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DOUBLE HOMES, DOUBLE LIVES?

Regina Bendix and Orvar Löfgren

In contemporary life there is a growing and increasingly diversified landscape of double homes, linking different parts of Europe in new ways. In tourism research the term 'second homes' often connotes a summer cottage in the woods, a restored farm house in Tuscany or an apartamento at the Costa del Sol, but the types and the nature of second homes is more varied and complex. There are many life situations that can lead to a second residence; by far not all are simply attributable to leisure pursuits. There are long distance commuters, spending most of their week in an overnight flat or a caravan in a dreary parking lot or a construction site, waiting to go home to the family for the weekend. Economic migrants dream of a house "back home" for vacations or retirement. Children in divorced families may move between the two homes of their parents. Dual homes come in all kinds of forms, from touring circus artists' caravans to people turning sailboats into a different kind of domestic space than their mothballed dwelling in their country of origin.

This special issue of *Ethnologia Europaea* tries to capture some dimensions of lives that are anchored in two different homes. Through the title "double homes, double lives?" we want to explore how such lives are organized in time and space, in terms of identification, belonging and emotions. How do they develop, how are they negotiated, what comes to be taken for granted, what challenges are there? We have asked the contributors to choose between genres, ranging from the classic paper to shorter and more personal essays and sketches.

Multi-national or supranational identities have

been discussed intensively in recent years. People fashioning their own, individualized border crossings are of special interest in this context. The material dimensions of such transnational processes come to the fore particularly clearly when studying the crafting of double homes. "The nomadic turn" evident in cultural studies of the 1990s focused on people, ideas and commodities in transit or on the move (see for example, Clifford 1997; Cresswell 1997). It was a welcome deconstruction of notions of stable identities and fixed cultural forms. Processes of flux, flow and flexibility came into the foreground, marked with new terms characteristically prefixed with 'trans-'. However, in the ambition to capture old and new and often transnational mobilities, there was a striking absence of how the materialities of movement and multi-sited dwelling shaped people's sensual and material experiences. Looking back on a decade of research, Rebecca Solnitz reflects on the ways in which the body in motion has remained, on the whole, a highly theoretical entity rather than provoking an actual discussion of bodily sensations and practices:

... we seem to be reading about the postmodern body shuttled around by airplanes and hurtling cars, or even moving around by no apparent means, muscular, mechanical, economic or ecological. The body is nothing more than a parcel in transit, a chess piece dropped on another square, it does not move but is moved (Solnitz 2001:28).

Mobility in such studies was often seen as a frictionless, more mental than physical process. In this col-

lection of papers and essays we have asked contributors to reflect on mentalities and materialities of mobility and multi-sited living. A second home calls for a constant handling of material infrastructure and mundane routines, it can be a life of constant doing and fixing, planning, synchronizing and worrying, but it is often the mental and emotional dimensions that preoccupy owners and authors alike. For an understanding of how individuals invest their time and resources in a second home, it is necessary to grasp new forms of mobility in conjunction with new perceptions of what constitutes “home” and the organization of everyday life. How are basic concepts like dwelling, home and belonging transformed through this new mobility, how are identities anchored in time and space? Is there a double homelessness created or new forms of anchoring oneself in two cultural settings?

The phenomenon of double homes has a long history, from peasants moving between the farm and outlying chalets, fishing huts or logger camps to the making of holiday homes, starting early among European elites. The papers in this collection do not focus on this particular lineage, though shades of such cultural and social histories certainly inform the motivations of some double home owners. Rather we seek to bring to the fore how living in two places affects individuals and suggest research directions to uncover new patterns of “home-making” in the present. The main focus is on the contrasts between different kinds of second homes, different emotional geographies, and different contexts of age and economic standing, but in the introduction we will sketch a historical outline and present possible approaches to the theme of double homes.

A rough taxonomy of types of second homes appears at first glance easy to construct: Firstly, there is the upper and middle class tradition of finding a second home “in the sun” or “away from the city, out in the rural landscape”. Such places can be in one’s own country or in old farm houses in changing favored regions – the Provence figuring prominently late into the twentieth century, Bulgaria featuring as a rising star in the twenty-first. There are retirement communities in Thailand, Greece or Gran Canaria

and German summer houses in Poland and Sweden. Secondly, there are the double home arrangements born from immigrant longings to nurture the link to their homeland by planning and building a house “back home”, used for vacations and often planned as a retirement retreat. Thirdly one might name the mobile homes, ranging from the recreational vehicle parked next to the house to the circus artist’s caravan or the recreational sailor’s yacht. And the fourth second homes result from occupational obligations – be this the au pair’s room in her host family’s apartment, the farm laborer’s seasonal accommodation or the commuters second home. These categories represent (not only) transnational mobilities with a different social and economic base. They contain different dreams and aspirations although they share aspects of the material concerns entailed in living in two different countries or places. The sun loving senior citizens who flock from Northern Europe to the South are seldom discussed in terms of exile, diaspora, ghettoization or multiculturalism as are other migrants; the experiential dimensions of imbibing a new cultural context and the mind altering possibilities of breaking with the daily routine of one’s first home in turn are rarely considered when considering the plight of migrants and refugees.

Thus as we construct a typology, motivations and emotional investment entailed in the double lives resulting from double homes complicate matters. While we seek to differentiate types of second homes not least in terms of introducing the contributions to this issue, the diversity and overlap in emotional investment cuts across the loose categories.

Summer Homes and Winter Retreats

Elites developed a pattern of multiple homes far back in history. In order to escape the heat, the urban congestion or health hazards, they have built summer retreats for thousands of years, from Roman rural villas to renaissance summer palaces, from the nineteenth century summer “hill stations” of British colonials in India to jet-setters buying an artificial island off the coast of Dubai in the early years of the twenty-first century.

There is, however, since the nineteenth century

a tradition of establishing summer cottages on a somewhat broader social scale, although the label of summer cottage may turn out to have a much wider range of forms, from a shack in an allotment garden to fancy villas. Usually, the term summer cottage is used for rural second homes in Europe and America. It can be anything from an actual restored rural cottage, to a farmhouse, a Victorian villa, a hunting lodge, a functionalist box, or a small prefab cabin. Not surprisingly, most of them are found by the water, on seashores or lakesides or in the mountains. Preferably, they are not too far away from the urban centers where the owners live. A distribution map would show that the highest proportion is found in Northern Europe and above all in Scandinavia. Strikingly enough, in Britain, the country many often think of as the classic site of the summer cottage tradition, only a few percent own second homes.

There is also a strong cottage tradition in Eastern Europe, as for example in the Russian *dacha* – a term which denotes anything from a small shack with a kitchen garden to exclusive mansions built for the former nomenclature. In America the tradition is much stronger in Canada than in the USA.

Culturally, the summer cottage traditions of Canada and Scandinavia have striking similarities, as Nik Luka points out in his paper on the Canadian experience. They share a similar history, facilitate a particular life style, exude a symbolic aura, and developed mostly out of summer vacations in hotels and boarding houses. Acquiring one's own summer home was at first an ambition of a narrow elite, but during the early twentieth century the social base was broadened and as pressures on recreational space increased, the base was narrowed again in many tourist regions.

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for copyright reasons.**

Ill. 1: For the working class in many North European settings, allotment gardens with a small shed or cottage developed into a special tradition of 'second homes' – not very far from home. (Photo from Southern Sweden, 1920s. The Folk Life Archives, Lund.)

The upper middle class of professionals, academics, and managers came to dominate the new cottage cultures of the early twentieth century. These new settlements were shaped in the “back-to-nature” tradition with an emphasis on privacy and a family-centered holiday life – away from the holiday crowds. In Scandinavia they could celebrate a peasant culture heritage; in Canada it more often had to be a celebration of a frontier past.

In these cottage cultures a very distinct summer world developed, full of days spent down at the beach, informal visits and parties in the evening, a great many physical activities such as canoeing, sailing, fishing as well as summer sports like croquet or badminton, hikes to wild berry patches, expeditions by sail or row boat to nearby islands. Life at the cottage was contrasted to the ceremony-ridden resort life, but soon developed its own routines and rituals (see Löfgren 1999).

One of the most striking characteristics of cottage cultures concerned rhythms and temporalities. Most of the year the vacation cottages stood closed. The start of summer was marked by the grand ritual of leaving town, not for a couple of weeks but for the whole summer. Long summer school vacations typical of North America and Scandinavia were one condition permitting this pattern, the other was a nuclear family relying on the presence and labor of housewives. The family usually spent several months at the cottage, while fathers visited for shorter periods.

If the summer cottage tradition constitutes the oldest type of vacation homes, a second wave can be identified since the 1960s. It has a quite different geography as this type results from the search for winter sun. New settlements “in the sun” followed in the wake of mass tourist travel to new, year-round tourist destinations. Sun, warmth, easy living and cheap property constitute the requisite bundle of attractions. “Hibernating tourism” has its own history, starting with the North European elites’ discovery of the Riviera towards the end of the nineteenth century. Here, families arrived with mountains of luggage and servants, rented a suite in a hotel and spent the winter in the sun. Senior citizens such as those discussed by Anne Leonora Blaakilde, Klaus Schriewer

and Irene Encinas Berg develop new models in this lineage, turning the respite from a Nordic winter’s gloom into a year round pursuit.

Yet another seasonal second home lineage is linked to mountainous areas and sports or at the very least health related mobility. Much as there were summer resorts inviting those who could afford it to bodies of water, the “discovery of the Alps” in the late eighteenth century encouraged the development of guest housing and, eventually, grand hotels for the elites in mountainous regions. The Habsburg emperor Franz Josef I spent summers in a “modest” summer palace in Austria’s Bad Ischl, and the imperial family was far from alone in seeking the cool mountain air away from the capital Vienna. As mountains were rescripted from an environment fraught with danger to a place of beauty and health, upper class dwellings appeared in unlikely, inaccessible mountain villages. In the twentieth century, resorts such as the one featured in Thomas Mann’s *Magic Mountain* were increasingly joined by holiday chalets and, in the past World War II era, apartment buildings seasonally inhabited by the kind of second home owners whose descendents are discussed by Marius Risi. Families enjoying summer hikes and winter skiing point to the draw of these quite different landscapes as well as to the rising importance of winter sports in engendering the wish for a second home.

The papers in this collection trace different traditions. The cases may loosely fit into overall patterns, from the early expansion of apartamentos and bungalows in Spain (Schriewer & Encinas Berg, Blaakilde) to the longing for a village home in the Provence (Kapchan, Shannon) or Tuscany (Seidl) to the refuge in the mountains (Bendix). Yet behind the patterns, individual double life worlds can be gleaned, suggesting opportunity for further ethnographic scrutiny. As prices in Southern Europe have increased, new property markets for vacation homes keep developing: Gran Canaria, Turkey, Bulgaria, or Thailand might be favored in the early twenty-first century, but the global map of second home preferences will undoubtedly shift and thicken further. Cheap flights are an essential ingredient in this calculation that facilitates the expansion of markets and the shrink-

ing notions of distance and time. The new players on distant shores meet up with those who maintain a “first-wave” second home, upholding a family tradition and its material representation, sometimes lasting over generations (Eleftheria Deltou); the jet set in search of sun and sea crosses paths with senior migrants investing their pensions abroad.

Longing for a Place “Back Home”

The second category of double home owners has some, if limited, overlap with the first. As migrants and refugees have created a new sense of belonging as well as a new material home in the countries they have migrated to, they maintain ties with the old country in different ways. Building a house back home is perhaps the most prominent project for economically motivated migrants. Returning to the village or town they have left, holds an emotional as much as a material appeal; the dwelling is first intended as a base for holiday visits, but holds the promise of moving back completely when sufficient funds have been earned or one is ready to retire. Such dream houses stand waiting for their owners all over emigration areas, from Turkish villages to the Cretan shore and Croatian towns. Some are fully realized, others await a white washing; yet others are only marked out as a piece of property or stagnate in an unfinished state, with concrete pillars and gaping holes instead of windows, standing as material metaphors for a dream put on ice or gone awry.

Different migrant populations craft different feelings and practices around their second home, as is palpable in Magnus Berg’s conversation with his longtime Turkish friend in Sweden compared to Daniel Miller’s discussion of a Caribbean–London double home experience. Though, perhaps, the differences are more variegated yet, with age, gender, historical experience and memory contributing further layers, as illustrated by Ulrich Mai’s observations on German longings for a home in Mazury.

Planned Impermanence: Creating Temporary Homes while Working Away from Home

Many immigrants find themselves living in two countries for many years. Often it was the men who

left their families at home and tried to make do in makeshift and often cramped conditions, sharing a flat with several other immigrants and slowly planning the return back home or the arrival of the whole family to the new country. Increasingly, it is also women who undertake economic migration and find themselves negotiating not only double homes but also family obligations and longings in a long distance fashion (for example, Sánchez-Carretero 2005; Hess 2005a, 2005b). Women find opportunities to work particularly in serving and care taking occupations related to the home – child care, nursing of the elderly, cooking and cleaning – and experience the “home making” for others away from their own home with particular force.

There is, however, also a long and varied tradition of people whose work forces them to live in two places, albeit with great social and economic differences. The transnational elites whose work takes them to different places for longer or shorter periods do not always invest in a second home. There is rather an old pattern of hiring a hotel suite or a whole hotel floor while one is in town, but there are also more humble solutions for creating a home base while away from home for work. Traveling salesmen book themselves into boarding houses, construction workers inhabit caravans, migrant cleaning women in Brussels share cheaply rented flats. Urbanite professionals might maintain two households so as to facilitate a dual career based on double homes – as invoked in Anne-Marie Palm’s essay. There is an as of yet poorly explored history of material choices and second home experiences, from the hotel suites of the wealthy to the labor camps of seasonal workers, cutting cane or timber or making makeshift living arrangements on the coast, to the shanty towns outside and inside cities of seasonal market sellers and other members of temporary labor forces.

The traveling artists’ home on wheels, always on the go, is perhaps the extreme development, here exemplified by Maria Alzaga’s paper on touring circus artists. Here it is the “first home” that recedes in importance or vanishes entirely. Modern day nomads, on the go not for work but for pleasure and adventure, similarly endow the second, perhaps floating

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Ill. 2: A row of caravans in a parking lot next to a construction site; many migrant workers live in this kind of barren second home setting. (Photo: Richard Wilk.)

home with more material and emotional importance than their first, as is the case in Martina Kleinert's exploration of circumnavigators and their yachts.

Ethnographers, too, pursue a line of work that forces them to establish second homes, an experience discussed by Glenn Bowman. Experimentally, their effort at crafting a homelike realm away from home is psychologically taxing and fraught with paradox. Present in the new surroundings to observe how others tackle life, the ethnographers' need to withdraw into a space of their own is keenly and incessantly observed by those observed. Making a home turns, at least during initial phases of fieldwork, into a performance rather than a retreat.

Dreaming of a Second Home

The majority of people live in their one and only home. Yet some of them spend time dreaming and

scheming about a second place, a retreat or hide-away. In daily life, we experiment with different forms of realizing such imaginary homes. Children build secret huts out in the woods or turn attics into spaces to live out play worlds. Husbands and wives develop hiding-places or private spaces. One of the lawyers in the broadly aired tv-series *Ally McBeal*, John Cage, has a hide-away accessible through a secret door in his proper lawyer's office, to realize aspects of his rather quirky personality. In their book *Where men hide*, Twitchell and Ross have explored such male retreats, from the garage or the tool bench in the attic to the car, the cocktail bar or the men's only club (2006). What is the attraction, the need for such fantasies about a space of one's own, metaphorically evoked in Virginia Woolf's *A room of one's own* from 1929? To what extent do they serve as a place for living out suppressed aspects of the self, how do

they afford a foundation for emerging from suppression? While some people seem to have a knack for making themselves at home in all kinds of situations even while they are on the move, others crave a private space all to themselves or spend a lot of time daydreaming about that other home.

Having two homes can also be a way of having none. Attachments to places, landscapes, material structures are doubled or multiplied, and more or less complicated patterns associated with either place may emerge, as can be gleaned from Daniella Seidl's conversations with Germans in Italy. Lives "back home" and in a holiday or temporary work home are compared and there are associations of greater or lesser vitality for one or the other. In the course of time, with repeated back and forth or with the changing view of long term experience, what was once a dream come true might lose its luster; biographical transformations as much as economic and political changes might lead to a surprising sense of unbelonging. The very rich have developed patterns not of double but of endlessly expandable numbers of homes – a manor in London, a flat in New York and another in Venice, a little hide-away in Dubai and a coastal home in Mallorca. The cosmopolitan certainty of simultaneously belonging everywhere and nowhere finds its contrast in the lower middle-class retiree who moved to a bungalow in Spain only to realize after a few years that life bereft of green fields, rainy skies and a familiar language is perhaps not worth the cost of a second home.

Literary works depict what secret plans might slumber in many a person's fantasies. The Hungarian journalist and novelist Mor Jokái's "The golden man" (*Ein Goldmensch*, Hungarian original 1872, German 1873 and reissued again and again) narrates the life of the merchant Timar who succeeds in everything except for a fulfilling marriage; thus he disappears to lead another, happily loved and loving life on an island as Deodat, keeping the two worlds separated. The small group of documented bigamists – ever so often appearing in news headlines when their case becomes public – enact the most extreme and baffling variant of "living double lives" in double homes. They spend years of their increasing-

ly stressful life building up two homes and two lives, but keep them apart as well-guarded secrets. Here, circumstance – that is, doubled families – enforces perhaps a greater practical consciousness associated with each home. Developing routines and rituals allows such doubled individuals to remember where they are and which aspect of their selfhood is to be performed, thus practicing more or less successfully the mechanisms of secret keeping analyzed by Georg Simmel (1999[1908]).

Belongings

The identity politics of belonging in the sense of "feeling at home" leads to further complications. What is it you own – a piece of land, a physical structure or, in the case of a renter, a set of furnishings, chairs to gaze out at the view? The second home owners look out on a settlement and landscape inhabited by local owners. Possession and the divergent attitudes and habits associated with it bring forth a dynamic between increasingly diverse groups of locals and second home owners. To what extent is one seen as just a visitor or a guest, will one ever become a local? A complex hierarchy may develop as for example in holiday settings, where the "old summer visitors" may view themselves as true locals and regard newcomers or renters as an alien influence. In such cases, the old summer guests may come to see themselves as the true guardians of local traditions, taking up central positions in the local heritage movement, or getting involved with the local museum or the politics of preservation and environmental policies. In this process they may invest themselves in their second space and place with greater vigor than in their first home context and come to stand for the politics of nonchange, which many of the "real" locals can find exasperating. In other instances, villages may be so depopulated due to urban migration that second home owners turn into welcome agents of renewal and economic possibility. Migrants who move "back home" may experience that the local setting has changed in ways that confront their nostalgic memories of "how things should be" or find that the locals aren't quite as ready to welcome them back, as they might have thought.

The complicated question of “who really belongs here?” can find its expression in the far more pragmatic “what may belong to whom here?” Communities might decide on zoning laws or conditions of land sales to maintain a majority in ownership of local property. In some regions, however, tourism and second home ownership have such a long tradition, that lineages of local presence might be as long among holiday home owners as among many “locals”. In many places, the sharp seasonal pattern has been exchanged for a rhythm of weekend visits or permanent residence as some visitors decide to retire in their summer community – demonstrating the multilocal life style characterized by Johanna Rolshoven. In places where there may remain a high seasonality, relationships are still ongoing as houses and apartments standing empty require care takers: lawns and plants need to be watered and trimmed, and potential problems must be communicated and addressed.

Newer second home communities avoid such often frail interpersonal arrangements and potential confrontation between locals and non-locals completely. New complexes intended for second home owners from abroad form village like communities of their own, with stores and local transport ready made and service personnel planned for to worry about maintenance during the owner’s absence.

Emotional Landscapes

The materiality and emotionality of living in two places is touched upon in very different ways in the contributions in this volume. Having two homes might mean all the work involved in getting two sets of everything, from cutlery to feelings of belonging. The emotional and material investments made require, however, further study, in order to grasp diversity of existential orientations such multi-local dwelling affords. Vocabularies used may be one useful entry for sounding out the complex interweaving of attachments to multiple locality and ways of living. Words such as belonging, my real home, homecoming, authentic or simple life, a retreat, or my get-away signal different commitments and emphases.

Many of the papers describe the practical and

emotional divisions of labor that come with living in two places, a theme that has also been explored by the anthropologist Jean-Didier Urbain in his study of French second homes (2002). Does the double set of homes combine different moods and modes of domesticity? Another question is which one is seen as the first one of the two – a hierarchy that may alter over time. In a changing emotional, economic and social division of labor between two sites for living we can follow what is foregrounded or emphasized in each place and what kinds of balances or complementarities are developed. How do double homes learn to co-habit? There might, for example, be an attempt to create two kinds of domestic aesthetics, the two homes come to “feel different” or are seen as scenes in which different aspects of personality or aspiration can be played out. In a study of Turks in Berlin Ayse Caglar (2002) noted how the best furniture was saved for the house back in Turkey, it became a dream space in many ways, while one was prepared to live in more make-shift arrangements in the small flat in Kreuzberg. The fancy glass table was meant for Turkey, in Berlin a simple wooden one had to do for the living room. It is a similar division of labor and taste transformed into belongings that Daniel Miller describes in his paper.

Traveling back and forth also may produce different feelings of motion and emotion. For both summer cottage owners and migrants with a place “back home”, the journey to their second home may feel like time travel, a feeling of going back to childhood or “an authentic life”, a journey between rural simplicity and urban stress. Comings and goings get charged with different sentiments and rituals in which the dwelling itself may even get anthropomorphized. Is it possible for a house to return a look? asks the Finnish author Hans Ruin. He is describing the loaded moment when he is about to leave his Finnish summer house in late summer to travel back to his job in Sweden:

I didn’t understand how this was possible, I only felt it. Maybe I understand it better now, when I travel even further away every autumn and catch an even longer glance, as I like to do before I turn

around a last time. A house stores the warmth of one's feelings. At the moment of farewell it is naked and speaking, abandoned and betrayed, disappointed and wondering. The warmth in it calls for you. Calls during a whole winter (Ruin 1964:8, trans. Löfgren).

Again, the house works both as a very concrete and mundane materiality that demands time, money and effort, but also as a template for cultural projections, dreams and aspirations.

*

Living in two homes may be experienced as both stressful and restful. Common to all the different adaptations that this special issue contains is a basic condition, namely a life style linking mobility, materiality and belonging in special ways. However, the multiple and divergently emphasized effects of this condition on these double home makers, and the differences in how gender and class, ethnicity and personal biography shape individual actors' attention to such homes warrant further ethnographic and analytic effort. New methodological insights have emerged from ethnological work on the non-sedentary – migration, nomadism, and cosmopolitanism; George Marcus' notion of multi-sited ethnography (1995) or Gisela Welz's extension thereof in her essay "Moving targets" (1998) can be named here as prominent suggestions. A focus on the materiality of second or multiple homes and the attendant unfolding of multiple ways of experiencing being in this world is worthy of further exploration.

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