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Workshop 18: People and environments

Re-constructing the surburban fringe

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'space is a configuration...of a multiplicity of trajectories. The co-existing multiplicities and the necessary but incomplete (potential) interrelatedness which that entails give rise to time and space together.' (Massey 2000: 225)

Introduction

This paper is a pilot-analysis of empirical data from a post-doc-research project concerning young families' experiences, images and performances of space and how they use mass-mediated images in this. Focus is on their housing areas and transport, and particularly on their perceptions of rurality, urbanity and mobility. In my research I am inspired to take up the proposal by Massey and other social scientists that argue that we must see space and place as dynamic and as having multitudes of trajectories that are also interrelated. I am therefore interested in how people experience, imagine and perform space, but I am also interested in how they use mass-mediated images of space in this process.

The dual focus on peoples personal images and experiences and on mass-mediated images developed as part of the research. During the research process I have become increasingly aware that when I as a researcher had a focus on the urbanity-rurality-mobility-nexus, so did planners and developers of housing, as well as informants themselves. This made me question my hold on 'reality' – where exactly is the urban and the rural? - and made me double aware of the necessity of a focus on representations and how they are made, and I decided to make that an explicit part of the research. Likewise it made me aware of the necessity of reflexivity as part of the research process: how I understand the production of space, and how I research it.

The background for the project is the shift from living in bounded communes to living in a large networked-connected city which has taken place in greater Copenhagen. More broadly, urban areas are increasingly understood in terms of networks (Castells, Graham and Marvin), mobilities (Sheller and Urry 2000) and as being borderless (Albertsen et.al.), and this involves extensification of peoples everyday lives as well as infrastructure being a central organising principle in peoples everyday lives. There is a loosening of the relationship between humans and places (Giddens). However, rather than seeing this as a story of endless mobility and loss of any socio-spatial referents in the building of identities (Bauman 1996), there seems to a profound and complex

transformation of the relationship between social subjects and their physical environment (Jensen 2005). Thus, the new dynamics could be seen in terms of an ongoing negotiating and story of relating and belonging to different entities and different scales at different times (Savage et.al. 2005). The empirical focus in the research is housing areas. Not surprisingly, housing research show how peoples perceptions takes form in the intermezzo of the two poles, where the major challenges are to grasp and conceptualize the differentiated meanings housing areas have in a time characterised by globalisation, mobility and urbanisation (e.g. Mazanti 2002; Simonsen 1993, 2005; Karstens 2003; Savage et.al. 2005; Tillberg 2001; Åquist 2001). Some suggest that housing has a relative higher distinction in a context characterised by mobility (Savage et.al. 2005), whereas other suggests that peoples relations to their housing areas are lessening (Kristoffersen 2003). This make housing/housing areas an interesting and relevant focus for investigating the relationship between place and mobility.

The transformation of the relationship between humans and their physical environment has consequences for the rural-urban divide as well as for how we perceive transport. The divide is conceptually (and in planning terms) seen as two separate spaces. However, the development of the city as network and mobilities means that it is difficult to uphold this division, and raise question of how to understand the rural-urban divide. Some writers think that it no longer make sense to use these categories, since the whole of society has been urbanised (Newby), while others think that rural and the urban are being reproduced in situated contexts (Murdoch m.fl). This development also has consequences for how we can understand everyday transport, and researchers suggest that commuting has substituted migration during the last century (Pooley 2003). It makes it important to research how both urban-rural divide as well as transport are being negotiated as part of the urban dynamic.

It is in the context of these shifts I am interested in how people make themselves at home in place. This can further be seen as part of a politics of recognition about what constitute good living and attractive living areas. In this paper I will begin my sketching the theoretical perspectives used, then I will introduce my methodology, namely visual ethnography. In the third section I will sketch some of the pilot analysis of representations and interviews.

Theoretical perspectives

There is large bodies of research exploring peoples differential experience of space and place, pointing out how places, both rural (MacNaghthen and Urry 1998) and urban (Taylor et.al.1996), are endowed with significant meanings for individuals and groups, often in the making of identity. As argued in the introduction I am particularly interested in how trajectories co-exist and interrelate and I will therefore in the following sketch a theoretical understanding that allow us both to understand how people imagine, perform and experience space, as well as how they draw on mass-mediated images of the city when they do so.

To build on my argument that cities increasingly must be understood as based on networks and mobilities, I develop a theoretical perspective that allow me to understand peoples understandings of their housing area and transport not as given primordially, as the local in contrast to the global. Instead peoples experiences of space can be seen as situated in local environments with other local environments, where references and comparisons are multiple and complex (Savage et.al.2005).

More specifically I want to suggest the performance metaphor, which has been taken up by a number of authors within geography and social sciences to understand how the social and cultural are produced and reproduced (Edensor 2004, Tully 1999, Szerszynski 2003). This metaphor has a long history in sociology, anthropology and theatre studies. Choosing performance metaphor points to the embodiment of social practise and away from social life as texts. The metaphor help us understand how performativity is a means of understanding dominant symbolic and cultural categories, but also a way of understanding how these might be resisted. There is presently a large discussion concerning the scope for creativity and resistance in performances,[1] but here I tentatively suggest that performances opens up for creativity and change. It allow us to understand how cultural and social categories such as gender, class, rural/urban, private/public are being produced and reproduced. Such performances can both be routine as well as reflexive and interpretative. This starting point seek to recognise both how experience is practised, embodied, sensuous and felt, but also how such experience is made sense of through definition, reflection and interpretation. Within anthropology the notion of performativity has mainly been used to discuss ritualisation, public performances, however others have noted the performative aspect of everyday life, which also involves imaginative concumption of images.

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[1] This discussion is often structured using Bourdieus and Butlers work.

One contribution is Tullys work on consumption of culture. He suggest that we see performance as an expressive 'technology of the self' that "focuses on 'words in their speaking' as embodied situationally in formal and everyday performance" (1999: 7). The distinction between formal and everyday is important here as it draws attention to how performances and images of space are both carried out as part of everyday practises but also in relation to 'formal' performances. Tullys work is concerned with consumption of culture – high and low - and drawing on audience theory he is interested in how people 'perform' audiencing, and construct themselves as audience. Likewise Morley suggest that media studies explore cultural knowledge and competencies, the linguistic terms and categories used by respondents to constructs worlds and their own understnading of activities (Morley, cited by Rose 2001: 192). When I focus on how people use mass-mediated material in their imagining of space, I am interested in how they draw on available images as part of performances of space. Hence I do not see people as 'passive dupes' in their uses of this material, but I am interested in how people use it when they imagine and perform place.

Copenhagen surburbs as housing areas, transport and young families

The chosen housing areas are three selected areas in greater Copenhagen. Greater Copenhagen is part of northern European growth region, the Øresundsregion, and this makes it the central urban growth center in Denmark. As such the region is in competition with other regions at both national and particularly international level.[2] This also influence the housing market. There is a huge demand for housing in greater Copenhagen, which means that house prices have rocketed and commuter areas are extending further and further away from the centre (Kristoffersen 2003, Nørgård upubl.). In the last 5-10? years there has been a large housing developments, where new housing areas have been build. These housing developments are characterised by being both rented, cooperative owned and owned, and it is also different sizes.

At the same time the development in the housing market are characterised by an increasing polarisation between house owners and people who rent, which reflect broader polarisation in the Danish society (Kristensen upubl.). This is reflected in the increasing homogenisation of housing areas, where people from the same social groups live in the same areas (Olsen). When I in my research look at three selected areas in greater Copenhagen it is therefore in a growth area. Within these areas I aim at different types of housing namely owned and co-operatively owned as a way of

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[2] In this context Neil Brenner argues that 'on sub-national spatial scales, interspatial competion has intensified among urban regions struggling to attract capital investments and state subsidies' (1999: 433).

reaching people with different social positions. At the same time it is people who are able to buy / cooperatively buy their own home, and therefore people with some resources. When I single out these areas and types of housing, it is therefore at the same time people from more comfortable social positions and who has access to economic resources..

Finally, the group that I single out in these housing areas are young families with children. A large part of the new housing developments are target at this group (families). A study from 1997 show that half the new housing developments was aimed one-family housing (SBI and Byforum 2001), and this group is a large part of the housing market. When this group occupy a house it can be seen as a stabile choice. At the same time this group is active on the labourmarket and needs access to this, and hence access to infrastructure, which can be seen as an important part of the housing choice.

Visual ethnography

To research how people imagine, experience and perform space and how they draw on available images I propose to use visual ethnography. I draw on both informants stories and photos to explore how people how people are making sense of their housing area and transport as well as what interpretative frames and forms of identification available material are offering informants. This will enable me to explore what Massey calls 'multiplicity of trajectories'.

I am inspired to call my ethnography for visual for several reasons. One point of inspiration is the importance of images in the constitution of the city. Generally urban researchers point to the role of culture more generally in the understanding of the constitution of the city. Likewise a number of empirical studies of space take up the use of visual methods (Rasmussen and Smidt 2003; Rasmussen 2004; Højring 2004; Buss 1995; Latham 2003). Another reason is methodological. Generally speaking, visual methods has had a marginal place in social sciences, however, there is an increasing literature on visual methods within the social sciences (Pink 2005; Banks 2001; Rose 2001; Crang 2003). A number of critiques have been made against using visual methods, but here I want to highlight one important criticism which has been made, namely how the use of visual method has functioned as forms of documentation and presentation of the visible realities of the world – the documentary gaze – and as an objectifying realism. The problem with this way of using visual methods is that the question of re-presentation are not addressed and no attention are paid to

the production of the visual and how ways of seeing are shaped in social and cultural process.[3] However, this critique should not make us turn away from using visual methods, rather researchers must address reflexively how such representations are produced and interpreted. Recent contributions to visual methodologies suggest a simultaneous focus on both image itself, as well as how it is made meaningful by viewers.

In my research I have chosen to carry out research in selected housing areas in greater Copenhagen, but only results from the first area is reported here as I am in the process of data collection. The choice of several sites enables focus on different configuration of urban/rural divide. As part of my ethnographic work I use several methods which utilise the visual.

- Firstly I have collected available contemporary published material about the housing areas concerned produced by planners and developers. Likewise I visited the areas and spend time wlaking and cycling at different times of the day. This material give access to the available visual clues, interpretative frames and identifications available. The visit give knowledge about how this is expressed materially.

- Secondly, I carry out qualitative interviews with appr. 12 inhabitants, both men and women, living in both owned and co-operatively owned housing (andelsforening). As preparation for the interview the informant took up to 25 photos of the their use of local area and transport. In the interview these are used as a starting point to discuss understandings and practises. Further the expectations and images people had of the area and how these were modified later were discussed. Thirdly, during these interviews I asked how they were informed about the area, and what materials they had access to. Finally I present 'branding' brochures and ask for their immediate reaction to it: is it recognisable?

In my analysis and representation of this material I will focus on both images themselves, as well as how it is made meaningfull by viewers. I carry out content analysis of the available branding material and I include informants comments. In the analysis of informants stories and pictures I will include both analysis of their stories as well as content of images.

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[3] For an example of this critique in geography, see Crang 2003; Rose 2001. In anthropology Morphy and Banks 1997, Pink 2005.

Imagining a 'new' housing area

Just five years ago Søndergårdskvarteret was a bare field. It used to be farmland, but was 10 years ago taken over by a school preparing yuoth for employment using the farm land for organic agriculture. Now it is home to approximately 250 detached and semi-detached houses, the first phase, while the second phase is just beginning and will see the building of low blocks of flats. As I visit the area in March I feel the newness of the area. All the houses are new, while the area is seems like any low housing area, there is no trees or bushes of any height, making it feel bare and almost like a stage. When I cycle around I feel very visible, and note that a few women are looking at me. This feeling is confirmed when one informant tells me she saw me cycle round. How does a place like Søndergårdskvarteret, a housing area like many housing area in greater Copenhagen, growing out of bare fields, become a place with which people identify and feel 'at home'? In this section I focus on the place-marketing of space, and the political economic framework this is part of. I argue that housing areas can be seen as examples of the urban imaginery, and I explore some of the images constructed in relation to the specific housing. I argue that Søndergårdskvarteret are being re-imagnined/re-branded through production of images and materiality, and that 'nature' and 'connectivity' or a soft model of cosmopolitanism are making it a model for for surburban development.

The notion 'imagined geography' was used by Shields (1994) aseing the logic of common spatial perceptions accepted in a culture. More specifically Shields suggests the term social spatialisation to designate "an object of study which encompass both the cultural logic of the spatial and its expression and elaboration in language and more concrete actions, constructions and institutional arrangements" (1991: 31). The importance of imagined spaces is reflected more broadly by other. Sennett argue that representational images of the city are often more legible than those offered to the urbanite using their own unaided sight on the street (Sennett (1991). These images, he argues, actively constitute the city and its narrations, rather than being simply representations of an external 'real'. They enable the chaos of space to be turned into a knowable place. Likewise Donalds (1997: 182) suggest that the living space of the city exist as much as representation, projection and experience, as it exist as bricks, mortar, concrete and steel.

Several authors points out how 'branding', or the conscious impressions management efforts done by city stakeholders, intervenes in the imagined geography of cities (Jensen 2005). As a result of what has been called the leisure economy, learning and knowledge regions and creative cities urban

branding as attempts to redefine the define the city has been taken up by city stakeholders engaging in the game of trying to manage the impression that potential investors, visitors and inhabitants might get. Branding as selective story telling has become one of the tools of city management in a context characterised by increasing competition between different cities (Jensen 2005: 12).

Jensen problematises the relationship between the brand and people actually living in the area asking 'who will actually live the brand?' (2005: 15), and this reminds us that such representations always take place in an economy of interests and depends on decisions about what should be visible and what should not (Skeggs 2004). Jensen suggests that there is no automation in making inhabitants of a city or region perform according to the brand, on the other hand urban narratives and brands fuel the urban imaginery and the more or less self-consious understanding of what it means to live in a city. Jensen ends up suggesting that urban branding (both imaginery and material) is an act of shaping the urban imaginery and hence an act of framing and articulating norms and visions related to particular sites. Here I am interested in precisely this interaction between urban imaginery in the form of brands and peoples imaginings and performances of places. To understand this interaction I want to suggest that narratives and images also in the form of brands as constitutive representations engage with and entwine other trajectories especially those of peoples experiences, and they therefore have to be plausible and make sense to those who inhabit the place. They can be seen as dialogical: people and places script each other.

Søndergårdskvarteret can be seen as example of how conscious impressionsmanagement are carried out and used in the place-making of a new housing area. As such the area is part of the political economic framework of greater Copenhagen. Greater Copenhagen is part of the Øresundsregionen, the central urban growth center in Denmark, which has seen a remarkable growth in the last decade. This has also influenced the housing market. There continoues to be a huge demand for housing in greater Copenhagen, which means that house prices have rocketed and commuter areas are extending further and further away from the centre (Kristoffersen 2003, Nørgård upubl.). In the last 5-10 years there has been a large housing developments, where new housing areas have been build. These housing developments are characterised by being both rented, cooperative owned and owned, and it is also different sizes. These developments has also seen a rise in place branding, particularly by housing developers and planners (Berg et.al 2000). This can be seen in the context of place promotion under neo-liberalism, where cities and areas within cities compete with each others for capital investments and state subsidies (Brenner 1999: 433), and where capital has become more

sensitive to the qualities of place in the search for investment opportunities. As such the Øresundsregion has been very successful in making a particularly mix of the metropolitan and the local: "There is a a mix of fast flow and creative friction…but also a metropolitan vision of mixed colours. Here we find the traditional grey of transport machinery…, but also a strong streak of green, a pleasing environmental setting…and then of course there is the important streak of blue, the magic of glittering, moving water…(Löfgren 2000: 51).

There is also a competition between different regions of greater Copenhagen for state subsidy and investment. Søndergårdskvarteret is placed along Frderikssundsvejen, an area of Copenhagen characterised by being less developed than the others, and by having an image of being neglected and less developed. In terms of socio-economic development the area has been characterised by having more difficulties in attracting business development and a distinct lower educational level than along the 'other fingers'. Also house prices are lower here. Likewise the finger does has been been slower in developing public infrastructure, and it still does not have a motorway. As part of the general development in the region the last 10 years, the area have had a high development rate in terms of number of jobs, inhabitants and housing. To combat this situation the councils along the 'finger' has formed an association to promote development in 1992 with the main aim of having a motorway build. A number of business reports all pointed to the lack of infrastructure as a main way of achieving higher development. To promote this aim the association talked about 'the neglected finger' to emphasise how the area was lacking in development in comparison to other areas in greater Copenhagen. To further promote development in the area the association hired a branding consultancy in 2004 to formulate an identity for the area. The consultancy began by pointing out the need for developing a positive vision of the area and discarding the narrative of 'neglected finger'. Instead their suggesting was branding the area as 'being close to nature and to the city'. The branders argue that this brand make the area distinct from the surrounding regions.

Re-imagining Søndergårdskvarteret
In the next section I will look more closely at how a particular place identity as 'nature and connectivity' are being created for Søndergårdskvarteret, where the 'real' city are being reshaped according to this image. How is the area being represented in branding material? What visual clues, interpretative frames and forms of identification that can be made with the area. Several stakeholders produce material, and here I will look at the councils and developers material. Developers material are not surprisingly more 'glossy' than the councils material.

Views – one way of representing Søndergårdskvarteret is through the representation of views, often with water in the background. One brochure describe the activities possible around the new lake, and suggest promenading along the lake or through the forrest. 'Views' as a particular experience is given through visual clues, but is not necessarily narrativised in the brochures. Rather the special qualities of the area is stressed, sensitive lake area and easy access to forest.

When views are emphasised, it can be seen as a particular way of performance in space which has its roots in the 19th century, where new practises developed by which nature was increasingly gazed upon, this involved both leisure activities as well as gardening and landscaping. More specifically Green demonstares some of the effects of the spectacularision of nature in the region surrounding Paris in 19th century, which he calls 'metropolitan nature'. In this nature is understood as specularisation, nature understood as scenery, views, perceptual sensation. Green connects the spectacularisation of nature with nature of changes taking place in Paris itself. Paris had visual characteristic. There were spectacular street scenes bathed in new forms of lightening, a consuming gaze, a male gaze. This metropolitanism did not remain spectating at Paris, there was an invasion of surrounding regions for the pariasian spectator. Such spaces are turned to safe sites for leisure and recreation for the citydweller to visit from time to time. They produce what the visitor believe is an individualised experience of nature as the rejuvenating or refreshing antidote to the city. Green notes that much of the advertsing for houses in the countryside near paris in this period emphasise the importance of visual spectacle:"The language of views and panoramas prescribe a certain visual structure of the nature experience. The healthiness of the site was condensed with the actual process of looking at it, of absorbing it and moving round it with your eye. Environmental values were here articulated in relation to visual modes of consumption that enabled the visitor simultaneously to look at the picture and plunge into sensation. " (1990: 88)

- *Leisure activities – embodied-activities.* However, also a more multi-sensual engagement with nature is represented, particularly through leisure activities. Cycling, sailing on the lake, 'being in nature' are some of the activities visualised. Here the body is not passively enjoying the view, but is active and moving through 'the scenery'. In particular there is many close-up photos rather than landscape photos of children doing things with nature. We see the child in close interaction with nature, water, flowers. This therefore shows a multi-sensous body in action, but it also introduces a new type of body apart from the adult.

- *Being connected*. A theme which is narrativised is but rarely visualised is 'connectivity'. Several brochures stress the 'easy' access which nearby infrastructure affords to the centre of Copenhagen and to neighbouring towns. 'Being connected' is a guiding thread in the branding effort of the council association, but is most readily come forward in a brcohure produced for international firms and their employees. Here nature and connectivity are stressed in text and through visual images.

- *Being in the metropol*. The fourth theme which is taken up is the 'urban or metropolitan chatacter of the area it self. In narratives in the brochures closeness to daily shopping facilities in Måløv, as well as the 'easy access' to the centre of Copenhagen. More particularly, the emerging housing area will contain a public square and art and is described as the new 'metropole', and as giving a frame for people 'with a taste for the good life'. Likewise, the qualities of areas along the 'Frederikssundsfinger', the urban qualities are stressed. The shopping centres are creative, multiple and full of exciting offers. Here both planners and developers draw on an understanding of the city as 'pleasure', as

These are four examples of the images with which planners and developers represent, and hence they are some of the images available for people when imagining and performing space in their housing areas. They reflect what Löfgren dubbed a soft cosmopolitanism, fast and with mixed colours. They show some of the complex configurations being made about 'new' housing areas on the surburban fringe.

Performances in the housing area

The following present some tentative attempts at analysising the collected empirical material. I have chosen three informants and will give a short summary of their narratives of how they came to live where they live and how they use the area. There is a number of shared themes running through the interviews, but in this presentation I will focus on the nature theme. Other themes would be the urban, transport, indiviudality verses communality in the housing area and 'rambling and disciplining moving children'. I give a short selected summary of the interview, which will allow us to see how 'nature' is performed differently by the three informants. This is a first attempt to distill out tendencies in the material. Due to size I have not included photos in this text.

Jessica Hansen

The interview with Jessica takes place in the morning. She is on maternity leave, and her two month old baby sleeps as we talks. Her husband and other child is as work and in school. Her husband is a cook and works nearby, he cycles very early in the morning and return home early afternoon. She has more normal working hours and uses the s-train to go to work. They don't have a car.

Jessica considers herself as a girl from the country, as she lived in a small village on Southern Sealand untill she was about 15. Then her parents, themselves from Copenhagen, decided to move back to Copenhagen as they missed it. She thinks it was a good time to move, a time where she was ready for some change as she had to think about educating herself and getting a job. Although she lived for almost 15 years in Copenhagen she continues to think herself as a person from the country. She thinks well of her upbringing in the countryside, and she refers to the ability of playing together and easy access to her friends.

When her and her husband had their first baby they took the decision of buying the cooperatively owned flat, which they now live in. They consequently sold their car, and proceded to save up as much as they could. They felt that their flat was to small for a family life, and also she felt that it was not the right place to bring up a child. How would their child be able to move around? To cycle? This raises the question of the emotional politics of the boundary between urban-rurale which is persisting and visible in many interviews. The informants move to Copenhagen when young, but as soon as they have a child the city changes from an attractive place to live into being a dangerous and undesirable place for children to grow up. This theme is continued in how they use the surburb where narratives and images evovle around the children; this theme I will not develop further here.

Her and her husband had prior knowledge of the area since her husband was brouht up in the little village, and his parents still live and work there. They therefore had frequent visits, and it was also through this knowledge that they found out about the housing development.

She says that although she felt it was the right decision, she was also very excited about the time of moving. She had lived 11 years in her flat in Copenhagen, and moving to Måløv seemed a very big change. She said she lied awake all night before the move, pondering whether it would be ok.

One quality that she stresses in living in Søndergårdskvareteret is that it is spacious and that you can see the sky. One of the photos that she has taken shows a blue sky; it is taken right up. She says you can feel it immidiately when you get off the train. Other photos show some wild bushes taken from a path, it is from her walk to one of 'mothers-group'. She would not normallly see this area as much, but as she is at home with the baby, she has many walks around the area, something she really cherishes. She particularly appriciates the 'wild' quality of some of the nature in the surrounding area. One of the photos is taken out the kitchen window to show me her view of the landscape from her home. She acknowledges that this view will alter as the new housing developments will change the landscape, but she intends to enjoy it as long as it lasts, and points out that she will continue to see the sky.

Juliet N.

Juliet is 27 years and she lives with her partner and small child in a cooperatively owned flat. They both work as nursery teachers, and both work in Måløv. Her partner used to work in central Copenhagen, but as they had their child, he thought that he would see to little of him when he returned at six. When an apprppriate position came up in the village he applied for it and got it. However, she says that he doesn't mind long transport. When she finished college she applied for a job in the village as she new she was going to live, and she did not want much transport.

Juliet grew up in Ølstykke the little town lying a bit further out than Måløv, and she appriciated the type of upbringing she had there. That she had easy access to her friends and in getting about on all the small paths. However, as she grew up, she got to feel that she wanted to get awat, that it was not the right place to live; she wanted to live at the centre of Copenhagen. This obviously was difficult, but when she started her education as a nursery teacher, she managed to find a small, run-down flat on the outskirts of Copenhagen. Here she lived when she studied with her boyfriend. Her boyfriend was brought up in the neighbouring village to Smørum, and regularly played football here with his friends. During her study she one day saw an advert for the housing development she now lives in, and really liked it. She persuaded her boyfriend, and discussed the economics of it with their parents. I ask her how she reconcile her early distancing from the surburbs with the decision to buy this flat. She says she was a bit hesitant of moving into a place with families, but then, as she says, by the time she finished her studying, and the flat was ready to be moved into, she was pregnant.

She says that she did not really have any preconceptions of the place, apart from Måløv being a place that one drove through. On one of their visits to his parents she saw a swedish timber house being build and fell in love with it, so that when she later saw the advert for the housing development she already liked the area. It can be argued that she associate the swedish timber house with a romantic idyll.

One set of her photographs shows a farm building and a farm shop in the neighbouring Pederstrup, a combined farm, farmshop and museum. She says she really appriciates this, and and that she goes there offen, sometimes with her little son to see the animals, sometimes on her own to shop. One saturday morning they all went as a family – they went early as she insisted they be there when the shop opened. She really, really appriciates this place, and she emphaises the organic shopping opportunites at the farm shop. Referring to her liking eco-shopping, she jokingly calls herself an 'eco-hippie' If they could afford it, this was a place that she would like to live. When she refers to herself as eco-hippie, it is not so much the little village as a romantic idyl she emphasises, but more the village as representing an alternative lifestyle.

Jeppe P.

I interview Jeppe at mid-day, with his wife also present. The living floor is full of bags, they are in the middle of packing for a weekend away. They have 3 children, including two 5-week old babies a sleep outside. Jeppes wife is on maternity leave. They both work in the same company in central Copenhagen; Jeppe as a consultant. Generally Jeppe takes the car to work, while his wife take up public transport and adapt her work pattern to their daughters needs.

Jeppe grew up in a housing area / detached housing in a town in western Jutland. He appriciates his upbringing and emphasises the safe paths of the city that enabled him to move around safely. His wife grew up in a rural location in western Sealand.

When he began to study he moved to Copenhagen, where he lived in rented accomodation for a number of years before he bought a flat. When he and his wife decided to have a child they began looking for a house. They soon decided they wanted a new house, and got into contact with a housing developer whom they liked. They looked in several locations. In one location the firm had build up to 500 similar houses and they both thought that was to much, to similar. At first they did not like this developement. They had been to see it several times, also during building, and just thought it was to odd. However, they tell of one sunny summer evening, where they visit the site,

crawl up into the first floor via a ladder and see the spacious bedrooms and the wonderfull views and immidiately decide to buy it.

They are also fascinated by the descriptions in the sales material that emphasise the sensitive nature/water areas, and the development of a new 'urban' area with art and a lake. They make explicit references to this material. However in Jeppes photos of the area, he emphasises on theme, namely the provisional status of the area. He has many photos of the not-yet build building site next to their house. The lake has been build, and one block of flats are in the process of being build. He underscores his theme by taking photos of his childrens nursery – temporary buildings – and the dump – temporary. One photo shows the not finished block of flats wth the picture poster in front, this picture depicts the lake with sailing boats and mature planting around it, and the buildings name, 'seapleasure'.

Along one bank of one of the naturally occuring lakes nearby a row of houses are being build, and he has also taken photos of these. He strongly objects to them, saying that they look ugly, and that he can here the small, local developers thinking that on this small row of land is just place for a small row of houses.

By this visual and narrative representation of the area, Jeppe he reflexively questions the area and what it is. He uses the available images to reflect, and to contrast image and reality.

At the same time it is not that he does not upheld simialr images to the many other informants – he is attracted to the area due to its 'nature' qualities, and he walks it with his children as other informants. Also he says that it 'feels' rural – the first time they drove to the area it felt like forever, and they were passing fields. Also he stills feels it is rural: he has to have the long lights on when he drives home in the evening and in daytime he passes fields with sheeps. However, he is frustrated about the discrepancy between image and reality, between the image of gaining both nature and metropol qualities, and the obviously not-yet-but-soon status the area has.

Discussion

In my analysis I emphasise how people perform place, and how they drawe on available images, particular branding material.

In my presentation of these three informants stories and photos I have chosen three examples. I have highlighted the different ways they talk about and make images about the area they live in. In

further analysis I want to focus how images and narratives negotiate dominant cultural constructs. For example we see how nature in the housing area in these three narratives and images are performed diffrently: as open and spacious, but accepting that this will change; as romantic idyll and organic shopping; and finally as reflexive questioning of what exactly the nature of the area really is.

Hence the qualities of space are not given, but is lived through different performances of envisioning the area. These negotiaions draw on available images and cultural constructs, which I discusses, such as metropolitan nature and embodied-leisure activities, involving different types of interaction with nature.

Directions for conclusion

In the conclusion I want to return to my opening statement hypothesis, that space must be seen as multiple and interrelated trajectories. I have attempted to build on this by looking at both available images as well as informant images and narratives. Thus there is not divided sfæres, nut rural or urban bodies, but complex situated performances, where space change character. The quality of a space cannot be seen as given but produced in interaction between available images and peoples performances.

The informants actively seek out nature experiences for themselves and their children, at the same time they negotiate and reflect upon what 'nature' is. It could be speculated than when nature is stressed in so many accounts, 'nature' is a central performance of space and perhaps of attaining belonging in a networked city.

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- developers attempting to create attractive housing areas to attract knowledge workers
- what is a good living area
- part of a politics of recognition – what/who should be recognised