between individual security and state security was one leading concern when drafting Finland’s very first Aliens Act in 1983. The debate was dominated by those who stated that Finland was infamous for not protecting immigrants’ legal rights and for having made arbitrary immigration decisions with no possibility for appeal.

It is interesting to note that security was seen as having two opposite dimensions: that of the individual migrant and that of the state. Mastering this conflict and ensuring the humane treatment of immigrants was a central challenge (HE 196/1981, 2 k, January 27, 1981). Even MP Vennamo from the Finnish Rural Party (the predecessor to the Finns Party), who took an anti-immigration stance in the debates overall, stated the following: “The law should protect the country, but when implementing the law, there should be common sense and humanity and understanding of the current situation. Foreigners are not a threat to Finland. They are, on the contrary, in need of protection” (Vennamo, HE 196/1981, 2 k, January 27, 1981).

Despite these efforts to secure the rights of foreigners in Finland, we can observe that immigration was also linked to criminality and questions of terrorism. “In addition to the refugee question, immigration legislation

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5 All translations from Finnish into English are by the authors.
is facing new challenges, such as preventing international terrorism and ever more mobile criminality” (MP Muroma, HE 186/1981, October 29, 1981). Overall, four MPs linked immigration to terrorism and security when drafting Finland's first Aliens Act. The bill stated that authorities should be able to respond effectively to threats posed by increased mobility, and that the national interest is a central approach to addressing complicated issues (HE 186/1981 vp, 1–2). The draft also includes a mandate for the government to alter rules in the times of crisis, such as war, terrorism, or other threat to national security (HE 186/1981 vp, 21).

Finland’s first Aliens Act (400/1983) makes only three explicit references to security. One refers, in a rather restrictive sense, to the personal security of others as a reason for deportation (Section 18.1), and the other establishes a mandate for the Ministry of the Interior (instead of the police) to decide on deportation in situations of national security (Section 19.2). There is also reference to sabotage, espionage, unauthorized intelligence collection, or actions damaging Finland’s relations with foreign countries (Section 18.1.6), which seems to refer to national security. Interestingly, it is explicitly stated that the deportation of refugees in the aforementioned situations requires special reasons based on public order or national security (Section 18.2).

The prevention of crime also became a topic in court cases of the time. For example, in 1985 the court made three decisions which clarify the application of Section 18.4 in relation to the possible disruption of family life. In one case (KHO 1985-A-II-73), the deportation was justified, and in two cases (KHO 1985-A-II-76 and KHO 1985-A-II-77), the right to respect for family life was given more importance than the preservation of public order and the prevention of criminality.

The 1990s: Finland Becomes an EU Member in a Changing Europe
The total number of immigrants to Finland increased fivefold in the 1990s, with the majority arriving from the former Soviet Union. Yet, it is vital to note that Finland has always had one of the lowest numbers of foreign residents in Europe (Eurostat 2016). In addition to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the facilitated immigration status granted to so-called Ingrian Finns also contributed to the growing immigration from the east. Between 1990 and 1997, about 20,000 Ingrian Finns moved to Finland as so-called returnee migrants. The beginning of the 1990s also marks the period when the first asylum seekers from Somalia arrived in Finland. Insecurity in the areas that people flee from was also discussed in the parliament, and these discussions focused primarily on African countries, as well as the question of whether or not the USSR could be regarded as a safe country (HE 47/1990, 22.5.1990 lk; 8.2. 1991 1. k; 2.k, 12.2.1991). Here, we find several references to questions of human security, usually in connection to the possibility of deportation.

6 KHO = Supreme Administrative Court. Available in the Finlex database.
During the 1990s, the understanding that Finland’s legal responsibilities were restricted to its own citizens started to be challenged (see Lepola 2000, 44–48; Pyrhönen 2015, 45). Finland had in 1989 become a member of the European Council and signed the Human Rights Convention, which required legislators to reconsider the treatment of foreigners in relation to immigration control. The rapid internationalization of Finland, both in terms of the mobility of people, as well as in terms of international human rights engagement, was a major motivation behind replacing the previous Aliens Act. The objectives of the renewal of the act were two-fold: to enhance the processual rights of immigrants, while at the same time preserving the capability of authorities to prevent terrorism and crime (HE 47/1990 vp, 3.)

Finland passed a new Aliens Act in 1991 (378/1991). In this act, a new section, designed to protect the security of refugees and their family members, limited public access to certain administrative documents (Section 65). Section 30, concerning international protection, was amended by, for instance, adding reasons for the refusal of protection status. These reasons were mainly the same as those stated in the 1951 Refugee Convention (adopted in Finland with SopS 77/1968), with the exception of a paragraph allowing the authorities to refuse protection if there were any specific national security reasons (Section 30.2.1). At this point, the conditions for deportation were tightened a bit: the new act allowed for the deportation of criminals with a conviction of at least one year, while the previous act had allowed deportations for convictions of six months (Section 40.1.3). However, a new paragraph was introduced allowing deportation in cases where the immigrant posed a threat to the personal security of others (Section 40.1.4).

When looking at the court cases based on this law, there are six cases related to the 1991 Aliens Act in which security is explicitly mentioned. In these cases, felonies such as an aggravated drug crime and a conviction of sexual violation were enough to fulfill the criteria of being a threat to the personal security of others (KHO 7.3.1997/557 and 7.9.1993/3234). In a case that dealt with family reunification (KHO 13.9.1994/4122), interfering with family life was justified for reasons of general and national security. In the other two cases, the court referred to the European Convention on Human Rights Article 8, which states that public security is a legitimate reason to interfere with family life, but it did not actually apply that provision in deciding the case.

In 1995, the government’s security and defense report dealt with a high number of asylum seekers in Europe following the dismantling of Yugoslavia. Although Finland received only a fraction of those asylum seekers, the report shows that fairer burden sharing between different European countries was a topic of discussion in Finland as well. Immigration was also mentioned in connection with the possible mobility of people because of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which did not,  

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however, seem to escalate to any considerable numbers (VNS 1/1995, 16–17). Terrorism as a security threat was mentioned only a few times, and not in connection with mobility toward Finland.

The New Millennium: 
Intensive Securitization and Anti-Immigration Rhetoric
The turn of the twenty-first century marked an increase in asylum seekers from Eastern Europe. Finland’s Aliens Act was rewritten again in the early 2000s, with many of the changes related to the ratification of international and EU regulations on human rights (Lepola 2000, 77–78; Pyrhönen 2015). Finland’s first migration minister, Astrid Thors, from the Swedish People’s Party, took office in 2007. Finland’s nationalist– populist movement, The Finns Party, gained an electoral victory in municipal elections in 2008, and later in the parliamentary elections of 2011. The party has a clear anti-immigration agenda, and among its members are several prominent politicians who are part of Finland’s far-right movement. In general, it became more common to express quite restrictive views on migration issues in the 2000s, and the debate on immigration intensified (Pyrhönen 2015).

The Ministry of the Interior took five years to prepare the new Aliens Act. According to Pyrhönen (2015, 64), the fact that the development of the Aliens Act of 2004 required more than one governmental period to be completed shows that the question of immigration-related policy was a difficult topic, dividing decision-makers and parties.

In the parliamentary debates on the new act, we still find the debate dominated (with seventeen out of twenty-seven speeches) by questions of what qualifies as a safe country—for example, the debate now considered whether or not an EU-member state should automatically be considered a safe country. In ten of these seventeen speeches, MPs claimed that applications from safe countries were creating problems for Finland’s asylum system. In seven speeches, it was argued that each case should be analyzed individually, and five speeches concerned balancing Finland’s own security interests and the rights of the individual migrant. In two speeches, MPs were concerned with the security of immigrants, and in two more with the national security of Finland; one speech concerned terrorism and organized crime. In these debates, MP Kari Rajamäki (Social Democratic Party) dominates the discussions on immigration and security. Rajamäki was Finland’s minister of the interior from 2003 to 2007, and he is known for taking strong anti-immigration stands. Rajamäki made nine statements in four parliamentary plenary sessions, stressing that immigration is a question of internal security and harshly criticizing the existing immigration legislation, which he felt did not pay enough attention to Finland’s national security (HE 28/2006, lk 16.6.2003; 1. k 14.4.2003 & 15.4.2003; 2. k 21.4.2004).

In the Aliens Act (301/2004), a certain kind of security turn can be observed. The sections introducing the general requirements for entry and

residence state that a foreigner should not be a threat to public order, security, or health, or to Finland’s international relations (Sections 11 and 36). However, the government bill further explains that ensuring public order and security includes all measures guaranteeing members of society a safe and pleasant living environment, as well as measures preventing crime and disturbance (HE 28/2003 vp, 125, 138, and 215). Several other sections restate this requirement (Sections 42, 44, and 110). The new law no longer contains an obligation to justify a visa rejection if the grounds were related to national security (Section 32). In addition, national security and international relations were introduced as valid grounds for refusal of entry and deportation (Sections 148 and 149). Not even Nordic or EU citizens were spared from this wave of securitization (Sections 156, 165, 168, and 169).

Despite this securitization turn, the 2004 Aliens Act also improved the security of asylum seekers in sections relating to the right to a translator (Section 10) and the confiscation of travel documents (Section 132). The government bill also points out that providing information to support the residence permit application should not endanger the security of the applicant or family members (Section 7; HE 28/2003 vp, 121). In addition, national security as a reason for the refusal of international protection was omitted. In 2007, a new section, 88 a, had been added to the Aliens Act to establish a protection status based on humanitarian considerations such as insecurity, human rights violations, or the humanitarian situation in the country of origin (166/2007 vp, 50).

From the passage of the Aliens Act of 2004 through the rest of the decade, security is mentioned in twelve Supreme Administrative Court yearbook cases. In the deportation cases, the court had to balance “the reasons for deportation and interests speaking against deportation” (KHO 2008:90 and KHO 2008:91), which in these cases were the state’s security interests and the foreigner’s personal security and ties to Finland. In one deportation case (KHO 2009:22), the court applied the EU’s Dublin Regulation when considering if an asylum seeker could be returned to Greece. Although the Greek asylum system faced serious problems, the court found that the personal security of the asylum seeker was not threatened so seriously as to amount to a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights on torture or inhuman treatment.

When we turn our analytical focus to the way in which immigration features in security documents, we find that in the security and defense report published in 2004 (VNS 6/2004), terrorism featured quite prominently, being mentioned 177 times. This is not too surprising, taking into account that the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States had taken place only three years earlier. Immigration is mentioned a few times in the report, and a separate chapter is dedicated to immigration management. In this chapter, illegal entry, the misuse of asylum or immigration procedures, and the secondary movement of asylum seekers are presented as challenges to managed immigration. However, the right to seek asylum
and the need to speed up procedures and protect the procedural rights of migrants are also mentioned (VNS 6/2004, 135). The report also briefly mentions illegal border crossing and human trafficking, as well as refugees, who are discussed in connection to fragile states far from Finland.


In 2010s, the government has seen it necessary to revise different parts of the Aliens Act, especially after the sudden increase in the number of asylum seekers in 2015, when Finland received over 30,000 asylum applications (Migri 2016). Some of these amendments include security aspects relevant to this study. During the 2010s, the populist Finns Party gained electoral strength, becoming the third largest party in 2011, and part of the government coalition in 2016. National populist rhetoric has become a growing part of political speech, and references to a shared national interest prevail in anti-immigration statements (Pyrhönen 2015).

In the period between 2010 and 2016, the main topics in parliamentary debates relating to security were the danger posed to the general public by immigration and the question of when a foreigner can be deported or denied entry. There were forty-seven speeches in which the word security is mentioned. Out of these, twenty were related to the human security of migrants and their safety, while twenty-one were related to immigration and its threat to national security in Finland (six were in the category “other”). Most of the speeches on human security were about an amendment made to the law that extended the income requirement for family reunification to immigrants enjoying international protection. Those opposing this law pointed out that tightening the requirements would cut off a safe route to Finland for women and children in particular, leaving them to attempt dangerous journeys with the help of smugglers (HE 43/2016, LK 12.4.2016, and 1.k 16.6.2016). Another point that was raised by several MPs was that constant worry about the safety of one’s family back home would work as an obstacle to integration for immigrants.

The tightening was justified with the increase in asylum seekers in 2015, and with the claim that Finland’s policies need to make Finland less appealing to potential asylum seekers. MPs from the Finns Party were particularly vocal in defending the tightening of family-reunification criteria, stressing that they are merely putting governmental plans into practice and “taking care of Finnish border security” (HE 234/2016, 12.6.2016). Interestingly, the Finns frame the elimination of legal means to come to Finland from conflict zones as a strengthening of border security. Thus, while the Finns propose the use of economic criteria such as income requirements to keep people out, they appeal to national security concerns in their argumentation.

It becomes clear from the legal developments in this period that many amendments were motivated by security considerations. In 2010,
biometric passports were introduced and the Aliens Act was amended with a requirement that fingerprints be taken when applying for a residence permit. The objective of this amendment, besides fulfilling EU legal obligations, was to protect the integrity of the residence permit, in the sense that it is important for public order and security to be sure of the identity of the residence-card holder (HE 104/2010 vp, 20, 22). The general conditions for a residence permit were amended in 2013 and 2015 because of EU-law requirements. In addition to the reasons of public order, security, health, and international relations, obligations stemming from international law or EU cooperation could also be reasons for refusing entry or residence to a foreigner (1214/2013, Section 11.1.5). New rules for researchers’ residence permits were introduced, including the possibility for refusal on grounds of public order and security (Section 47 e). In 2015, a new system of “voluntary” return was introduced to the Aliens Act (Section 147 a) in order to encourage rejected asylum seekers to return independently, even though it is not offered if there is a risk of absconding or a risk to public order and security.

In 2016, humanitarian protection status was removed as a response to the increased number of asylum seekers and the desire not to appear more generous than other EU countries (HE 2/2016 vp, 3). Also from 2016 on, the Finnish Immigration Service replaced the police as the authority responsible for interviewing asylum seekers; however, the police and the Security Intelligence Service can participate in cases relevant to national security, international relations, or public order and security (Section 97). It is clarified in the government bill that the large number of asylum seekers in 2015 demonstrated the necessity for police access to interviews, in order to investigate threats related to public order and security as well as to collect intelligence information and gain informants (HE 64/2016 vp, 42).

Despite the trend of securitization, some aspects of immigrants’ security have also been taken into account. In 2006, Section 136 was added to allow that an alien passport holder’s nationality not be disclosed on the passport if requested for the holder’s security. In addition, authorities must not collect information in a way that could pose a risk to the security of the applicants or people close to them (Section 97 b). Interestingly, since 2013, being a threat to Finland’s international relations has no longer been grounds for the deportation of a foreigner (Section 149). Concerns about national health are also no longer a valid reason for not renewing a residence permit, if other requirements have been met (Section 36.1). In addition, residence permits for family members or long-term EU residents cannot be refused merely on the basis of posing a risk to Finland’s international relations (Section 36.1).

In court cases between 2011 and the end of 2016, security was mentioned in forty-one cases. However, in fourteen cases, the court only referred to security clauses in different legislation, without actually applying them in deciding the case. In many cases, especially in those connected with deportation, the security concerns of the state prevailed.
Here we cannot give exact numbers, because it is in many cases difficult to say what the decisive factors were. However, the personal security of the foreigner and the general security situation in the country of origin were considered relevant in seventeen cases. These human security cases also include applications for international protection. For example, in case KHO 2014:112, the court considered the personal security of a victim of human trafficking if returned to Nigeria, which in this case did not prevail over other requirements for a residence permit. In contrast, in case KHO 2016:53, concerning the application of the EU’s Dublin Regulation, the court observed that “in Hungary there were systemic faults” in the asylum and reception process, and “considering the principle of the benefit of the doubt, as well as the principle of legal interpretation favoring basic and human rights, the case had to be resolved in favor of the applicant.”

As security rhetoric became common in immigration debates, we also find that immigration became a common topic in security strategies, where the securitization of immigration was well established by 2010. In the 2010 Security Strategy for Society, terrorism is mentioned thirty-three times and immigration is mentioned twenty-three times. Separate sections are dedicated to the management of immigration as well as the management of large inflows of asylum seekers (YTS 2010, 76). The strategy finds that illegal entry, a large inflow of immigrants, human trafficking, and human smuggling are serious disturbances of border security. The strategy claims that illegal immigration and illegal residence are the foundation for other threats, such as the shadow economy, illegal employment, and terrorism (YTS 2010, 75–76).

The Finnish Security and Defense Policy 2012 (VNS 6/2012) still mentions terrorism many times (twenty-six), but not as extensively as in 2004. The management of immigration is mentioned a few times but is dealt with as an internal security objective instead of being the topic of a separate chapter (VNS 6/2012, 90). Refugees are mentioned only once, again in connection to fragile states, but this time the policy also acknowledges the possible spillover effects of conflict that can affect other countries. Conflict zones are said to provide a platform for terrorists and other criminals (VNS 6/2012, 16). Human trafficking and illegal border crossing are also briefly mentioned.

In 2016, the Finnish government issued a report on internal security, in which it mentions immigration forty times and asylum seekers fifty-two times. Terrorism and illegal entry are mentioned eighteen times each (VNS 5/2016, 11). The report states that the large inflow of immigrants has increased interruptions to public order and security. In addition, integration is seen as key in preventing criminality and threats to internal security (VNS 5/2016, 17). The 2016 Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy mentions terrorism nine times and immigration and

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refugees a few times each. It also refers to illegal entry, human trafficking, human smuggling, border security, and asylum seekers. According to the report, uncontrolled immigration can cause risks to internal security through the radicalization of actors such as terrorists, anti-foreigner fanatics, and criminals (VNS 6/2016, 12).

Analysis: Securitization and the Search for Balance
By combining legal and political data, we have been able to provide comprehensive insight into the securitization of immigration. The method of content analysis by scanning for the word *security* provides results regarding the frequency of use, which might indicate that the authorities emphasize certain interests over others. However, there are limitations to this method, especially when the drafter of the legislation has chosen to repeat this requirement of not being a threat to national or public security for each permit category. On the other hand, our method of considering different, rather fragmented categories of data has enabled a more comprehensive analysis of the policy and practice of different time periods. For example, recent years did not show any remarkable increase in securitization within legal texts, while parliamentary debates showed an intense interest in security considerations.

In our analyzed time period, the understanding that immigration poses some sort of threat is unquestioned in the research material. What has changed, however, is the idea that the individual rights of migrants and rule of law need to be written into legislation and upheld in the court. Our material shows that even though immigration was already conceptualized as a security issue in the 1980s, the securitization of immigration took a steep increase in the beginning of the 2000s. The 1990s do not stand out as a period of major securitization, but rather as a period of internationalization and of updating national policies to reflect that. However, the government’s security strategy papers demonstrate a shift from emphasizing refugees’ individual security in the 1980s to increasing references to terrorism, illegal immigration, and immigration control beginning in the 1990s. In the most recent period, since the introduction of the 2004 Aliens Act, we find a dramatic increase in the securitization of immigration. Deportation and denial of entry on the grounds of security feature both in the law as well as in legal practice. Terrorism in connection with immigration as well as the indirect security effects of immigration start to appear more often in strategy papers on security, as illustrated in the figure 1 below. The figure shows how many times certain notions appear in these strategy papers.

In addition to a steady increase in securitizing speech and action, we find that the understanding of the concept of security has broadened. In table 1 below, we categorize different aspects of security presented in our data. Some security concerns are more inclined toward general security and some toward human security. While security tended to be linked to military and state security in the 1980s, as well as to public order and
national security from the 2000s on, understandings of security also start to encompass human security aspects, both the migrants’ and that of other citizens. However, we most often find the polarization of national security and human security as the individual rights of migrants (also Pyrhönen 2015). Therefore, Sasse’s (2005) perspective that security and rights could be conceived of as a dual process and two sides of the same coin does not seem to hold in the Finnish context.

![Figure 1](image.png)

**Figure 1.** References to mobility and immigration in Finnish security plans and strategies.

The security paradigm is usually understood as an overemphasis on national security interests in policy-making. We argue that national security is only one aspect, and that security concerns can include human security aspects that actually challenge or are concurrent with national security interests. When it comes to migration policy, it is crucial to consider carefully whose human security is at stake and if the security concerns of people abroad matter. Although we find in the data an increasingly nuanced concern for human security, it seems to be outweighed by the constant characterization of asylum seeking and immigration as a threat to national security or public order. Therefore, it is vital to look at the weight and prominence that each of these security perspectives is given in policy and legal practice. Which factor tilts the scale when lawmakers and judges must balance colliding interests? Although the judiciary also protects immigrants’ security interests, we find that, especially in political discussions, the understanding of immigration as a threat to Finnish society has precedence over the idea that policy and legislation need to protect immigrants.
Table 1. Different aspects of security presented in our data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Security</th>
<th>Human Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures Against Criminality (Public Order)</td>
<td>Protecting Security of Private Persons in Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures Against Terrorism (National Security)</td>
<td>Protecting Security of Foreigners if Deported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures Against Illegal Immigration (Border Security)</td>
<td>Protecting Security of Family Members Abroad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our analysis shows that the balancing of different security interests has been at the heart of difficult cases for some time. Balancing has been used by legislators, by the administrative authorities, and by the judges in the court. Balancing is a method to find a fair outcome to a difficult problem. If we look at balancing from a security interest point of view, many times the scale is loaded with national security or public order on one side and the human security of the immigrant on the other side. In a typical case, the human security aspect means the obligation not to deport a person to a country where he or she could face a serious security risk, whereas on the other side of the scale we find the objectives of preventing crime and preserving public order and security. The human security of other persons living in Finland is an interest placed on the same side of the scale as national security and public order.

Pyrhönen (2015, 72) wonders why it is not explicated why migrants’ rights and the security of migrants are in opposition to national security, especially when considering that national and migrant security interests are presented as a balancing act. It is true that in some cases it should be possible to find these security interests on the same side of the scale (Sasse 2005). These kinds of concurrent security interests are present, for example, in the case of social security and health care for undocumented migrants, where the spread of disease is seen as a public security issue. Another example is the case of family reunification, in which a safe route to join family members can be seen as promoting integration and preventing threats to public order and safety, such as radicalization.

Conclusions
Our review of Finnish immigration policy and legislation from the 1980s until today provides empirical evidence that there has been a clear movement toward increased securitization over time. While we already find references to terrorism, cross-border criminality, and the defense of Finland’s national interest in early documents on immigration, we find a clear spike in the securitization of immigration since 2000. In political speech, these securitizing measures are justified by a presumed threat to
Finland’s national security. The individual rights of migrants and notions of the human security of migrants appear in these debates on the other end of the spectrum. The Aliens Act and its legal interpretation presents the regulation of immigration as a balancing act between national and individual security, without actually explicating why and how the regulation of immigration is hindering or enhancing national security.

As this special issue has shown, the mobility of people, things, and ideas is of growing interest in the social sciences. Considering the way in which mobility and migration are linked with security in Finnish policies, the mobility paradigm should be complemented by a security paradigm. Cross-border mobility does not occur in a sphere separate from legal and political institutions, but is closely entangled with them. As Urry (2007, 36) argues, legal and social systems restrict and limit the way in which people can migrate and reside.

As part of the EU and the Schengen area, Finland participates in building the “fortress Europe” against “illegal immigration.” However, in recent security discourse and legislative amendments, the threat increasingly seems to be immigration per se and especially humanitarian immigration on a larger scale. Although we find that securitization does not involve all migrant categories with the same intensity, restrictive practices might also affect the mobility of groups other than those usually targeted by security measures. In times of growing political unease about immigration, scholarship on mobility needs to include an analysis of the ways in which security is used as a political argument to restrict immigration.

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Raitasalo, Jyri, and Joonas Sipilä. 2007. Mikä Suomea uhkka? Laaja turvallisuuskäsitys ja uhkakuwapoliitikka näkökulmina Suomen turvallisuuspolitiikkaan [What threatens Finland? Broad security concept and politics of threat scenarios as aspects to the Finnish security
Prioritizing National Interest at the Expense of Narrowing Regular Migrant Mobility and Residence

Elina Todorov
Tampere University

Abstract
This article examines how Finnish national legislative amendments have restricted the space of regular, cross-border migration and stay, possibly resulting in forms of increased irregular mobility and residence. Aside from addressing legal science, this article has political, cultural, and sociological dimensions. Restrictive legislative amendments in a general European context are often validated with state arguments based on prioritizing national interests, such as the state economy or national security. At the national level in Finland, there have been dozens of government proposals that have resulted in amendments to the Aliens Act (301/2004) since its renewal in 2004. I look at these amendments systematically, and, by providing key examples based on the data studied, I show how these amendments have restricted regular mobility and residence for migrants coming mostly from third countries. These observations show that the Finnish government resorts to arguments concerning the state economy, the alleged favorability and attractiveness of Finnish legislation, and the management of migration while at the same time limiting rights to regular mobility and residence. As a result, issues regarding the generation of irregular mobility and residence continue to be ignored in the preparation and application of the Aliens Act, despite certain amendments being likely to maintain a legislative framework that generates irregular mobility and presence.

Keywords: Aliens Act, regular and irregular mobility, irregular residence

Introduction
In 2015, over one million migrants, mostly refugees and asylum seekers, arrived in Europe in a search for better living conditions. At the same time, Europe was experiencing a remarkable increase in the number of asylum seekers it received. Finland’s share of this was 32,476 asylum seekers, almost ten times more than it had ever received before (Annual Report
of the Finnish Immigration Service 2015, 3). It may rightfully be assumed that not all of these migrants are expected to leave Finland and return to their countries of origin, even when they are issued a negative residence decision. Therefore, there is a need to assess the constructed legal framework which may produce irregular migrant mobility and presence.

The increase in the number of asylum seekers in 2015 clearly put into action certain political and legislative amendments in countries all over Europe, including Finland. In following different European states, introducing even stricter immigration policies has to some extent affected the Finnish government’s actions, and so fueled national legislative amendments to the Aliens Act. State interference has changed from the traditional management of migration to the preventive management of migration, especially by making references to national security (Mitsilegas 2010, 65). For Finland, the preventive management of migration is combined with arguments of economic capacity and the favorability and attractiveness of Finnish legislation. Moreover, the increased number of asylum seekers was represented in proportion to the numbers of the Finnish population (Government proposal 43/2016, 16–17), which affected the general perspective considerably.

In autumn 2015, the Finnish government included in its action plan the assurance that all actions must be based on safeguarding and respecting the basic and human rights of migrants (Finnish Government 2015b, 1). A short while later, the government acted against its own assurances; the government’s more recent political will is represented in the Finnish Government’s action plan submitted in December 2015 (Finnish Government 2015a), which states more clearly that uncontrolled migration must be managed better, and then lists ways in which these management goals may be reached.

However, the national Aliens Act (301/2004) had been in transition long before the events of autumn 2015, and corrections and further specifications to the Aliens Act are believed to improve the transparency of decision making, to increase trust in the authorities, and to ensure equal treatment and better legal protection (Government proposal 9/2014, 12; 133/2016, 23). The amendments of the Aliens Act have been aimed at reducing malpractice and the circumvention of the provisions of the Act, as well as at reducing the incentives for migration to Finland; the amendments also refer to the conditions of the state economy and to reducing Finland’s attractiveness as a target country.

Soevereignty signifies that it is a matter of national discretion regarding which migrants are allowed to enter a country. A migrant has no absolute right to settle in a specific country, and a migrant’s residence rights are always ruled upon under national legislation. A migrant’s right to enter and reside in Finland forms an exception to the purpose of the Finnish Constitution, which, as a rule, guarantees basic rights for everyone, including non-Finnish citizens (Constitutional Law Committee 16/2010, 2). The Constitution of Finland (731/1999) regulates freedom
of movement, and this is different for citizens and non-citizens. The right of migrants to enter Finland and to remain in the country is particularly regulated by the Aliens Act.

States have sovereignty, although not unlimitedly, to pursue their actions, for example, based on the doctrine of the margin of appreciation established by the European Court of Human Rights (Case of Handyside v. The United Kingdom, application no. 5493/72, § 49). Therefore, a state’s actions must take into account three core elements: that they are in accordance with or prescribed by law, that they pursue a legitimate aim, and that they are deemed as necessary in a democratic society (Arold Lorenz, Groussot, and Petursson 2013, 77).

The immigration authorities have discretionary powers to consider the general requirements for issuing residence permits and refusing residence rights. Government proposals highly emphasize that the national authorities (and not the migrants themselves) are best placed to assess whether or not migrants deserve the right to reside in the country they choose (Government proposal 170/2014, 33). Aside from international obligations, the exercise of discretion must occur in the framework of the national Aliens Act, and it is therefore subject to any nuanced interpretations of amendments that are made to it.

Migration occurs in multiple forms, being work or studies based, but also in forms of irregular migration, trafficking, and smuggling. No state structures and legislative frameworks can fully hold back even undesired forms of migration. Yet, emotions may drive migration policy and influence political will (Last, Spijkerboer, and Ulusoy 2016, 20). Indeed, the political will to reduce the number of un-grounded asylum and residence applications has been seen in Finland since 2009 (Administration Committee 2/2009, 2), and it is even claimed in government proposals that preventing malpractice and un-grounded residence applications would improve the status of those applicants who are honest and who do not seek to circumvent the provisions of the Aliens Act (Government proposal 240/2009, 30; 43/2016, 27).

It is generally recognized that migrants use irregular routes and means to reach Europe. Still, states have done little to improve the legal ways to enter and reside in a country. This also applies to Finland, regardless of the fact that the Finnish government has emphasized that unmanaged migration must be brought under control and that people need to be directed toward safe and legal routes (Finnish Government 2015b). Moreover, the earlier Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior noted that Finnish legislation is explicit in the sense that it requires that every person must have a clear status in the Finnish society, and that no one should reside irregularly in the country (Nerg 2016). These views may rightly be questioned as being too optimistic, considering that states informally admit the existence of irregular mobility and residence.

It must be kept in mind that people have different capabilities in fighting for their human rights (Sen 2005, 153; Nussbaum 2011, 18–20).
Irregularly resident migrants are especially vulnerable as they lack the recognition and protection of the country they reside in. The realization of human rights is therefore dependent on the regularized status, and those with regularized status are offered more possibilities. This depends largely on the fact that those who are legally resident in a country are recognized: they exist in terms of a national jurisprudence that is better able to reach them, and they are thus better regarded by societal structures.

Law and policy go hand in hand. Restricted immigration policy has the ability to limit the space of regular mobility and residence by prioritizing national interests such as the state economy or matters of national or legislative attractiveness. These restrictive measures may result in the irregular status of a migrant, and this is likely to generate multiple problems for the individual. In this article, I observe whether the gradual amendments made to the national Aliens Act are likely to generate an outcome where irregular mobility and residence are in fact increased in opposition to the original aim of managed migration by the Finnish government.

Research Data and Central Characteristics
Legislative amendments and preparations are affected, inter alia, by the rulings of national courts such as the Supreme Administrative Court, or by international and European courts such as the European Court of Human Rights. Legislative amendments and preparations are also affected by European Union migration law, as reflected in the directives and in national political assurances presented on government platforms.

This study was conducted by looking systematically at the existing and ongoing amendments made through government proposals to the Finnish Aliens Act, dating back to the year 2004. The observation period therefore covers the years between 2004 and 2016. By the end of September 2016, there had been sixty-six amendments made to the Act, as well as one new government proposal issued on September 15, 2016. Alongside government proposals through which amendments were made, committee statements and reports, the conflicting opinions of government representatives, associated literature, and national and European court cases were also studied. These data were analyzed by way of identifying qualitative argumentation based on prioritizing the national interest. Accordingly, the data were observed in light of the possible recognition of irregular mobility and residence and their possible generation.

The high number of amendments to the Aliens Act does not necessarily tell us whether the actual situation has impacted a migrant’s possibilities for regular mobility and residence either negatively or positively. Almost all of the amendments interfered with a migrant’s entry, residence, or stay in Finland, although approximately 30 percent of the amendments were rather technical in nature, for instance, amendments that were made as a result of the changed names of national authorities.

Most recognizably, the government proposals have often remained intact, and passed through the legislative process mostly unaltered. The
committees that provide statements concerning the government proposals would often comply with the actual proposals, without offering suggestions of amendment. Only rarely did committees provide statements that required additional or specific legislative attention. Nonetheless, the separate opinions of government representatives attached to the committees’ statements were more brave and outspoken, but unfortunately few in number.

Also noteworthy is the fact that the preparations featured in these government proposals were often linked with comparisons to other European states. Indeed, comparisons between European and northern countries were, and still are, essential when defining the national immigration policy. Comparisons were made mainly with Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Great Britain, and Germany, but also with Canada and Australia. However, these comparisons tended to focus on very narrow areas, and the conditions created in other states were not viewed as a whole (regardless of the possibilities of doing so). Still, such comparisons were always a feature when they served to defend the standpoint of the government proposal. Restrictions were based on international, mainly European, comparisons, such as arguing that an early right to work had been seen as an incentive for many asylum seekers who arrived in European countries, and which also then affected an increase in the number of asylum seekers (Government proposal 240/2009, 21–22). The preliminary hypothesis of these observations rested on the fact that reasons which prioritized national interest were and are used to restrict the space of regular mobility and residence in Finland, and that these amendments may collectively lead to even more migrants falling into an unregulated status.

Results and Analysis

Restrictive Political Trends

For Finland, the observations showed that when the amendments had restrictive effects, they were mainly based on references to the state economy and the supposedly more favorable legislative conditions and attractiveness of Finland in comparison to other European and northern countries, as well as on the overall context of the management of migration.

From the viewpoint of restricting regular mobility and residence in the government proposals through which amendments were made to the Aliens Act, two distinct political trends stood out. First, the amendments mainly expressed goals that related to a harmonization of national migration law with European Union law. Second, amendments that were made to the Aliens Act were based on allegations and predictions that relied on relieving the state’s economic burden, or referred to possible or alleged restraints for the state economy.

European Union member states are expected to act consistently and coherently. However, despite incoherent operations in European
countries, Finland has started to refer to harmonizing its policies with other European Union member states, even though the situation of the Union’s immigration policy is clearly incoherent. European Union immigration directives set a certain minimum standard, but those countries that have more favorable conditions in force through legislation are not obliged to harmonize their legislation with the minimum standards set by the directive. Based on the observations, government proposals often stated the fact that Finnish national legislation mainly fulfilled the set requirements of the European Union directives, when the fulfillment procedure of the European Union migration directives was seen as ongoing. However, recent amendments made to the Aliens Act show a stricter interpretation and reading of the European Union directives, in the sense that even Finland, as a state that argues that it has achieved the acquired level of protection, has begun to lower the requirements of its alleged and originally more favorable legislation and better standards when it comes to basic human rights protection, by legalizing conditions that the European Union directives accept as only the minimum degree of protection to be afforded. This trend does not necessarily constitute a breach for one’s basic human rights, but it definitely lowers basic human rights protection for a migrant, and is therefore likely to cause irregular mobility and residence.

Another political trend in Finland concerned the national preparation for an alleged increase in the number of migrants and asylum seekers. The observations showed that there is no existing tolerance for a possible increase in migrant mobility in its many forms. The more apparent aim of the Finnish government seemed to aim at cutting migration to Finland as a whole. It appeared that incentives were readily turned into deterrents that aimed to keep the feared masses, influxes, and flows of migrants away. Thus, a political and emotions-based fear seemed to have replaced the previous better compliance with international human rights obligations (cf. Wang 2012, 744; Kirk et al. 2012, 94). The allegations and predictions of an increased number of migrants seems to have caused a situation where the most vulnerable migrants are in fact victims of the amendments. The central effects of the amendments targeted (although not necessarily clearly stated) persons from third countries: families and vulnerable individuals such as women, children, and other disadvantaged individuals who may not be positioned to take active measures for themselves.

Family reunification has been estimated to form significant grounds to apply for residence rights in Finland (Government proposal 43/2016, 10). The number of children and minors has been predicted to increase in the coming years, and thus minors have been especially targeted with multiple amendments, both positive and negative, such as tracing the parents of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (Government proposal 31/2006) and carrying out medical age assessments (Government proposal 240/2009). Accordingly, the Aliens Act has been tightened based
on alleged harmful side-effects of migration such as false marriages or parents sending their children alone to Finland; these children are then envisaged as trying to reunite with their families on Finnish territory (Administration Committee 3/2006, 2–3). At the same time, however, such harmful phenomena and their growth have not been seen as a significant issue for Finland in general (Government proposal 77/2009, 10).

Those who were favored in the legislative amendments were mainly skilled migrants from third countries and the European Union, whose aim would be to come to work in Finland (e.g., researchers or experts). These migrants were not believed to generate costs for the state economy. To a small degree, attracting skilled migrants was seen as desirable by European countries (Government proposal 37/2011, 29; Employment and Equality Committee 3/2011, 2). The status of foreign students was improved in the amendments, but such students still have certain requirements that must be met in order for them to achieve a regular right to reside and study in Finland, such as holding insurance to cover costs generated from health care services (Government proposal 277/2006).

**Turning Points during the Observation Period**

Until 2010, amendments made to the Aliens Act through government proposals were not believed to have significant impacts on the state economy (e.g., Government proposal 205/2006, 22; 167/2007, 23; 166/2007, 46; 86/2008, 49), and it was not believed that amendments made to the Aliens Act would result in increased residence applications for Finland. Up until 2010, the development of the Aliens Act was quite balanced compared to the changes which were seen in following years. At the time, the need for a migrant workforce was recognized in Finland (Government proposal 90/2007, 8). However, compared to the public debate on migration, political attitudes and legal capacities toward recruiting and attracting more migrants from different working groups (not only experts) for the Finnish labor market were seen to be more considerate and modest when it came to safeguarding the workforce in the context of an aging Finnish nation (Government proposal 78/2005, 4; Administration Committee 3/2006, 3). Thus, the idea of Finland creating attractive conditions for residence rights has persisted since the beginning of the observation period, although this has developed gradually (Employment and Equality Committee 10/2005).

When looking at the language of the government proposals and their political tone, there are two clear turning points to be seen during the observation period. The first turn concerned the assessment of the impacts of the proposed amendment to the state economy. Between 2009 and 2010, government proposal language began to refer to possible beneficial economic effects to the state economy if more restrictive amendments were implemented in the Aliens Act (Government proposal 240/2009, 28). Simultaneously, the possible future increase in the numbers of migrants from third countries was more firmly acknowledged (Government proposal 295/2014, 12–13).
At the turn of 2009–10, the government proposals turned toward cutting down the incentives for migration to Finland, with regard to restricting a migrant’s work and family reunification rights, for instance by adding legislation concerning a minor’s medical age assessment. This turn can partly be explained by Finland closely following the example of neighboring countries, such as Sweden, which was facing a remarkable increase in the numbers of family reunification applications around this time (Government proposal 240/2009, 4, 20; Administration Committee 5/2010, 7). The second turn occurred more recently, between 2014 and 2016, and has continued until the present time. During this period, economic perspectives were still being used, but rather as an additional consideration alongside novel arguments that referred to the attractiveness or favorability of the Finnish legislative framework, or the management of migration (Administration Committee 3/2016, 6; Government proposal 43/2016, 1). In these arguments, the more migrants Finland received, or was alleged to receive, the more value was given to a principle of managed migration.

In the beginning of the study period, it was better recognized that the arrival of migrants and asylum seekers depends on a number of factors (Government proposal 86/2008, 49) and not just the favorability of a country’s legislation. The observations showed a transition toward looking at the national legislation as being more favorable to migrants, and this mostly occurred between 2014 and 2016. The Finnish government has regarded it as important to ensure that Finnish legislation is no more attractive than in other European states, and that Finland’s attractiveness must be acknowledged so that Finland would not face any larger number of asylum seekers compared to other countries (Government proposal 2/2016, 3). For example, the Finnish government believed that a proper voluntary returns system in Finland would signal that there is no automatic link between irregular residence and a possible future right of residence (Government proposal 170/2014, 32).

The favorability of this legislation seems to have been taken for granted, but it is unclear whether the Aliens Act was truly so favorable before the amendments were made. The Aliens Act is hard to follow because of its scattered and disordered nature, especially as many amendments have been made to it. The numbers of people migrating to Finland\(^1\) in the twenty-first century, or even prior to that, indicate that favorable legislation and the attractiveness of Finland as a target country for asylum seekers and large numbers of migrants are generally hard to see as powerful arguments, and they feel somewhat exaggerated. Additionally, the attractiveness argument has been regarded as very problematic from a perspective of basic human rights (Constitutional Law Committee 27/2016, 2).

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\(^1\) In all, a few tens of thousands yearly. Precise statistics on the numbers migrating to Finland may be found on the webpage of the Finnish Immigration Service: www.migri.fi.
The comprehensive assessment of the effects of the latest amendments remains incomplete. Beside the high number of newcomers to Finland in 2015 and the alleged fact that this high number of migrants creates an unreasonable burden for the state economy, the urge for the latest amendments was based on the Government action plan on asylum policy in December 2015, and it echoed the fact that other states would also restrict and limit the space for regular mobility and residence. These latest amendments are best pictured as being hasty, immature, and incomprehensive. What is especially striking is that the more restrictive amendments made to the Aliens Act had shorter preparation time than usual: for instance, the circulation period for expert statements and comments was more brief than usual. Additionally, some of the amendments adopted in 2015 and 2016 were also especially worrying as they were instantly applicable without having to undergo a period of transition (Government proposal 2/2016).

Generally, amendments that restricted possibilities for regular mobility and residence were disguised in the form of acceptable societal goals. Acceptable societal goals are generally acknowledged and may be, for instance, aimed at relieving economic restraints for the state economy, the better management of migration, the encouragement of employment (Government proposal 43/2016, 18), or, for example, a reduction in the time allowed for the appeals process (Government proposal 32/2016, 14–15). An acceptable goal might be expressed in a way that the assessment of one’s basic human rights is in fact neglected. Yet, even for restrictive legislative amendments, legal principles such as reasonability and proportionality must be regarded, especially when the target of the amendment is a human being.

Not all of the amendments were necessarily and purposely affecting the migrant’s basic human rights in a more restrictive manner. There were some ostensibly positive amendments adopted, such as broadening the rights to appeal in visa matters (Government proposal 54/2015) or limiting the time spent in a detention center and regarding a migrant’s detention as a last resort (Government proposal 172/2014). Glimmers of hope appeared, for instance, between 2009 and 2010 when there was a political will to add a precondition for the time lived and spent in Finland for those willing to reunite with their families; however, the proposed amendment did not pass as it was seen as creating circumstances of diversely unequal treatment (Government proposal 240/2009, 31).

Irregular Presence is Not Acknowledged

The reading of Finnish government proposals shows that attitudes toward irregularly resident migrants were cautiously optimistic but lacked a deeper understanding of their situation. The presence of irregular migrants was and still is refused proper acknowledgement. The observations showed that it was not regarded as either realizable or bearable for a migrant to decide to reside irregularly in Finland (Government proposal 170/2014,
32, 35). Yet, if a migrant chose the option of irregular residence, it always would entail risks for potential side effects to occur (Government proposal 170/2014, 33).

Discussions concerning the effects of irregular migration and irregular presence on a state territory did not really change during the observation period. Irregular migration was still seen as voluntary and dependent on the person’s own choice, whereas victims of trafficking were more easily labeled as victims of compulsion or threat (Government proposal 34/2004, 9; 73). Irregular entry, mobility, and presence were still closely associated with organized crime (Government proposal 6/2005, 31; 243/2006; 133/2016, 23), and preventing irregular entry was believed to achieve savings for society (Government proposal 6/2005, 65). The observations showed that irregular migration has remained a generalized phenomenon that must be managed and prevented. The effects of the amendments for basic human rights and their possible impacts on those of vulnerable and victimized status remained unassessed. Irregularly resident migrants were, and still are, often rejected. Still, the Constitutional Law Committee reiterated that irregularly resident migrants do not fall outside the basic human rights protection of a state, and this should be remembered during the preparation of the legislation, and also in its application (Constitutional Law Committee 9/2012, 4). In the same vein, it must still be acknowledged that a residence permit may be issued even for irregularly resident migrants under certain conditions close to those of victimized or cooperating migrants, such as for victims of trafficking or migrants who are in a witness protection program (Government proposal 65/2014, 44). The possible and likely generation of irregular mobility and presence is, however, still not fully comprehended in the observed government proposals.

Irregularly resident migrants were given limited attention in the proposals, but the notions of irregular migrants were superficial. For instance, a couple of years ago, the Finnish government estimated that this sort of middle ground between regular and irregular residence is problematic for both society and the individual (Government proposal 166/2007, 34). In the same vein, the government assessed that there would be no potential for growth in irregular mobility or presence (Government proposal 77/2009, 9), as had been feared in other European countries in light of the European Court of Justice’s confirmation of its ruling for irregularly resident family members (Case of Metock and others C-127/08). At that time, however, it was even positively assessed in Finland that a European Union citizen’s rights to move could not be limited merely based on the grounds that it might add to irregular mobility and presence (Administration Committee 4/2010, 2).

Irregular migration to Finland was estimated to be of small significance: the estimated numbers of irregular migrants in Finland were only 3,000–4,000. However, many of these were claimed as having applied for international protection, which actually makes their residence regular
for the time that their applications are being processed (Government proposal 3/2012, 3). This indicates that it is especially challenging to estimate the numbers of irregularly resident migrants. The estimated low number of possible irregular residents in Finland may partly be the result of a previously more flexible family reunification process (before the introduction of biometric identifiers), the issued temporary residence permits (before the voluntary returns system and emphasis on the migrant’s own contribution), or protection afforded based on humanitarian reasons (before the category of humanitarian protection was abolished).

The Effect of Amendments on Regular Mobility and Residence
The current version of the Aliens Act maintains a legislative structure wherein irregular mobility and residence have the potential for growth. During the observation period, there were certain amendments that centrally affected a migrant’s right to regular mobility and residence. For some of the amendments, the Finnish government is not solely responsible as it implements the requirements of European Union law. For other amendments, however, Finland can be seen to have taken more sovereign steps. The most central of these amendments are presented below.

Various precautionary measures were implemented during the observation period. These also coincide with measures that have been legalized quite recently, and that would effectively expose irregularly resident migrants. These include measures such as organized surveillance by the police based on the right to reside in Finland (Government proposal 169/2014), where a special goal was to tackle irregular residence on Finnish territory (Government proposal 169/2014, 22). Another measure links to the privatization of responsibility to control and report irregular migrants. Thus, responsibility is moved from state authorities to industrial safety authorities, occupational health and safety authorities (Government proposal 94/2005), or to employers (Government proposal 3/2012), who need to ensure that a migrant has permission to work (and reside) in Finland (Government proposal 94/2005, 17). The responsibility to control and report irregular travelers also falls on vehicle drivers and carriers. In 2013, the duties of vehicle drivers and carriers to control and report were widened, and these duties obliged them to ensure that people not entitled to enter the country would not enter without permission of the border control authorities (Government proposal 220/2013). However, legalizing measures like these may ultimately push irregularly moving or resident migrants even deeper underground and drive them into an even more vulnerable position. Moreover, irregularly resident migrants are in an especially difficult human rights situation, and they are mainly deported back to their countries of origin when they are exposed (Employment and Equality Committee 9/2012, 2).

In the proposals, migrant contributions, actions, and duties began to receive emphasis and value in connection to regular mobility and residence. Amendments emphasizing a migrant’s own contribution were
implemented through medical age assessments for minors, the require-
ment for a child to be a minor when the residence permit application is
evaluated, a voluntary returns system, and an income requirement for
families. For instance, the medical age assessments of minors are linked
to providing the authorities with correct information. Accordingly, a
recently implemented amendment covering the requirement for an alien
to reside in a reception facility is a precautionary measure aimed against
such aliens whose entry or requirements of stay need to be clarified or
when the authorities wish to ensure the expulsion of rejected asylum seek-
ers (Government proposal 133/2016). On the one hand, the government’s
aim needs to be respected—that is to keep possible irregularly residing
aliens known to the authorities. On the other hand, aliens targeted with the
requirement to stay in a reception facility are even more likely to be pushed
underground as they may fear the possible expulsion.

Issuing a residence permit based on family ties to an unmarried minor
c child requires that the child be a minor on the date when the child’s resi-
dence permit application is decided. This requirement thus calls for rapid
actions from both the applicants and the immigration authorities (Supreme
Administrative Court, KHO:2016:79). However, not every migrant has
the capability of challenging the decisions of the immigration authorities
in court, and thus the migrant’s contribution is only rarely assessed at a
court level and discretion is mainly left to the immigration authorities.

Since return agreements between Finland and certain third countries
have not been successful (Government proposal 208/2010, 5), Finland
has implemented a system of voluntary returns (Government proposal
ultimately on the ruling of a national Supreme Administrative Court
(Supreme Administrative Court, KHO:2013:78). Previously, the return
decision was made independent of the migrant’s own contribution, and,
as such, a migrant would get a temporary residence permit more easily.
Voluntary returns were regarded as being the fastest and cheapest way to
remove irregularly resident migrants from Finnish territory (Government
proposal 208/2010, 19).

Actually, the voluntary returns system adopted in 2015 leaves the
migrant with limited options that comprise either irregular residence
or return. This was found to be questionable when assessed as “volun-
tary” (Constitutional Law Committee 47/2014, 2). The Constitutional
Law Committee pointed out that by implementing the voluntary returns
system, a group of irregularly resident migrants would therefore be gen-
erated (Constitutional Law Committee 47/2014, 2; Employment and
Equality Committee 11/2014, 2). However, counter arguments based
on the unprofitable implications of irregular stay overruled in the final
assessments. The Aliens Act also allows immigration authorities to apply
a provision when migrants have an opportunity to receive internal protec-
tion in their country of origin, which together with the voluntary returns
system well depicts the subsidiary nature of providing international protection (Government proposal 166/2007, 56).

Since the summer of 2016, the economic responsibility has been shifted to families themselves, and a family’s legal right to reside in Finland was made dependent on the income level of the family (Government proposal 43/2016, 18, 26). The more general principles for family reunification in Finland were (and currently are) that the right to family reunification is valid only for those who are legally resident (Government proposal 198/2005, 7), and only for those whose family life is real (Government proposal 240/2009, 27). Thus, irregularly resident migrants do not have a right to family reunification in Finland (Government proposal 43/2016, 4).

The recently implemented income requirement concerning families puts migrant women and children in an especially unequal position. Migrant women often have worse employment opportunities than migrant men (Government proposal 43/2016, 26), and even a child’s interests do not in general mean that regular residence is guaranteed for a family (Supreme Administrative Court, KHO:2014:50). Children and minors who are not exempt from this requirement cannot realistically reunite with their families as they often have no realistic means of support. Applying the income requirement may therefore pose an obstacle for migrant family reunification, and thus generate irregular mobility and presence. The application of an income requirement might increase the number of overall residence applications, but as the process is time-consuming, it may also increase the number of irregularly resident migrants who are present on Finnish territory.

The possibility for a potential migrant to apply for regular residence from abroad has been limited through the number of existing Finnish embassies, and also because of a migrant’s duty to provide biometric identifiers. Although some ostensibly positive amendments were made, such as allowing tasks of the Finnish embassy to be taken up by other Schengen embassies and external service providers, yet the negative reality behind the amendment was that the number of Finnish embassies in foreign countries was (and is) facing serious pressure to be reduced (Government proposal 295/2014, 8–9). Thus, a migrant’s potential to apply for regular residence from abroad has decreased, and it is still likely to decrease in the future.

Serious safety threats such as terrorism have prompted a push for the introduction of biometric passports and a shorter validity for travel documents, which are also means believed to help prevent irregular entry (Government proposal 25/2005, 9; 40). The implementation of the Council regulation (EC No 380/2008) to prevent identity abuse meant that in the context of family reunification, family members now needed to initiate their residence applications and register their fingerprints personally, and no longer by their sponsor who lives in Finland (Government proposal 104/2010, 25). For the sake of society’s security, it has been considered important that the identity of an applicant be verified as well as possible (Government proposal 104/2010, 20), for example, using databases such
as EURODAC—the European fingerprint database. However, this may mean migrants resorting to irregular mobility or residence for compelling technical, practical, or economic reasons. In the same vein, it must be noted that criminalizing phenomena that are judged harmful either for the state or for the individual (e.g., prostitution) (Government proposal 34/2004) and also associations with terrorism might push vulnerable people even deeper into an unregulated position.

During the observation period, the workload of Finnish immigration authorities was relieved by implementing amendments related to the timely processing of residence applications, abolishing the category for international protection, and restricting the entitlement to legal aid and the time to appeal for asylum seekers. Additionally, a recent amendment aims ultimately at removing asylum seekers who have been issued a negative residence decision, and ensuring that these individuals would no longer be covered under reception services (Government proposal 133/2016). It is clear that such amendments are likely to have consequences that result in irregular mobility or presence.

The expedited processing of residence applications—the prompt dismissal of applications, procedures regarding safe countries of asylum or origin, and rapid decisions (Government proposal 218/2014)—was implemented in order to prevent malpractice and to guarantee a procedure of reasonable duration. Yet, these amendments may also add to the workload of the administrative courts (Government proposal 218/2014, 35–36).

Humanitarian protection was afforded between 2009 and 2016, and it allowed a migrant to gain a residence permit when the originating country’s general situation was judged to place people at risk or to infringe their human rights (Government proposal 166/2007, 55). Indeed, the humanitarian protection previously afforded by the Finnish state for regular residence was not based on any absolute national or international obligations (Constitutional Law Committee 6/2016, 3). Thus, when humanitarian protection was included in the Aliens Act in 2009, the goal was still to maintain the requirements for protection at the former level and not to broaden the grounds for protection (Administration Committee 26/2008, 4). However, the amendment abolishing the category for humanitarian protection was approved, and it actually placed limits on the possibilities for regular residence.

Reducing the times to appeal a decision is likely to put vulnerable individuals, such as minors and children, at risk (Legal Affairs Committee 7/2016, objection 3, 34). Maintaining former levels of legal aid that exceeded the minimum standard set in the Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU) was, according to the government, no longer possible in the changed situation since 2015 (Government proposal 32/2016, 11). The government proposal was placed under heavy criticism especially with regard to the applicant’s legal protection, as applicants must now make an appeal in a shorter time when they are simultaneously coping with language learning and finding a competent source of legal aid (Legal Affairs Committee 7/2016, objection
1, 22). Thus, migrants’ capabilities or practical situation may foreseeably weaken the success of their appeal and future residence rights.

Conclusion
The current Aliens Act is sometimes unable to reach different groups of migrants, such as the victims of trafficking (Non-Discrimination Ombudsman 2016, 19) and irregular migrants. The Employment and Equality Committee has observed that in Finland forms of trafficking beyond sexual and work-based exploitation remain unidentified (Employment and Equality Committee 16/2014, 3). Relatedly, recognition and approval of different groups of migrants clearly affect the political process behind the amendments made to the Aliens Act.

This article has observed whether the gradual amendments that have been made to the national Aliens Act are likely to generate irregular mobility and presence or not. It is difficult to identify when irregular residence truly starts to increase in Finland or, in fact, anywhere else. The generation of irregular mobility and residence statistics in the forms of tables and numbers is impossible to achieve. Therefore, it is important to examine the constructed legal framework and establish what kinds of conditions it allows and enables.

Based on the observations from 2004 to 2016, there are clear signs that irregular mobility and presence have a potential for growth in Finland within the legislative framework of the Aliens Act. The restrictive amendments have not necessarily been many in number, but their outcome is now a scattered Aliens Act which is hard to interpret, and the possibilities of regular mobility and residence seem to have been neglected. It is, therefore, important that the effects of recent legislative amendments should be considered holistically (Constitutional Law Committee 27/2016, 6) and that basic human rights should be given better assessment in the future.

Having a clear, transparent, and predictable Aliens Act links to principles of good governance and legal protection which, after all, are central to the purposes of the Act. However, constant amendments render the transparency and predictability of the Act as questionable. Making regular mobility and residence harder to achieve ultimately pushes migrants into unpredictable or even dangerous and inhumane routes. Until today, the starting point for government proposals has been the internationally accepted principle that migrants have no general right to settle and reside in another country (Government proposal 309/1993, 52; 2/2016). The validity and importance of international treaties may be occasionally acknowledged (Government proposal 32/2016, 3), yet any references which are made to them remain minimal and their effect goes unassessed. The ongoing reality is that although certain amendments to the Aliens Act have limited the possibilities for regular mobility and residence, they are not principally in obvious conflict with international treaties and conventions, such as the European Convention on Human Rights (1950).
Finland has been acknowledged as a country that respects and dignifies basic human rights, and is a party to the most central international human rights treaties, conventions, and obligations. Finland also continues to abide by the duties created in them. However, it is noteworthy that international legal instruments do tolerate certain distinctions to be made between a state’s own citizens and non-citizens such as migrants. The Finnish judicial system maintained in the current Aliens Act is not in breach with international human rights standards and obligations. It has merely moved closer to meeting only the minimum standards of protection afforded in these legislative instruments. From a human rights perspective, the Finnish Aliens Act is still satisfactory, although the direction in which the amendments are heading gives cause for concern. The Aliens Act comes under pressure for constant and holistic renewal because of its scattered and complex nature, and a need for simplified and clarified provisions has existed since 2011 (Employment and Equality Committee 3/2011, 3; Administration Committee 42/2014, 2).

A central question relates to whether irregular mobility or presence may be managed through legislation. The actual goal of the Finnish government is more evidently to reduce the number of migrants to Finland, especially those from third countries. For this purpose, the legislation has been developed as a tool to transmit ideas and associations. As a result, poor, disadvantaged, and vulnerable people are practically unwelcome, as migrants belonging to these groups are usually seen as either expensive for the state economy or as having no capabilities to fight for their rights. At present, the Finnish Aliens Act does not provide sufficient protection for those who belong to vulnerable groups such as women, children, and minors, and who are likely to be the subjects of irregular mobility and residence. Finnish legislative framework should be capable of providing adequate protection to the many forms of migration, including irregular migrants. Therefore, the incapability to embrace the heterogeneity of migrants may be a factor that could lead to violations of international human rights law.

Political power and will may prompt both positive and negative human rights initiatives. Based on the observations of this study, it appears to be the political will that needs to change in order to improve legal opportunities for regular mobility and residence. Unfortunately, there are no clear signs that this is in fact present, as it was striking that basic human rights, not to mention matters of equality were only given limited consideration in the assessments that featured in the government proposals made during the observation period. Notable was that the government’s publicly expressed policy goals were not directly linked to upholding basic human rights. In the Finnish context, the amendments have been pursued in a manner that ensures that Finland does not break its international human rights obligations, but at the same time it undeniably lowers the protection for the basic human rights of a migrant to close to the minimum standard afforded by, for instance, the European Convention on
Human Rights and thus restricts regular mobility and residence. Indeed, the European Court of Human Rights case law leaves considerable space in which states may act, especially in relation to difficult and burning topics such as migration. This is why the European Court of Human Rights often resorts to assessing the minimum standard protection that must be afforded. Finland uses these guidelines sparingly as arguments to bolster its own government proposals, while at the same time lowering its basic human rights protection toward obligatory minimum standards and limiting the potential for regular migrant mobility and residence.

A positive observation is that there is now more discussion concerning irregular mobility and residence in Finland than there was a few years previously. There was even a government proposal that would have secured better health care services for irregularly resident migrants; however, this lapsed in spring 2015 (Government proposal 343/2014), a lapse best described as a lack of political will. The biggest problem therefore seems to manifest in the lack of political power and will to properly acknowledge irregular mobility and residence, and that certain amendments made to the Aliens Act have in fact structured a framework that is likely to create such conditions. The next steps of the Finnish government will most likely concentrate on screening the Aliens Act for favorable or attractive conditions that it feels should be eliminated. Given that the preliminary hypothesis presented in this article was confirmed via directly linked observations, it is foreseeable that the space for regular mobility and residence in Finland will only shrink during coming years. Therefore, it is even more important to pursue a holistic assessment of future government proposals, including an assessment of the basic human rights they affect, and to even consider a holistic renewal of the national Aliens Act in light of these circumstances.

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Explaining the Difference between Policy-Based Evidence and Evidence-Based Policy: A Nexus Analysis Approach to Mobilities and Migration

Melina Aarnikoivu, University of Jyväskylä
Sirpa Korhonen, University of Jyväskylä
Driss Habti, University of Eastern Finland
David M. Hoffman, University of Jyväskylä

Abstract
In this policy analysis, we explain the difference between policy-based evidence (PBE) and evidence-based policy (EBP). We argue that better, evidence-based understanding, explanations, and questions can be sought by problematizing the challenging forms of twenty-first century migration and mobilities. We emphasize that this can be done by not confusing PBE with EBP, especially when each is needed as a basis for specific types of action. By focusing on topics often viewed as “unrelated” or confused with one another, we underline the social dynamics that are unfamiliar to many policy actors, professionals, and stakeholders, who rely on scholars for actionable analyses. Our mode of inquiry is based on nexus analysis, and it contrasts and problematizes our recent studies, research in progress related to distinct types of mobilities and migration. The article draws on four disciplines and a more diverse set of perspectives than is the norm in Finland. Because of this, we are able to articulate better the relationship between contemporary migration challenges in Finland and present better policy questions that the mobilities paradigm brings into view.

Keywords: higher education—Europe, migration, mobilities, nexus analysis, policy analysis

1 The authors are all founding members of the Migration, Mobilities and Internationalization Research Group (miGroup), a jointly led initiative of the Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER) and the Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) at the University of Jyväskylä.
Introduction:
Who Talks about Migration and Mobilities and Who Does Not?
Our journey began in 2016 when we took part in a Finnish sociology conference, the theme of which was “the Future of the Sociological Imagination.” In our presentation, we chose to discuss what was normally missed within the narrow, uncritical, and unproblematized way “immigration” was being approached across Finland. We argued that the focus failed to engage scholarly and policy debate that better explains the relationship between migration and the mobilities paradigm (Urry 2007). Our problematization, following Denzin, stressed the following propositions:

... [t]here are two types of interpreters: people who have actually experienced what has been described, and those who are often ethnographers, or field workers, so-called well-informed experts. These two types (local and scientific) often give different meanings to the same set of thickly described/inscribed experiences. (Denzin 1998, 325)

Denzin’s distinctions were important in 2016 because in popular culture, the media, policy circles, and stakeholder groups, as well as in scholarship, many were focused on the sensationalized reporting of “Europe’s refugee crisis” and frequently conflated all discourses on migration into extremely narrow terms of refugees, asylum seekers, and (im)migration. What went unnoticed by many sociologists of migration whom we met at the conference was the empirically-based framing developed over decades by organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as the new generation of studies focused on mobilities. Denzin’s distinction of (1) those experiencing a phenomenon from (2) experts implies two others: (3) persons who are both and (4) persons who are neither (table 1 below). This problematization highlights “who talks about migration and mobilities in Finland?” In terms of nexus analysis (Scollon and Scollon 2004), the mode of inquiry used in this article, these distinctions problematize four distinct historical bodies and perspectives that potentially come together in specific nexuses to act on migration and mobilities.

Initially, our rationale for using nexus analysis was motivated by its potential to problematize issues, topics, and settings that many of our Finnish-based colleagues were missing when it came to the relationship between migration and mobilities. Our purpose was to contrast those who frame discourses and act on “immigration” in Finland with those who do not or cannot. These specifically include people with professional competence(s) regarding migration or mobilities but who often have little or no experience of either topic. We do not claim that any of these points of departure is better or worse. Instead, we argue that relying on a single perspective when all four are important is unlikely to be relevant to
Four points of departure for discourse and action regarding migration and/or complex mobilities

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<tr>
<th>Professional competence(s) regarding migration and/or complex mobilities</th>
<th>Experience(s) of migration and/or complex mobilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Persons with professional competence(s) regarding migration and/or complex mobilities and experience(s) of migration or complex mobilities.</td>
<td>Persons with professional competence(s) regarding migration and/or complex mobilities but with no experience(s) of migration or complex mobilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons with experience(s) of migration and/or complex mobilities but with no professional competence(s) regarding these topics.</td>
<td>Persons with no professional competence(s) regarding migration and/or complex mobilities and no experience(s) of migration or complex mobilities.</td>
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Table 1. Historical Bodies of Discourses. Based on Hoffman (2007, 43), adapted by Hoffman, Habti, Korhonen, and Aarnikoivu (2016).

Growing groups that correspond to fundamental qualitative distinctions and the key situations and settings they spotlight. By doing a policy analysis—rather than assuming that the present policy is adequate—we ask: might different types of policy options and alternative courses of action come into view when taking into account the actualities embodied by specialists from three of the four quadrants rather than relying on only one of four potential points of departure? More simply put: who could discuss migration and mobilities but normally does not?

It should be noted that policy analysis is distinct from policy research that focuses on existing policies, practices, and implications using “evidence” defined in choices that have already been made (Wildavsky 1987). Policy analysis contrasts alternative courses of action and the best evidence for justifying one approach over another. In other words, much policy research involves policy-based evidence (PBE). Policy analysis, by contrast, concerns articulating policy options and identifying the best available evidence, often advanced as evidence-based policy (EBP).

This article first overviews key background issues and the relevant literature that allows us to use nexus analysis to explain and underline
the need for policy analysis as a process of contrasting alternative courses of action and the evidence supporting them (Wildavsky 1987). Following the literature review, we detail the way in which we have drawn on nexus analysis, as well as define its key features. In our analysis, we provide four concrete, research-based examples (vignettes) from the topics we are each focused on in our respective disciplines: applied language studies, intercultural communication, sociology, and comparative and international higher education studies. Finally, in our discussion and conclusions we advance our claims, in terms of policy analysis of the most relevant distinctions, types of evidence, and focal points we believe could be used to articulate viable alternatives aimed at a constructive, realistic change, based on better questions grounded in multiple perspectives.

**Background and Literature Review**

Nexus analysis, the mode of inquiry used in this policy analysis, identifies and spotlights significant *discourses in place* (Scollon and Scollon 2004) that shape specific situations. Single discourses often reveal something interesting. However, they fail to explain the set of perspectives we problematized in our introduction, or their relationship. As a necessary first step, we review the most visible discourses in place that concern our topic. The linkages between our work and the key literature, in turn, correspond to the broader *cycles of discourse* (Scollon and Scollon 2004) that form the wider context for our topic. Both discourses in place and cycles of discourse are key focal points in nexus analysis, explained in more detail later in the methodology section.

**Internationalization Policy that Misses More than It Reveals**

It is not difficult to locate studies in higher education research, for example, which claim to be international but which pay little notice to mainstream scientific debate, theoretical developments, methodologies, or critical inquiry (Kosmützky and Nokkala 2014). While internationalization is a very powerful concept across our analysis, much of it results from “following” fashions (Birnbaum 2000) that are connected to the short attention span of policymakers (Teichler 2004) instead of breaking new scientific ground. Within the established discourses that are focused on internationalization and mobilities (Urry 2007), what explains several challenges is the failure to grasp the key tensions between *established* forms of internationalization and academic mobility (Trondal, Gornitzka, and Gulbrandsen 2003) and *emergent*, complex mobilities (Archer 1995; Urry 2007). Within Finnish society, a critical look at higher education is necessary because much contemporary migration is socially mediated within internationalization discourse (Käyhkö, Bontenbal, and Bogdanoff 2016).

The explanation for this is higher education, which is grounded in liberal ideology and is where normative internationalization and academic mobility has never been seriously critiqued (Pashby 2015). While
mainstream social sciences and humanities made major advances in scholarly inquiry, liberally-driven, neo-colonial framing of internationalization and mobility were never subjected to emancipatory paradigm shifts aiming at social inclusion happening on the same campuses. This lack of scholarly horsepower left higher education specialists ill-prepared for the transnational ideological shift in which neoliberal ideology supplanted liberal ideology. While a few specialists discussed this ideological shift as it was happening, seminal critique (Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Rhoades and Slaughter 2004) was not aimed at internationalization, mobilities, or migration. A few early efforts critiqued the global implications of transnational academic capitalism and international agenda setting (e.g., Currie and Newson 1998; Marginson 2006; Kallo 2009) accounting for the complexities of mobilities and migration (Marginson, Murphy, and Peters 2009; Tremblay 2004; Urry 2007). However, by the time Pusser et al. (2012), Slaughter and Cantwell (2012), Kauppinen (2012), and Cantwell and Kauppinen (2014) got traction on transnational academic capitalism, global higher education had adopted neoliberal new public management.

Amid this largely undetected ideological shift, the central distinction that our analysis brings into focus concerns settings that are inclusive, international, and innovative versus those that are not, particularly regarding contemporary mobilities. These key discourses in place are particularly important because universities in Finland frame much of their current efforts aimed at “immigration,” especially regarding refugees and asylum seekers, in terms of uncritical internationalization policy discourse. Much of this discourse is ill-suited to the acute social challenges highlighted in our four vignettes, presented in the analysis section. In stark contrast to much uncritical, atheoretical, and unproblematic neoliberal higher education policy aimed at internationalization and academic mobility, a new generation of social scientists zoomed in on “the mobility turn” (Urry 2007) over the past decade. Inspired by Urry (2007), this paradigm, as the articles of this special issue highlight, is squarely aimed at the type of complexity that inward-looking social science simply misses.

International Highly Skilled Migration and the “Mobility Turn”

Increasing global mobility\(^2\) has also accelerated the mobility of highly skilled people\(^3\) worldwide (Favell, Feldblum, and Smith 2007). This is a result of the globalization of information, economies, transports, goods,_____

\(^2\) “Migration” and “mobility” as concepts in the current literature on highly skilled people are referred to and used in different ways. The term migration usually entails movement from one country or location to another for necessity or with enforcement, while the term mobility infers a free and self-initiated movement (Habti and Koikkalainen 2014), often meant for a shorter stay abroad, or it may refer to movement within the European Union.

\(^3\) OECD (2008) defines a highly skilled person as someone with either tertiary education or equivalent experience. Conceptually, different definitions and classification of the category of highly skilled person were introduced at national and international levels (see OECD 2008, Lowell 2008). Combining educational level, sector of occupation, and salary threshold is often the strategy used by destination countries to guarantee that the actual qualifications of these migrants will match their migration status (Batalova and Lowell 2007; Cerna 2010).
higher education, and capitals. Mobilities challenge the idea of national borders and nation-states, spotlighting the needs for this workforce (Castells 2000; Xiang 2003; Smith and Favell 2006) and sparking worldwide debates about the “global war for talent” (OECD 2008).

The dynamic nature of the global labor market and economy raises new questions for further research, including the forms and patterns of mobility (OECD 2008). The internationalization of higher education is a major driver of the mobility of professionals, students, and academics, and their cross-border movement (Waters 2008; OECD 2008; Habti 2010, 2014, 2018) for better academic, educational, and employment opportunities (Xiang 2003; Saxenian 2006), or even cultural enrichment (Beaverstock 2005). However, the integration of these groups is not solely structured by the productivity of their knowledge and skills in the labor market, but could be subject to “symbolic struggles” and power relations over recognition, qualifications, and access to state institutions (Weiss 2006; Habti 2014).

Recent research has focused on theoretical and analytical developments linking occupational, socio-economic, socio-cultural, spatial, and life-course dynamics that affect mobility or hyper-mobility for personal, economic, or socio-cultural reasons. This research attends to the interplay between micro-, macro-, and meso-level factors that shape job, career, social, and spatial mobility for the highly skilled, as well as the extent to which they are integrated within receiving societies (Favell, Feldblum, and Smith 2007; Habti 2012; Habti and Elo 2018, 12). Recent research also addresses the life-course perspective (Wingens et al. 2011; Findlay et al. 2015) and the individual life stories and experiences of highly skilled migrants (Habti 2012; Ryan 2015). However, much has been left untouched regarding the multi-faceted nature of highly skilled mobility in a rapidly globalized world (Sheller and Urry 2006). A new theoretical and empirical approach, the “mobility turn” (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2010) or “new mobilities paradigm” (Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007) offers a new avenue forward with the literature of the mobilities paradigm by incorporating new ways of theorizing. The mobility turn highlights the overlooked “importance of the systematic movements of people for work and family life, for leisure and pleasure” (Sheller and Urry 2006, 207–8; see this issue’s introduction).

Much of the higher education internationalization discourse is poorly suited to contemporary demographically driven challenges, such as migration in Finland. The mobilities paradigm and associated discourses offer a more robust approach, but are not widely used in the nexuses we focus on in our analysis. One possible reason for the disconnect between these two key discourses in place is a third discourse, which is not new, historically, but which is being experienced as new by some scholars and policy actors in Finland. The disconnect is further explained by the myopic focus on the “migration crisis” in a policy discourse that ignores the recent generations of migrants—already in Finland—who have been arriving in the country.
over the past several decades (Jaakkola 2005). While refugee and asylum flows are important, policy analysis can only be done by understanding they are a single focal discourse, not the (single) discourse into which all mobilities can be—or should be—placed.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers, the “Migration Crisis,” and “Return”

At the same time when international highly skilled migration benefits corporations, organizations, universities, and national economies (e.g., Harvey 2006), the EU is facing the most complex refugee challenge in its history. In the current situation, policy has aimed to control “floods” and “masses” of refugees and asylum seekers entering the EU. The International Organization for Migration⁴ and supranational actors emphasize “voluntariness” of returns as a policy option but many are mandatory rather than voluntary (Black and Gent 2006; Bradley 2008; Hautaniemi, Juntunen, and Sato 2013). Those who opt for a truly voluntary return within return programs, (specifically, refugees with a permanent-residence permit) confront a decisive question regarding their future: to go or to stay? Returns result in giving up residence permits in exchange for travel expenses and (small) reintegration assistance, in an all-or-nothing decision (Huttunen 2010). These policies do not account for transnational dynamics or consider future developments in the region of return. Eastmond (2006) noted that the returnees from Sweden often adopt a different strategy and organize the return individually, ensuring a back-up plan, and Finlay, Crutcher, and Drummond (2011) explain that highly educated Sudanese refugees were prepared to return with their skills, to help in rebuilding their country, provided they are granted Canadian citizenship before the return.

Returns—voluntary, mandatory, or forced—are regarded as ways to control undesired mobility. This solution is often framed as final, unconcerned with the consequences for the returned, often deported, individuals. Returns have become an integral component of the EU migration policy (Black and Gent 2006; Harvey 2006). Within this highly politicized humanitarian emergency, perspectives from individuals seeking asylum and evidence based on research following them up are increasingly needed to frame both specialists’ and public discourses. People with refugee experience have been forced to leave and they have experienced the loss of control over many aspects of their lives, but, nevertheless, they are individuals with skills, knowledge, and strengths (Correa-Velez, Gifford, and Barnett 2010), having obtained language, social, and networking skills, both en route and in host societies. However, these issues still remain largely unnoticed within the narrative of refugee masses.

Policy-oriented research on forced migration often focuses on macro-level phenomena. We argue that the analysis of individual experiences could inform policies and provide further insights to the study of refugees. Intercultural communication, as a field of study, has often the individual in

the focus of research, but it has long served the needs of the affluent: business people and their family members, exchange students, and sojourners, and only marginally studied forced migration (Steyn and Grant 2007; Szkudlarek 2010). Refugees’ and asylum seekers’ restricted mobility and dependence on policymakers’ decisions highlights the intertwined questions related to citizenship, human rights, power, and agency at the core of individual refugee experiences. Up until now, these have been of secondary interest in policy making, if noticed at all (Finlay, Crutcher, and Drummond 2011; Kibreab 2003; Muggeridge and Doná 2006).

Having discussed the most prominent discourses in place regarding migration and mobilities, we now move on to discussing nexus analysis in more detail. This is important, as nexus analysis as a mode of inquiry is not widely used in the disciplinary communities that form our key audiences. For that reason, it is important to outline the key features that allow us to make valid claims based on the evidence used in our argument. While policymakers might not always be keenly interested in the ways in which we arrive at our findings, it is critical that we make the methodological and theoretical connection between the problematization of our topic, the findings, and ultimately the policy implications of those findings.

Methodology: Nexus Analysis as a Mode of Inquiry
As a member of a research team, Korhonen, one of the authors, asserted in 2015 the need for policy analysis across our team’s respective areas of expertise during a thesis advising session with co-author Hoffman, Korhonen’s dissertation supervisor. Our experientially grounded hunch was the need for a far more nuanced understanding of the complex relationships cutting across settings where ideas, perspectives, and people are structurally excluded from view as a result of action that can be empirically observed but that most often goes unnoticed in the policy process (Hoffman et al. 2015). In other words, at the outset of our collaboration, we understood that the social dynamics we focus on are not very well understood by the specialists or policymakers within the perspectives we have problematized. Because this is the case, understanding key relationships across our distinct but interrelated topics becomes highly unlikely. Nexus analysis was developed by Scollon and Scollon (2004) in very similar circumstances, which is why we selected its theoretical and methodological premises to guide our analysis. The four different vignettes drawn from our respective fields of interest are outwardly “unconnected” in the minds of many within the types of perspectives we problematize in our introduction. That said, nexus analysis has allowed us to understand salient connections better, in ways that are actionable in terms of policymaking.

6 Discussions between Sirpa Korhonen and David M. Hoffman, Jyväskylä, 2015.
Key Terms in Nexus Analysis

In order to test the potential of nexus analysis, it is important to outline its framework and features. To do so, we begin by defining a number of interrelated concepts. First, a site of engagement refers to settings in which mediated action is situated in a unique historical moment and material space where distinct practices intersect in real time. When a site of engagement is repeated regularly, it becomes a nexus of practice. In turn, the discourses regularly intersecting in these moments and material spaces are called discourses in place. There are three main activities that comprise nexus analysis. The first stage, engaging the nexus of practice, is the opening stage of the analysis, where analysts place themselves in a specific nexus of practice where they are both accepted and legitimate participants. Once having done so, they identify those social actions and social actors that are crucial to engaging the social issue in focus. Furthermore, the analyst needs to observe the interaction order of practices within the nexus. By interaction order Scollon and Scollon refer to any of the many possible social arrangements with which people form relationships in social interactions. Finally, in the first stage, the analyst determines the most crucial cycles of discourse—the histories and futures of different discourses that intersect in a particular nexus of practice (Scollon and Scollon 2004).

To understand the small changes happening in the nexus of practice, the analyst then needs to expand the analysis in both space and time and explore the connections between the past, present, and future discourses. This forms the second stage of nexus analysis, navigating the nexus of practice. At this stage, the analyst maps the cycles of people, places, discourses, objects, and concepts that circulate through the micro-semiotic ecosystem unique to each nexus. By doing so, the analyst wants to find anticipations, links, as well as their inherent timescales circulating through and within a nexus of practice. Moreover, one has to expand the circumference of the analysis from time to time, which means that instead of focusing and “getting stuck” on certain actions and moments, the analyst should “zoom in and out” to see if there are broader discourses that need to be considered when conducting the analysis (Scollon and Scollon 2004).

Last, changing the nexus of practice is what nexus analysis ultimately aims to do. By conducting discourse analysis, nexus analysis attempts to accomplish social change instead of merely studying it. “The outcome of a good nexus analysis is not a clear statement upon which further action may be taken. The outcome of a good nexus analysis is the process of questioning which is carried on throughout the project” (Scollon and Scollon 2004, 143–44). However, as is the case with many participative strategies aimed at social change, not everyone accepts the premise of social change as a scholarly objective within institutional, organizational, and professional settings (Scollon and Scollon 2004).
Our analysis hinges on the same type of historical and institutional contextualization as is used in the Scollons’ “micro-sociological analysis” (2004). It has close parallels to an interest in identifying the everyday settings and situations that bring a larger picture into view. Like Scollon and Scollon, we are interested in the tensions between “micro-rhythms in the integration of social action at one extreme” (Scollon and Scollon 2004, 68) and the need to study the structural nature of participation in societies’ most important institutions set against a challenging and complex geopolitical backdrop. The key link between the work of the Scollons and our work though is that, like them, we find ourselves “deeply embedded in a set of social issues that circulate(d) through virtually every aspect of our lives” (Scollon and Scollon 2004, 70). In other words, we do not have to identify a focal setting to study “outside” the locations where we live and work. The respective vignettes we focus on in our analysis, presented in the next section, are our daily lives.

Finally, those familiar with nexus analysis will recognize that the authors are much more in the beginning of a very long process than near the end. Therefore, we have to draw a sharp distinction between doing a full-blown nexus analysis and drawing on the theoretical and methodological logic of nexus analysis, in order to illuminate possible paths forward regarding a positive impact on acute social challenges. While outside the direct scope of our policy analysis, this is a very important distinction that we will fully address in the discussion and conclusion of this article.

Analysis: Better Questions Based on Understanding a Bigger Picture
Another key similarity between our work and the work of Scollon and Scollon (2004) is that we are also focusing on several empirically grounded sites of engagement, each outwardly distinct. Holistically, these allow a bigger picture to emerge. While it is possible to approach scholarship and policy on our respective topics “as if” they were unrelated, we argue that the best policy questions will be based on a better understanding of their complex interrelationships. Following Denzin’s (1998) distinction (see introduction), these are four vignettes from the research topics each of us has been studying, living, or both for the past several years.

Vignette 1: Early Stage Scholars, Mobility, and the “Gap of Insecurity”
There has been a great deal of research done on academic work/life balance (see, e.g., Cooklin et al. 2014; Fox, Fonseca, and Bao 2011; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2012). Furthermore, there has been a great amount that has been written about scientific mobility (see, e.g., Ackers 2004; Guth 2008; Veugelers and Van Bouwel 2015) and the internationalization of higher education (see, e.g., Marginson and van der Wende 2007; Kogan and Teichler 2007). However, the relationship between these bodies of knowledge is something that has been less talked or thought about. In her doctoral research, Aarnikoivu (in progress) examines the trajectories of
two groups of doctoral students. To do this, she applies nexus analysis as a general methodological approach. The first group of participants consists of physicists and engineers based at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, where Aarnikoivu did insider ethnography (see, e.g., Aarnikoivu 2016; Alvesson 2003) from July 2015 to December 2016. The participants are affiliated with universities in eight different European countries, including Finland. To clarify, the doctoral students at CERN are not typically employed by CERN, but instead they use the CERN facilities in order to carry out their dissertation work. Typically, they either work on grants or are paid by different research groups. The second group consists of doctoral students of applied language studies doing their dissertations at the Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Finland. However, because the work of the second group is still in progress, only the first group will be discussed in this policy analysis.

Although there are several different issues that the doctoral students of the studied group were facing throughout their studies, the complex themes of mobility, temporariness, and the gap of insecurity were the most apparent ones that emerged while Aarnikoivu was navigating the nexus of doctoral studies at CERN. This could be explained by the fact that not only were the participants highly mobile people, having decided to work outside their country of origin, but they were also working in a highly mobile environment where people were continuously moving to or from. As studied earlier, academic mobility is usually connected to uncertainty related to fixed-term employment, which again presents challenges for researchers and their families (e.g., Oliver 2009, 2012). Researchers’ family members normally participate in the decision-making regarding mobility (Ackers 2004), which comes up regularly when the contract of one (or both) of the spouses is coming to an end (Oliver 2009, 2012). Oliver (2012) has named this the “gap of insecurity” and points out that, in fact, mobility very often is not a choice but rather “a must” considering one’s career advancement.

Based on Aarnikoivu’s preliminary analysis, all the participants were generally very content with their current situations, and they were happy to work in such an inspiring scientific environment. However, when they spoke about issues that they were concerned about, they often talked about their families, friends, and the future. Among those participants who were either married, engaged, or even those who had started dating only recently, there was often worry about how the partner would cope outside the country of origin. For example, for a spouse moving to a new country because of a husband’s or wife’s work, it might be difficult to find a new job. Moreover, creating new social circles was considered to be time-consuming, and it demanded a great deal of effort, especially if there were small children in the family. Many of the participants also expressed their worry for the future—not only in terms of their own careers but also because of the future of their relationships: what will happen after graduation? This was a matter of concern especially for those participants
who were in a relationship with a person they had met while working at CERN—usually a person of a different nationality than themselves.

Although formally doctoral studies typically involve a very narrow range of people (such as the supervisors and thesis examiners), there are a number of other people and networks involved in the process of doing a doctorate: other academics (peers, other colleagues, and research participants), family (parents, siblings, spouse, children), and friends (Hopwood 2010; Mantai and Dowling 2015), who all have an effect on the course of doctoral studies, knowingly or unknowingly (Baker and Lattuca 2010; McAlpine, Jazvac-Martek, and Hopwood 2009). The need to extend the viewpoint beyond the doctoral student/supervisory relationship has already been pointed out by others (e.g., Hopwood 2010; Wright 2003). In the research regarding doctoral studies, however, the aforementioned groups are often referred to as “support.” Although undeniably important for the doctoral journey itself, it is apparent that in the nexus of practice of carrying out doctoral studies the role of family and friends is much more significant than to simply “offer support”: It is **with the help of** but also because of these groups that doctoral students make decisions during their studies and especially after they graduate. What Aarnikoivu would, therefore, like to ask is whether all these crucial social actors and their roles are taken into account when making decisions and planning policies regarding doctoral studies—and the early-career research stage—in Finland and elsewhere in Europe.

**Vignette 2: The Most Valuable Data Source? The People We Never Bothered to Ask**

In order to understand the consequences of migration policies better, it is possible to follow up on returnees with either a refugee or asylum-seeking background—those who have first-hand experience on return within the context of irregular migration. Researchers have tackled several aspects related to returns within irregular migration, and it is encouraging to see that individual voices are gradually becoming more prominent within a field of studies that has commonly focused on macro-level phenomena. Nevertheless, these returnees are often out of the public eye, even though they are the specialists whose experiences could spotlight important lessons for policymakers and organizations as to the effectiveness of present policy and practice. The people we never bothered to ask may well be the most valuable data sources, people who possess evidence-based knowledge of the whole refugee cycle, from the flight from crisis, to being on the move, entering the host country, the challenges entailed in settling in and attempting integration, the actualities of return, and the ever-present dilemmas entailed in remigration or onward migration. These people are not easy to reach, but, once located, they are often more than willing to share their insights, intrigued by the fact that someone cares.

In her on-going doctoral study, Korhonen (in progress) focuses on returns in the context of irregular migration. Specifically, the study looks at...
refugees’ and asylum seekers’ return to their place of origin from Finland, after several years’ stay in the host country. Korhonen did her field work for her dissertation in Iraqi Kurdistan (or South Kurdistan) in 2013 to interview returnees from Finland, along with follow-up interviews as long as almost two years after the initial ones.

The evidence from the interview analysis offers insights fundamentally distinct from the way most scholars and policymakers have researched or problematized migration within Finnish society. While many seem content with speculating on the negative sides of migration and what a great deal “we” might lose by letting in small numbers of people in crisis, the focus is on people who came to Finland as refugees but then returned and their perception of inclusion potential within Finnish society’s most important institutions, organizations, and communities.

Korhonen’s results spotlight key migration issues outside the view of “experts” and actors in the migration debate. Specifically, the current migration policies do not consider the policy implications and consequences on individual lives based on the available data in return and deportation contexts. These data from individuals whose actual experiences are subsumed by media headlines of “masses” and “floods” of migrants are missing from the discourses in place and interaction order that inform the policy cycle. Instead, asylum seekers are seen and treated as “illegals” in the eyes of the authorities but also in everyday discourses informing the action on migration, contradicting the viewpoint of individuals actually caught up in migration. What most discourses in place have in common is an oversimplified view of return migration and a lack of sustainable long-term, evidence-based decision-making. Real-world questions, such as the need for a voluntary returnee to come back to Finland or the EU, are not considered. The de facto “one-way return ticket” does not map onto the changing needs of either Finnish society, the geopolitical realities of the regions of origin, nor the obligations of the international community. Instead, returnees give up their residence rights in exchange for return. In a private discussion, a Finnish migration official stated that another option “does not exist,” specifically, that “the returnees do not return” (to Finland).7

The present policy in many circumstances is “no second chances on European soil.” However, the reality of global migration often entails further or remigration, in spite—or because—of “getting-rid-of-policies.” Moreover, rigid borders, invisible to “us,” control the lives of people with second-tier citizenship and human rights. What is not considered is that migrants who have been deported—or those who returned voluntarily but without additional financial or educational/professional capital—are often seen as “failures” upon return because they have not achieved what they were aiming at and are marginalized in their own communities. The time spent in the host society and its educational institutions benefits

7 A telephone conversation on October 27, 2015, followed by an email exchange, with an anonymous official in the Finnish Ministry of the Interior.
neither the returnees nor the host societies. The education received in Finland holds the power to enhance the migrants’ position. It is, however, designed for the Finnish context and working life and mostly unsuitable for post-return circumstances.

**Vignette 3: Cultural Capital Mobilization of Russian Physicians in the Transition into the Finnish Health Labor Market**

Public debates on foreign physicians moving to Finland for employment, especially from non-EU countries, center on the assessment and recognition of their competences and qualifications to practice in healthcare services and ways of managing their labor integration. This process seriously impacts healthcare workers’ initial integration stage at different levels (personal, social, socio-economic, and professional) as it necessitates a multi-layered struggle. Russian physicians moving to Finland initially experience a lengthy period of time working as trainees, referred to as the “transition penalty” (see Lochhead 2003), before they receive a license to practice. This affects their career progression and social mobility. The main question is how these physicians gain the credit of recognition and trust when entering the Finnish labor market. In his postdoctoral work, Habti engages these issues: to what extent does the integration process offer a high or low return in their career mobility, or meet the expectations of an employer? How do these physicians then succeed in the transition passage to work using their qualifications in Finland so that their qualifications are acknowledged as valuable cultural capital?

Habti discusses these questions using a relational approach that conceptualizes the value of qualifications of Russian physicians. Because the recognition of qualifications is related to socially constructed and biographically changing spaces (Weiss 2005), his study partly uses Bourdieu’s (1986, 1990) conceptual groundwork, which serves as a relevant theoretical instrument that guides Habti’s study, namely cultural capital, field, and symbolic capital. Bourdieu asserts that agents are embedded in collectively shared cultural and symbolic practices and that recognition is “traded” in markets and is symbolically logically grounded. As a concept, his cultural capital is based on skills and knowledge accumulated in education and the family (social networks), and it is constrained by state regulations that allow or limit the use of this cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986, 242–43). It embodies relational aspects of different social spaces. **Institutionalized cultural capital** is assessed for recognition depending on specific national (location-specific) contexts (Weiss 2005), using a specific nation-state institutional framework (see Neiterman and Bourgeault 2012) or transnational (globally recognized) contexts. When the value of this capital is known and recognized in different fields (contexts), it turns into **symbolic capital** and plays a role in social reproduction (Bourdieu 1989, 17). Cultural capital depends on the field (Bourdieu 1986, 1990), which is defined as a social space related to joint interests, formed by
shared norms, hierarchic positions, and struggles over the shared forms of capital (social, cultural, economic, symbolic).

The processes of building and mobilizing the components of cultural capital are time-related. These temporal processes, as a transition passage of integration into the labor market, transform this cultural capital. The value of the capital is negotiated when it is used in the labor market with employers or intermediaries in the job market. This process equals to what Bourdieu calls *symbolic struggles*. Otherwise, physicians seek ways in which the consequent loss or weakened symbolic capital does not signify a loss of the professional or social status in working life. Russian physicians have to struggle for their recognition within a hierarchical but symbolically legitimated structure of society because the process of integration and accreditation usually negatively affects career progression and social mobility in their initial career stage.

Using Bourdieu's relational social theory within the life-course approach (see, e.g., Kõu et al. 2015; Wingens et al. 2011), Habti's study aims to describe and analyze the perceptions and practices of these physicians who recount their experiences in establishing themselves in Finland, both in national and local cultural contexts. Habti’s study also aims to present aspects that the Russian physicians consider as an integral part of the healthcare workforce. In addition, the study examines the more problematic or ambivalent aspects of establishing professionalism as a migrant from a non-EU, Eastern European country. This allows an understanding of the complex dynamic processes and the different strategies (struggles and negotiations) that govern their professional and organizational integration into the Finnish health services. The research is based on qualitative evidence about the basic questions related to these Russian physicians’ integration process in a highly segmented labor market. The analysis is based on twenty-six in-depth semi-structured interviews with Russian physicians (21 F, 5 M) currently living and working in different regions of Finland.

Developing the theoretical and empirical synthesis can serve as a knowledge base for policy-actors, stakeholders, and concerned institutions. This empirical synthesis can also lead to a better, theoretically grounded understanding of the embedded dynamics and characteristics in the migration, integration, and career progression of this unique group in Finland. Understanding these complex dynamics is important when Finnish authorities improve policies and programs that address and target the recruitment and integration of foreign healthcare workers in Finland. In terms of nexus analysis, this vignette spotlights institutional, organizational, and professional nexuses in which the two fundamental policy questions are the following: (1) Are there alternatives to a six-year internship process for fully qualified physicians, including specialists, especially considering the shortage of medical doctors in several Finnish municipalities? (2) Is there a risk that underpaid MDs and specialists might choose
other migration destinations or leave for countries that offer better-paid integration in a fraction of the time?

Vignette 4: Underserved Populations in the Nordic Countries? We Don’t Know.

From 2013 to 2015, authors Hoffman and Habti and their colleagues studied scholarly precariousness in Finnish higher education (Hoffman et al. 2015). The research process included presentations regarding key findings for personnel employed in both research institutes in the team’s focus. The purpose of the presentations to personnel was peer-to-peer intervention, designed to provide a better understanding of the challenging personnel practices that explained scholarly precariousness. These presentations were given by different combinations of authors at over the course of the research. In addition, the scientific findings were presented by Hoffman in several presentations at international conferences on both migration and higher education studies (e.g., Hoffman et al. 2013; Hoffman et al. 2014; Hoffman 2015). In the latter stages of the study’s write-up, Hoffman was asked to publicly comment on the critical approach his team had taken to the topic of equality and unproblematic human resource policies and practices in two research institutes. The site of engagement was a seminar focused on “Equality and Diversity” in the university in which these institutes are located. Several policy actors were present, including the university’s director of administration, a representative of the strategic planning unit, the chair of the university’s equality committee, a board member of the student union, and an official from the Finnish Ministry of Justice, whose office had recently mandated new measures concerning equality and non-discrimination, based on updated legislation that applied to all organizations in Finland.

The majority of the seminar presentations were by institutional decision-makers and policy actors, reacting to the recent legislation. In the only research-based presentation, Hoffman and the study’s co-authors Siekkinen and Stikhin each pointed out research and experienced-based findings that aimed to interrogate critically the legislative and policy-driven discussion that was taking place. In his comments, Hoffman’s central point problematized the relationship between three ideas stated to be important in the European Union and in national and university policy: internationalization, attractive academic careers, and equality. Drawing from several studies, Hoffman pointed out that the easiest way to gauge the extent to which ideas stated to be important (in policy discourse) are actually important (in terms of action) was through the direct observation of publicly available information that ministries and universities routinely make available on their websites (Hoffman and Välimaa 2016).

In terms of discourses in place, Hoffman pointed out that all three topics are said to be important in both the university’s current strategic plan and its operational agenda. Internationalization was referenced twenty-eight times in the strategic plan and eighteen times in the operational
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agenda, attractive academic careers six times and four times respectively, and equality two times and once, respectively. Hoffman then pointed out that the number of people hired by the university to specifically act on these topics was eight persons (full-time staff: internationalization) and fourteen persons (full-time staff: human resources). Equality, on the other hand, institutionally and organizationally speaking, was the province of an unpaid committee made up of non-specialists, supported by a student affairs officer whose job description included acting as a secretary for this committee, among other responsibilities.

As an issue of social and public policy, Hoffman pointed out that, structurally speaking, the university did not employ anyone whose primary focal responsibilities qualified them to answer, address, or act on the question: Do all groups located in Finnish society have access to, or are they, in fact, located in, the faculty ranks, student population, or management structure of this university? More important was the fact that the university employees who might have occasionally considered these types of questions did not appear to be drawing on extensive experience with, or state-of-the-art knowledge of, what the scholarly literature identifies as the single most important issue regarding inclusive universities: the context of the community served (Hurtado, Carter, and Kardia 1998; Kahn and Pavlich 2001). This had been confirmed in Hoffman’s follow-up work with the university’s equality committee, which involved developing a staff/student survey focused on equality. The initial draft of the survey supplied to Hoffman was not meaningfully connected to the state-of-the-art scholarly literature on equality, higher education, and academic work, and it did not account for nor problematize the relationships between access, participation, and career trajectory. Equality was conceptually unproblematized and empirically not operationalized in terms of state-of-the-art scholarly literature, current European Commission (EC) or university policy, or contemporary management and leadership practices.

In terms of nexus analysis, this observation, if generalizable, underlines an awkward situation, in terms of universities around the world preoccupied with recruitment, selection, promotion, and retention of faculty, staff, and management (who in turn select and credential students). Specifically, if asked—by anyone—if Finland’s higher education system has underserved groups in our general population, the answer—at this particular university—is: “We don’t know.” Further, in terms of a focal interaction order essential to nexus analysis, these observations underline the absence of an institutional or organizational nexus in which the actors necessary to problematize this type of question could potentially meet. In other words, teaching, research, and policy referencing equality exist. However, this university does not employ specialists who focus on, can articulate, or who routinely act on the relationship between the backgrounded, unfunded, and unstaffed discourse on equality and the foregrounded, well-funded, fully staffed discourse on human resource practices and internationalization.
Discussion
Using the theoretical and methodological logic of nexus analysis, we have now identified and problematized key discourses in place and cycles of discourse of our respective research topics. They are socially mediated in recurring interaction order(s) in the sites of engagement each of us has zoomed in and out of within our respective research. This, in turn, has allowed us to identify discourses that are ignored and the structural absence of interaction between particular groups within sites, characterized by the absence of engagement. Our analysis implies that alternative approaches to policy exist, and it spotlights the sites of engagement in which those alternatives could be articulated if present challenges were adequately problematized and better understood within the nexuses we identify. Further, by using a transdisciplinary mode of inquiry well outside the range in use by most scholars and policymakers focused on unresolved social challenges in Finland, the relationship between mobilities and migration becomes actionable in terms of policy analysis. While the identification of these focal points (above) and articulating their relationship (below) is only an initial step, it underlines the methodological utility of testing the logic of nexus analysis, as well as its potential in areas where it is not widely used, like higher education studies.

Why the Relationship between Mobilities and Migration Matters
The reason we chose to problematize our topic in a scholarly setting—focused on C. Wright Mills’s (1959) formulation in his classic work, The Sociological Imagination—was because we found little imagination in the research-policy nexus concerning the topics spotlighted in the four vignettes of our analysis. Our problematization spotlights the limitations of many scholars and policy actors brought into view across our topics, especially those who (1) have no direct experience of contemporary mobilities and/or migration and who (2) know nothing of significance of either (Denzin 1998). The research-policy nexus concerning Finland’s current social challenges is of crucial importance, as most persons in Finland’s general population have no expertise in these areas. This is the case in many countries. However, what is unique to Finland is the lack of imagination, evolving knowledge, and long-term experience on which viable policy could be based. This is important because of the social, economic, and political challenges currently faced by Finnish society in an era of public financial austerity and the stagnation of a challenged private sector. Both of these are complicated by uncertainty and ambivalence about EU cohesion, in general, and migration issues, in particular. Added to all of this are the increased geopolitical tensions along Finland’s eastern border. None of these broad challenges was in dispute in 2016–17, as we authored this analysis.

More specific to our topic, Finland has the oldest working-age population in the EU, and as that part of the workforce retires, Finland has never articulated a clear evidence-based approach to the migration and
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mobility challenges raised across our four vignettes. The consequence of not understanding these complexities is “push factors” bearing on precisely the people most needed to directly address the challenges faced by Finnish society. Sometimes, as migration studies show, these two groups are the same. This is also not in dispute as these relationships are better understood in countries, communities, and companies competing for precisely the global talent brought into focus by the mobilities paradigm, as well as studies of the internationalization of higher education, both of which cut across the topics advanced as evidence of our argument. This is the backdrop common to the four sets of studies carried out by the authors and the explanation for why we selected a transdisciplinary mode of inquiry, drawing on four different fields of study or disciplines and focusing on what outwardly might appear to be unrelated topics to anyone but specialists.

Lost in Translation—and on Policymakers and Scholars

Our policy analysis illuminates several key distinctions lost on many in the research-policy nexus in Finland, especially those structurally disconnected—as indicated across our analysis—from a population that is changing more rapidly than those who mediate policy. By “lost,” we mean that these distinctions are often unclear, confused, conflated, and used without conceptual precision. In scholarship and policymaking, this lack of theoretical or conceptual grounding renders analysis of data—or “evidence”—meaningless. The most important of these distinctions are as follows:

Policy Research versus Policy Analysis. An example of a good time for conventional policy research is indicated when the researching of issues is not widely contested, such as when universities publish the numbers of bachelor or master’s degrees per year, as defined by the Bologna Process reforms. Those numbers and any action based on them is what we term policy-based evidence. Policy analysis, as advanced by Wildavsky (1987), on the other hand, is needed when contrasting alternative approaches to policy issues that are not yet understood, such as the relationship between migration and mobilities in Finland.

In other words, when thinking about degree numbers, the evidence defined by policy exists and is clear. However, when thinking about migration challenges within Finnish society, the lack of compelling evidence across our vignettes spotlights the need for contrasting conceptually problematized, empirically grounded alternatives, within the sites of engagement brought into focus in our vignettes. The policy “trap” that many fall into when dealing with complex topics is confusing policy assumptions, which are grounded in clear rationale, with theoretically unproblematized and empirically ungrounded normative assumptions. The latter are often only biased assumptions of some variety (cultural, political, religious, and so on) that may—or may not—be backed up by valid data and rigorous analysis. While it can be argued that existing policy needs to be revisited
in terms of considering alternatives, the four vignettes in our analysis are characterized by the unlikelihood that alternatives were, will be, or are being considered. In addition, the evidence base for both scholarship and policymaking is fairly narrow, as indicated in our opening problematization of this field, and remains so in the sites of engagement illuminated across our vignettes.

**Getting Traction on Contemporary Contested Complexity.** Our analysis puts a spotlight on four key focal points that we regard as essential to gaining better evidence-based understanding of the demographically driven social challenges faced by Finnish society. These include the following:

- **Mobilities** (Urry 2007), which offers a paradigmatic approach to the era in which we now live. As such, this implicates humankind, in general, as no person on the planet falls outside the scope of this paradigm.
- **Migration**, which involves well-documented dynamic patterns of human movement within and across the regions and countries of the globe involving millions and which entails complex mobilities.
- The **internationalization of higher education**, which involves distinct forms of mobilities and sometimes migration.
- The migration of refugees and asylum-seekers, an established focal point of migration studies relevant to several forms of complex mobility.

These distinctions spotlight especially the least mobile, in terms of the most important forms of mobility, specifically social and intergenerational mobility. As we wrote this text, commentators across the political spectrum agreed that both the UK’s Brexit vote, as well as the US Presidential Election were “won” by groups whose identity is shaped by a perceived or experienced loss or lack of social mobility, over generations, and who felt threatened from groups, especially “immigrants” and (highly mobile) political elites (Cillizza 2016). The point of our use of the four outlined focal points is that the theory and major concepts in use are needed to contextualize and understand social challenges we are faced with when analyzing our topics, in empirical terms. This becomes even more important when communicating the relevance of our findings to policymakers. The main challenge we encounter across the vignettes is not a lack of appreciation for complexity within specific settings and situations. All persons we have encountered during our research agree that tackling the types of challenges brought into view in our paper are complex. What is absent, however, most often because of *non-interaction* and a *lack of engagement* within specific sites is the fact that *complexity is contested* in very important ways that defy simplification from narrow perspectives. The four key focal points explain, in part, the reasons for contestation, especially when the relation between terms is unclear, confused, or conflated. What remains is whether policymakers detect and
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effectively engage contested complexity or remain baffled. Readers will probably have seen this play out in both the UK and the US, as this article is finalized. “Immigration,” the term that caught our eye in the initial conference where we met, is interesting in the sense of a “discourse in place” that clearly mediates action in scholarship, policymaking, and, especially, the media. That said, it is not on our list for the same reason it is not typically used by the International Organization for Migration. Specifically, the term assumes both a single direction and a final result that is not born out in enough cases to make it meaningful regarding the topics our analysis brings into view. What we would propose, based on our argument and evidence, is unremarkable but comes into view with an untypical mode of inquiry: nexus analysis. Specifically, better questions are clearly possible when researchers rely on conceptual precision and better evidence, which by definition means better policies and—ultimately—the positive change hoped for by policymakers and the society they serve.

The single best policy question starkly illuminated by the mobilities paradigm is not “managing the floods of migrants coming to Finland,” but rather “how to keep floods of migrants from leaving Finland.” The moment a highly skilled professional leaves Finland, they enter patterns of mobilities and migration well outside the assumption-laden focus of scholars and policymakers narrowly focused on “immigration.” Even for those migrants arriving in Finland who temporarily enter the “immigrant” discourse in place, it is clear that many never arrive with the intention to stay. Those categorized as citizens or residents with an “immigrant background” may opt, at any time, to move onward, to countries, communities, and companies where it is well understood that they need mobile talent a lot more than mobile talent needs them. Finland, as a society, is not one of these countries. While some small groups might contest that, this defines several unresolved dilemmas and paradoxes faced by policymakers (Hoffman et al. 2015, 2016).

Conclusions
Within the sites of engagement our vignettes are focused on, we detail structural pressure and push factors that underline the stark realities of Finland’s unsustainable dependency ratio as the post-war baby-boom generation retires and gradually fills expensive, publicly funded residential facilities and stretches the limits of a publicly funded healthcare system. The long-term, generational, focal framing of the mobilities paradigm instantly highlights a stark choice for highly skilled mobile talent: “Why stay?” This question is acute within the structural nexuses highlighted across our vignettes. Our analysis of policy outcomes bearing on mobilities and migration in sites within institutions, organizations, and professions ranges from benign misunderstanding of the most important needs of highly skilled mobile professionals (Aarnikoivu); continuous neglect of key issues and dynamics (Korhonen); obstructionist gatekeeping by professional communities (Habti); and the failure to ask critical questions
uniquely suited to higher education (Hoffman.) Over generations—a key time-scale missed in neoliberal short-term, top-down, non-inclusive policymaking—the consequences of “getting policy decisions wrong” becomes clear. Regarding the vignettes that are the evidence of our argument, it is worth noting that the people brought into view are focused on long-term consequences of decisions, especially where social mobility is concerned, and the intergenerational mobility of those closest to them. This should come as no surprise to scholars or policymakers. What is more surprising is policy processes that disregard this.

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Bordering Mobilities: 
The Case of Russian Trans-Border Second-Home Ownership in Finland

Olga Hannonen
University of Eastern Finland

Abstract
Trans-border second-home ownership is a growing mobility trend in different parts of the world. This paper employs both a mobilities and border perspective in considering trans-border second-home ownership through the example of Russian second-home mobility in Finland. The analysis highlights the importance of borders and bordering in contemporary trans-border mobilities—an importance that the new paradigm has yet to fully recognize and address. The argument in the paper is constructed through three empirical perspectives: Russian second-home owners, Finnish locals and second-home owners, and parliamentary discussions. The results show that the border and the bordering process are present in multiple ways in Russian trans-border second-home mobilities. The border is a regulator of mobility; it is an attraction; it is an invisible barrier in everyday life; and it is a means of differentiation between “us” and “them.”

Keywords: bordering, mobility, second home, Russians, Finland

Introduction
Mobility is an integral feature of contemporary societies, and travel is increasingly becoming a necessity in people’s social lives. The increasing scale and diversity of human movements, with growing forms of “discretionary” mobility (Cohen and Cohen 2015b) and a diversification of migration forms, raise the question of finding an appropriate conceptual framework to understand this social change (Clarke 2014). The new mobilities paradigm, presented to the scientific community by Mimi

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Sheller and John Urry, has become a new approach for the social sciences in studying peoples’ movements (Sheller and Urry 2006). The new paradigm has claimed to "extend and develop the ‘mobility turn’ within the social sciences" (Sheller and Urry 2006, 208).

Mobility, both as a phenomenon and a research subject, is not new to the social sciences. What is new is, among other things, expressed in the following list:

The scale of movement around the world, the diversity of mobility systems [. . .], interconnections of physical movement and communications, the development of mobility domains that by-pass national societies, the significance of movement to contemporary governmentality and an increased importance of multiple mobilities for people’s social and emotional lives (Urry 2007, 195; see also Sheller and Urry 2006).

In other words, the pace and scale of mobility have been changing under the influence of the developing mobility systems and various material and immaterial objects. This has resulted in the growth of “forced” and “pleasure-seeking” mobilities (Urry 2007, 195).

One of the rapidly growing forms of “discretionary” (Cohen and Cohen 2015b) or “pleasure-seeking” (Urry 2007) mobility in different parts of the world is international property purchases for recreational purposes. While some owners move to their foreign properties for longer periods, others visit occasionally on holidays and weekends, forming an international circulation between first and second homes. The latter type of trans-border mobility is the focus in this article. In this study, I examine trans-border tourism mobility across the Finnish-Russian border through the example of Russian second-home ownership in Finland.

Tourism usually involves the crossing of borders, whether these borders separate different countries or different jurisdictions within one country. Borders affect various aspects of mobility across them, ranging from motivations to infrastructure development and marketing (Timothy 2001). I argue that the new paradigm, however, does not sufficiently addresses the role of borders in relation to contemporary mobilities. Borders are integral components of international mobility that should be better included in mobility discussions and in the new paradigm.

In this article I apply two theoretical perspectives to the research case of Russian second-home mobility in Finland: the mobility paradigm and the border(ing) concept. Starting from defining and applying the new paradigm to explain and conceptualize trans-border second-home mobility better, I continue with an issue that is less developed by this new paradigm: the contemporary understanding of borders and their role in international mobility and formation of mobility flows. Thus, the aim of my article is to conceptualize trans-border second-home mobility through the new paradigm and the border(ing) concept.
To deepen the understanding of second-home mobility and to illustrate the importance of borders for contemporary mobility using as an example Russian trans-border second-home ownership, I employ different perspectives on borders and bordering: Russian second-home owners, local Finnish citizens and second-home owners, and Finnish parliamentary discussions. Respectively, the data consist of three parts. The first part reports on the interviews with Russian second-home owners (N=25) from the Savonlinna area (the municipalities of Savonlinna, Enonkoski, Rantasalmi, and Sulkava), in the region of South Savo, Finland (see figure 1). The interviews were collected, transcribed, and translated from Russian into English by the author. The second part consists of the survey with Finnish local inhabitants (N=186) and second-home owners (N=308) from the same area. The survey was coded and translated from Finnish into English by the author. The third part focuses on legislative and citizens’ initiatives (N=4) by members of Finnish Parliament and discussions (N=4) on these initiatives. The necessary translations for this paper have been made by the author. Utilizing the interview and the survey data collected during my doctoral research in 2010, this article extends the scope of my doctoral study with a different theoretical perspective and additional data.

My article makes a primarily theoretical contribution. It connects border studies and the new paradigm through the empirical case of Russian second-home mobility in Finland and is structured as follows:

**Figure 1.** The study area of Savonlinna in the region of South Savo, with the closest border-crossing points and the trans-border road network. Map created by Olga Hannonen and Maija Toivakka, published originally in Hannonen (2016). Data sources courtesy of the National Land Survey of Finland and Suomen ympäristökeskus (Finnish Environment Institute)/YKR.
The second section presents the research case of Russian second-home mobility in Finland. The third section outlines the features of contemporary mobilities, as presented by the new paradigm, which help to enhance the understanding of second-home mobilities. In the fourth section, I discuss contemporary theoretical perspectives on borders and bordering. The fifth section presents an empirical discussion of the components of the new paradigm and borders in relation to Russian second-home mobility. The concluding discussion summarizes the findings.

Across the Border: Russian Second-Home Mobility in Finland
This case study of Russian trans-border second-home mobility comes from the border region of Finland in the southeast (see figure 1). The Finnish-Russian border was formed after Finnish independence from Russia in 1917, and “has been shaped as a consequence of wars, several territorial shifts and decades of closure” (Scott 2013, 79). The border shares an uneasy historical past between the two states. During the Winter War (1939–40) and the Continuation War during World War II (1941–44), the Soviet Union and Finland were enemies. In 1944 the Soviet Union annexed 12.5 percent of the Finnish territory, which resulted in the evacuation and relocation of more than 420,000 Finns and created a national trauma (Eskelinen and Jukarainen 2000; Paasi 1999). Thus, Finnish national identity has been constructed through portraying the Soviet Union as the “other” (Paasi 1999). The border with the Soviet Union was strictly controlled and functioned as “the East-West dividing line in Europe, with its most extreme form developing during the Soviet era” (Eskelinen and Jukarainen 2000, 255). Consequently, in addition to physical demarcation, the border has had a strong symbolic role. Nowadays, the Finnish-Russian border is an external border of the European Union (EU) and in many ways has remained both mentally and physically a hard, separating border (Kolossov and Scott 2013, 195).

The Finnish-Russian border became a point of contact after the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991. With the opening of borders in 1991, Russian citizens discovered another world. Even though Finnish “vodka” tourism to Russia was already taking place in the 1970s and 1980s and Russians made singular journeys to Finland, after 1991, crossing the border became more accessible. Since then, Russian visits to Finland have rapidly increased, reaching 3.46 million visits in 2015 (Federal State Statistics Service 2016).

The high level of cross-border activity initiated discussions on the creation of a visa-free regime between Finland and Russia that reached the highest negotiation levels in 2012. The situation, however, went in the opposite direction. The redrawing of Ukraine’s borders after Crimea’s annexation into Russia in 2014 and the subsequent war in Eastern Ukraine resulted in heightened tensions in EU-Russian relations and the introduction of sanctions. These tensions are especially felt along the EU’s external border in the northeast—that is, along the Finnish-Russian
Bordering Mobilities

The border marks the visa regime between Finland and Russia. Because entering Finland also means crossing the external border of the EU, Russians must apply for an EU Schengen visa (Council Regulation [EC] 539/2001). Under the current visa regime, Russian property owners can stay in Finland for a maximum of 180 days per year without the right to social services (other tourists even less). Visa applications are submitted to a Finnish consulate or a Finnish visa center in large population centers in Russia. The visa application is either submitted personally or sent through a tourism agency that provides such services and may be located closer to a visitor’s place of residence. Recent changes in the visa application process require applicants to submit their biometric material in person at a Finnish consulate or visa center every fifty-nine months (Biometric Data Collection 2015). It is important to note that border communities along the Finnish-Russian border receive no benefit from their proximity to the border in terms of easier access to the neighboring state. Most of the population residing next to the border has never visited Finland and has a very vague picture about the closest neighbor (Hannonen 2016).

The Finnish-Russian border also encompasses great discrepancies between physical proximity, on the one hand, and economic, cultural, and linguistic distances between Russia and Finland on the other. The border marks one of the world’s highest economic gaps between neighboring countries (Numbeo 2016; The World Bank 2015). Despite that, Russians have been the largest group of foreign visitors in Finland. Since 2000, they have also become the largest group of foreign second-home owners in Finland. Russians purchased 4,424 properties in Finland between 2000 and 2015, which is nearly twice the amount of all other foreign purchases (N=2,441) for the same period.

In her study of Russians’ motives for second-home ownership in Finland, Lipkina (2013) found that a decision to purchase a second home abroad is driven by the differences in leisure conditions between Finland and Russia. Among the main motives for Russian second-home purchases in Finland are safety, nature, cultural motives, and prices. In terms of safety as a motive, Russians look for a calm and safe environment where they can spend their leisure time with family. Finland has the image of a safe destination both in terms of personal safety and safety of investment. A second home in Finland provides the possibility of owning a second home in pristine nature with personal lakeshore access. While shorelines in Russia are public property, in Finland, one can have them in private possession (Lipkina 2013). The image of Finland as a county of lakes attracts Russians. The study of the distribution of Russian properties shows that the majority of Russian property purchases in Eastern Finland have a lakeside location (see Hannonen, Lehtonen, and Toivakka 2016). The mentioned benefits of second-home ownership in Finland come with a cheaper price, which is another important motive for the purchase of property (Lipkina 2013).
Russian ownership in Finland has been the subject of a contested social debate, in which estimations of and attitudes toward the phenomenon have been largely negative. Speculation concerning the topic has been the subject of lively coverage in the national press and has been colored by increasingly nationalistic rhetoric (Pitkänen 2011). The debates in the press focus on three major issues. First, Russian property purchases are portrayed as a “Russian invasion”; these portrayals express the fear that Russians will buy out all the shores and land and resettle in Finland. Second, Russian purchases are perceived as a threat to the national landscape as they might turn lake shores into Russian dacha (second-home) villages. Third, Russians are accused of displacing locals by pricing Finns out of the market and purchasing permanent residences in rural areas (Pitkänen 2011). Since the outbreak of the Ukrainian conflict, Russian second homes are increasingly viewed as a security issue with the most recent public discussions concerning Russian property purchases next to strategic sites in Finland.

To understand the phenomenon better, the new mobilities paradigm and border(ing) concepts are used as a theoretical approach to trans-border second-home mobility. The next section discusses these approaches in more detail.

Mobility: What is New?
The new paradigm outlines changes in contemporary mobilities. It suggests thirteen features that define these changes (Urry 2007). This section presents only some of the elements that are relevant to second-home mobility. In order to discuss the features of the new paradigm in relation to second-home mobility, it is important to define the use of the term mobility in this paper.

Despite the current scale of mobility development, its meaning remains unspecified (Cresswell 2006). Migration studies define mobility as an “act of moving between locations” that is induced by push and pull factors (Cresswell 2006, 2). In geography, mobility is treated as “the movement from A to B” (Sheller 2014, 46). The term has had a sedentarist connotation and has become too narrow to outline the variety of movements, including temporary mobility, circulation, and movements across borders. The growing forms of mobility challenge a clear distinction between migration and tourism or some other types of visitations. Second-home mobility, including its trans-border forms, stands between tourism and migration and shares features of the two (Williams and Hall 2000). Similar to migration, second-home owners make a permanent connection to their second homes and second-home area through property ownership. It is, however, incorrect to categorize second-home owners as migrants, because they are not permanent residents, but permanent “repetitive” visitors to the area (Müller 1999; Overvåg 2011). The purpose of visits to a second home is recreation, which is a tourism activity. A second home is defined as a property owned as the occasional residence.
of a household that usually lives elsewhere, and which is primarily used for recreational purposes (Coppock 1977; Shucksmith 1983).

Williams and Hall (2002) state that migration literature fails to acknowledge the importance of temporary mobility and circulation. At the same time, a mobility approach to people’s movement “helps to deal with increasingly blurred boundaries between tourism and other categories of local, national, and global corporeal movements” (Cohen and Cohen 2015a, 14). This underlines the relevance of applying the mobility approach to second-home mobility, which stands between tourism and migration.

In the new paradigm, mobility ranges from physical movement to movement enhanced by technologies to movement of images and information and even to virtual travel (Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007). In this paper, mobility in the form of second-home ownership is defined as primarily the corporeal movement of people across national borders for leisure and recreational purposes.

While second-home mobility concerns physical relocation between first and second homes, the mobility paradigm suggests diverse connections and interconnections of different types of mobility. Urry (2007) criticizes the focus of the social sciences on face-to-face interactions, which assumes physical proximity and fails to consider other forms of social grouping not based on propinquity. Thus, in addition to corporeal travel, Urry (2007) defines four other types of mobility: physical movement of objects, imaginative, virtual, and communicative travel (original italics). The new paradigm “emphasizes the complex assemblage between these different mobilities that may make and contingently maintain social connections across varied and multiple distances” (Urry 2007, 48).

Social relations are never static but are constituted through “circulating entities” that can connect at a distance (Urry 2007, 46). There are “multiple forms of ‘imagined presence’ occurring” and “[s]ocial life involves continual processes of shifting between being present with others [...] and being distant from others” (47). Such connection “at a distance” or “imagined presence” (46–47) is enabled by objects, images, people, and information. This specifically applies to second-home mobility as the owners remotely connect to their second-home area through material means as well as connections at a distance (see the analysis section for more details). Mobility takes a number of forms, but as much as mobility is about movement, in the same way it concerns stillness, slowness, or immobility (Sheller 2014, 50). Various forms of dwelling, including second-home ownership, are about getting still and pausing the movement of hectic life. Second-home mobility is a movement between (at least) two distinct nodes of home and second home with a pause and rest in the latter location (Overvåg 2011).

Urry argues that discretionary mobility or unforced movement is power: “to be able to move (or to be able voluntarily to stay still) is for individuals and groups a major source of advantage” (Urry 2007, 51–52).
This is another feature of the new paradigm. I would add that mobility is the new power and capital in the contemporary world. Mobile populations are more empowered than immobile ones. In this regard, access to mobility is a valuable resource in the modern world.

Urry (2007) avers that, in addition to the self-evident economic and physical aspects of access to mobility, organizational and temporal aspects also need to be met. Organizational access assumes the ability to organize access to public or private transportation and to ensure safe travel. In international mobility, it may refer to the obtaining of the necessary documents, tickets, and travel permits. Access to mobility also depends on temporal availability. The various schedules and opening hours of, for example, visa centers or border-crossing points are important in providing access to trans-border mobility. Requirements and restrictive regulations concerning the crossing of national borders create difficulties in gaining access to mobility. International mobility thus remains a limited resource for many.

Cresswell (2010, 24) states that “[m]obility is channeled. It moves along routes and conduits often provided by conduits in space.” This channeling effect of routes designates the “possibilities for mobility and accessibility” (Vannini 2011, 260). On the other hand, such factors as amenities and climate, political regimes, and costs also influence the formation of flows along certain routes over others. In trans-border second-home mobility, the opening of routes in both the physical (the opening of border-crossing points) and legal sense (visa regime, the right to property ownership) has created a new type of mobility and circulation pattern. Thus, borders play an integral role in the formation of flows and routes in trans-border movements. In this regard, my case study shows that circulation along certain routeways is not restricted to the territory of a particular state, and that it is the trans-national scale which is new in circulation.

The concept of “affordance” is another important feature of the paradigm. Affordance means objective and subjective elements that are both part of the environment and the organism (Urry 2007). In other words, affordance is both physical characteristics of the environment and bodily capacities. Among the examples of such affordance are “a path that draws people to walk along it, a beach that invites one’s skin to be tanned” (Urry 2007, 51). In such a manner affordances are also particular features of the environment that cannot be easily accessed in everyday life, the differences that make certain destinations particularly attractive. Hence, the border marks those differences.

One of the central points of the new paradigm is the role of mobile infrastructures and material objects (Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007). Urry (2007, 45) argues that material worlds, such as clothing, tools, objects, buildings, and paths (to which I add borders in relation to trans-border and international mobility in general), augment the “powers of humans.” These material worlds or systems precede and change human
powers and activities. Material objects provide different affordances and enable or presuppose movement (Sheller and Urry 2006). Immobile infrastructures organize, channel, and limit movements. Thus, they equally engage in the production of both mobilities and immobilities. The latter is especially the case with borders. However, borders remain a yet undefined subject in the new paradigm.

Borders safeguard the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state, which finds mobile populations challenging (Urry 2007). The border control relates directly to the feature of the paradigm that concerns the surveillance and control of mobile populations: “borders, gatekeepers, police and security guards filter out ‘legitimate’ tourists, with their tourist visas” (Sheller and Urry 2004, 3). In addition to control over movements, borders are also involved in the production of mobility and immobility. On the other hand, borders produce various forms of interactions, relations, and activities across them which would not exist without the border (Newman 2006; Schack 2001; Van der Velde and Spierings 2010).

Thus, borders have a number of meanings and functions and are present in various ways in trans-border mobility. The further discussion in the paper is devoted to a deeper understanding of the meanings and functions of borders in producing and stopping mobilities across them, and the presence of borders in people’s daily life.

Borders and Bordering

The border is found at the center of the politics of mobility (Konrad 2015), and studies on mobility are inextricably entwined with research on borders and the ways that they shape and regulate movements of individuals (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Richardson 2013). While the mobility approach provides a new perspective on borders (Sheller 2014), the new paradigm does not sufficiently address borders as an important component of contemporary mobilities. The paradigm’s perspective on borders is narrowed down to the barrier-and-control function of borders (Sheller 2014; Urry 2007).

Scientific views on borders have been changing during the last decades because of the changes in ways borders function both as physical structures and in terms of the meanings attributed to them. De-bordering and re-bordering processes have modified previous views on borders as fixed structures. Contemporary border studies focus on bordering processes and practices: “what borders do, how they perform, and how they are performed” (Timothy, Saarinen, and Viken 2016). When crossing borders, individuals cross several layers of a particular border—political, economic, and cultural (Schack 2000). Thus, in addition to the border, per se, and border formalities, an important aspect in understanding borders is the process of bordering, the way the border is perceived and maintained (Newman 2006; Schack 2000). My understanding of the border here is not solely downgraded to a line but incorporates its social and spatial
functions, as well as the way it defines the nature of inclusiveness and exclusiveness (Newman 2006).

Borders as physical constructions have various degrees of access by different populations. In terms of accessibility, borders can be categorized as a continuum from functionally closed, or strong, borders with almost no trans-border interaction to integrated, soft borders with high stability and almost unrestricted movement of people and goods (Gelbman and Timothy 2011). The Finnish-Russian border is located on the strong side of the continuum of border functionality with strict border and visa control on both sides of the border. It has been argued that the level of interaction between people across the border depends on the type of border; the interaction is high across soft borders and low when the border is strong (Schack 2001). Statistics on Russian outbound travel both supports and contradicts this argument. While Turkey, a visa-free destination (i.e., open border), was the most popular destination for Russian visits in 2015 with 3.6 million visits, Finland, which has a visa regime with Russia, was the second most popular destination with 3.46 million visits (Federal State Statistics Service 2016).

The presence of the border and the differences that it marks may become a resource for intensive cross-border activities, which is especially the case in trans-border tourism. In tourism, borders as political boundaries act as barriers, attractions, and modified tourism landscapes. Both physical lines and the differences across them attract visitors (Timothy 2001). Thus, the main focus of this article is on the way borders influence mobility across them, their role as barriers and attractions.

Gelbman and Timothy (2011, 112) define the importance of borders in tourism and their attractiveness for visitors in the following way: “The populations on the two sides of a border are usually different, as they belong to different regimes and have developed different lifestyles and cultures, separate economies and different cultural landscapes.” In such a way, the border and places across the border become an attraction. While differences are considered as the major force and attraction for trans-border tourism, including second-home ownership, the disparities across borders should be attractive but not too unfamiliar. Thus, in order to stimulate mobility across borders, the balance between unfamiliar (but not too strange) and somewhat familiar (but not too much) should be achieved (Van der Velde and Spierings 2010). In second-home mobility, people cross borders for cheaper properties, fewer restrictions in planning, warmer climates, and better investments (Müller 2011; Paris 2006). In addition to economic factors, the border can also provide access to a society and environment that are perceived as more picturesque or harmonious for second-home location (Buller and Hoggart 1994; Hannonen 2016). In such a manner, the border may become an opportunity.

Borders as barriers in tourism can be either real or perceived, or, correspondingly, physical and mental (Schack 2000; Timothy 2001; Van der Velde and Spierings 2010). As a real barrier, the border imposes
requirements on travel documents to cross the border, limitations to the length of stay, restrictions on types and amounts of goods, and strict rules for customs and taxation. In relation to second-home tourism, there are often restrictions regarding property purchases and ownership by foreigners and limitations on the length of stay in the destination country (Paris 2006).

Borders as perceived or mental barriers refer to how the border is perceived and imagined by potential tourists on both sides of the border. It is argued that the removal of the physical border does not eliminate other borders and differences, as borders “carry a heavy weight of symbolism” (O’Dowd 2002, 27), and differentiate “us” from “them.” Thus, in addition to the physical boundaries themselves, the bordering process, the way borders are constructed and imagined, and the way people perceive and act on them are also highly important (Timothy 2001; Newman 2006). Even when physical demarcation is removed and the political agenda changes, borders “persist in peoples’ minds” (Schack 2000, 203). Strong mental and physical attachment to one’s home across the border mentally upholds the borderland (Gielis and van Houtum 2012). Bordering means “distinguishing between those who belong and those who do not” (Newman 2006, 147), differentiating between “us” and “them,” “insiders” and “outsiders.” While the physical border represents the top-down separation of the “self” from the “other” initiated by government, the perception of differences, individual border narratives, and experiences represent the bottom-up or the bordering process. Newman (2006, 144) states that “the bordering process, rather than the border per se, [...] affects our lives on a daily basis.” Thus, in order to understand the notions of “difference” and “other,” the meaning of the border to people, it is important to “listen to their personal and group narratives” (Newman 2006, 154). Thus, the understanding of the border in this article is constructed in part through the perspective of Russian owners and Finnish locals.

In relation to crossing borders, it is significant, for instance, how people perceive the border formalities and restrictions, administrative differences, costs, and ideological paradigms (Van Houtum 2010). Different languages and cultures on different sides of the border create an additional barrier. Newman (2006, 147–48) considers language the biggest boundary that “remains difficult to cross.” In second-home tourism, owners make a permanent connection to a foreign destination through a second home. In such a way, they constantly negotiate the differences and define the borders of familiar and unfamiliar. The way the border(ing) is present in Russian trans-border mobility in Finland is discussed in the results section.

Results: The New Paradigm and Trans-Border Second-Home Mobility
This section discusses the features of the new paradigm in relation to Russian second-home mobility. The theoretical discussion here
emphasizes that an approach to mobility as just a physical movement between a first and second home does not reflect the multiplicity of such mobility. Urry (2007) suggests that mobility is composed of diverse connections, including those at a distance. When Urry’s types of mobility are applied to second-home mobility, they demonstrate that in addition to physical or corporeal travel between a first and second home, the mobility of various kinds of objects (personal goods, souvenirs, and gifts that second-home owners bring along) is also included. Second-home ownership also presumes imaginative travel to a second home through photographs, videos, and other images. In some cases, owners travel virtually to their second homes through smart surveillance or house-maintenance systems. This type of mobility is, however, rather limited in case of Russian second-home ownership in Finland, and it largely depends on the equipment of the second home.

Communicative travel happens through person-to-person messages via various communication devices. This type of travel is largely interrelated with connection “at a distance” (Urry 2007, 46). Communicative travel is not exclusively related to a second home, but rather to the second-home area, its inhabitants, other owners, and local institutions and companies (Overvåg 2011). Various legal, economic, social, political, familial, work, and other obligations require physical or face-to-face presence and extensive movement that cannot always be replaced with communicative travel. Such obligations often create the compulsion to travel (Urry 2007). Moreover, in the case of Russian second-home ownership in Finland, it is not always possible to remotely conduct various forms of payment and seasonal arrangements at a second home across the border. Communicative travel is, however, increasingly important in long-distance ownership, especially in the case of trans-border second-home ownership. The empirical study of Russian second-home mobility shows that communicative travel is largely exercised by Russian second-home owners through connections to local “mediators.” Mediators are often local contractors or interpreters who have been involved in second-home construction or purchase. They mediate between the two cultures, providing various maintenance services for second homes and their surroundings:

We go to the same person who built the place [. . .]. Even when we’re on our way here, or even when we’re in Saint Petersburg, we can keep in touch by phone or email. It’s not an issue at all. (Russian second-home owners, St. Petersburg)

Thus, mediators are involved in the communicative travel of Russian second-home owners to their second homes on the other side of the border.

Overvåg (2011) has examined different types of mobility in relation to second homes. Similarly to Urry’s categories, Overvåg (2011) defines physical or corporeal movement through “the temporary presence of second-home owners” in their second homes, and remote connection
through “permanent’ presence through material means and connections at a distance” to their second homes. In terms of the new mobilities paradigm, the “permanent presence through material means and connections at a distance” (159) is of greater interest here. This type of mobility describes how “second homes and their owners are permanently present in several ways in the rural landscape and communities, even when the owners themselves are not physically present” (158). This permanent presence of second-home owners in rural communities happens, first, through the permanent physical presence of second homes and their connected infrastructure in the landscape. Second, “second-home owners continually engage economically and politically in taking care of their second homes and promoting their interests, also when they are not physically present” (160). This is what Urry defines as a shift between being present with others and being distant but simultaneously co-present (an “imagined presence”) through different means of communication (Urry 2007, 47). While Urry (2007, 47) emphasizes the intermittent nature of presence which is dependent on processes of connection and communication, Overvåg (2011) demonstrates that connection at a distance is a permanent presence in the case of second-home ownership.

Second-home mobility is an example of various forms of connections and communication that do not necessarily involve face-to-face interactions. In addition to face-to-face interactions and connection at a distance, travel to a second home is predominantly “facing the place” (Overvåg 2011) rather than faces: “this is the place where you can be alone, at peace [. . .] this place is a nook” (Russian second-home owner, Moscow).

The border on the way to a second home in Finland creates additional face-to-face interactions. I consider such a “concomitant” face-to-face interaction a distinct feature of cross-border mobility2 (in relation to airports, Urry [2007, 54] uses the term “unintended co-presence”).

Russian trans-border second-home mobility combines a number of movements. Physical relocation between a first and second home incorporates a number of other mobilities, such as communicative, imaginative, and virtual travel that are present and exercised in different degrees by the owners, as well as permanent presence in the second-home area and concomitant interaction at the border. The way the border influences the mobility of Russian owners is discussed in the following section.

### Bordering Russian Second-Home Mobilities

The discussion in this section is devoted to top-down and bottom-up perceptions and construction of border and bordering process in Russian trans-border second-home mobility from three perspectives: (1) Russian owners’ perception of the physical border and its role in movement between a first and second home, as well as the negotiation of differences at their second homes in Finland; (2) bordering second-home mobilities,

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2 It should be noted that the discussion in this article is about controlled borders that require customs and migration control, such as the Finnish-Russian border.
and defining “us” and “them” from the perspective of the Finnish local population and Finnish second-home owners in the study region; and (3) reinforcement of borders of mobility at the national level in Legislative Initiatives and parliamentary discussions.

The border is an essential component of Russian second-home ownership in Finland (Hannonen, Tuulentie, and Pitkänen 2015). It is frequently crossed on the way to and from a second home; it marks the different regulations and norms that exist on either side. The border also imposes restrictions that shape mobility across it: “Finn restrict our length of stay” (Russian second-home owners, Moscow); “The only problem is the visa, it is given for half a year” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg). Thus, some of the owners find it challenging to adapt their second-home visits with the visa regime.

The interview data with Russian second-home owners demonstrate that the border acts as an attraction in trans-border second-home mobility because of attractive differences on the other side: “You cross the border and you are pleased right away” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg). Safety is the most important difference on the other side of the border. From an investment perspective, “Finland today, and hope still for a long time, is famous for the fact that real estate is real (immovable)” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg). Physical safety is another important difference in Finland: “[A second home was purchased] because of safety. Again, to have something like this in Russia you have to build the fence, all security systems, you cannot leave it for a while unattended” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg). The quotes show both the emphasis on a favorable and attractive environment in Finland and the differences in societal conditions between Finland and Russia. Thus, second-home ownership in Finland is also an escape from the insecure lifestyle and leisure conditions in Russia.

In second-home mobility, people long for amenity-rich places. In Finland, Russians are attracted by the possibility of lakeshore ownership: “It is impossible to buy a plot with a shoreline” (Russian second-home owner, Moscow). The possibility of lakeshore ownership in the case of Russian second-home mobility in Finland is a good example of an environment which cannot be easily accessed in everyday life back in Russia. Thus, a lakeshore that attracts Russians to build a second home on it is without any doubt an issue of “affordance” suggested by the new paradigm (Urry 2007). Most of the respondents mentioned cheaper prices on second homes in Finland: “You are saying so nicely, ‘a second home in Russia.’ We cannot afford a second home in Russia” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg) (please note that the interviews with the owners were conducted in 2010).

The border provides a number of positive and desirable differences for Russian second-home owners, but it also maintains a number of barriers. While the Finnish-Russian border marks a strict border regime and involves a number of border formalities, second-home owners perceive
invisible barriers, sociocultural and linguistic differences, as the most challenging: “The main problem is, naturally, the absence of [a shared] language” (Russian second-home owner, St. Petersburg); “Lack of language is an obstacle” (Russian second-home owners, St. Petersburg).

The language and cultural barriers of Russian second-home owners have led to the formation of “mediator practices” to meet their needs. This network of mediators in Finland is sustained by the sociocultural and linguistic distance between Russia and Finland (Hannonen 2016). Language is also a barrier for deeper community involvement and integration for Russian owners (Lipkina and Hall 2013). Russian owners, however, are determined to overcome the social and informational vacuum by learning the language and culture, and getting to know their neighbors. As a result, from the perspective of Russian owners, the border enhances and marks attractive differences between Finland and Russia, but also upholds the invisible barriers that are a part of everyday life at the second home.

The relationship with and attitudes toward Russian second-home ownership in Finland have been studied through a survey with local Finnish residents and second-home owners. The survey questions on Russian second-home ownership in the area concerned the presence of Russian owners in the neighborhood, mutual interactions and conflicts (if any), opinions on the restriction of Russian ownership, as well as respondents’ agreement with media statements about Russian second-home ownership in Finland. In other words, the overall attitudes and opinions on Russian second-home owners were evaluated.

The results revealed less-favourable attitudes held by Finns toward Russian ownership with the Finns’ desire to uphold both mental and physical distance between the two. While over a half of Finnish local residents (56 percent) and Finnish second-home owners (52 percent) from the Savonlinna region have Russian second-home owners in the same neighborhood or village, the majority of them have never been in contact with a Russian second-home owner (65 percent of locals and 77 percent of second-home owners). Moreover, more than half of the Finnish locals (51 percent) and Finnish second-home owners (61 percent) want to have very little or no contact with Russians. Russian second-home ownership in general is perceived negatively as 64 percent of both groups would like to restrict Russian opportunities to purchase properties in Finland. Frequently mentioned reasons for the restrictions included the shady background of Russian owners, the absence of a reciprocal right to land ownership in Russia, and the belief that Finns should have a primary right to Finnish land:

Go somewhere else for money laundering. (Finnish second-home owner, Savonlinna region)

If a Finn is not allowed to own property in Russia, why then is a Russian allowed to in Finland? (Finnish second-home owner, Savonlinna region)
Finland for Finns. (Finnish local resident, Savonlinna region)

Nationalistic connotations were supplemented with the references to the historical past and the image of Russia as an enemy:

The fatherland that our fathers have protected should not be sold to foreigners. (Finnish local resident, Savonlinna region)

Finns cannot purchase even former home shores on the Isthmus (that is, the annexed Finnish territories on the Karelian Isthmus). (Finnish second-home owner, Savonlinna region)

Attitudes toward Russian interest in Finnish properties were clearly differentiated from other foreigners: “EU citizens are welcomed” and “Properties should not be sold to foreigners outside the EU” (Finnish second-home owners, Savonlinna region). Many Finnish respondents who supported restrictions suggested property rentals over the ownership right for Russians.

The study shows that despite intense cross-border interactions and the permanent presence of Russian second-home owners in the Savonlinna region, Finns desire a reinforcement of the mental border through minimal contacts with Russian owners and a restriction on Russian property purchases in Finland. The latter is an attempt to move the mental barrier to the edge of the territory of the Finnish state and reunite it with the physical border.

The issue of Russian property purchases in Finland has been the subject of heated debates in Finnish Parliament. Attempts to restrict Russian property purchases in Finland have been made through three legislative initiatives and one citizens’ initiative3 (Legislative Initiative 35/2009; 45/2011; 77/2013; Kansalaisaloite 2015).

The legislative initiatives of 2009 and 2011 are identical but were submitted in different parliamentary seasons. They raised a number of concerns on foreign (i.e., outside the European Economic Area [EEA]) and especially Russian interest in Finnish properties that largely intersect with concerns in the press. Among them are an increase in property prices; violation of the purpose of property use; sale of areas of special value; potential for conflicts including those with racist connotations; and the location of foreign properties that might be questioned from the perspective of security policy. The proposed restrictions on property ownership were aimed at protecting national assets, improving the regulations of property acquisition by foreigners and their societal responsibilities, determining the reciprocity principle in foreign property ownership, as well as keeping

3 The citizens’ initiative is one of the forms of legislation’s enactments through a direct proposal from citizens who are eligible to vote. The initiative must be signed by 50,000 citizens within six months to be passed to the parliament (for more details, see kansalaisaloite.fi).
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the benefits of a foreign presence on the Finnish property market through property rentals (Legislative Initiative 35/2009; 45/2011).

In the following initiative in 2013, these claims were supplemented with concerns on turning permanent residences into vocational use, money laundering, a lack of background information on the buyers, and an absence of any reciprocity principle of land ownership by foreigners in Russia (Legislative Initiative 77/2013). The citizens’ initiative (2015) examines the above-mentioned claims in more detail with a special emphasis on foreign interest in lakeshore locations that are (according to the document) decreasing in Finland (Kansalaisaloite 2015). None of the four initiatives proposes a complete restriction on property purchases by non-EU and non-European Free Trade Organization (EFTA) citizens, but demand to subject them to special permissions. These legislative initiatives did not proceed further in the parliament, but their frequency demonstrates the negotiation of the border of second-home mobility in Finland in relation specifically to Russian owners.

Parliamentary discussions on each initiative give a wider perspective and a deeper understanding of “othering” Russian ownership and bordering second-home mobilities (PTK 48/2009; PTK 9/2012; PTK 10/2012; PTK 16/2014). While bordering practices are often constructed through differentiating “us” from “them” (Newman 2006), the parliamentary discussions focus mainly on “them,” Russians, without a strong definition of “us,” which is interchangeably used as both Finland and EFTA/EEA. The restriction of Russian second-home ownership in Finland is constructed around the absence of reciprocity rights for Finns to purchase properties in Russian border areas (with Russian territories bordering Finland in the southeast having a special meaning for Finns, as former Finnish territories). References to the historical past and annexed territories are also present in the parliamentary discussions. The reciprocity of property purchases as one of the main points emphasizes Finland’s deprived position and Russians’ advantage in trans-border second-home purchases:

An important issue is the absence of reciprocity. If foreigners can purchase land in Finland, Finns should be able to reciprocally purchase land in that country. In Russia it is not possible. (PTK 48/2009)

It is important to note that reciprocity issues with other countries that have restrictions on land purchases by foreigners, including Finns—for example within the EU—have not been raised in the discussions. This indicates the specific focus on Russians as the “other” on the Finnish property market: “according to various public opinion polls, the majority of Finnish citizens want to forbid especially Russians’ right to purchase properties in Finland” (PTK 16/2014).

The discussion portrays Russian interest in Finnish properties as a source of problems with the first legislative initiative in 2009 resembling
a call “to prepare for possible problems before they appear on a bigger scale” (PTK 48/2009). The discussions are, however, contradictive in their content. While the one side accuses Finns of having a racist perspective when suggesting nationality-based restrictions, the other side talks about discrimination against Finns (PTK 48/2009).

Russian property owners are portrayed as having “very often a dubious background” (PTK 16/2014), and Russian purchases in general are connected to the issue of money laundering, speculation, and grey economies: “Finland cannot become such a country where one can come and invest in property with criminal money” (PTK 10/2012). Since the outbreak of the Ukrainian conflict in 2014, the discussions have become more acute, and Russian property purchases have been addressed as a matter of security policy, the purchases posing a threat to Finnish national security because of the possibility that the Russian state might seek to protect its citizens across the border (PTK 16/2014; Vihavainen and Laitinen 2018).

**Discussion**

In this article, I discussed two theoretical perspectives on Russian trans-border second-home ownership in Finland. A mobilities approach to Russian second-home ownership through the features of the new paradigm underlines the complexity of second-home mobility, which is composed of a number of different mobilities. Such features of the paradigm as communicative travel and connection “at a distance,” borders as immobile structures, affordances and access to and formation of distinct routeways are especially important in Russian trans-border second-home mobility. “Connections at a distance” (Overvåg 2011) is a distinct type of second-home mobility. It extends Urry’s (2007) definition and encompasses both imaginative and permanent presence. Unlike Urry’s communicative travel, which concerns new technological advancements, Russian second-home owners connect at a distance through local mediators in Finland. In such a manner, mediators enable the communicative travel of Russian owners. Face-to-face mobilities in Russian second-home mobility in Finland include two face-to-face interactions: a “concomitant” interaction and surveillance at the border, and the interaction at and with a second home, which has been categorized as “facing the place” (Overvåg 2011).

As any mobility, Russian mobility depends greatly on the issue of access: economic, physical, organizational, and temporal availability, including access to transportation, and the opening hours of visa centers and border-crossing points. The border plays an important role in influencing mobilities across it. It provides “affordances” (Urry 2007) for Russian second-home mobility, such as the lakeshore and safety. Borders as immobile structures affect the way people move, the path and route taken. Thus, they impact the formation of some routeways over others. In the case of Russian second-home mobility, the opening of borders both in physical and legislative terms has enabled this mobility type. This
demonstrates that borders are involved in production of mobility and are an essential part of contemporary mobilities.

In addition to the physical connections between the two states, the challenging organizational access to mobility that includes the visa-application process with personal submission of the application at the closest consulate, visa center, or tourism agency demonstrates the presence of the border in everyday life of potential travelers beyond the actual border-crossing point. Passing first through visa centers or consulates makes Russians’ route to Finland more complex.

The Finnish-Russian border is located on the strong side of the continuum of border functionality. This indicates that in addition to the vivid physical demarcation and strict border control, the border affects trans-border travelers in many other ways. While real barriers affect the way mobilities are produced, they also manifest those intangible differences which shape mobilities’ outcomes. The relationship between second-home tourism and borders differs from other types of trans-border tourism. While ordinary tourists pass through a destination, second-home owners make a permanent connection with the destination through second-home ownership. Thus, while second-home owners are permanent visitors to the same area, the border and its invisible barriers are present in everyday life and affect life beyond the border. Despite the strict border regime and border formalities, the invisible barriers (socio-cultural and linguistic differences) are perceived as the most challenging by Russian owners. This supports the theoretical standpoints on the multilayered structure of the border (Schack 2000). While for Russians it is possible to cross the physical border, it is yet impossible to cross other barriers. Invisible barriers influence second-home owners’ leisure practices in Finland leading to the formation of mediator-practices to fulfill their needs. In addition to the barrier function of the border, in the case of trans-border second-home ownership in Finland, the border also appears to be both an attraction and an opportunity for better leisure conditions, such as lakeshore ownership and safety. Thus, Russian second-home ownership in Finland is a distinct type of mobility, as it is a product of the border’s very existence. The opportunities the border provides and safeguards outweigh its control function.

There have been many attempts to re-enforce this symbolic border in relation to property ownership and exclude Russians as the “outsider” from the “insider,” the Finnish, and, more generally, European property market. The bordering process of Russian second-home owners as a negotiation between the familiar and the unfamiliar significantly differs from Finns’ differentiation of “us” and “them.” The study shows that Russians and Finns differently articulate language and culture as invisible and mental barriers. Russian owners are constantly negotiating the barriers to overcome them, but Finns use them to construct the “other.” While Finns are not directly involved in Russian second-home mobility, this type of mobility produces a number of barriers that generate the bordering
process at different levels at the destination. The study has revealed that the historical past that produced a strong dividing line between East and West greatly influences contemporary perceptions of Russian ownership by Finns. This results in bordering Russian second-home mobilities and “othering” Russians from the Finnish property market.

The application of the elements of the new paradigm to trans-border second-home ownership offers a useful theoretical framework for addressing contemporary mobilities and understanding their complexity. In addition to interpreting second-home mobilities through the lens of the paradigm, I have applied the border(ing) concept to the research case. In such a way, this empirical case study of Russian trans-border second-home ownership shows the significance of the border and bordering process in mobility. The results demonstrate the presence of borders in mobility in various forms. They are a part of mobility both for the group that crosses the border, but also for those at the destination who are not directly involved in this mobility.

Sheller and Urry have engaged in discussion of the interrelation of the border and mobility in a number of their publications (Sheller 2014; Sheller and Urry 2004, 2006; Urry 2007), but they have not yet included the border as one of the important elements of the new paradigm. Borders in many ways are the reason for immobility, but simultaneously they produce mobility to attractive and accessible destinations. The case of Russian second-home mobility in Finland shows that such ownership is the result of the presence of the border. The border marks the desirable differences and provides a number of opportunities. The impact of the border and contemporary bordering practices in producing (im)mobility is a subject of future research on the topic.

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Mediated Mobility and Mobile Media: Transnational Media Use among Russian-Speakers in Finland

Olga Davydova-Minguet, University of Eastern Finland
Tiina Sotkasiira, University of Eastern Finland
Teemu Oivo, University of Eastern Finland
Janne Riiheläinen, University of Eastern Finland

Abstract
Systems of communication and media are an important area of mobilities research. Because of the digitalization of media and changes in other social institutions, mobility and migration are not only stimulated by the media, but also people who are on the move and who settle in new locations are affected by transnational and overlapping digital spheres, which relate them both socially and emotionally. Transnational media use produces communities, belongings, and ideascapes that transcend national borders. This article focuses on the intersection of migration and media use in contemporary digitalized societies, namely in Finland. We examine the multifarious ways in which Russian-speakers in Finland use and engage with media in their daily lives. Russian-speakers are targeted for information influence from their country of origin, and they perceive Finnish and Russian mainstream media as conflicting. The article elucidates these phenomena by identifying the factors that engage Russian-speakers with Russian media in this situation and how Russian-language media in Finland have responded to this development. We also present some insights on how the involvement of Russian-speakers in the Finnish mediascape can be developed. The article is based on the findings of the research project titled “Finland’s Russian Speakers as Media Users,” which was implemented in 2015–16.

Keywords: Russian-speakers, media use, transnational media, information influence

1 This article was written in the context of a research project “Finland’s Russian-Speakers as Media Users” (2015–16) supported by the Finnish Prime Minister’s Office. The final report is published in Finnish online: https://tietokayttoon.fi/julkaisu?pubid=14701.
Introduction
At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Russia intensified its compatriot politics, which aims to create an image of Russian-speakers living outside Russia as being tightly connected to their “historical motherland.” At the same time, Russia uses compatriots abroad as a means to achieve its foreign policy goals. For example, a justification for Russia’s interference in Ukraine was made by presenting the forces that gained victory during the 2013–14 “Revolution of Dignity” as people who oppress Russians. The defense of Russians abroad is claimed as one of the main goals of Russia’s foreign policy (Davydova-Minguet 2014; Grigas 2016, 57–93). Russian television is seen as one of the instruments that may be used to influence Russian-speakers living abroad (Pomerantsev and Weiss 2014; Dougherty and Kaljurand 2015).

Concern about the social integration of Russian-speaking diasporas is common in countries that accommodate Russian-speaking minorities, such as Germany and the Baltic states. Questions about the loyalties of Russian-speakers to their host countries are addressed in different political programs and research reports (e.g., Reire 2016; Dougherty and Kaljurand 2015). One of the main issues in the conversation about Russian-speakers living in Western counties concerns their media use, whether they exclusively follow Russian media and whether they are affected by its discourse.

In this article, we examine the multifarious use of media by Russian-speakers in Finland, and we analyze the factors that engage them with media and the ways in which they adopt media in their everyday lives. Our view on mobilities examines the intersection of migration and media use in contemporary digitalized societies. The established paradigm of migration research is concerned with integration and pays little attention to media use or media production. Within the “new mobilities paradigm,” attention is given to the intersections of different factors that produce contemporary mobilities: for example, the daily, mundane practices of movement across spaces, the effects of legislation on the enablement or restriction of mobility, and the images, fantasies, material objects, and practices that combine to produce this complex and multifaceted phenomenon (see Sheller and Urry 2006; Hannam and Butler 2012).

Our research brings new insights into a multicultural Finnish society that is affected by the use of mobile digital media by mobile people. The article addresses the following questions: (1) How do Russian-speaking immigrants use media in the context of the mediated on-going conflict between the European Union and Russia? (2) What are the factors that engage Russian-speakers with Russian media? (3) What is the situation of Finnish media produced in the Russian language? (4) How can Russian-speakers become more involved in developing the Finnish mediascape?

This article is based on the findings of a small-scale research project “Russian-speakers in Finland as media users,” which was implemented in the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland in 2015 and
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2016 and funded by the Finnish Prime Minister’s Office. The research data are taken from three different datasets. The first of these consists of twenty-five thematic interviews conducted with Russian-speakers living in Joensuu, Tampere, and Helsinki (twelve males and thirteen females). All but two of the interviews were conducted in Russian and then transcribed by members of the research group, who have also translated the examples used in this article from Russian into English. The majority of the informants were of working age and had lived in Finland for more than five years. The second dataset consists of interviews conducted with eight Russian-speaking media experts who represent the Russian-language media produced in Finland, or who are involved in different media-related activities. These interviews were also recorded and transcribed by the research team. The third dataset covers the news and commentary programs produced by the main Russian TV-channels that covered the shooting down of the Malaysia Air MH 17 flight in July 2014. All of the study data were analyzed thematically.

In this article, we first sketch a portrayal of Russian-speakers in Finland and the media they can access. We outline our theoretical points of departure and then present our findings about the media use of Russian speakers, the means of influence used by the Russian media, and the current state of Russian-language media in Finland. We then return to a theoretical discussion based on our findings.

Russian-Speakers in Finland

In Finland, Russian-speakers form the largest group of immigrants speaking a foreign language. At the end of 2015, there were 72,436 people in Finland who considered Russian to be their native language. Russian citizenship was held by 30,813 people, and 25,572 held dual Finnish and Russian citizenship (Statistics Finland 2016). The Russian-speakers have a clear migrant background, with 55,552 born in the former Soviet Union, and 12,766 born in the Russian Federation. Although the Finnish population register is very comprehensive, it does not reflect the whole picture, as one cannot, for example, register two native languages (Saukkonen 2013).

Post-Soviet immigration to Finland started in the early 1990s, mostly through two channels: either as a re-migration of people of Finnish origin or through marriage to Finnish citizens. The re-migration program (closed in 2016) resulted in the immigration of approximately 30,000 people, whose Finnish background usually correlated purely with a mastery of the Finnish language. The pattern of marriage migration is gendered, with the majority of migrants being women. In 2015, 2,772 Russian citizens were issued their first Finnish residence permits: 586 of these were based on an existing workplace and 993 based on coming to Finland to study. Nine-hundred-and-forty-eight permits were issued on the basis of family ties and only 226 were issued on the basis of Finnish origin (Finnish Immigration Service 2015). Many who come to Finland from the Russian
Federation or the former Soviet republics can identify with both Russian language and culture (Iskanius 2006). On the other hand, they may also identify with, for example, Ingrian-Finnishness, Russianness, and Finnishness (Mähönen and Yijälä 2016). Within these identities, Ingrian Finns are the descendants of Finns who migrated to the territory of former Ingria (presently encompassed in the Leningrad region of Russia) in the seventeenth century when the area was under Swedish rule. Thus, the Russian-speaking minority in Finland is ethnically, historically, geographically, culturally, and socially a heterogeneous group.

Russian media in Finland are easily accessible because of the digitalization of media and developments in information and communication technologies. One can watch Russian television via satellite or via the Internet. Russian-speakers in Finland use the same Internet-TV providers as those who live in Germany or Israel, and can watch more than 150 channels in Russian (the channels are produced in Russia and abroad). Also, a wide variety of Russian-language resources is available on the Internet to those who have an Internet connection. Internet connectivity is very well developed in Finland, with roughly 52 percent of Finnish households having access to a fast broadband connection of 100 Mbps, and fast mobile broadband is now available to 76 percent of the population (Finnish Transport and Communications Agency 2016). Some Russian newspapers are available in larger shops in Finland. Additionally, several other media outputs are produced in Russian, including printed monthly newspapers, and daily TV and radio news made available by the public broadcasting company *Yle*, which also publishes news in Russian on its Internet pages. Russian-speakers also practice their own spontaneous media-related activities by active blogging and engaging in debates on the Internet.

Our research project provides a good case study of transnational media use in a context of conflicting media models. In Finland, in spite of the proliferation of digital “false media” and social media, the democratic media model is still powerful with a well-established printed press and a strong public broadcasting company (Nordenstreng and Wiio 2012). In Russia, however, after a short period of democratization, the media have returned to a neo-Soviet pattern which has been adapted to encompass contemporary digital technology (Strukov and Zvereva 2014). In principle, Finnish Russian-speakers have a choice of which media to follow. However, the current crisis in Russian-European relations and the strong nationalistic discourses featured in the Russian state-controlled media put Finnish Russian-speakers under pressure to negotiate their media use in conjunction with their everyday life in Finland.

**Theoretical Framework: Mobile People and Mobile Media**

The “new mobilities paradigm” underlines the interdependence of different global and local movements, stillnesses, ideas, technologies, bodies, objects, and practices in the production of mobilities (Urry 2007; Hannam
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and Butler 2012). Paying attention to these multiple components and their combinations also reveals the relations of power that affect and produce particular mobilities. In this article, we concentrate on the intersection of migration and media. We argue that the digitalization of media, combined with the attempts of the countries of origin to influence and control (mobile) populations through media, produces new situations both for the migrants themselves and for their receiving countries, and that this phenomenon needs more attention and reflection.

The interrelationship between mobility and media in today’s immigration and media research is obvious and has been thoroughly studied (see, e.g., Appadurai 1996; Thussu 2007; Dhoest, Nikunen, and Cola 2013; Eide, Kunelius, and Phillips 2008; Matsadanis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach 2011). However, fast and often unanticipated developments continue to arise and keep challenging our notions of this relationship. For example, in The State of the Art of Research in the EU on the Uptake and Use of ICT by Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities, the authors state that this field of media studies still suffers from theoretical and methodological shortcomings, that is, a “lack of theoretical models which ICT specialists as well as migration researchers apply in order to explore and explain current and future trends of digital and transnational interconnectedness” (Borkert, Cingolani, and Premazzi 2009, 1). This report starts from a notion of the emergence of a “connected migrant” (Diminescu 2008) who represents today’s new culture of mobility and combines the concepts of international geographical mobility and those of digital mobility. This means that with the help of new mobile technologies, people on the move can stay connected with the places and communities of their departure, and because of this they can no longer be seen in terms of a “twofold absence” (Borkert, Cingolani, and Premazzi 2009, 2), which describes an absence from home and an absence of proper integration into their destination country. Some researchers have claimed that mobile communication technologies, such as social media, not only produce a sense of co-presence in old networks, but that by providing a possibility to network with people under the same mobile conditions, they hinder integration into the receiving society by promoting an interest toward furthering their geographic mobility. As such, mobile media and communication technologies play a part in (re)producing mobility (see Komito and Bates 2009; Lášticová 2014).

Digitalization changes communication between those on the move and those who stay put, and it also changes the processes of information production and consumption. As a result, this stimulates profound changes in media. As Horsti (2015, 343) puts it: “The ways in which information and imagery are now being produced, shared, consumed, and interpreted are no longer as attached to mediated centers as before. Ideas and voices that surface in the public consciousness are now also those of individuals and groups that were previously marginalized in [a] nationally bordered

2 ICT = Information and Communications Technology.
media environment.” Different forms of civic journalism (blogs, posts in social media, video blogs, etc.) de-centralize and displace the power of “traditional” media, and as such, the boundary between traditional media and new media has become mobile, flexible, and more porous.

We live in times where media are ever-growing and proliferating. In this setting, the “connected migrant” consumes both traditional and new media and, thus, becomes transnationally and multilocally connected. Simultaneously, the topic of migration gains even more attention in the traditional and new media of both the receiving and originating societies. Migrants themselves act as active media producers in both social and traditional media. Also, the experience and understanding of migration (mobility) is profoundly mediated and mediatized. Hedge (2016, 2) points out that media do not only determine our situation, but rather it becomes “our situation.” In this context, Hedge urges us to shift our attention from seeing “media as artifactuality to media as processes of mediation” (2).

Mobility is mediated, and media are mobile. The intersections of the geographical mobility of people and digitalized media have been formulated by many scholars. Appadurai (1996) portrays the globalized world as many overlapping “scapes” which stem from the mobility of people, ideas, images, technologies, and capitals. The “ethnoscape” overlaps with the “mediascape,” and people on the move consume media products which are produced elsewhere. He describes mediascapes as “image-centered, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality” (Appadurai 1996, 35). Georgiou (2007, 22) writes about the interactivity and simultaneousness of digital media, which create new diasporic experiences and transcend social and geographical limitations. At the same time, transnational media users differ from their “national” counterparts because any interpretation of media occurs within the context of the country and locality of residence and is also influenced by issues such as gender, age, class, and other social categories (Aksoy and Robins 2003). Media perception is, therefore, always an active process, and the identities and cultures of migrant communities should not be simplified as being mere extensions of identities and cultures that have been produced in their countries of departure.

The importance of the activity of media users is also recognized by authors who conceptualize present-day media as being made up of many uneven flows. Thussu (2007) sees global media as profoundly transnational, and something that is divided into dominant and contraflows. Dominant media flows are still produced in the media-rich Anglo-American North and inscribe the hegemonic cultural standards developed there in media that are produced elsewhere. “Subaltern flows,” or contraflows, follow populations who migrate from global peripheries to global centers, where they consume “subaltern media.” Diasporic populations, therefore, become central from the point of view of research on the transnationalization of media and the shifts of power relations between media flows. Georgiou and Silverstone (2007) point out that contraflows in global media can be understood by researching the mediated communication
generated around and by diasporic groups, and they consider diaspora as posing a challenge to the ideologies of the boundedness of people, identities, media, and cultures.

Because of multiple belongings and loyalties, diasporic populations can be seen as loci for the development of diasporic media, where dominant and contra-media flows intersect (Thussu 2007). Georgiou and Silverstone (2007) claim that since diasporic populations are also media addressees, audiences, and producers, and that media representation involves both participation and recognition, then diasporic media should be seen as a complex field which is profoundly de-centralized. Georgiou and Silverstone portray the diasporic media as a space of ongoing contestation of dominating discourses, which can be produced in different centers and peripheries, and in turn stimulate the production of contraflows on many scales, which may also complement and co-exist with each other (34). These contestations are very much present in the everyday realities of Finnish Russian-speakers. In fact, we argue that it is not possible to understand the daily life of migrants without considering the interrelation between different media and everyday practices (Hepp, Bozdag, and Suna 2012). It is, therefore, crucial to analyze how discourses position minorities in the transnational space, as well as to recognize the attempts of migrants themselves to come to terms with these negotiations.

**Transnational Character of Media-Use**

There are many lies, sometimes it feels like every word is a lie, and an anecdote. A Russian calls a Ukrainian and asks: “What is the weather like in Kiev?” The Ukrainian answers: “It is great weather. The sun is shining.” “No, it is not sunny, it is rainy and stormy.” “What are you talking about? I just looked out the window and it is sunny here.” “And I watched the news and they said that you have storms and rain.” This is what it is like. With my dad. He lives in Russia, and my aunt lives in Moscow. We don’t talk politics. (Female, 30 years old)

This anecdote clearly illustrates the process of mediation; in other words, it describes how people’s understandings of the world are dependent on media and the important role of media as a source of information. As the interviewee explains above, this mediation is not so distinct from face-to-face interaction, but it creates situations where personal and mediated communications intertwine and take place alongside each other.

The media-use of Finnish Russian-speakers is very versatile. The informants used traditional means of mass communication, as well as personal communications like Skype and emails (termed by Dayan [1999] as “small media”). Our results concur with the findings of Maasilta, Simola, and af Heurlin (2008, 81), who claim that immigrants as media-users are just as equally active and heterogeneous as any other group in Finland.
Among our informants, we found heavy media users as well as those who consciously limited their exposure to media.

However, the above quote reveals that the use of media is of special concern to Russian-speakers. One particularity was that informants were, generally speaking, very skeptical about the media, and their skepticism was especially prevalent in relation to news coverage of the Ukraine conflict (see also Dougherty and Kaljurand 2015, 17). In times of conflict, media can act as an important source of information, but it may also serve to increase stress and put strain on people’s well-being and social relations. The above interviewee claimed that she and her relatives in Russia live in completely different media realities, and that they are so divergent that these days it may be even difficult for them to agree on a common topic of conversation.

What united our informants was their interest in media content of a transnational character. Some informants were more interested in media produced in their countries of origin, others focused on Finnish media, and some focused on media produced overseas. While research on mobility and media-use often highlights the importance of the media of the origin country to the well-being of people on the move, our research shows that this relationship is complex.

Recently, the mediascapes of Russian-speakers have become politicized and prone to conflict, and a prominent issue has been the situation in Ukraine. While some informants said that they have been “sucked into” the controversy, the majority tried to distance themselves from it. In the following quotes, our informants explain how they also attempted to control their lives and the effect politics had on their everyday situation by controlling their media-use:

Recently the news, regardless of the topic, has been sad, miserable, depressing . . . all the time—just problems. People have their own issues. They don’t want to hear about other people’s problems. Recently in the news they have talked only about politics—it goes in circles, I can’t be bothered to listen. War and all that—it just continues, nothing new, repeated time after time. (Male, 18 years old)

[When events in Ukraine broke out] it was really sharp. I constantly followed it, on TV, live stream, not just news but what happened in Kiev, in Liberty Square. [. . .] Russian propaganda is hair-raising [. . .]. Then I chose to take a break because I got so tired of it all—the Ukrainian news. Ukrainian news is also propaganda, just from the other side—it distorted information, and was even ugly. It lacks the professionalism of the Russians. Now this topic is closed for me. Sometimes I watch Finnish news, but the less the better. (Female, 30 years old)
During the interviews, the informants explained how the recent separation and polarization of Finnish and Russian media realities have affected the way in which Russian-speakers evaluate their relationship with the media. This is an important feature of post-Soviet mobility into Finland and other European countries. Increased mobility has made families more multicultural, and also added a transnational character to everyday practices. In principle, informants considered their increased mobility and the associated changes as an advantage, but in times of conflict, their daily transnational relations may in fact become a mental burden. Among families and circles of friends, people tend to negotiate their loyalties between state and worldviews. This means that people are forced to come to terms with differences of opinion when it comes to the constructions of reality portrayed by different media. The informants argued that media produce and support a polarized view of the world. Some people are able to relate to this conceptualization and find media that support their identity formation. However, more generally, people perceived this polarity to be a problem, and a black-and-white media reality seems to be in conflict with their individual perceptions and identity.

**Russian Media and “Truth” in Construction**

As explained above by our interviewees, Russian-speaking inhabitants of Finland are positioned at a junction of various cross-cutting mediascapes. In an ideal situation, these mediascapes construct relatively coherent worldviews that people can adapt and relate to. In times of conflict, however, different national media can produce and mediate very different accounts of the world. The differences between Finnish and Russian media become most apparent during transnational media events (Eide, Kunelius, and Phillips 2008) and in the context of the so-called information war between Russia and “the West.” The messages of Russian mainstream media seem especially to resonate among those of the Russian diaspora, who feel that Finnish media narratives do not correspond with their own conceptions.

Our analysis of Russian media reveals that Finnish and Russian media differ in their content as well as their style. This coincides with the argument offered by Oates (2009), who claims that in Russian media culture, the principle of informing people about how things are is less important than the moral judgment of how things should be. Indeed, in Russian television, it is not unusual for news anchors to clearly show their bias with loaded, emotional, and judgmental commentary, because portraying a good cause is expected to gain public approval.

Beside the emotional elements, the visually enhanced, attractive elements of news broadcasts also distinguish Russian TV from Finnish TV because, in Russia, even the public TV operates according to a ratings-oriented commercial principle. Moreover, it operates on larger markets and has resources to create a greater amount of content. Hence, Russian news can allocate more broadcast time for extensive analyses of the backgrounds of events and to storytelling, as compared to the much shorter
and more limited Finnish broadcasts that can be seen as one-dimensional and uninteresting in comparison.

Russian media-event framing in accordance to the biases of the expected core audience is referred to as *nudge* propaganda (Wilson 2015) or *truthiness* (Babayan 2015). Within this expected worldview, Russia is portrayed as being unjustifiably accused and misunderstood by the West. The USA (much as in the former Cold War narrative) is portrayed as being the malicious manipulator trying to place the rest of the world under its will and feeling threatened by Russia in its challenge to the American “unipolar” world. Europeans are presented as being manipulated to some extent by the Americans and, in addition, as failing to listen to Russia. This has led to unnecessary conflict. In the analyzed discussion shows of the Russian TV, the anti-West ideas are rarely challenged. In accordance to nudge propaganda and truthiness, instead of attracting new viewers, these negative portrayals of the global political actors appear to target the Russian-speaking audiences who previously agreed with these narratives.

Russian media report various and loose theories about controversial events, such as those surrounding the MH17 crash. Whereas the majority of these theories have been interpreted by experts as being a diversion ploy (e.g., Pomerantsev and Weiss 2014, 31), Russian TV frames this as serving the journalistic virtue of observing a “point-of-view pluralism.” Accordingly, viewers are given a range of aspects of a news story because “the truth is not as simple as the Western media portrays it to be.” This gives Russian TV viewers the idea that they are critical observers who draw independent conclusions, and that their counterparts in the West are naive audiences who are provided “ready assembled” conclusions. Relative to its Western peers, the quality of Russian journalism is highly praised, even to the extent that it is its mission “to deliver the truth to the World” (e.g., Solovyov 2014). To support its claim to tell all sides of the story, Russian TV will show some arguments against Russian narratives but in conjunction with selectively repeating aspects that are easily disputable in the opposing newsreader’s commentary, or by a contrasting story.

Russian journalists use many symbols, images, and references to frame events in a pro-Russian way. The “our boys” narrative is in constant use, linking Russian politicians and journalists as “we” (Russia) or “our” (Russian), and consequently connecting the actors of the events to the expected core audience. In the MH17 case, for example, the journalist’s narratives of “our” concerns, “our” defense, and “our” questions were analogously shaped with the official statements made by the Russian Ministry of Defense. In the long term, using the emotional biases of an audience is an effective way to influence it, because attitudes and expectations are not as quickly debunked and changed as logically invalid arguments. Emotionally appealing narratives can often be connected to the historical Slavophil stances, for example, how the West has unjustifiably claimed a position of moral superiority over Russia and acted disrespectfully against Russia (Vihavainen 2013, 190). Particularly in the MH17
case, this manifested both in the expressed belief that the West was trying to humiliate Russia and in a critique against the West’s moral integrity in ignoring human suffering and freedom of speech in preference for its pursuit of egoistical political ambitions.

From the perspective of a consumer’s self-identification, the portrayal of Western and Russian media in Russian TV clearly profiles media users into either more or less attractive groups. The Western official narrative is labeled as being anti-Russian, manipulative, simplistic, one-dimensional, rushing to ill-judged conclusions, and being politically oriented toward conflict. The more attractive, Russian side is presented as being humane, relatable to viewers, and deliberating, as well as basing its claims on objective evidence and a concern for justice and peace. Russian TV represents itself to its target audience as contraflows to “the conflict-stimulating US information hegemony.” It shows Western “mainstream” representations of media events as contentious and molds its portrayal to lend support to pro-Kremlin perspectives. Relatedly, this amplifies the concepts of charged and conflicted transnational information realities and is something which Russian-speaking media users have found particularly challenging to cope with.

**Russian-Language Media in Finland**

Media that are produced for a minority and by the minority are called ethnic media, and they have many functions in the countries of immigration. Ethnic media are an essential part of the formation of “imagined communities” for minorities, as well as of the promotion of multiculturalization in the host societies (see Matsadanis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach 2011).

In Finland, ethnic media constitute a small part of the diasporic mediascape of Russian-speakers, and according to our interviewees, “traditional” ethnic media (newspapers and TV-news) are not very popular among Russian-speakers. In the interviews that we conducted with Russian-speaking media experts, we sought the reasons for this preference, and we also wanted to gain a larger picture of media production.

The Russian-language media produced in Finland can be grouped by several attributes. In our view, the division between “traditional” (print and electronic) and “new” (Internet-based) media is significant. Among traditional media, commercial print outlets seem to face a difficult situation. The digitalization of media has weakened the revenue model of all of the traditional media in Finland, and this has also affected media produced in Russian. This has been intensified by the crisis in EU–Russia relations, and financially by a drop in the ruble, which started in the spring of 2014. A decrease in (shopping) tourism to Finland from Russia started around the same time, and this has seriously affected advertising in commercial print, and also electronic media, such as the monthly newspaper **Spektr** or **Sputnik** radio. The dual-orientation of traditional commercial media (to local Russian-speakers and to Russian tourists) provided sufficient revenue streams during a period of growing tourism between Russia
and Finland. However, the drop in income since 2014 has shown that commercial media in Russian has failed to develop self-sufficient revenue models that are primarily oriented to the migrant population in Finland.

Outlets that have public financial support find themselves in a better position. These tend to be more oriented toward local Russian-speakers although, according to the experts, they are not considered by their audiences to be interesting or engaging. Outlets such as the monthly Mozaika journal are felt to be haughty and aloof, while the five-minute TV-news in Russian aired daily by the Finnish public broadcasting company Yle is thought to be too short and “too translated.” Yle’s Russian editorial office translates the most important news elements produced by the company into Russian, and also produces some of its own material. The Russian editorial division of Yle works on the same grounds as the remainder of the company, which means that the content is distributed across many platforms—presented partly on TV and radio, but mainly on the company’s Internet site. However, according to the media expert interviews, the translated material is thought to be less interesting than material produced by the Russian-speaking editors. The broadcasting of Russian-language news and the launch of the Russian-language Internet site started in 2013. Prior to this, Russia had started to present issues that related to Finland in its own (transnational) media coverage, especially when it believed that Russian-speakers in Finland had been treated in a biased or controversial way. This included, for example, reports of cases where the children of Russian-speakers had been taken into custody by Finnish child-protection authorities, and other cases that involved Russian-speakers in Finland. The coverage of Russian-language news in Finland may, therefore, be seen as being prompted by Russian media activities. Yle aims its content at both a Finnish Russian-speaking audience and at audiences abroad, and its mission is twofold: first, to promote the integration of Russian-speakers into Finnish society, and second, to produce a contraflow in relation to Russian mainstream media.

When compared to traditional media, Internet-based new media publications and activities in Russian do not seem to have suffered so much from the decrease in Russian tourism and the revenues derived from advertising. The most popular Russian-language Internet forum and portal in Finland, Russian.fi, continues to grow. According to an interviewed stakeholder of this company (and also a few other Internet sites published in Russian), the financial situation of the company is stable and its future prospects seem bright. The forum works as a self-organizing system, with a core group of about ten staff who act as moderators and maintain conversations on the forum. In June 2016, there were more than 3 million messages posted on the forum, and there were over 50,000 open threads. Conversations are always active and diverse. Sometimes (and usually relating to the situation of international/Russia–EU relations), conversations become very charged (Davydova 2008). The representative

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3 Personal communication with the anonymous stakeholder of the company, May 10, 2016.
Mediated Mobility and Mobile Media

of Russian.fi told us that when the situation in Ukraine and Crimea was extremely strained, the forum’s moderators had to restrict the right to participate in the political conversation and, in such a way, limit any possibilities to influence the forum from outside Finland. While the aim of the administrators is to promote a vivid and engaging conversation, they also seek to preserve the forum’s independence. These kinds of forums can be seen as a new form of ethnic media, which fulfills all the functions of traditional print and electronic media, but does so by means of the forum participants. In principle, these kinds of media are more embracing and grassroot, but at the same time, they are vulnerable to external influence. Thus, new media are sites of juxtaposition, where appropriation and contestation of different media flows combine, and with it their “truths.”

In addition to the well-known Russian.fi, there are also other Internet-based media. Some of these operate transnationally, such as the St. Petersburg-based Internet-newspaper Fontanka.fi. This site was originally founded as a side site of the well-known Fontanka.ru, which concentrates on political, economic, and social issues in St. Petersburg. When tourism from Russia to Finland was growing, the site provided tourists with information about crossing the border, visa regulations, and tourist sites and activities. However, when the crisis between Russia and the EU broke out, the character of the media features became more oriented toward the relations that existed between Finland and Russia. Both the writers and the readership of this newspaper are transnational, with journalists based in both Russia and Finland. Approximately 20 percent of its readers are located in Finland. Fontanka.fi is an example of a transnational diasporic media that represents a contraflow to the dominant media seen in both Russia and Finland. In Russia, Fontanka.fi has come to be known as an independent outlet that writes critically about the state and society, and which is also consumed within the Russian-speaking minority in Finland. However, in matters concerning Finland, it seems to be an influential “truth-maker.” In the expert interviews, Fontanka.fi was mentioned as “the only real media outlet in addition to Yle,” and Fontanka’s news is also published on the Russian.fi forum front page, alongside that of Yle.

Besides institutional Internet-activities, there are also many less-institutionalized or private Internet-based activities taking place. In their Internet activities, Russian-speakers abroad promote geo-cultural identities that connect them with their country of residence, and at the same time capitalize on their knowledge of the Russian culture, language, and discourses (see Morgunova 2013, 2014). In Finland, the Internet activities of Russian-speakers usually consist of blogging and video-blogging, which serve to construct images of their creators as experts in Finland, who present their expertise and their lives to outside audiences. Usually, these audiences are imagined as being those who know less about Finland and who live outside the country. In such activities, the Internet bloggers can also adopt a pro-Russian position and present life in Finland in a way that resonates with the stance taken by Russian official media.
Russian-speakers are also active social-media users, and have dozens of discussion groups on Facebook, and also on the Russian *Vkontakte* and *Odnoklassniki* websites.

Ethnic media provide a site for activities that aim to create communities and foster a sense of belonging. Such activities can be performed against the backdrop of the politics of the country of origin, the country of immigration, and different migrant organizations or other actors. The Finnish Russian-language media landscape is structured primarily by the integration politics of Finland (represented, e.g., by *Yle* or *Spektr*). Some actors such as *Moaika* combine the integrationist politics of the receiving society with Russian compatriot politics, aiming at the creation of a state-sponsored and pro-Russian diaspora abroad (see Davydova-Minguet 2014; Byford 2012; Grigas 2016). *Moaika* hosts a “portal for compatriots” on its website, which presents compatriot politics, together with its tools, officials, and different compatriot events and activities that are organized in Russia or abroad. This kind of information is also circulated in the social-media networks of Russian-speakers living abroad.

Russian influence (be it conceptualized as creating a media contraflow or as an informational influence) is a growing phenomenon, and is reinforced by a transnational media consumption that is typical amongst diasporic populations. At the same time, social media act as sites for interpreting, contextualizing, and localizing the discourses produced by “traditional” media, regardless of whether the content is produced in Russia, Finland, or elsewhere (see Davydova 2008; Aksoy and Robins 2003). In the opinion of the Russian-speaking media experts, Russian-language media produced in Finland can have a more significant role in developing open and responsible conversations on issues that are important for Russian-speakers and hence help them participate in the production of a functioning public space in the increasingly multicultural and transnational Finnish mediascape.

**Discussion**

In our article, we have discussed Finland’s Russian-speaking population’s media use and the versatile mediascape that is potentially available to them. We have also paid attention to Russian-language media production and to other related activities that occur in Finland, and have identified some of the conflicts that appear in national media.

The results of our research confirm the findings of previous research. People become affected by mobility in many ways, and in the case of geographic mobility (migration), media may also be seen as an influential mobile phenomenon. Media production, distribution, and consumption are decidedly transnational, and in the case of diasporic users, this notion becomes evidently clear. Russian-speakers in Finland are transnational media users, and in their personal mediascapes, Russian, Finnish, and international media become interwoven. Especially, there is no reason to presume that immigrants belong to a national community, or that
they share a cultural identity or adopt a particular relationship to media (Dhoest, Nikunen, and Cola 2013).

In contrast to previous research on Russian-speakers’ media use, the present research paid special attention to the situation of conflicting media flows. In the present situation, a continuously mediated conflict between Russia and “the West” creates many tensions in the everyday lives of Russian-speakers abroad and often forces them to choose which “camp” they belong to. Subsequently, this choice can have a dramatic effect on (transnational) families, friendships, and other social relations. In such circumstances, media users tend to develop different coping strategies; they may minimize their media use, become massive media users who choose between mainstream Russian or Finnish perspectives, or perhaps aim for a critical and nuanced worldview, which they try to achieve by broadening their use of media. In any case, the relation transnational migrants have with media reveals a multi-level conflict that requires critical management.

The worldview and interpretations of international events produced by Russian media are based on a polarization of “the West” and Russia. Russia is presented as being a target of a Western information war, and, in retaliation, Russian media exploit themes that present “the West” as being unsafe and decadent, a deteriorated space that is hostile to both Russia and to Russians. These images are mostly produced with a view of consolidating audiences inside the country, but they can also raise mistrust among transnational users in their receiving societies. In such situations, ethnic media (which are produced by the minority, for the minority) serve as a site on which to post and contend these conflicting “truths.” In our view, this form of media needs to be strengthened, and Russian-speakers have to become more involved in the open societal and political discussions that take place in their countries of residence. Overall, however, present-day democratic societies face a need to rethink and develop their public spaces, so that they acknowledge diasporic media use and recognize the transnational character of media in an age of increasing geographical mobility.

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This special issue on the emerging new mobilities paradigm in the context of Finland provides the reader with a rich set of case studies written mostly by Finnish scholars who represent diverse social science fields and cultural studies. While these case studies are typically contextualized in specific Finnish national circumstances, the themes investigated in the articles are thoroughly international. Contributions scrutinize various forms of mobility (e.g., tourism, migration of various social groupings, refugees, second-house traveling), changing social and cultural identities, as well as borders/border-crossings from several vantage points. Since this compilation is interdisciplinary, the articles are based on versatile methods and rich research materials that vary from artistic documents (novels, movies, photos) and blogs to interviews, document(s) analysis, and media texts. Some of the authors study mobilities explicitly from the vantage point of border-crossings, while for others state borders are in the background and border-crossings and new emergent social circumstances, networks, and identities are the focus. A very valuable transnational element in this collection arises from the fact that most authors look at their cases in light of existing theoretical wisdom. Consequently, this special issue provides the reader with an exciting body of knowledge regarding a Finnish society and culture in transformation, but at the same time the issue leans firmly on theoretical horizons that fruitfully combine this knowledge with international academic debates and conceptual innovations.

As the title of this special issue suggests, several articles draw explicitly on so-called “new mobility paradigm” that has been launched and promoted especially by Mimi Sheller and John Urry (2006) but also by many other scholars since the millennium. Rather than summarizing, reviewing, or commenting on individual papers, in this brief afterword section, I will problematize the idea of mobility: the conceptual basis and premises of the so-called “mobility paradigm,” the relations of human “anchoring” to place/space, and the relations between mobility and various kinds of borders. These are issues that most contributions in this collection, at least partly, resonate with.
Borders are understood today in many ways; they are seen as institutions, symbols, social practices, and discourses that are mobilized by power-holding actors (individuals, social groupings) to control and direct mobility. This simply means that borders are much more than neutral lines on the ground or maps. Along with increasing mobility and the solidification of the control of social spaces, borders are themselves partly mobile since they are inscribed into the biometric features of human bodies as well as in their main travel documents, like passports, if moving people have such documents (Paasi 2012, 2019). Borders and outsourced border controls are often risky, even lethal for mobile persons, as we have seen, for instance, in the Mediterranean, during the last few years. As Reece Jones (2016) aptly suggests, violence is among the key structural features related to borders. Such violence is mobilized by the states to control populations and their access to resources and opportunities.

The World and Words on the Move

One of the most intriguing features of socio-cultural life and, correspondingly, a critical part of research practice in the social sciences and the humanities is the perpetual tendency to invent new concepts and to attach diverse general and contextual meanings to them. The flow of such concepts typically tends to originate from the Anglophone academic core rather than linguistic peripheries. While existing words (“names of the concepts”) may sometimes persist, their concepts may nonetheless change. The changing meanings of the words migrant and border are fitting illustrations of such dynamics. In his influential book on the keywords of the social sciences/social life, cultural historian Raymond Williams (1976) suggested that such words tend to transform, and each of them typically displays a history and complexity of meanings, at times conscious changes, and sometimes consciously different uses. Occasionally, concepts change to such an extent that they come to express radically different meanings and implications of meaning than they originally did. Of course, new words with new concepts that are employed in academic research and in broader social life are also concurrently developed. Most powerful conceptual expressions—like “mobility paradigm”—may travel widely across national borders. Some expressions may also become part of social and policy practices—a phenomenon labeled today as policy transfer or policy mobility (Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016).

Oftentimes, such transformations of words and concepts occur gradually and resonate with wider social upheavals. In academic research, major transformations have been labeled as “paradigm” changes that have taken place in scientific revolutions since the 1960s. As is so common in the social sciences, the proponents of the mobility paradigm have also developed a strong rhetoric to promote their message. A fitting example is the use of the term paradigm itself. It is well known that the contemporary academic understanding of this term is derived from the classic book The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, in which the author Thomas
Kuhn defined the scientific paradigm as “universally recognized scientific achievements that, for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of practitioners” (Kuhn 1962, viii).

While a paradigm was originally seen as a more or less dramatic transformation of established, generally accepted, and possibly even an “authoritarian” theory, in contemporary usage, paradigm normally has a much “softer” connotation, referring to academic tendencies rather than to the sharp rise of some new fixed frameworks or approaches. For example, the “mobility paradigm” that many authors in this collection refer to does not represent a strict, totalistic, and formal change in approaches, methodologies, or data. The “mobility turn,” another expression used by the proponents of “mobility paradigm” (referred to in this collection, e.g., in the articles of Hannonen and Aarnikoivu et al.), is perhaps even more flexible. This flexibility partly explains the incredible popularity of this expression across disciplinary boundaries. Mobility paradigm is a fitting example of another interesting feature: the social (and academic!) power of concepts and ideas and how they tend to create “truth effects” as part of their articulation and frequent use (Paasi 2019).

The tendency to advocate new “paradigms” and concepts also resonates with the continual struggle over symbolic capital that characterizes the increasingly competitive academic world. Mobility paradigm is a conceptual product of the academic Anglophone core. The advocates of the mobility paradigm (Sheller and Urry 2006, 210) wanted to challenge what they saw as a major problem in social and cultural science: focusing on the study of the static structures of the modern world. The mobility paradigm was, of course, not the first and only effort to do so. Indeed, scholars accentuating the relationality and dynamics of the socio-spatial structures and processes had highlighted this for decades—and philosophers even longer. For some scholars (for instance, actor-network theorists), relationality was an ontological condition; the world was seen to consist of fluid and dynamic networks of actors and relations. For sociologists like Castells (1989), the rise of networks and flows was a manifestation of the disarticulation of place-based societies and cultures from the organizations of power and production that continue to dominate society without submitting to its control. Bounded spaces were thus understood to be turning into spaces of interaction.

For some others, the denial of the conceptualization of place politics in terms of spatially bound processes and institutions was an inevitable consequence of globalization and the general rise of a society of transnational flows and networks. To use Amin’s (2004, 33) pretty normative expression, this new state of affairs simply did not “allow such conceptualization” anymore. Globalization and governance theorists and the advocates of relational planning theory have also challenged the static structures of the modern world. For decades, or in some cases more than a century, academic scholars have studied tourism, information and economic flows, and migration, for example, but the scale of changes is much
larger nowadays, giving rise to an increased interest to study all kinds of mobilities—a feature that is visible in this collection.

Of course, there are processes, governmental practices, and territorial elements that perpetually maintain a certain fixity of spatial systems—in spite of all kinds of mobilities. Contemporary reorganization of state spaces and the related rescaling of the state often mean that place and region become increasingly important. The European Union’s rhetoric and practice of the region (“the Europe of regions”) is one expression of such tendencies (Paasi and Metzger 2017). Paradoxically, the EU has simultaneously promoted normative visions of (planning) spaces as relational, non-bounded, and fluid (“seamless space,” Jensen and Richardson 2004). Similarly, growing ethno-regionalism emphasizes inward-oriented territorial configurations. Network-based governance continues to have territorial motivations (territory is also one expression of networks, see Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016). Also, regional identity discourses mobilized in spatial socialization (education), place marketing, and image-building tend to maintain territoriality. Then, we have the strengthening nationalist politics perpetually building on bounded spaces, as has been illustrated by the success of Donald Trump, Brexit, and many extremist nationalist parties in Europe and elsewhere.

In spite of previous contradictory tendencies of friction, the world seems to be on the move: flows of capital across national borders have rapidly accelerated, and borders have turned semipermeable for travelers. Let’s take tourism as an example since it has witnessed virtually uninterrupted growth since World War II. Whereas in 1950 the estimated number of international tourists was 25 million, their number increased to 278 million in 1980, 527 million in 1995, and, in 2014, 1.1 billion tourists traveled across borders to various destinations. Besides these flows of tourists, forced and voluntary migration has become the order of the day. Almost 250 million international migrants live today in the world, and their number is increasing in both the developed and developing world. Yet, while there are major differences between states, on average only 3 percent of the population of nation states are immigrants, although this share varies, especially in the developed states (Paasi 2019).

We can also see the power of mobilities in the changing meanings and significance of the concept(s) of border and in general bounded spaces. Until the turn of the 1980–90s, the idea of border was quite insignificant in the social sciences and the humanities, even if there were scholars, in political geography and anthropology, in particular, who paid attention to this idea. Yet state borders deeply characterized the world that was divided between the capitalist West and socialist East. Since the collapse of this sharp dividing line, dramatic changes have occurred. At first, Japanese business guru Kenichi Ohmae (1990) started to promote the term “borderless world.” He wanted to open the borders of national states so that the models from the business world would also come to characterize other spheres of social action. The background for this was
a certain naive cosmopolitanism that emerged after the collapse of the dividing line between the capitalist and socialist worlds. While references to a borderless world repeatedly appear in academic literature, very few scholars today believe in such huge generalizations since more and more walls are in the making (Jones 2016; Paasi 2019).

**Mobilities and the Changing Character of Place and Borders**

Finally, we have to raise the question of what happens to “place”—an important idea for many authors in this collection—in a mobile world and in mobile cultures. The recent rise of the opposition to immigration and the related rise of extreme nationalism clearly display that place becomes increasingly politicized and a battlefield between those who claim more openness and inclusion and those who want to make contemporary state and sub-state spaces more bounded and exclusive.

I think that one of the conceptually underdeveloped features of new mobility research has been the conceptualization of place in this context. While scholars like Cresswell (2006) have critically contributed to debates on both mobilities and the ideas of place (Cresswell 2004), he and many other authors seem to perpetually link the core of the conceptualization of place to a specific location. However, it is thought-provoking that some advocates of the “new mobility paradigm” have also reflected the concept of place in somewhat different terms and suggested that this paradigm leads its proponents to discard usual notions of spatiality and scale, as well as linear assumptions of temporality and timing (Sheller and Urry 2006, 214). The mobility paradigm also follows relational conceptualizations of place, and its advocates argue against the ontology of distinct people and spaces. Sheller and Urry remind us that there is a complex relationality of places and persons connected through performances. However, places in their vocabulary still seem to be located and grounded somewhere and are something that people are related to. Respectively, in this thinking, “activities are not separate from the places that happen contingently to be visited,” and “[t]hus there are hybrid systems, ‘materialities and mobilities,’ that combine objects, technologies, and socialities, and out of those distinct places are produced and reproduced” (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006, 14).

Sheller and Urry (2006) then suggest that places are dynamic, places of movement. In what follows, they seem to detach place from locations. Hannam, Sheller, and Urry (2006) write how “[p]laces are like ships, moving around and not necessarily staying in one location. In the new mobilities paradigm places themselves can be seen as traveling, slow or fast, greater or shorter distances, within networks of both human and non-human agents” (13). Similarly, Cresswell (2004, 7) notes how a ship, for instance, can become a shared, meaningful, “mobile place” during a long voyage. While places for mobility researchers are certainly more often than not relationally constituted and socially constructed, rather than bounded and exclusive (this seems to be the case also for many
authors in this collection), this taken-for-granted location-centrism seems to characterize much of the debates on the idea of place.

Mobile places certainly sound exotic and instantly raise questions about how to take this idea further and how to make sense of it in empirical terms, beyond the random comments on “ships as places.” This is possible when we think that places are something that is related to human mobility and experience and to the personal and family life-histories of human beings. Places, from this angle, are unique webs of social and material spatio-temporal life connections, events and episodes with associated meanings emerging on the basis of the life-world. Places as personal archives of memories and experiences typically evolve from various localities where people are living or visiting as citizens, tourists, migrants, or refugees. Such an understanding is helpful in making an analytical distinction between personal spatial experiences and institutional spatial structures, such as a region or territory, that are always based on socio-spatial divisions of labor and are more fixed than personal biographies. I recognized this in the 1990s in my empirical study of the spatial experiences and identities of several generations of people living in the Finnish-Russian border area and especially in the case of the Karelian evacuees who had to move to Finland from the areas ceded to the Soviet Union (Paasi 1996; cf. Fullilove 1999).

While many papers in this special issue take the new mobility paradigm at face value, some authors also raise critical points about the scope of the purported paradigm. As Hannonen, for example, accurately observes, the “new mobility paradigm” does not sufficiently address the roles of borders in contemporary mobilities, and neither is it interested in the direction of mobility flows. This critique, echoing the early comments by sociologist Georg Simmel (1997) on the significance of borders in human orientation in space, points above all to the original proponents of the mobility paradigm. Many of them have not carried out border research, and, for them, borders are ostensibly something that can be, and have to be, crossed or exceeded (see, e.g., Sheller and Urry 2006). More recent research work on labor mobilities and migration has, of course, been much more sensitive to border issues that cannot be neglected in the context of these forms of mobilities.

This special issue, including several intriguing case studies, confirms the view that borders are not merely static lines between states and social groupings. If this was for a long time the dominant approach in border studies (and relevant because borders were generally more closed and passport regimes were more significant), contemporary understandings of what borders are sees them as mobile sets of practices, discourses, and symbols. The chapters in this special issue meticulously echo the ongoing global turmoil shaking socio-spatial structures, processes, and identities. And—in spite of the focus on Finnish case studies—immigrants, refugees, economic recession, and austerity measures seem to be present in a number of national contexts. This special issue is therefore a topical contribution
to the debates on the various and complex forms of mobility. Providing contextual knowledge on Finland can challenge existing general conceptual understandings of mobilities that have so far been largely dominated by Anglophone scholarship.

References
Contributors

Melina Aarnikoivu is a doctoral student at the Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Jyväskylä. Her dissertation is a nexus analysis of becoming a scholar, and its purpose is to study and ultimately to understand the path of becoming a professional researcher. Furthermore, the aim of her thesis is to map out and engage any problematic issues that the process of earning a PhD entails. The emergent issues include international mobility, the work/life balance of doctoral students, and the construction of academic identity. Aarnikoivu’s studies have been funded by the Centre for Applied Language Studies, the Emil Aaltonen Foundation, and the Ellen and Artturi Nyyssönen Foundation.

Olga Davydova-Minguet, PhD in folkloristics, University Researcher, holds a tenure-track position at the Karelian Institute of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Commerce of the University of Eastern Finland. Davydova-Minguet’s main research interests fall, to a large degree, within the intersection of migration, cultural, and transnational studies. She is engaged in a number of research projects on migration, ethnicity, security, gender, and welfare in the post-Soviet space (e.g., in the Wider Europe and in Russian Karelia). Currently, she conducts research projects on transnational politics of memory in the border areas of Finland and Russia, and on media use of the Russian-speakers in Finland. Davydova-Minguet also works on a project concerning the images of Russia in Finland, funded by the EU EraNet research program and the Academy of Finland.

Driss Habti, doctor in sociology, is a postdoctoral researcher at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. His latest research project is on career mobility of Russian physicians in Finland. His main research interests include international migration and ethnic relations, global highly skilled mobility, ethnicity, and cultural diversity. Habti has taught courses in cultural diversity, migration and cultural security, and sociology of migration and mobility. He has co-edited special issues on international highly skilled migration, and he has international publications on issues related to international highly skilled migration, internationalization of higher education, and ethnicity and cultural diversity in Europe. He recently published a co-edited book with Maria Elo on highly skilled self-initiated expatriation.

Pilvi Hämeenaho works as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Eastern Finland in the Department of Geographical and Historical Studies. Her main research interests concern everyday life well-being, rural studies, disability studies, and collaborative ethnography. She previously worked on inter-professional collaboration related to support and rehabilitation of special needs children. Currently, she is doing research.
on local responses to sustainability transitions from the perspective of residents living in remote rural areas in Finland.

**Olga Hannonen** is a post-doctoral researcher at the Karelian Institute at the University of Eastern Finland. She defended her doctoral dissertation entitled “Peace and Quiet beyond the Border: The Trans-Border Mobility of Russian Second Home Owners in Finland” in June 2016. Dr. Hannonen is a board member of the Finnish Association for Russian and East European Studies, as well as an invited reviewer in international academic journals.

**David Hoffman** is a Senior Researcher at the Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER) at the University of Jyväskylä, where he co-leads the Migration, Mobilities and Internationalization research group. Hoffman has published on a wide range of topics in the fields of comparative and international higher education studies, migration, ethnic relations, and intercultural communication. He is regularly invited to present his research and policy analyses to stakeholders such as the European Science Foundation, European Migration Network, Early Career Higher Education Researchers Network, Centre for International Mobility, The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, Academy of Finland, and the Finnish National Student Union. The article in this collection was funded by the Academy of Finland and the European Science Foundation.

**Saija Kaskinen** (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer of English at the University of Eastern Finland. Currently, she works as a Project Researcher at the Karelian Institute (UEF) for an international research project, funded by the Academy of Finland and entitled *Traumatized Borders: Reviving Subversive Narratives of B/Order, and Other*. Earlier, she worked in another funded project by the Academy of Finland entitled *Writing Cultures and Traditions at Borders*, in which she focused on “hybridization” of border, mobility, and border regimes. Her main area of interest is “Border Utopias” in contemporary and historical context. Her research and publication interests include betrayal trauma theory, global mobilities, the discourse and ideology in the press, and the role of the press in creating shared political and national culture.

**Sirpa Korhonen** is a doctoral candidate in intercultural communication at the Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä. Her areas of interest include studies on forced migration, especially issues related to return, and biographical-narrative methods. Her research has been supported by Finnish Cultural Foundation.

**Tuulikki Kurki**, PhD and Adjunct Professor, works as a Senior Researcher in Cultural Studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland.
Currently, she also works as a deputy director of the Karelian Institute. As a principal investigator, she has managed two international research projects studying literature, cultural practices, and traumas at borders and borderlands: *Writing Cultures and Traditions at Borders and Traumatized Borders: Reviving Subversive Narratives of B/Order, and Other*, funded by the Academy of Finland. In 2018, she and her research group launched a project entitled *A Lost Mitten and Other Stories: Experiences of Borders and Mobilities and New Neighbourhoods*, funded by the Kone Foundation.

**Teemu Oivo** is a doctoral student and researcher in the Department of Social Sciences and Business Studies at the University of Eastern Finland. His dissertation examines Russian self and otherness in transnational media. His major research interests are Finland’s Russian-speakers as media users, the discourses of Karelianness, and nationalism. In the project “Perceptions of Russia across Eurasia,” Oivo has studied distancing and familiarizing perceptions of Russia in the border provincial newspaper of Eastern Finland; out of this project, one article is published and a chapter in the project’s book is scheduled. Currently, Oivo is doing a case study regarding dual citizenship among Russian-speakers living in Finland in the project “Multilayered Borders of Global Security” (GLASE), funded by the Strategic Research Council at the Academy of Finland.

**Anssi Paasi** is a Professor of Geography at the University of Oulu and a Docent at the University of Eastern Finland. He has published extensively on spatial/political geographic concepts and processes (e.g., regions, borders/boundaries, territory, and spatial identity) and on power-knowledge relations in the contemporary academia. His books include *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness* (Wiley, 1996). He has served recently as a co-editor of the *Handbook of Human Geography* I–II (Sage, 2014), *Regional Worlds: Advancing the Geography of Regions* (Routledge, 2015), and the *Handbook on the Geographies of Regions and Territories* (Elgar, 2018). His most recent co-edited book is *Borderless Worlds for Whom? Ethics, Moralities and Mobilities* (Routledge, 2019).

**Jaana Palander** is a doctoral student in Public Law in the School of Management at the University of Tampere and lecturer in Constitutional Law in the Law School of the University of Eastern Finland, where she also works as a Researcher (2017–19) in a project on security and migration, funded by the Strategic Council of the Academy of Finland. Palander’s research interests include migration law and governance and human rights law, especially family reunification.

**Saara Pellander** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Helsinki, where she defended her doctoral thesis on the regulation of family migration to Finland. Currently, she is a member of the research consortium GLASE (Multilayered Borders of Global Security). Pellander examines migrants’
experiences of security and bordering in that project. Previously, Pellander worked as a researcher in an EU-funded project on bordering and intersectionality. Her research fields also include gender and migration, memory studies, postcolonialism, and Nordic welfare state. Within the Nordic Center of Excellence NordWel, Pellander has coordinated an international research network of young scholars who work with questions of migration and the welfare state. Pellander is part of a Nordic network funded by NOS-HS called Borderscapes, Memory and Migration. She has authored several internationally published studies related to her research interests.

Janne Riiheläinen is an expert and widely known commentator on the matters of national security. He has been writing his own blog on this topic since 2012. He has also commented on security politics for the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE), as well as in the newspaper Helsingin Sanomat. Riiheläinen was invited to participate in President Sauli Niinistö’s national security discussion event, Kultaranta Talks, in 2015. He is an expert member of the Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI), which is a permanent parliamentary committee, administratively part of the Ministry of Defence.

Tuija Saresma, Senior Researcher, is Docent/Adjunct Professor in the Department of Art and Culture Studies, University of Jyväskylä. She leads research projects that deal with migration, mobility, belonging, and exclusion. Her multidisciplinary research interests cover various topics from autobiographical writing and the affectivity and performativity of reading and writing to populist rhetoric and gendered and racialized hate speech in the internet discussion forums and blogs. She specializes in interdisciplinary textual and discourse analysis and intersectionality as a research method.

James W. Scott is Research Professor of Regional and Border Studies at the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland. Professor Scott obtained his PhD in 1990 at the Free University of Berlin. His fields of research include urban and regional geography, borders, border regions, geopolitics, regional and urban governance, cohesion policy, and Central European studies. Scott has participated in the establishment of the BRIT (Border Regions in Transition) network. He has coordinated several research consortia focusing on border studies and supported, for instance, by EU’s Framework Programmes, European Science Foundation, and the Academy of Finland. Presently, he is coordinator of the GLASE project (Multilayered Borders of Global Security), funded by the Academy of Finland, and scientific coordinator of the Horizons 2020 project RELOCAL that investigates the role of the local level and local strategies in cohesion and territorial development.
Tiina Sotkasiira is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Eastern Finland. Her PhD study, “Caucasian Encounters: North Caucasian Youth and the Politics of Identification in Contemporary Russia” (2013) examined North Caucasian youth as citizens of Russia, their identification, and experiences of racism. Sotkasiira has published and lectured extensively on ethnicity and migration in post-Soviet and Finnish contexts and attended scientific conferences both in Finland and abroad. She also worked on the Academy of Finland project “Contexts of Diaspora Citizenship: Transnational Networks, Social Participation and Social Identification of Somalis in Finland and in the U.S.” Currently, she is working on her postdoctoral project “From Integration to Autonomy: The Meaning of Welfare for Immigrants in Rural Finland.”

Eija Stark is a postdoctoral researcher in the Folklore Studies at the University of Helsinki. Her interests include European nationalism in ethnology and folklore scholarship, estate society, class mobility and cultural knowledge of/about the underclass, and powerless groups of people. She published an article “Narrative Weapons of the Underprivileged: Class Conflicts and Welfare Consensus in Finnish Autobiographies” in Ethnologia Scandinavica.

Elina Todorov is a PhD candidate in Public Law at Tampere University, Faculty of Management and Business. Currently, Todorov works on her doctoral thesis, which concerns the judicial status of undocumented migrants in view of the European Court of Human Rights. Todorov’s research areas and interests consist of international and European law, European Convention on Human Rights, human rights in general, and asylum and immigration affairs.

Minna Zechner (PhD) works as an Associate Professor at the University of Lapland. Her research interests include care for older adults, marketization of welfare services, transnational migration, and care and social policy. Her publications concern transnational habitus, transnational care, negotiations on care, good life in old age, home in old age, creating policies for elder care markets, marketization of care, and the care policies.