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PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Outdoor Mobility, Place and Older People

Everyday Mobilities in later Life in a Swedish Neighbourhood

VANESSA STJERNBORG | FACULTY OF ENGINEERING | LUND UNIVERSITY



Outdoor Mobility, Place and Older People

Everyday Mobilities in later Life in a Swedish Neighbourhood



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Vanessa Stjernborg

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION


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Abstract <p>The overall aim of this thesis is to offer an understanding of everyday mobilities outdoors among older persons from a place- and context-dependent perspective. The emphasis is to take a gentle approach towards an overall perspective with consideration to physical aspects (like the home neighbourhood), social aspects (like social networks and social participation) and mental aspects (like place images, mental maps and fear of crime). The thesis builds on three different studies with a mixed method approach that have resulted in five papers. Two of the studies are qualitative and were conducted in two neighbourhoods in Malmö city, in southern Sweden. The first neighbourhood is a disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhood, which has been highly exposed in mass media. This ethnographical case study includes a critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles, observations, 'travel-alongs' and interviews with senior participants of a senior group in the neighbourhood. The study focuses on issues such as fear of crime, social participation and wellbeing in the light of everyday mobilities in later life. The second study, a case study, focuses on the everyday mobilities of older people in a suburb, with longitudinal interviews and time-geographical diaries. The third study is a quantitative study focusing on changes in outdoor mobility. This study is based on a sample of older people in the transition from a two-person household to a single-person household from a questionnaire that went out to households in both Skåne county and Östergötland county in Sweden. Results from the first study show that social participation and social networking in the neighbourhood have positive effects on everyday mobility and fostering positive effects on neighbourhood development. Thus, avoidance and protective behaviour among the seniors occur because of fear of crime, implying restrictions in everyday life mobility. However, social participation in the form of being a part of the senior group and knowing people in the neighbourhood seems to have a salutary effect on fear of crime and a commendatory effect on everyday life mobility. The results from study two show a pronounced dependence on car use. Representations of suburbia - as places of freedom, independence and mobility enabled by private cars - devolve into a harsh reality, i.e. disabling lock-in effects for people gradually losing locomotion, and experiencing diminishing mobility capital and social intercourse. Finally, in the third study the results suggest that society must put more effort into offering good walking conditions, since a) walking seems to be the most important mode of transport for outdoor mobility in this case and b) walking is valued almost as high as a car after becoming alone in the household regardless of whether the population in our study reported unchanged, decreased or increased mobility.</p>		
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List of papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their numerals:

- I. Stjernborg, V., Tesfahuney, M., Wretstrand, A. The Politics of Fear, Mobility and Media Discourses – A Case Study of Malmö City. Resubmitted.
- II. Stjernborg, V. “How dare you go out?” Perceptions of Neighbourhood Security in later life in a Disadvantaged Neighbourhood in Sweden. Submitted.
- III. Stjernborg, V. ‘That is something that you don’t do by yourself, it isn’t fun’ – The Everyday Life Mobilities of Older Persons in an Inner-City Neighbourhood in Sweden. Submitted.
- IV. Stjernborg, V., Wretstrand, A., Tesfahuney, M. (2014) Everyday life Mobilities of Older Persons – A Case Study of Ageing in a Suburban Landscape in Sweden. Mobilities; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2013.874836>, in press
- V. Stjernborg, V., Melin-Emilsson, U., Ståhl, A. (2013) Changes in outdoor mobility when becoming alone in the household in old age. Journal of Transport & Health; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2013.11.001>, in press.

Population ageing is one of humanity's greatest triumphs. It is also one of our greatest challenges

(WHO, 2002, p. 6).

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Sammanfattning

Äldres vardagliga mobilitet är temat i denna avhandling. Den handlar dels om äldre personer i två bostadsområden i Malmö, dels om äldre personer som har blivit ensamma på äldre dar. Resultaten visar på olika sätt vikten av sociala nätverk och sociala relationer för att äldre personer ska kunna eller vilja ta sig ut om dagarna.

Bostadsområdet för den första delstudien är Sevedområdet i Malmö. Seved har fått en starkt negativ massmedial uppmärksamhet och beskrivs i den lokala dagstidningen som laglöst område, där de boende påstås vara gängens gisslan. Kameraövervakningen av Rasmusgatan i området har också varit ett hett och omdebatterat ämne. Seved är socioekonomiskt utsatt och räknas som ett av Malmös fattigaste områden. Under nära två års tid har därför en seniorgrupp följts i en etnografisk studie. Seniorgruppen är ett initiativ från stadsdelsförvaltningen, som arrangerar aktiviteter för äldre personer både utom och inom bostadsområdet. Resultaten från studien visar på ett unikt samarbete mellan olika instanser i Malmö kommun; samarbete sker mellan stadsdelen, Malmö museum, Malmö stadsteater, Malmö stadsarkiv och Studieförbundet Bilda.

Resultaten från den första delstudien visar att samarbetet mellan olika aktörer i Malmö har lett till ökad mobilitet. Äldre personer har fått möjligheten att komma utanför området och besöka teatern, grilla på stranden, rensa och röka sin egen sill med efterföljande båttur på kanalen, besöka julmarknader och mycket mera. ”Livet har fått en ny mening” säger en dam på över nittio år, som samtidigt beskriver hur ensam hon varit innan hon deltog i seniorgruppen. Nu har hon fått ett stort och sammansvetsat socialt nätverk. Övriga deltagare är av samma åsikt, och menar att de nu har ett skäl till att lämna sina lägenheter och vistas ute om dagarna. Vidare anser vare sig de äldre personerna eller personalen att Seveds negativa mediebild stämmer, och man menar att ”media förstör vårt område”. Istället trivs de väl och de känner sig trygga. Samtidigt finns dock tendenser till att de undviker att vistas ute under kvällar och nätter, eller undviker att vistas på vissa platser om de ser ett gäng ungdomar. Andra platser som de undviker är platser som beskrivits negativt i media och som de upplever som skrämmande.

Bostadsområdet för den andra delstudien är en villaförort till Malmö. Livet i villaförorten innebär ofta en speciell livsstil. När man är ung handlar det om

känslor av frihet, oberoende och naturligtvis användande av bilen som främsta färdmedel. Emellertid kan det för äldre personer leda till en besvärligare vardag: isolering när hälsan successivt försämras och när det sociala nätverket krymper. Att åldras i förorten leder till successivt ökade krav på samhällsstöd och service i närområdet i form av anpassad och tillgänglig kollektivtrafik, sjukvård, assistans osv.

I de återkommande intervjuer som i denna delstudie genomförts med ett äldre par är det tydligt att deras vardagsliv ständigt försvåras och begränsas. De har blivit mer och mer isolerade under årens lopp. Bilen, som tidigare symboliserade friheten, har blivit helt nödvändig och det är svårt för dem att lämna hemmet utan bil. Detta till den grad att promenader som förr gjordes, numera har ersatts av bilturer längs landsvägarna för att på så vis betrakta landskapet från bilfönstret. Det märks tydligt att det äldre paret har en önskan om att upprätthålla det vardagsliv som de tidigare har haft, men med en försämrad hälsa och ett minskat socialt nätverk blir deras livsstil dock allt mera besvärlig. Kollektivtrafiken anses inte som ett realistiskt alternativ. Man upplever att förändringar har skett över tid i förortsområdet; den sociala gemenskapen minskar med alltfler höga staket som boende gömmer sig bakom.

Slutligen i tredje delstudien så ställs frågan om vad som händer med rörligheten när man har blivit ensam i hemmet av ena eller andra anledningen på äldre dagar. Tidigare studier har varnat för att vissa äldre kan komma i kläm om det till exempel alltid är partnern som har kört bil. Den enkätstudie som genomförts inom ramen för denna delstudie sändes ut till hushåll i Skåne och Östergötland uppvisar olika tendenser. Resultaten visar att utomhusaktiviteten förändras på olika sätt när man blir ensam: den kan både öka, minska eller ligga kvar på samma nivå som tidigare beroende på vem man är och vad man har tillgång till för färdmedel. Resultaten visar också att ta sig fram som fotgängare är det främsta sättet för denna grupp att kunna upprätthålla ett aktivt liv, och att färdtjänsten utmärks som speciellt betydelsefull för många som blivit ensamma och bidragit till en ökad utomhusaktivitet.

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the everyday life mobility outdoors of older people from a place- and context-dependent perspective. Here the emphasis is to take a gentle approach towards an overall perspective with consideration to the influence of physical aspects (like the home neighbourhood), social aspects (like social networks and social participation) and mental aspects (like place images, mental maps and fear of crime) on everyday mobilities in later life. The thesis builds on three different studies with a mixed method approach that have resulted in five papers. Two of the studies are qualitative and were conducted in two neighbourhoods in Malmö city, in southern Sweden. The first neighbourhood is a disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhood, which has been highly exposed in mass media. This ethnographical case study includes a critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles, observations, ‘travel-alongs’ and interviews with participants in a senior group in the neighbourhood. The study focuses on issues such as fear of crime, social participation and wellbeing in the light of everyday mobilities in later life. The second study, a case study, focuses on the everyday mobilities of older people in a suburb, with longitudinal interviews and time-geographical diaries. The third study is a quantitative study focusing on changes in outdoor mobility. The study is based on a sample of older people in the transition from a two-person household to a single-person household from a questionnaire that went out to households in both Skåne county and Östergötland county in Sweden.

Mobility is to be considered as essential in people’s everyday lives, for managing everyday activities, for participating in society and for maintaining social contacts (Mollenkopf, et al., 2004c). The ability to be mobile is also often associated with independence, freedom (Urry, 2007) and wellbeing in later life (Schwanen & Ziegler, 2011; Ziegler & Schwanen, 2011). Mobility is more than moving from point A to B, which can be seen as the physical movement alone; instead, movement is located within a context of time and space (Cresswell, 2006). Mobility includes factors such as type, strategies and implications of the movement, and it is a concept loaded with power and meaning. A limited mobility can give rise to feelings of social deprivation and exclusion (Urry,

2007), while the opposite can have the meaning of freedom and a power to control one's own life. Mobility is about the context that the individual is embedded in, and interacting with, like the community, the household, the family and the larger society. The social, cultural and geographical contexts and the specifics of place, time and people are considered of utmost importance (Hanson, 2010).

Research on ageing, and in this case more specifically on how older persons move through space in daily life, has a long history. Much of this work has been studied from the perspective of environmental gerontology and grounded in the environmental docility hypothesis (Lawton & Nahemow, 1973) introduced by Powell Lawton and colleagues during the 1970s (e.g. Peace, et al., 2011; Oswald, et al., 2005; Iwarsson, 2005; Mollenkopf, et al., 2004). However, since the focus in this thesis mainly concerns everyday mobilities in later life in a given context, rather than ageing itself in particular contexts, the discussions are held through the lens of the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

Physical aspects of the outside environment in later life have received great attention, from highlighting outdoor barriers due to poor design and maintenance of pedestrian facilities such as narrow pavements, poor crossing facilities, high kerbs, poor lightning, uneven or slippery surfaces, lack of benches, stairs without handrails, noise, traffic flow, etc. (e.g. Risser, et al., 2010; Wennberg, et al., 2010; Wennberg, et al., 2009; Ståhl, et al., 2008; Carlsson, 2004) to highlighting the accessibility of outdoor environments in a year-round perspective with barriers such as snow and ice (Wennberg, 2009). Other issues concern older people and public transport (Svensson, 2003; Wretstrand, 2003; Carlsson, 2002; Waara, 2013). Thus, social aspects of the everyday mobilities in later life have received less focus, although some studies have illuminated the importance of such issues (e.g. Mollenkopf, et al., 2005; Mollenkopf, et al., 1997; Ståhl, 1986).

Furthermore, an unprecedented attention of the mobilities of older people has emerged in several disciplines such as human geography, transport research and gerontology (Schwanen & Páez, 2010). Yet, until quite recently, older people's mobilities had been overlooked by scholars working within the new mobilities paradigm, even though the challenge of handling the needs of older persons as an increasingly pressing social issue was recognised by mobilities researchers several years ago (Macdonald & Grieco, 2007). However, interesting work has emerged in the last few years (e.g. Fisker, 2011; Burnett & Lucas, 2010), and researchers have pointed to the value of placing the mobility of the older person within this field (Schwanen & Ziegler, 2011).

Social cohesion and community participation have, in some countries, proved to be important dimensions of residential milieus associated with positive health

effects and wellbeing (e.g. Dupuis-Blanchard, et al., 2009; Mendes de Leon, 2005; WHO, 2002). Other studies have emphasised the role of place of residence and issues of social exclusion and inclusion (Scharf, et al., 2002a; Scharf, et al., 2002b; Scharf, et al., 2005; Phillipson, 2007), and social and physical functioning in later life (Bowling & Stafford, 2007). Some researchers address older people in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods as particularly vulnerable (Buffel, et al., 2013), or highlight the risks of older people in suburbs (Rosenbloom, 2003), and some researchers maintain that it is important to quickly move towards an understanding about ageing in different neighbourhoods — such as disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Smith, 2009; Scheidt & Windley, 2006).

Thus, there has been a call for further studies of the everyday mobilities of older persons with more emphasis on social, emotional and motivational aspects of being mobile (Kaiser, 2009), and pointing out the need to develop a more complete understanding of mobility among older people (Schwanen & Páez, 2010) as context-dependent and closely related to wellbeing (Schwanen & Ziegler 2011; Ziegler & Schwanen 2011).

Disposition

This thesis begins with an Introduction presenting the three studies conducted within the frame of the thesis and some earlier research within the research area.

The next chapter *Everyday mobilities in later life* – an overview offers a general discussion about framing the thesis, followed by discussions on a more theoretical level about mobilities and older people. After this chapter, Aim and research questions will be presented, followed by Study design.

Next, Methods will be presented: an ethnographical case study of an inner-city neighbourhood with a critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles, interviews, observations and “travel-alongs”; a case study with longitudinal interviews and time-geographical diaries in a suburb; and quantitative analysis of a questionnaire encompassing older persons who have transitioned from a two-person household to a single-person household during the two years since the study occasion.

Next, the Study district will be presented — Malmö city in southern Sweden. This will be followed by a closer presentation of Seved neighbourhood and of a suburb located just outside of Malmö, both in focus for the different case studies.

Then, Results will be presented from the studies conducted within the frames of this thesis. This is followed by a Discussion of findings from the studies, of study

design and methods used, ethical considerations and implications for further research.

Everyday mobilities in later life – an overview

To facilitate understanding of the focus and rationale behind this thesis, this chapter begins by presenting the framework of the thesis in the sections *Changing demographics and mobilities* and *The place, mobilities and older people*. This is followed by discussions from a more theoretical approach, with influences mainly from human geography and sociology, in the sections *(Im)mobilities and place* and *Differential mobilities, motility, and older people*.

Changing demographics and mobilities

Ageing¹ populations and urbanisation are two strong global trends that are major forces in shaping the 21st century. They are also among the major challenges of our time, and more and more old people² will be ageing in urban environments (WHO, 2007). Some studies have brought up the challenges of more older people ageing in urban environments, which from some standpoints can be viewed as unfavourable and excluding for some, especially in the light of globalisation and the demands on a “hypermobility society” (Phillipson & Scharf, 2005). Some scholars emphasise the role of cities for the support of active and independent ageing through increased service and opportunities for participation (WHO, 2011).

The urban future of Europe, however, is a matter of great concern, and by 2020 estimates are showing that approximately 80 percent of the population will be living in urban areas (in seven countries 90 percent or more). Cities are spreading, and there is a minimisation of time and distances between going in-

¹ Ageing is an irreversible organic process of growing older and it occurs gradually and often involves a declining functional capacity. Speaking about age often refers to chronological age i.e. the number of years since a person’s birth. However, besides biologically, age can be psychologically and/or socially determined as well (Dehlin & Rundgren, 2000).

² The United Nations uses a standard age of 60 years and over to describe older people (UN, 2001), which is a definition used in this thesis as well.

and-out of the cities (EEA, 2006). For the mobile society this means functional partition where people live in one place, work in another and do their shopping in a third. Besides, most European countries are experiencing changes in their urban landscape with growing and divided cities yielding segregation and growing socio-economic gaps within the population. Concurrently, movement is regarded as a human right and is presented in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in connection to freedom - the freedom of movement (UN, 2013). However, as with most things in life, politics and uneven distributions create injustices, which affect mobilities as well. Mobility is a resource differentially accessed by different persons (Tesfahuney, 1998), and is affected by politics and power relations (Cresswell, 2010). Injustices based on factors such as class, ethnicity, gender and/or age can thereby have an impact on everyday life mobilities and a negative effect on the freedom of movement. During recent years, transport researchers have started to illuminate the 'poor relation' that the social dimension traditionally appears to have had in transport research (e.g. Jones & Lucas, 2012; Cresswell, 2010).

Social dimensions focus on people, their attitudes, behaviour and wellbeing³ since transport-based barriers can contribute to social injustices and socio-spatial inequities in many different ways, especially along lines of race and class (Boschmann & Kwan, 2008), young people and older people, single parents and people with functional disabilities (Lucas & Jones, 2012). Boschmann & Kwan (2008) draw on an example from the USA of how low-skilled, low-wage, and minority workers are more often experiencing problems of inadequate transport to overcome spatial separations between the locations of home and work. Barriers for movement can occur in different forms and shapes, and can in different ways mean negative social impacts (James, et al., 2005). They can be physical, e.g. traffic infrastructures with large roads with heavy traffic etc., and they can be psychological and/or perceived, such as individual disturbances from traffic noise, road safety fears and/or the fear of crime etc. There are also other factors that can contribute to a negative effect on the possibilities for movement such as low social capital⁴ and/or reduced health (e.g. Tuan, [1977] 2011) with

³ Wellbeing is a complex concept, studied in such diverse disciplines as human geography, sociology, gerontology, economics, psychology and health studies, and is understood and examined in many different ways. In the case of this thesis the approach to wellbeing is that it "concern[s] the 'good life' and what makes life worth living [...]. For instance, having positive relationships with others and a role in society" (Schwanen & Ziegler, 2011, p. 721). Furthermore, mobility is here viewed as a "facilitator of being well: both motility and actual trips allow people to access activities at specific locations through which desires can be fulfilled, needs satisfied, and people can experience happiness or realise their true potential. Movement can, however, promote wellbeing directly in various ways" (Nordbakke & Schwanen, 2014, p. 119).

⁴ According to a definition by OECD (2007), social capital includes networks of friends, family networks, networks of former colleagues, neighbours and so on.

functional limitations (Rosenkvist, et al., 2010) which often means limited mobility.

The place, mobilities and older people

Many older people have a strong relation to their home neighbourhood (Hagberg, 2012). For some people the time they spend within the home increases with age, while spaces they use and move within can shrink with time, not seldom due to deteriorating health (Tuan, [1977] 2011). Difficulties such as poor hearing, vision problems, poor capacities for movement and balance may be a problem for some seniors, which can become even more severe within unsuitable urban environments (Phillips, et al., 2013). Thus supportive environments have proven to be important for everyday mobilities in later life (Sugiyama & Ward Thompson, 2007; Mollenkopf, et al., 2004a), as revealed in a number of studies (e.g. Risser, et al., 2010; Wennberg, et al., 2010; Wennberg, et al., 2009; Ståhl, et al., 2008). Those studies point to the relations between older people's perceptions of their neighbourhood and city and how they move within and outside their neighbourhood, while others focus on the importance of supportive environments in unfamiliar public spaces as well (Phillips, et al., 2013). Some studies have also shown that the motivation of older people to leave home in the evenings and at night decreases if there are concerns about assault, robbery or the like (Wennberg, et al., 2010; Pain, 2001). Other factors that have emerged include access to local shopping and services, traffic and pedestrian infrastructure, neighbourhood attractiveness, and public transport, which can influence the activity level of the older person (Michael, Green & Farquhar, 2006).

Furthermore, ageing in an urban context can involve environmental pressure in the form of poor housing conditions, crime-related problems leading to fear of crime and social polarisation (Rodwin & Gusmano, 2008). This can in turn impose mobility and transport restrictions such as reduced mobility with avoidance behaviours, like avoiding being out in the evenings or avoiding using public transport. One group often designated as being particularly vulnerable is older persons in socioeconomically "poor" neighbourhoods, and questions of

concern are thus social isolation⁵ and social exclusion⁶ (Buffel, et al., 2013). This may be a growing challenge since cities of today are often characterized by large socio-economic gaps, segregation and growing income inequalities. Furthermore, a large contributor to psychological and/or perceived barriers can be the mass media and public discourses, which support the stigmatisation of places and have negative impacts on everyday mobility in different ways (Wacquant, 2007; Rogers & Coaffee, 2005). News media can create mental and physical boundaries, mental maps⁷, and can lead to avoidance behaviour (e.g. Koskela, 1997) and mobility strategies (for example detours, talking on a mobile phone while walking home etc.). Regarding areas and neighborhoods that have been targets of negative attention in mass media in terms of insecurity, increasing privatization has often been observed. Control technologies like cameras, fences, door codes and lockers often increase a so-called hidden privatization of public spaces (Listerborn, 2002). However, the security of the few comes at the expense of the many others.

Moreover, underprivileged areas are often challenged by high turnover rates (Hedman, 2011). Research reveals the damaging effects residential turnover can have on neighbourhoods related to residential instability, like weak community links, lack of identification with the neighbourhood, anonymity, insecurity and crime: A so-called “spiral of decline”, which is a combination of both physical and social problems that reinforce one another. This chain begins with the bad reputation of a neighbourhood, often due to poor housing conditions. Empty flats often cause an in-migration of families with low power over their own situation, leading to a low-income character of the neighbourhood (services will decline), with increased vandalism and other disturbances. A parallel process of even larger maintenance problems begins, as a result of reduced incomes from rents

⁵ The discussions that concern a definition of social isolation are many. In this thesis the meaning of social isolation is “the distancing of an individual psychologically or physically, or both, from his or her network of desired or needed relationships with other persons. Therefore, social isolation is a loss of place within one’s group(s). The isolation may be voluntary or involuntary” (Luskin Biordi & Nicholson, 2009, p. 85).

⁶ Social exclusion is a complex term widely discussed. Briefly, social exclusion can entail “a state of extreme disadvantage by particular groups in a society [...] consisting of dynamic multi-dimensional processes embedded in unequal power relationships, interacting across cultural, economic, political and social dimensions and operating at the level of individuals, communities, nation states and global regions” (Mathieson, et al., 2008, p. 73).

⁷ Mental maps is a geographical term referring to a person’s subjective perception of the world, a country or a neighbourhood. The mental map mirrors a person’s individual perceptions of different places. Our mental maps often influence our views on where we would like to live or not live and which places we would like to visit/avoid (Gould & White, [1974] 2002).

because of vandalism. The neighbourhood will probably acquire an even worse reputation, and the spiral is in operation (for this issue see Andersson & BråmÅ, 2004, p. 518).

Important for neighbourhood stability is the minimising of crime and anti-social behaviour (Barton, 2000) related to social participation⁸ and inclusion (Dempsey, et al., 2011). Such issues are also important for active ageing⁹ (WHO, 2002) and regarded as key determinants of successful and healthy ageing (Levasseur, et al., 2010).

Concurrently, cities are constantly expanding through the process of urban sprawl, which means “unplanned incremental urban development, characterized by a low density mix of land uses on the urban fringe” (EEA, 2006, p. 5), which implies a development of more and more suburbs (Batty, et al., 2003). The magnet of the suburb has not been an accessible and fully developed transport system not based on car traffic, but rather the possibilities to live near the city and at the same time be able to experience nature and recreation. Another driving force has been the possibilities of a private house with a garden. A private car is usually coupled to this particular lifestyle. Concurrently, insecurity, fear and surveillance shape the city in multiple directions, not least towards the growth of gated communities, the demand for ‘safe’ neighbourhoods (Graham, 2010), and for some the suburb can be regarded as a ‘safer’ place to be living than the city (Silverman & Della-Giustina, 2001) . This development, though, is viewed as having large environmental, social and economic impacts (Brueckner, 2005; Batty, et al., 2003; Kahn, 2000). One important reason is the consumption of space, which only will grow through moving over greater distances at higher speeds. The increased consumption of space often leads to faster modes of transport such as the car or the airplane, while slower modes such as walking and cycling are often neglected (e.g. Koglin, 2013; Adams, 2005).

A basic concern of some suburban developments during the 70s was social relations with neighbours, and in Sweden many of those suburban areas comprise many car-free areas for social gatherings. The suburbanisation of cities is no longer a new phenomenon, however, and the suburbs are ageing both physically as well as socially (Lord et al., 2011), and are an outcome of earlier planning ideals. However, Hägerstrand (1977) wrote early on that residential

⁸ A recent overview by Levasseur et al. (2010) shows that there is no recognised single definition of social participation. By studying definitions of the concept published between 1980 and 2009, the authors conclude that the definitions overall “mostly focused on the person’s (who) involvement (how) in activities that provide interactions (what) with others (with whom) in society or the community (where)” (Ibid. p. 2144) and it is from this standpoint that concept is used in this thesis.

⁹ The idea of this discourse is to highlight the potential of older persons for more active participation in employment, social life and independent living (Commission, 2013).

mobility and travelling, together with the watching of television, unravelled many of the close relationships that previously existed in many neighbourhoods in Sweden and between many generations. This can lead to a weakening sense of community and strain social ties. Today we can probably add the growing use of ICTs for social purposes. Another issue is stress, and during the 1960s and 70s there was less focus on stress problems in the country. However, during the 1980s and 90s this picture changed, and stress-related disorders increased, with the largest change during the beginning of the new millennium. It now became legitimate to talk about a more stressed population than in earlier decades. This development coincides with several societal changes during the period, e.g. constricted welfare systems, rising unemployment and increased demands for longer working hours and more women in working life (Socialstyrelsen, 2009), and with increasing functional partition involving greater distances - where people live in one place, work in another and do their shopping in a third.

To relate this to former planning ideals with the suburb as one example, the initial ideal of social relations with neighbours and car-free areas for social gatherings might be difficult to accomplish in today's increasingly stressed societies. Regarding social changes and the visible withdrawnness, Hägerstrand said that this would cause consequences for lonely persons, who in many cases would be even lonelier, and in a risk of social isolation. He was of the opinion that this development could largely be blamed on technological developments. Today we can view a trend in the directions that Hägerstrand (1977) predicted; in parallel we see increased supply of consumer technologies and many western societies transferring into post-industrial urban arenas, with the increase of global neoliberal politics favouring a growth of income inequalities and creating larger and larger gaps between residents (Harvey, 2007).

Besides the social impacts, suburbanization also creates environmental and economic impacts for both cities and rural areas, and the European development towards a more suburban landscape also undermines efforts to meet the global challenge of climate change (EEA, 2006). Studies have shown that low-density suburban development is more culpable in terms of greenhouse gas and energy consumption per capita than is high-density urban core development - suburban neighbourhoods thereby tend to emit more pollution per person than urban neighbourhoods (Norman, et al., 2006).

Some researchers have highlighted the fact that an increased number of older persons are living in places associated with high car dependence, such as in suburbs, where those persons are used to a special lifestyle highly influenced by the car (e.g. Sterns, et al., 2003; Rosenbloom & Winsten-Bartlett, 2002). Features like more solo driving in personal vehicles, more trips and greater trip distances have been observed and associated with new social and public health problems. Social challenges include social exclusion and accessibility problems

(Freund & Martin, 2007). The social consequences of this growth have, however, received much less attention than the threat it causes to the natural environment (Adams, 2005). In fact, many cities face major social challenges between “the demands of a ‘hypermobile’ minority on the one side, and the needs of a majority including older people, women living alone with children, disabled people and other groups, on the other side” (Phillipson, 2004, p. 964).

Social sustainability, (im)mobilities and place

There has never before been such massive movement in the world, with the quantity and speed that can be viewed in the societies of today where people, capital, goods and symbols transfer all over the earth. Globalisation is often denoted to be one of the most essential reasons behind this phenomenon and for the changing of urban landscapes as well. In addition, since the early 1950s developed countries have witnessed a ‘mobility explosion’, foremost due to a rise in car use, but also in air transport, and the access to a private car has become normalized and is often associated with wealth, privilege and the idea of freedom (Sheller, 2008). This development has caused substantial environmental effects, as is widely recognized today, and transport issues have become a major challenge for policy-makers, particularly in urban areas (Ubbels, et al., 2013). The debates on sustainability since the late 1980s have consequently been dominated by ecological perspectives and to some extent also economic perspectives. However, during the last decade there has been an increasing interest in the social aspects of sustainability, although there is still no single definition¹⁰ (Åhman, 2013).

The focus on environmental issues is reasonable, even though social impacts of transport and mobility are important, especially for sometimes vulnerable groups such as older people, children, ethnic minorities, people with functional disabilities and so on. Social impacts are often harder to measure and quantify; however, there is strong research evidence showing that social impacts in different forms can reduce people’s ability to fully participate in society and can lead to social exclusion and isolation (Lucas & Jones, 2012).

¹⁰ Social sustainability can, according to the Egan Review, be ascribed to a whole array of questions, and concerns places where people want to live and work, both today and in the future (OPDM, 2004). Further, social sustainability is regarded as a wide multi-dimensional expression with overlapping terms such as social capital, participation, cohesion, inclusion and exclusion (Dempsey, et al., 2011), and is also closely related to quality of life, wellbeing and sense of place (Åhman, 2013).

With this background one relevant basic question is: What possibilities do older persons have to keep being mobile in our changing societies? And, why attempt to answer this question through the notion of mobilities? In this thesis I will argue for the importance of everyday life mobility for social sustainability [in the neighbourhood]. Social networks and social participation among residents are considered to be positive for neighbourhood development and for the wellbeing of the residents, and this is an issue regarded as closely related to social sustainability. However, to be able to participate outdoors in one's community, mobility is essential. In relation to older people there is as well growing attention pointing to the meaning of social networks and social participation in one's community for 'active ageing' with positive health effects and wellbeing (e.g. WHO, 2002; Mendes de Leon, 2005; Dupuis-Blanchard, Neufeld & Strang, 2009) as well as for the promotion of the age-friendly city¹¹ (WHO, 2007).

Furthermore, Adey (2010) describes mobility as necessary for life, given that without mobility we cannot live. Mobility is regarded as closely related to wellbeing (Schwanen & Ziegler, 2011) and as an expression of the right to move oneself either temporarily or permanently (Urry, 2007). Mobility is related to time and space – movement is located within a context by time and space, while time and space at the same time are products of movement (time-space compression¹²) (Cresswell, 2006). Mobility is then, of course, more than moving from point A to B, which can be seen as the physical movement alone. Mobility also includes factors such as type, strategies and implications of movement, and is a concept that is loaded with power and meaning. A limited mobility can give rise to feelings of social deprivation and exclusion (Urry, 2007), while the opposite can have the meaning of freedom and power to control one's own life. To quote Cresswell (2006, p. 4):

While the abstract idea of movement is composed of equally abstract notions of absolute time and space, the notion of mobility I want to propose here, as a thoroughly social facet of life imbued with meaning and power, is composed of elements of social time and social space.

¹¹ According to WHO, "an age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age" (WHO, 2007, p. 1). Topical areas for the age-friendly city are transportation, outdoor spaces and buildings, community support and health services, communication and information, civic participation and employment, respect and social inclusion, social participation and housing (WHO, 2007).

¹² The time-space compression refers to the relationship between time and space. There is an idea that the world is "shrinking" due to rapid technological advances such as the jets, cars, trains etc. as well as the development of Internet, telephones and so on (Harvey, 1989).

Urry (2000) emphasises the importance of studying societies as characterized by flows consisting of people, images, information, money, waste and so on, instead of studying society as a set of bounded institutions. The new mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry, 2006) or the mobilities turn (Urry, 2007), arose from the critique of the static view on movement, a critique directed to both social sciences and the field of transport planners (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Some mobilities researchers mean by this that there has been a simplifying of categories of moving, and that not enough attention has been paid to the complex pattern of individuals' different activities (e.g. Sheller & Urry, 2006), as well as to not considering real bodies moving about and how mobility is actually embodied and practiced, but rather been developing ways of telling us about the fact of the movement per se, i.e. speeds, directions, distributions, continuities etc. (e.g. Cresswell, 2010).

Moreover, for Urry (2007) the relationship of mobility and immobility is essential, the dialectic of mobility/moorings. According to him, almost all mobilities are dependent on immobile infrastructures that make activities of everyday life possible, which is of relevance also for our understanding of societies and for social life in place. Such immobile infrastructures are for example public roads, airports, paths etc. (Urry, 2007). This view gives movement a context, "something to push off from" (Adey, 2006, p. 86). Mobilities can accordingly thereby not be described without taking spatial, infrastructural and institutional moorings into consideration, which configure and enable mobilities (see Hannam, et al., 2006, 3).

Further, activities shape one's everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991) and thereby constitute the foundation of one's everyday life mobility. Activities revolve around a few nodal places or points, the home being the most important (Ellegård & Vilhelmson, 2004). The home [neighbourhood] includes places and spaces of moorings, and according to Arp Fallov et al. (2013, p. 471), "spaces of 'anchorings' and 'moorings' form significant parts of the materiality of particular neighbourhoods, and, thus, condition our social relations within and between them".

The place [neighbourhood] acquires a set of meanings and attachments that combine location, locale and sense of place. Location is about the absolute position, while the locale is about the material structure that partly makes it a place, and sense of place is about the meanings associated with place. However, in any given place we encounter a combination of materiality, meaning, and practice. This means that places have a material structure (skyscrapers, boulevards, freeways etc.), a material form (libraries, shops, streets and sidewalks etc.) and material things that pass through them (vehicles, people, commodities, waste etc.). Places also have a meaning. Different meanings, however, can be connected to individuals and their life stories and stages, and

can be very personal; they can also be shared and social and are not fixed once and for all. Different meanings can also be produced for example by mass media, films, literature - and people do not necessarily have to visit the place physically to associate a place with a particular meaning. Places are also practiced, which means that people use the places for different activities, which partly shapes the meaning of place (see Cresswell, 2009, 1-2). Diverse mobilities in the context of class, gender, ethnicity, nation and age are other factors that intersect with the immobile infrastructures and include both enforced fixity as well as coerced movement (Urry, 2007); they also reflect structures and hierarchies of power and position ranging from the local to the global (Teschfahoney, 1998).

Differential mobilities, motility and older people

Globalization has, as mentioned, had significant spatiotemporal impacts, and the growth of new ICT technologies has radically changed the meaning of time and space (Harvey, 1989). Globalization supports the mobilities of capital and social elites, while the poor and underprivileged often have much more restricted mobility (Bauman, 2008). The current condition within cities is by some referred to as space wars; “space wars are expressed through class, ethnic, and gender tensions, revealing how urban space is constituted by many different kinds of boundaries, mobilities, and transnational flows of capital, people, and information” (Lund Hansen, 2008, s. 5).

Mobility is consequently a resource that is not equally distributed and differentially accessed by different persons (e.g. Sheller & Urry, 2006; Teschfahoney, 1998): the mobility of some can increase the immobility of others (Graham, 2010; Verstraete, 2004). Questions of mobility are political and a matter of power relations and hierarchies (Cresswell, 2010), and some think that mobility has always been politically and racially loaded (Mom, et al., 2011). Issues of power, mobility and injustice are closely related and central to spatial justice in general (Soja, 2010), and the right to the city in particular (Harvey, 2012). Class-, ethnic- and gender- and/or age-based spatial injustice can significantly affect the everyday life mobilities of different groups in different ways, since mobility is as much about space as it is about power (Cresswell, 2006; Teschfahoney, 1998).

Questions of differential mobility in terms of age, gender, class and ethnicity (or combinations thereof), as well as everyday mobilities, city structures and spatial and social planning have become key concerns in academic research, political discourse, as well as among individuals and groups. Consequently, mobility is not only corporeal or physical, but temporal and spatial as well. In spatial terms

mobility is shaped by a variety of tangible and intangible, individual, contextual and environmental barriers. Mental maps, fear of crime and insecurity are examples of intangible barriers. Furthermore, mobility is not only a sign of personal freedom and status, but is also invoked as a key attribute of the creative city, class and individuals. In sum, mobility is a form of capital – differentially available, mobilized and accessed in terms of age, disability, gender, class and ethnicity in urban contexts. Of equal significance is that spaces are perceived and experienced differently, due in part to variations in mobility capital and mobility restrictions for individuals and groups. Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that neighbourhoods – poor or otherwise – are not homogeneous, but rather heterogeneous in terms of age, class, education, ethnic background and so on. Nor are the experiences of the neighbourhood necessarily the same for all individuals.

Motility means the potentials and capabilities for mobility by individuals and groups (Kaufmann, et al., 2004), also referring to the interpretations of the individual concerning the personal situation and the needs and wishes for mobility. Motility is decisive for how and to what degree mobility will actually take place, and is related to other factors as well, such as age, gender, class etc. (Kaufmann, 2005). In terms of motility it may therefore be productive to consider issues of ‘mobility justice’. The term *mobility justice* denotes the structurally distributed age, gender, class and racial inequalities in motility (Sheller, 2011). Older people are not seldom regarded as a vulnerable group due to, for example, immediate risks of deteriorating health and biological changes related to age. Tuan ([1977] 2011) can here be mentioned as an example, and according to him “freedom implies space; it means having the power and enough room in which to act” ([1977] 2011, p. 52); the elementary power to move is fundamental. When moving, there is directly an experience of space and its attributes, and persons not able to move freely can, according to Tuan, be regarded as living in constricted spaces (for example the infant or the prisoner). Tuan also offers a statement of how “an old person moves about with increasing difficulty. Space seems to close in on him” (ibid, p. 52). To support this he refers to weakening senses as an important factor for declining mobility, since those are regarded as of utmost important for movement, the experience of space and the physical environment, and vision is for him regarded as particularly important. He is of the opinion that our senses change with time and age, which can affect the older person’s world-picture and eventually lead to reduced mobility. “The perceived world shrinks as both eyesight and hearing weaken. Declining mobility further restricts the world of the old” (ibid, p. 57).

However, it is important to acknowledge that older people are not in some way a homogenous group, but rather heterogenic in terms of age, gender, class, and ethnicity as well as in terms of health, capacities and so on. Thus, chronological

age does not necessarily align with changes that accompany ageing. Some even argue that age is far more social than chronological, and refer to the social construction of gender and race (Laz, 1998). Thus, it is important to point out that chronological age is no marker for health status, and/or participation and/or levels of independence, and there are large individual variations (WHO, 2002). Nevertheless, there are still strong stereotypes of older persons as economically dependent, physically less able and socially excluded (Pain, et al., 2001). The view of age and life course stages as socially constructed categories is nowadays dominant within the geographies of age. Such a view highlights the importance of place and space – though the access to, and the experiences of, places can differ on the grounds of age. Some spaces can also be associated with certain age groups, and have an influence on who uses them and how. Despite this fact, age has often been viewed as something fixed that undermines the suggestion of fluidity and cultural variance (Hopkins & Pain, 2007).

Furthermore, from the concerns of mobility and the individual, it is important to acknowledge that mobility involves the context that the individual is embedded in, and interacting with, like the community, the household, the family and the larger society. According to Hanson (2010, p. 8), “it should be impossible to think about mobility without simultaneously considering social, cultural and geographical context – the specifics of place, time and people”. Viewed from a life course perspective, earlier life events may also have an influence on mobility in later life — such as decisions to buy a car or move to a certain place for instance, which may have prevented the possibilities of adaptation to different experiences earlier in life. The transport system can be an apt example that requires some learning in [later] life for some people (Schwanen & Páez, 2010). This may also involve social relations and networking created in earlier life that in later life will influence the mobility of the older person.

Aim and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to offer an understanding of the everyday life mobilities outdoors among older persons from the perspective of place and social context. This involves a gentle approach towards an overall perspective with consideration to physical aspects (as the home neighbourhood), social aspects (as social networks and social participation) and mental aspects (as place images, mental maps and fear of crime).

By collecting people's own experiences and perceptions and by using an overall mixed method approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) for the thesis, involving qualitative (interviews, observations and 'travel-alongs'¹³, critical discourse analysis and time-geographical diaries) and quantitative (a questionnaire and a safety survey) studies, a nuanced picture of everyday mobilities in later life will hopefully be provided. To make the aim of the thesis more manageable, it can be broken down into the following research questions:

- How does urban fear (imagined/real) impact on mobility (patterns, strategies)?
- What do the place and the social context mean for everyday mobility in later life?
 - What meaning has the place (the home neighbourhood) for the everyday mobility in later life?
 - What role do social contexts (such as being a part of a social network in one way or another, or becoming alone in the household) play in everyday mobility in later life?
- What are the strategies of everyday mobility in later life?
- How can society facilitate the everyday mobility of older persons?

¹³ With travel along I here refer to the possibilities I had to travel with the seniors to different activities (by taxi and by the municipality rented buses) and to participate in the activities as well.

Study design

The objective of this thesis is to offer a wider understanding of mobilities in relation to places (like the home) and/or living circumstances in later life. To be able to gain a deeper understanding of this issue, three studies with a mixed method approach and slightly different focuses were conducted. The three studies resulted in five papers (see Figure 1).

The first study is an ethnographic case study conducted in a disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhood in Malmö city, Seved neighbourhood. This neighbourhood has been very negatively exposed in media during recent years and is regarded as a neighbourhood with major socio-economic challenges. To capture different dimensions and to gain a deeper understanding of the context in which the older persons were situated, it was important to begin the ethnographic case study with a critical discourse analysis in paper I. It was essential to observe the way Swedish news journalists in a local daily newspaper construct mainly negative discourses with residents about the neighborhood. In this study, descriptive results are also presented from the 2012 Malmö City safety survey. One relevant question was what consequences such discourses may have on the politics of fear and (im)mobility? This part of the study was followed by observations and semi-structured interviews with seniors and staff in Seved neighbourhood, resulting in two papers. Paper II aims to provide a further understanding of the perceptions of neighbourhood security and implications on everyday mobility in later life. Paper III seeks to offer an understanding of how the everyday life mobility of older persons could be improved.

In the second study, and in contrast to the disadvantaged inner-city neighbourhood, the ambition was to capture the everyday mobilities in later life from another place-dependent perspective, namely a suburb of Malmö city. There are large differences between the two places. One is centrally located with services and transport opportunities close by, but characterised by low incomes and large unemployment. The other one is located in the urban fringe, with proximity to the motorways that surround the city. Here the income levels are significantly higher and unemployment significantly lower. A majority of the residents lives in private or terraced suburban houses. There were large differences between the two studies, regarding both the place and social relations, which were important for capturing different contexts of the everyday

mobilities in later life. The case study conducted in the suburb resulted in paper IV. The ambition with this study was to offer a deeper understanding of the everyday mobilities of older persons living in a suburb. With longitudinal semi-structured interviews and time-geographical diaries, an older couple are followed over time. The ambition with following only one older couple was to make it possible to gain deeper understanding of individual changes in suburban everyday life mobilities as time goes by. Because of the in-depth and detailed descriptions of the older couple in paper IV, I decided to withhold the name of the study area for ethical reasons.

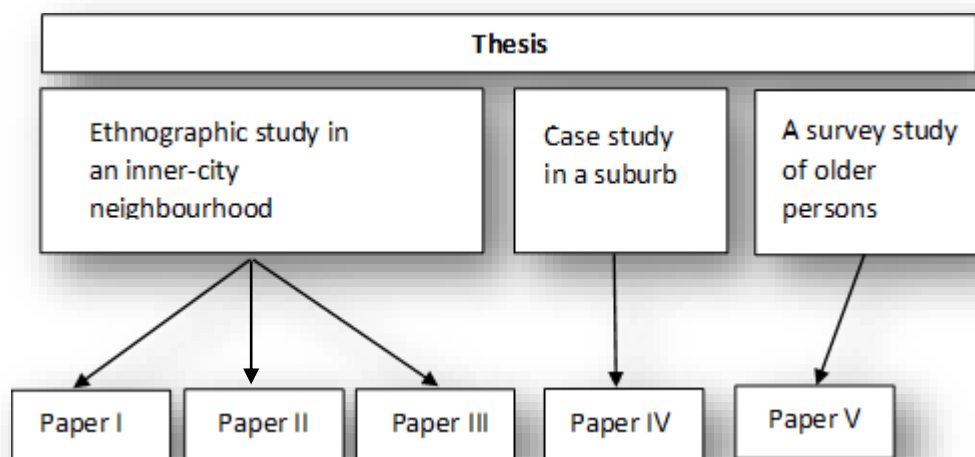


Figure 1 *Outline of the thesis and included papers*

In the third study, which is quantitative, the in-depth focus on the everyday mobilities is replaced by a wider focus, although the context is still important. The emphasis in this study lies on transitions points in later life and outdoor mobility. The intention in paper V is to analyse reported changes in outdoor mobility among older persons who have gone from a two-person household to a single-person household during the two years since the study was conducted. The data material being analysed is a questionnaire that went out to households in two counties in Sweden, Skåne and Östergötland County. Table 1 provides an overview of the papers included in this thesis.

Table 1 *Characteristics of included papers*

	Paper I	Paper II	Paper III	Paper IV	Paper V
Focus	To shed a light on the interplay between media discourses, urban fears and mobility in the city.	To offer an understanding of the perceptions of neighbourhood security and possible implications on everyday mobility in later life.	To offer an understanding of how the everyday life mobility of older persons could be improved.	To offer an understanding of the everyday life mobility of older persons living in suburbs in Sweden	To analyse reported changes in outdoor mobility for older people who have transitioned from a two-person to a single-person household.
Method	Quantitative/ Qualitative: Descriptive data from a security survey and discourse analysis of newspaper articles.	Qualitative: In-depth data (observations, interviews and travel-alongs) from an ethnographic case study.	Qualitative: Same empirical material as in Paper II.	Qualitative: Longitudinal interviews and time-geographical diaries.	Quantitative: Significance analysis and multinomial regression of data from a questionnaire.
Sample	Newspaper articles N = 115. Security survey N = 132.	Seniors and staff members from a senior group. Interviews N = 8.	Same as in Paper II.	One older couple (N = 2).	N = 162.
Key Words	Urban mobility; spaces of fear; surveillance; migration; stigmatization ; critical discourse analysis.	Mobility; fear of crime; disadvantage; older people; social participation	Senior citizens; social participation; wellbeing; social sustainability; active ageing; sustainable communities	Mobility resources; suburb; motility; time-geography; theory of continuity; mobile methods; longitudinal interviews.	Becoming alone; transition point; older people; access to car; walking conditions; mobility.

Method

In this thesis a mixed method approach is applied involving both qualitative and quantitative studies to be able to gain a wide understanding of the everyday life mobilities outdoors among older persons from a place and social context dependent perspective. The section begins with *An ethnographic case study in an inner-city neighbourhood (papers I-III)*, to be followed by *A case study in a suburb (paper IV)* to end with *A survey study of older persons (paper V)*.

An ethnographic case study in an inner-city neighbourhood (paper I-III)

This study aims at qualitatively studying everyday mobilities in later life from a physical context perspective (such as the place and location within the city), from a social context perspective (such as social participation and social networking in the neighbourhood) and from a mental context perspective (such as fear of crime, mental maps, place images and intangible barriers). By using the ethnographical method, the researcher gets to know the neighbourhood from the inside and has the opportunity to follow different persons over time. One of the original arguments for using ethnographical methods is the assumption that the researcher needs to engage in an extended period of observation, to really gain an understanding of a group of people (e.g. Silverman, 2000). The ethnographic method is thereby especially suitable for contextually studying daily lives and cultures of human agents (O'Reilly, 2005), i. e. studying the micro-world within and with references to a macro-world (Marcus, 1998). The method enables the researcher to collect valid and reliable data through ongoing and close contact with those being studied, and it is a fieldwork method (Gold, 1997). Some of the strength is thereby, in this case, the opportunity to get to know the studied phenomena from the inside and to be able to follow persons over time by observations, interviews, less formal and more spontaneous talks with informants and 'travel alongs'. However, the method is time demanding and a common critique is directed towards the reliability and the limited possibilities of generalisation (Bell, 2010). Are the seniors in Seved typical as compared to other seniors? Are the neighbourhoods representative of similar neighbourhoods

within the country or elsewhere? The insider perspective has also been criticised for being able to create a “blind spot” that can prevent the researcher from observing the “obvious” (e.g. Denscombe, 2010; Alvesson, 2003).

In the case of Seved, the ambition was to follow both a senior group and staff workers in the area. The senior group is an effort from the municipality to strengthen networking by seniors and to increase feelings of social participation in the neighbourhood. By different arranged activities, there is an attempt to reach increased social sustainability through everyday life mobility, social participation and wellbeing. The senior group was targeting around 40 seniors totally by the time of the study, but was constantly growing. Initially, everyday life mobility was mostly actualised through thematic meetings with social coffee breaks. Invited guests from NGOs and public health/welfare raised ageing issues, giving advice on nutrition and fall prevention and so on.

During the spring of 2012 the activities expanded, inspired by activities for children, to include activities outside the neighbourhood. The motivation was that there are many resources for activities for children and youths, but fewer activities for adults and older adults. One adult educational association, the city museum, the city theatre and the city archives joined in co-operation, unique from a Swedish perspective. During the same year around 20 activities were arranged, capturing around 40 seniors totally. The activities are free for seniors and financed through co-operation with the museum sponsoring some of the activities with two pedagogues, the theatre sometimes with theatre tickets and coffee. The local real estate company supports some activities and the local city councils (social welfare and health), provide a limited budget as through the programme responsibility. The small budget covers transport, coffee breaks etc. The staff is already employed by the municipality, and much of their earlier work has been focused on activities for children and youths.

During the time of the study, the senior group was constantly growing with participants and new municipality sectors. Activities largely came to revolve around time periods - occasionally realised through a line of innovative activities like visits to different museums, theatres, guided city tours, Christmas fairs, barbeques at the beach, forest walks, cleaning herring followed by a boat tour in the canal, lunch at the top of Malmö’s second highest building, the making of a calendar with pictures of the seniors in old costumes etc. (see figure 2-17). The involvement of seniors already in the planning phase turned out to be crucial for arrangement satisfaction.

The empirical material collection for paper II and III started in December 2011 and lasted until April 2013. During this time period I was visiting Seved neighbourhood on a regular basis. I attended planning and working group meetings, and joined programme activities, resulting in site visits a couple of

times per month. I became a known face among seniors and staff. The empirical material collection ended after saturation, which means that no additional material emerged and similar instances were found over and over again (for this issue see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The empirical material consists of participant observations, including conversations and field notes, and interviews (seven older persons and one programme worker), with the purpose of collecting observations, experiences and reflections i.e. a substantive sampling (Gold, 1997). The objective of a substantive sampling approach is to generate an exhaustive empirical account of how people perceive, experience and make sense of member's daily situations (ibid.). The empirical material was collected through first-hand involvement intended to study the participants in action (Murchison, 2010, p. 4).

Field notes were carefully collected in a field diary directly in connection with every meeting/activity. After participating almost one year in meetings and activities, interviews were conducted. Seven seniors were interviewed (with six women and one man), and the result was a convenience sample (for this issue see Denscombe, 2010, pp. 18-19) comprised of older persons involved in the senior group in Seved neighbourhood. Participants were asked during the activities if they were willing to participate in an interview for this project, and the seven informants registered their interest. Five of the interviewees were over 75, two of them were younger than 75, and they were all Swedish-born. Overall in the senior group, most of the seniors are Swedish-born women with a lower share of men, and only a few born elsewhere in Europe. None were born outside of Europe. The purpose of the interviews was to generate an exhaustive empirical account of how people perceive, experience and make sense of member's daily situations (Gold, 1997). Two of the interviewees reside outside the neighbourhood, but centrally in the city. They are familiar with the neighbourhood, and visit the area several times per week to join different activities. The five "Seved natives" have been living in the area for many years, and are familiar with the place. Two of them live in a two-person household and the rest in a single-person household. Two interviewees have home care service, due to deteriorating health, and the others manage everyday life routines by themselves.

The interviews were semi-structured, covering background questions about marital status, living alone or with someone else, children etc., and overall themes such as activities in everyday life, the neighbourhood, social relations and participation, and modes of transport. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed, except for one interview due to technical problems, but in this case notes were carefully taken. Multiple readings of the field diary and interviews were conducted for the analyses. Through line-by-line reading and analysis of the collected ethnographic record, a list of themes emerged. Texts were coded

into categories: health and support in daily life, everyday activities, housing, security, social network/relations, social participation, and transport related issues. This was followed by an identification of relationships and themes within the categories of data. Thus, the chosen ethnographic method is essentially inductive.

Moving on to paper I, this paper deals with a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of newspaper articles. The specific issue of interest is negative images and discourses of Seved neighbourhood and its residents in the local daily newspaper, and what effects those discourses may have on fear and the politics of everyday (im)mobility. CDA is strongly influenced by social constructionism and tries to unveil our taken-for granted ways of understanding and relating to the world. Power relations, norms and stereotypes are mediated through discourses, where the language is a key medium for the reproduction and contestation of hegemonic discourses (Burr, 1995). The nature of social power and the reproduction of dominance by some groups over others are fundamental (Van Dijk, 2001).

Only one newspaper was chosen for the study, namely *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (popularly known as *Sydsvenskan*), an “independent liberal” daily newspaper, the largest newspaper in the study-specific region and the sixth largest daily newspaper in Sweden. In addition to being the largest newspaper based in Malmö, *Sydsvenskan* was chosen because, unlike other nationwide publications, it offers an insider perspective and presumably more nuanced news, images and descriptions of Seved. Moreover, nationwide newspapers would cover Seved only in the event of something extraordinary happening there.

The newspaper articles were collected from the database Retriever, which provides rapid access to articles from many different Swedish newspapers. The search string was defined to include only articles published between August 2011 and August 2012. Approximately 500 article hits on Seved were found (nationwide coverage) with 274 article hits from *Sydsvenskan* matching the search string (Seved and/or Sevedsplan and/or Rasmusgatan [“Seved square”; “Rasmus street” - the residential street in the area under camera surveillance]) during the time period. Initially all 274 matching articles were read, but more than half of them were eliminated, mainly because they were reprints. For the analysis, 115 articles remained after this initial procedure.

Table 2 *Thematic Classification of Media Content*

Group	Categorization	N = 115
1.	Debate on/portraits of Seved	20
2.	News of Seved	44
3.	Seved mentioned in different contexts*	39
4.	Housing conditions in Seved	12

* Articles in this group did not actually concern the neighborhood per se, but contained political discussions and police work, where Seved was simply mentioned as an unsuccessful example.

For the analyses, first a macro perspective was used, where the text in the remaining 115 articles was analyzed from an overall view: What do the articles deal with? What do they include? What are their themes? After those initial analyses, four categories emerged, making the content of the articles more salient and visible through more manageable themes for subsequent analyses (see Table 2).

Thereafter reading of the articles was done group-wise after the thematic classification, and they were analyzed from a micro perspective concentrated more on details like the amount of information, choice of words, the context etc. CDA involves having a critical approach towards the empirical material for studying unequal relations of power, where discourses can have a negative influence on different groups by marginalizing some and including others, as well as nurturing an “us-them” dimension (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010). Important questions during the whole process of analyzing the newspaper articles were: Who are assigned the role as perpetrators? Who is described as the victim? Who is/are described as responsible? Who is described as responsible to clear it up? How are different actors/citizens/dwellers described in the texts? Who is included, who is excluded? Are different groups described as in opposition to each other? Are there any patterns?



Figure 2. Cleaning herring.



Figure 3. Boat tour in the canal.

Figure 4 and 5. Visiting a museum in Malmö City





Figure 6. On the way to the theatre.



Figure 7. At the theatre.

Figure 8. Photo shooting for a calender of the senior group.



Figure 9. At the exhibition "old clothes" at Malmö museum.



Figure 10. Waiting for the bus to arrive.



Figure 11. Arriving at a flower shop outside of Malmö.



Figure 12-15. Celebration of the Swedish Midsummer tradition.



Figure 16-17.
Barbequing at Malmö
beach.

A case study in a suburb (paper IV)

The second study, which resulted in paper IV, aims at qualitatively studying the complexity of ageing in suburbs, in particular the interactions between an older couple in relation to mobility and everyday life over time. Semi-structured interviews were conducted during the autumn of 2009, with follow-up interviews during winter/spring of 2011 and late summer/autumn of 2012. Interviews (lasting two hours on average) were conducted at the home of the respondents. Life in the suburb now and in the past, mobility patterns, modes of transport, and everyday life activities were taken up in the interviews. Follow-up interviews dealt with any changes in their lives (health, mode of transport, social relations and mobility).

Respondents also kept time-geographical diaries of all outdoor activities for one week during the autumn of 2009. In this case the diaries, collected in the first time period only, included self-reported time for the activity, place to visit, purpose of the movement, mode of transport, and whether alone or together with someone else. Only outdoor activities were reported, since the ambition of using a diary in this study was not to cover all activities, both indoor and outdoor. Filling in a complete mobility diary can be quite cumbersome. Given that the focus of this study lies foremost on outdoor activities, the diary was limited to this subject. The diaries from 2009 were also showed to the respondents during the first follow-up interview, to illustrate their life at that time and to ascertain if they could see any changes from then to the present.

The theory of continuity has been used in order to analyse the narratives of the older persons. The study has a time-geographical approach, and time-geography identifies at least three significant aggregates or sets of constraints: capability (corporeal), coupling (spatial) and authority (systemic/structural) constraints (see Hägerstrand, 1970). These constraints have been used for the analyses of the narratives as well.

A survey study of older persons (paper V)

The third study, which resulted in paper V, is a quantitative study. The objective of the study is to analyse reported changes in outdoor mobility, increased/unchanged/decreased, for a sample of older people (>62 years) in two counties in Sweden, who have transitioned from a two-person to a single-person household during the two years since the study was conducted. The study utilizes data from the Swedish part of the transnational ERA-NET project SENTRIP –

Senior Life Transition Points and their Implications for Everyday Mobility — that includes three European countries: Sweden, the Netherlands and Austria. For the ERA-NET project a study-specific questionnaire was developed in cooperation between the three countries. The core was identical, but every country added country-specific questions. For the study in Sweden the questionnaire consisted of 29 questions; most of these questions were structured with predefined alternatives, but three of them also included an open alternative.

Participants for the ERA-NET project in Sweden were randomly selected from official population registers, stratified by age (62-67 years, 68-75 years and >75 years) and living area (urban/rural). The questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 5000 people in two counties in Sweden. The response rate on the questionnaire was 41 per cent (N = 2033). The sample focused on in this study (N=162) was taken from the whole sample (N=2033), and consists of all persons in the whole sample who had transitioned from a two-person household to a single-person household during the two years since the study-specific questionnaire reached the participants.

Significance analysis between the three subgroups was conducted with the one-way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis H test ($P < 0.05$) in order to discover differences between these subgroups concerning a) background variables, b) transport-related variables, and c) health-related variables. Because of the natural relation between the initial level of mobility and the direction of change in mobility in the three subgroups (due to ceiling and floor effects), a multinomial logistic regression ($P < 0.05$) was conducted to control the initial level of mobility. A joint multidimensional analysis was also conducted to control the separate effects of each of the studied variables. However, no significant differences and effects could be traced, due to the limited sample size.

Ethics

The Regional Ethical Review Board at Lund University has approved the qualitative studies in this thesis (Dnr 2011/265). The quantitative study, which is situated within the larger project SENTRIP, has also been approved by The Regional Ethical Review Board.

Study districts

In this section the study districts of the three studies conducted within the frames of this thesis will be presented. The section starts with a presentation of *Malmö City*, since two of the study districts are located within Malmö municipality, *Seved neighbourhood* and *the suburb*. The section continues with a short presentation of *Skåne* and *Östergötland counties*, since they comprised the study district for the quantitative study.

Malmö City

The city of Malmö has undergone rapid transformations since the mid 80's, from a typical industrial city to rebranding itself from its industrial past to a "knowledge city" focusing on entrepreneurialism and innovation (Mukhtar-Landgren, 2005). The city is a key hub linking Sweden with Europe (Figure 18). It is a port town located in southern Sweden and is the third largest city in the country (with 307 600 inhabitants in 2012/2013). The population has been increasing during the last 25 years, and is expected to further increase due to the city's location in an expansive region. By 2021 Malmö's population is expected to increase to over 350 000 inhabitants. Today, 17 percent of the population in the city is 65 years or older, and those numbers are expected to increase as well (Malmö, 2013a).

The city strives to be a model of sustainable urban development and portrays itself as a compact city that offers an extensive network of bicycle pathways and focuses on public transport. However, new building projects are largely located in the outer parts of the city with new shopping malls, small-scale houses etc.

Following global trends with processes of urbanization and globalization, Malmö faces several challenges involving social sustainability. Large changes like increased migration of labour and immigrants have led to an increased movement to Sweden's larger cities (Ericsson, et al., 2000); more than 40 percent of the Malmö population has a foreign background as either first or second generation immigrants with 31 percent born in a foreign country in 2013 (Malmö, 2013b). Malmö is also a segregated city with several neighbourhoods

pointed out as socioeconomically vulnerable. The city is today dual, with rapidly growing gaps and social polarization, a development not unfamiliar to many post-industrial cities (Mukhtar-Landgren, 2005).

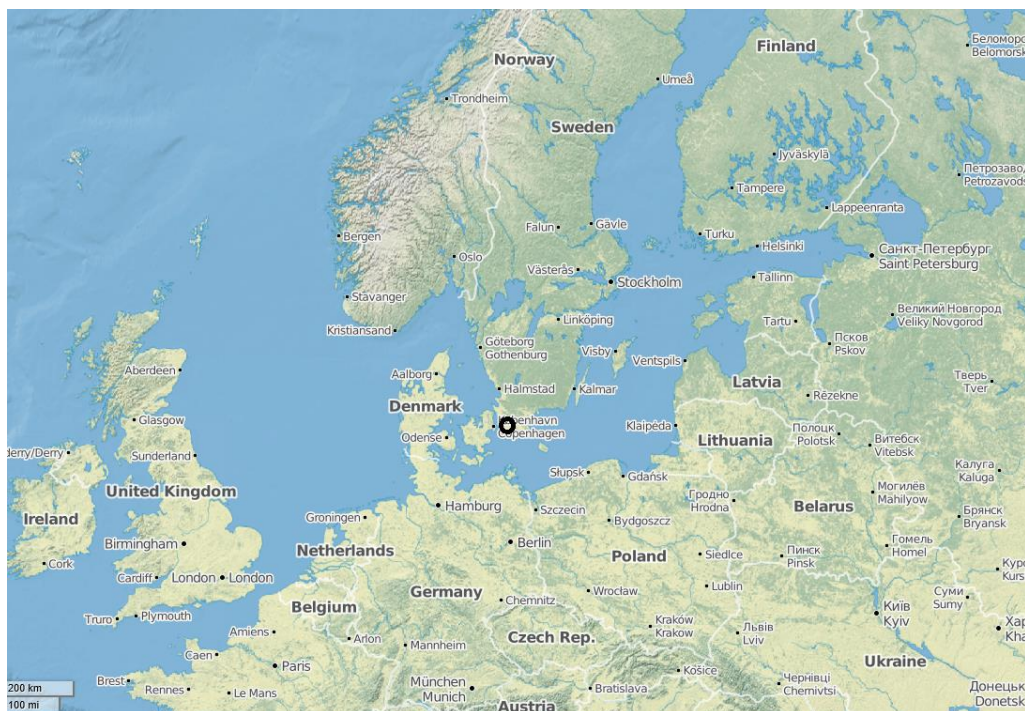


Figure 18. The marking shows Malmö's location in Sweden and in Europe (www.openstreetmap.org).

Figure 19 shows socioeconomic statistics based on Malmö's different districts¹⁴. As can be read from the statistics, there are great socioeconomic differences in the city, where the difference between the highest and lowest medium income is more than double. The numbers also show large differences in persons with foreign background, almost six times higher between the highest and lowest numbers. The difference in unemployment is six times higher and the difference in economic support is 27 times higher between the highest and lowest numbers in the city.

¹⁴ During 2013 Malmö city made a reorganisation and went from ten to five districts. However, since the reorganisation is new it is difficult to find statistics over the new districts; in this case there is a more nuanced picture showing the old ten districts rather than the five new districts.

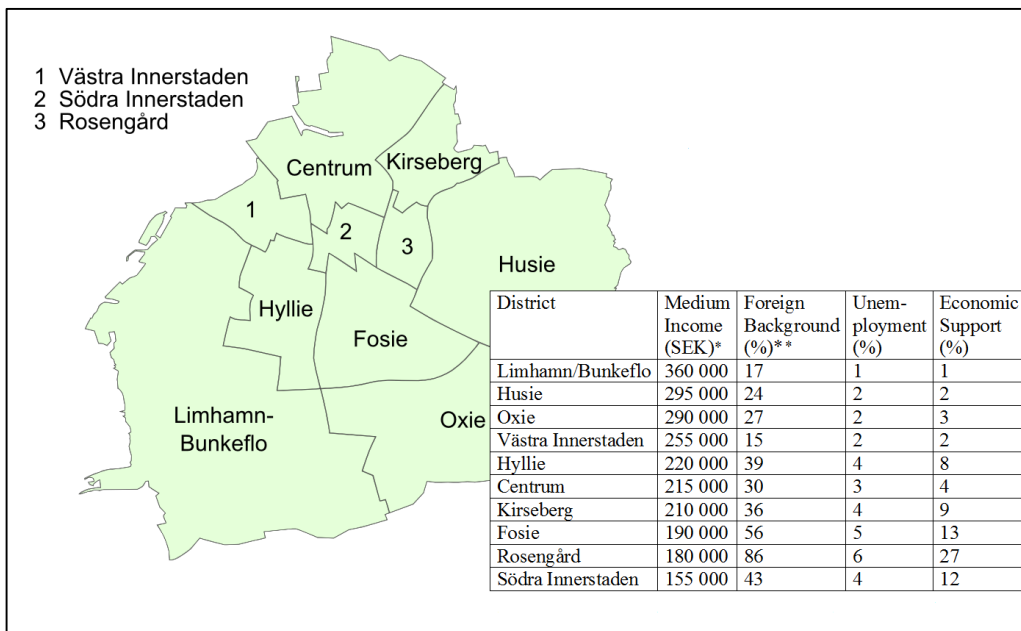


Figure 19. Socioeconomic statistics of Malmö's different districts.

*Medium income is rounded to closest 5000 **First or second generation of immigrants ***The map is borrowed from Wikimedia (2013) ****Statistics are from 2008 and borrowed from Malmö (2008).

Seved neighbourhood

Like many city regions in the western world, Malmö is characterized by an ageing population. Although some disadvantaged districts consist of young households with many children, local municipality outlays for older people are substantial. Yet very little is known about ageing in disadvantaged districts such as Seved neighbourhood, which is a part of Södra Innerstaden district (see Figure 20). Seved has a central location and offers proximity to city services and public transport in the form of local buses, and provides services in the form of a corner shop and a larger food store on the outskirts of the area. The car density is among the lowest in Malmö city, with 17 cars per 100 inhabitants in 2008 (Malmö, 2008). Seved was mostly built during the 30s and the 40s. It has low-rise apartment buildings and a traditional urban structure with a grid network. There is a common square located in the middle of the neighbourhood, where a meeting place and the corner shop are located.

Seved has attracted great attention and extensive media coverage. The neighbourhood has a young population, income levels are low and unemployment is high. Residents of Seved also feel more insecure than those in Södra Innerstaden as a whole, and even more insecure than the average resident of Malmö (Malmö, 2013c). It is notable that during 2012 Seved was the setting for a public TV documentary that focused on police work in general in the city.



Figure 19. The marking shows Seved's location with a slightly eastern but central location in Malmö (www.openstreetmap.org).

Seved is also one of fifteen areas in all Sweden focused on the Urban 15 programme, where the subject concerns urban development. Involved partners are police authorities, the national insurance office and job centres (Regeringskansliet, 2008). During 2013 the government contributed one hundred million SEK to involved areas for urban development against alienation and exclusion. During 2014 there will be a distribution of financial contributions based on achievements in areas of concern. Regarding security issues in the Urban 15 areas, statistical analyses of safety surveys shows that persons living in those areas do, compared to people in other neighbourhoods, experience high feelings of insecurity and fear of crime in their home areas. A correlation is also visible regarding quality of life and insecurity, where persons feeling insecure also claimed to have a lower quality of life (Arbetsdepartementet, 2012).

Furthermore, Seved is also one of the neighbourhoods in Malmö municipality chosen for further work with urban development. Since the city faces several challenges involving social sustainability, the municipality launched ambitious Area Programmes in 2010 for a socially sustainable Malmö. Several districts and neighbourhoods have been targeted in this programme, including Seved. The overall aim of this programme is to foster and strengthen local democracy, i.e. empower citizens' participation in the affairs of their township. Some parts of the senior work within the neighbourhood are a result of the Area Programmes.

Another significant challenge in Seved neighbourhood is the neglected indoor and outdoor environment, with around twenty-five property owners in a rather small area of around fifteen hectares, where the maintaining of the buildings and the outside environment connected to those buildings traditionally has been allotted low priority. Seved also has had a history of being a disadvantaged neighbourhood, even in the former industrial city. Moreover, a majority of the apartments are small (66 percent are one-two room apartments) and living in crowded quarters has been and is still a problem.

Finally, Seved is a neighbourhood that has been tremendously exposed in mass media, and the pictures shown of the area are not positive. The camera surveillance of one particular street — Rasmusgatan — has repeatedly been in the spotlight of news coverage and reporting. In an international comparison, Sweden has long had restrictive legislation regarding camera surveillance, but since its entry into the European Union the legislation has been relaxed (Lindström, 2011). However, camera surveillance of residential streets is still highly unusual in Sweden and this makes Rasmusgatan unique.

The suburb

On a daily basis, we all witness rapid, visible and conflicting changes in land use which are shaping landscapes in cities and around them as never before (EEA, 2006, 5).

The suburb in focus for this study is located about 10 kilometres from Malmö city centre and offers proximity to the motorways around the city. Between 1960 and 1990, the suburb has expanded rapidly; it now has a population of almost 12 000 persons. Of these around 13 percent are 65 years and older. However, the proportion of older persons in the area is growing even as special accommodation for older persons is decreasing, and more older persons continue to live in their own homes.

A clear majority of the accommodations in the suburb consists of private and terraced houses, and thus the area has the lowest population density in Malmö,

with 5 people per hectare in 2008 (Malmö, 2008). The area offers public transport in the form of buses and trains, with its own regional railway station. In the area, services are provided through a district centre with grocery stores, restaurants, a library, a pharmacy and so on. There are also a health care centre, dentists and sports facilities like a public bath, golf courses, football fields etc. All inhabitants are offered proximity to recreation areas within 200 meters from their homes. The suburb has the highest car density of Malmö's 10 different districts, with 41 cars per 100 inhabitants in 2008 (Malmö, 2008).

Skåne and Östergötland County

Skåne and Östergötland counties are both counties that are semi-urban with two geographically close cities (Malmö-Lund in Skåne and Linköping-Norrköping in Östergötland). They are both located in commuting distance from a metropolitan area (Skåne to Copenhagen, Östergötland to Stockholm). Skåne county had a population of about 1 260 000 million persons in 2012 whereof 314 000 were 65 years and older (19 percent). Östergötland has a smaller population than Skåne county with about 433 000 in 2012, whereof 147 000 were 65 years and older (20 percent) (Sweden statistics, 2013).

Results

This section will present results from the three studies conducted within the frames of this thesis, resulting in five papers. The section begins with the results from a critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles in *the politics of fear, mobility and media discourses (paper I)*. This will be followed by findings from observations and interviews from the ethnographical case study in Seved neighbourhood: *Seniors in Seved and fear of crime (paper II)* and *Social participation, wellbeing and mobility (paper III)*. Next, findings from the case study in a suburb will be presented in *Everyday life mobilities in a suburb – changes and strategies (paper IV)*, to be followed by findings from the quantitative study of *Life transition points and everyday mobility (paper V)*.

The politics of fear, mobility and media discourses (paper I)

The critical discourse analysis of newspaper articles from the local newspaper *Sydsvenskan* showed a mainly negative portraying of Seved neighbourhood with residents. After initial analysis, the findings were grouped into four thematic classifications: debates on/portraits of Seved (N = 20), news of Seved (N = 44), Seved mentioned in different contexts (N = 39), and housing conditions in Seved (N = 12).

The analysis of the first group, debates on/portraits of Seved, showed how this group mostly consists of identity discourses: identities of persons as well as places. Frequent discussions revolve around issues such as us and them, insiders and outsiders and inclusion and exclusion. The stereotypical portrayal is strong, and the “threat” the others constitute, “them”, i.e. the young men living in the neighbourhood, is clearly identified. There are the descriptions of young men, the ones “left to the street” (Stark & Tideman, 2011), where “the police have to make the guys that are creating the trouble feel constantly hunted” (Stark &

Moreno, 2011). It is about domestication and social control of something described as chaotic, where the descriptions point to a loss of control and where surveillance is regarded as necessary as a control of movement and mobility. The stigmatization is strong, along with the stereotyping and the shaping of mental maps and place images, which presumably widens the gaps and leads to behavioural responses in the form of avoidance behaviour, protective behaviour, behaviour and lifestyle changes and collective activities that in the end create negative influences on urban mobilities.

The second group, news of Seved, concerns news and things that have happened in the area during the time period. Articles building on concrete news reporting about incidents in the neighbourhood are, though, few. They mainly discuss the same news, like the (at the time) ongoing process with camera surveillance. There are many strong words used in the articles for describing the situation in the neighbourhood, like lawlessness, anarchy and social control, and the media create and transmit a picture of lawless space, a place where not even the police are in control. Control technologies like camera surveillance are discussed and implemented in the neighbourhood. This creates a prison-like space under surveillance, which most people probably avoid if they can. In early 2013, the police were given approval for camera surveillance on one residential street even during daytime after several appeals. In the descriptions in the articles there seems to be a constant struggle of power relations, where voice levels are highest from the police and persons actually living outside the area and the hierarchic top-down organizations of space become manifested in the symbolic and discursive struggles over the meaning of Seved as a place.

In the third group, Seved mentioned in different contexts, the articles did not actually concern the neighbourhood per se, but contained political discussions and police work, where Seved was simply mentioned as an unsuccessful example. The neighbourhood is seen to represent dystopia. It is recurrently described in negative terms such as war. One headline reads as follows: “The view of Malmö’s politicians is that ‘It’s nearly war’” (Fjellman Jaderup, 2012). Seved is also compared to other areas outside of Sweden. The situation is described as out of control, where not even the police have the power to rein in the growth of crime. Journalists use fictional allegories to “shed light on the truth”, with images and power struggles between good and evil: the police vs. criminals; “young men taking control of the neighbourhood in a lawless land, leads our thoughts to another city and another TV program – The Wire [...] cops who pull their weapons but fail to halt the development of crime when the gangs take over” (Avellan, 2012). The divisions between “we and them”, self and other is clear. Several of the articles also raise questions of citizenship and the right to mobility. The “other” is more or less equated with the criminal. The media

discourses illustrate the interplay of power, mobility and spatial injustice, such that it is the poor and marginalized who are constructed as the problem.

In the fourth and last group, housing conditions in Seved, the articles mostly deal with mismanaged housing (mold, pests, moisture, bad ventilation etc.) and several property owners. The houses are described by the journalists as miserable and as “slum dwellings” (Westerberg & Melander, 2011) with “slum property owners” (Pedersen & Westerberg, 2011).

Seniors in Seved and fear of crime (paper II)

As revealed in the results in paper I, there is a harsh picturing of Seved neighbourhood as a lawless place where gangs can flourish. However, talking to Seved senior citizens, hardly anyone agrees with the picture created by media. On the contrary, older residents spoken to seem to agree that the negative media picture of Seved is grossly exaggerated. In general, during the whole study, almost no one spoken to accept the description that Seved in any way is a particular danger zone. In fact only one of the persons spoken to during the whole study period claims to feel insecure while leaving home. This particular senior did not usually attend the senior activities on a regular basis, and when talking to him it was the first time he had joined the group. He is otherwise quite lonely and lives on the outskirts of Seved. He comes to the senior activities by car (as a passenger) due to reduced health, and never walks alone in the area. Referring to media, he had read in the newspaper about dangerousness in Seved and how everybody gets mugged. Hence walking alone even during daytime is not an option for him. This serves as a clear example of how space can be perceived through the images and texts provided by media. However, after this initial contact with the senior group, he continues to join the arranged activities and after a couple of months he feels more and more comfortable in the neighbourhood, which also has a reducing effect on the fear of crime.

Findings from the interviews with seven participants from the senior group show that the informants are all quite active and leave home more or less daily. Their modes of transport are foremost walking and secondly local buses, and no one owns a car. Several of them have lived in the neighbourhood for many years. They have experienced changes over time, especially in the social sphere. A typical experience nowadays is a more “closed” neighbourhood with fewer social gatherings with neighbours, something they miss. However, being a part of the senior group somehow seems to compensate for this loss by offering a new kind of social network, one instigated by the social programme activities.

Several seniors though emphasize changes in the residential composition, and mention immigrants as the new neighbourhood “problem”. Informants also tell about how empty apartments caused an in-migration of families with low power over their own situation, leading to a low-income character of the neighbourhood, with increased vandalism and other disturbances. Thus, the informants all claim that they do feel secure being outdoors in the neighbourhood. However, avoidance behavior did occur in the form of not being out late evenings, seemingly relevant for many of the older persons spoken to, and is in this case a common strategy. It was more or less agreed that whatever happens in the neighbourhood, regarded as threatening, happens during late evenings or night-time, and during these hours they are accordingly safe at home anyway. Protective behaviours mentioned by some of the older persons include crossing the street or choosing another route if for example a couple of youths are standing on the pavement, or having company with someone else when going outdoors in the evenings.

Most seniors interviewed and talked to are familiar with Seved neighbourhood, the inhabitants, the houses and the streets. They are however clearly influenced by media reporting. Several of the informants tell about how they often walk along Rasmusgatan (the street that has been in focus for camera surveillance and that has been extremely exposed in mass media) without anything ever happening to them, and without fear of crime. When talking to them, it seems like real space is somehow in conflict with imagined space, like a conflict between familiarity and availability heuristics. They carry a picture of the street, created mostly by mass media, which they do not agree with because of their own experiences. Yet, they all mention the street as an example showing that they actually feel secure in the area – “they even walk on Rasmusgatan”. However, none of them can report witnessing anything extraordinary happening on Rasmusgatan, but mostly mention that many youths are often visible on this particular street.

Several of the seniors also say that other people tell them to be careful, based on what they have heard and read about Seved neighbourhood. Remarkably, however, some of the Seved residents at the same time refer to fear of crime in other places outside the neighbourhood, based on what they have read in the newspapers, and some of them avoid those, according to them, frightful places.

Social participation, wellbeing and mobility (paper III)

The ambition of this paper is to offer an understanding of how the everyday life mobility of older persons in a disadvantaged neighbourhood could be improved. It highlights the importance of social participation in the neighbourhood for mobility and wellbeing. Four main themes emerged as key dimensions for depicting the everyday life mobility amongst older persons active in the neighbourhood senior group in the light of social participation and wellbeing: ‘Planning and realization of the senior project’; ‘Housing and social relations’; ‘Transport modes and everyday life mobilities’ and finally ‘Social participation and social activities’.

In the first thematic group, planning and realization of the senior project, findings foremost from observations showed that the priority of the municipality of the senior group was on social sustainability, security and social participation among seniors, with a special focus on quality of life and wellbeing. The working group for seniors had already existed for a year at the outset of this study during late 2011. A key issue the municipality worked with was solving “how can we work in a slightly different [better] way, given our [limited] resources?” The policy of stakeholders to engage in senior activities was based on an interdisciplinary mindset, and inclusion is an important issue, e.g. later on cross-boarding actions to foster meetings across cultures and ages. Early on, the ambition was also to embrace a wide perspective, involving other contacts like libraries, associations etc. for thematic meetings arranged for seniors within the neighbourhood. They also arranged activities outside the neighbourhood for seniors, organised by the municipality in cooperation with Malmö museum, Malmö theatre and others. These activities came to a large extent to revolve around historical time periods - about “now” and “then” realised through a line of innovative activities: visits to different museums, theatres, guided city tours, Christmas fairs, barbeques on the beach, forest walks, a herring cleaning demonstration followed by a boat tour on the canal, lunch at the top of Malmö’s second tallest building. The involvement of seniors already in the planning phase turned out to be crucial for arrangement satisfaction. During the whole process, suggestions, reflections and participation from seniors have been important and have been treated with democracy and humility.

Moving on to the seniors who participate in the different arranged activities and to the second thematic group, housing and social relations, findings foremost through interviews with senior participants showed that what the seniors have in common is many years’ central urban living and thus closeness to services and transport. However, one difference could be noticed between households, singles being more active than persons living in two-person households. Overall during

the interviews, older persons living on their own talked more about their friends and activities with them than did other informants, mentioning the boredom of just being at home alone. Several of the informants also mentioned a transformation where social networking with neighbours has changed over time. Other reasons according to some interviewees were that younger people today are busy in their careers and working long days and do not have the same time for socialising as they had when they were younger. Regarding neighbours and neighbourhood relations, most of them agree that Seved has changed. More young people are moving in and they tend not to socialize as was customary in the old days. Through the senior group the municipality makes an important contribution to increasing social participation and social networking among people who otherwise would risk loneliness and exclusion. For some of the participants spoken to, the senior group has given 'life a new meaning' to quote one of the seniors.

Regarding the third thematic group, transport modes and everyday life mobilities, most of the informants agree with being out more by being a part of the senior group, and having increased mobility because of a larger social network and more daily activities. In this case, increase in mobility mostly involves walks within the neighbourhood with friends from the senior group, walks to the meeting place from home and trips outside the neighbourhood through arranged activities. In daily life, the informants overall seemed satisfied with available modes of transport, and reasons they mention for sometimes avoiding doing things outside the home were more of a social character and not insufficient access to transport possibilities. None of the older persons drive a car or for that matter own a car anymore. Some still have a driver's licence and owned a car earlier in life, but others never had a licence and thus always used alternative modes like public transport and/or bicycling. None of them miss having a car, and they are on the whole satisfied with the options at hand. Only one of the older persons interviewed is authorised to use demand-responsive special transport services (STS). This person is one of the younger participants, and the reasons for eligibility are prior illness and a long way back through rehabilitation towards a healthier, active life. Primarily he uses STS for health care trips, because he thinks that it is practical not having to take the bus when he has early morning appointments etc. But in daily life, he actually prefers walking and public transport. Overall, the older people seem to be satisfied with the city buses, except for stressed drivers mentioned by some of the informants. They all mention the benefits of living centrally, how nice and satisfactory proximity to what the city offers is, and they all walk to a large extent. Except for non-availability of buses for some, there is nothing explicit that they would like to change in their daily lives regarding issues such as modes of transport.

Regarding the fourth thematic group, social participation and social activities, findings from both interviews and observations show that the senior activities are regarded as very successful by both older persons themselves and by persons working in or close to the project. For many of the older persons, participation is the crucial social factor. Some of the older people in the senior group have health and mobility problems and use walking aids like walkers, while others are relatively healthy and mobile. However, regardless of functional capacity they are all today quite active, and according to the informants they strive to leave their home every day. For them, the social context and ambience are crucial magnets, not just having the ability to move around. It is of course hypothetical, but still supported by their statements, that without the social context, some of them would probably leave their homes much less often. Many of them repeatedly describe how lucky they are, living in a ward that does so much for them in their daily lives. The activities have resulted in a supportive network that constantly grows organically. Because of the project, seniors have been inspired to take their own initiatives for other activities as well. E.g. a walking group has been formed, which walks around in the neighbourhood once a week with walking poles (“Nordic walking”). Another example is a very popular group doing “sitting gymnastics”, also once a week and led by one of the seniors. The local real estate company provides access to a venue. Because of the changed social context their mobility has increased, which through various descriptions of the meaningful activities seems to be closely connected to increased wellbeing. The only fear some of the seniors express is that it is a project, and that the project may run out of funding one day.

Everyday life mobilities in a suburb – changes and strategies (paper IV)

In this section selected findings will be presented from a case study with longitudinal interviews and time-geographic diaries of an older couple living in a suburb to Malmö city. The first meeting with the older couple was in the autumn of 2009 in their suburban home. By that time the woman was 83 years old and the man was 79, and they had been a couple for around 40 years. They had lived in the neighbourhood together for 25 years in a terraced house with their own garden adjoining a public garden in a car-free neighbourhood. They both had children from former marriages. In their daily life the car was very important for them as their only mode of transport. Since the woman did not have a driver’s license it was the man who drove. Health was an important factor, especially the health of the woman, which caused constraints in daily life for them both. The second occasion for visiting the older couple was after one and

a half years (2011). They were living in the same house and they had the same car, still their only mode of transport. However, some differences in their everyday life had emerged and both of them had experienced deteriorating health. The last two visits were in the late summer/autumn of 2012. The man could not take part in the whole meeting on the first of these occasions. The last meeting was with the man only in November 2012.

The old couple was struggling to maintain the everyday life they were used to through life-long habits, and not least through habits they had developed since moving to the suburb. Their physical presence in the neighbourhood appeared to be larger earlier in life, as well as the social capital the neighbourhood was offering. Better health had also made it possible for them to use the neighbourhood for walks, bicycle rides etc. However, today they perceived negative impacts of changes that involved a modified infrastructure and a loss of social capital. They also mentioned rising barriers between neighbours in the form of large fences [modified infrastructure], and the fact that the couple had aged; the neighbourhood had partly done the same. Yet they described their sense of place by using suburban representations like 'freedom'.

Furthermore, during the first visit the older couple managed their everyday activities without help from anyone else. Outside activities were mostly carried out together, and they had divided other activities at home between them. Their outdoor daily life activities often revolved around purchasing food. On the occasion of the first study, the older couple visited food stores almost every day, and during the week of the activity diary they visited a food store daily. Going shopping served as a strategy to maintain some kind of social networking, as they had become acquainted with many of the store employees.

During the second visit after one and a half years, the man expressed similar opinions of mobility and lifestyle. However, the woman's perspective had changed, and now she felt that the increasingly reserved atmosphere in the neighbourhood today actually fitted her current condition quite well because it reduced the demands on her and made it easier for her to adapt and cope. This change seemed to be connected to both lower mental and physical capacity. The pattern of their everyday activities was also different. They were still managing their activities without help from anyone else, but now it seemed harder to lead everyday life due to the woman's deteriorating health. This also affected and limited the daily life of her spouse, since the woman had grown increasingly dependent on him. Even if the man had the resources to do other daily life activities, he was limited because of his new caring role. At the time of this visit, the woman had not been outdoors at all for a couple of weeks. The man was still driving to the stores, but the man agreed on reduced mobility in terms of leaving home. He was now only leaving home about every second day.

During the first interview the couple did not want to talk too much about the future. Moving was out of the question. During the second occasion, they were still restrictive about discussing the future. However, the man seemed to think of alternative future scenarios, probably related to the increased feelings of sole responsibility regarding the living situation and everyday life mobility. The man had, however, by this time found new supporting strategies to maintain some kind of continuity when it comes to social relations in his life. What was clearly important for him was his computer, and he told about how, among other things offered by virtual media, he had joined Facebook [virtual mobility]. He could now have regular contact with friends and maybe sometimes the children through this newly discovered medium. The woman, though, seemed to be even more dependent on the man for managing everyday life because of her deteriorating health condition. During the first study occasion, problems with walking also made the couple adopt other forms of outdoor activities, such as just driving around in their car. They spoke about how in the past they often just went out walking. Now this was too difficult for them, but as a strategy to maintain some kind of continuity, they were instead driving around. However, during the second occasion this activity had also ceased. The man expressed feelings of sadness, and pointed out that this was an activity he missed doing together — a limitation of automobility.

Regarding the couple's past behaviour and choice of transport mode, they had earlier in life used other modes than the car, like public transport or bicycles. However, they had had access to a private car for most of their suburban life, and they talked about how the feelings of needing a car were accentuated since moving in. Although they had not used public transport in many years, or even special transport service for older and disabled persons, they attributed many negative aspects to such modes of transport. It was clear that they did not see any real alternatives to their car.

During the third visit (summer/autumn 2012), the woman initially talked a lot about her health and about how she was feeling worse. As before, she characterized her life by using negative expressions - life in her own words now was 'just shit', and now the woman more or less did not leave the home at all. The couple had recently actually discussed moving into a city apartment, because of the increasing everyday struggle in and around their house. Thinking about and discussing relocation caused stress. The rapidly declining health situation of the man also caused worries. Life in the suburban house grew more and more difficult for them, and she expressed wishes for more help from society, since they still tried to manage everything by themselves. Two days after the third visit, the man notified me that the woman had passed away the night of that visit. He expressed how important it was for him to keep on with his daily activities; otherwise his thoughts would take over and darken his life. However,

due to his sudden reduced physical mobility and, maybe more important, the loss of his life companion, he had to face a large transition point in life. Though even in this upheaval in his life, he stressed the importance of keeping up the mobilities of everyday life.

The last meeting with the man took place barely three months after the loss of his spouse. His everyday life was characterized by a decrease in mobility, loss of social contacts and changes in modes of transport. He did not leave home much, since his efforts were mainly directed to taking care of daily activities without help from anyone else. He had got eligibility for special transport services, but was not too satisfied with it. His virtual mobility seemed to have grown, however, and he talked about how his social network on this virtual media had expanded. Mobility of some kind or another had become a way for him to handle his loss.

Life transition points and everyday mobility (paper V)

This section presents selected results from a quantitative study based on a questionnaire. The sample (N = 162) consists of older persons who had transitioned from a two-person household to a single-person household during the two years since the study-specific questionnaire reached the participants. Results focused on differences and similarities between three subgroups according to whether the respondents have maintained, increased or decreased their mobility after becoming alone in the household. No significant differences between subgroups were seen regarding age, gender or place of residence, nor for driving license or access to a car in the household, even though the respondents with driving license and access to a car in the household scored lower in the group with decreased outdoor mobility. However, license for STS was lower (significant) in the subgroup that reported unchanged mobility.

There were significant differences between the subgroups and reported health. The subgroup that reported decreased mobility stated reduced health and/or some kind of mobility device more often, valued their state of health lower and needed help from other persons for outdoor mobility to a higher degree than did the other two subgroups. The questionnaire also included questions of different dimensions of mode of transport. A car was considered as the most important mode of transport in all three subgroups, but with least importance for the subgroup that claimed increased outdoor mobility, which mentioned STS to a significantly higher degree than the other two subgroups. However, regarding STS there was a significant difference between the sub-groups allocating higher importance of STS to the increased and decreased outdoor mobility groups.

There was a tendency that public transport was somewhat more important for respondents with decreased outdoor mobility than for the other two subgroups. Car and walking were the modes of transport that were most frequently used in everyday life in all three subgroups; however, there were significant differences between subgroups.

Looking at how the respondents valued their possibilities to travel with different modes of transport, the subgroup with decreased outdoor mobility valued the possibilities to travel with all modes of transport to a lower degree than did the other two subgroups. The differences were significant for walking, biking and use of public transport. Finally, regarding overall valuation of the possibilities to travel today, the valuation among the group with increased mobility was almost twice as high as in the group with decreased mobility. And dependency on the transport modes public transport, STS, or other people was reported twice as frequently in the subgroup with decreased mobility as in the other two subgroups.

Discussion

This thesis is partly a response to the call for developing a more complete understanding of mobility among older people (Schwanen & Páez, 2010), as context-dependent and closely related to wellbeing (Schwanen & Ziegler 2011; Ziegler & Schwanen 2011); this study offers a deeper understanding of the everyday life mobilities outdoors among older persons from a context-dependent perspective, including physical, social and mental dimensions. All studies conducted within the frames of this thesis showed that the context is important in one way or another for everyday mobilities in later life.

The section begins with discussions about *Urban fear and impacts on mobility* to be followed by *The meaning of contexts for everyday mobility in later life*, *Strategies for everyday mobility in later life* and *Keep moving in later life*. This will be followed by a discussion of *Considerations of study design and chosen methods* and *Implications for further research*.

Urban fear and impacts on mobility

Confirmed also by earlier research, media play a crucial role in the securitization of the city, not least by recurrent discourses of fear and images of the “other” and stigmatization of segregated areas and poor neighborhoods (e.g. Wacquant, 2008). This showed to be true even in the case of Seved neighbourhood. Mass media were picturing violence, criminals and gangs - a neighbourhood predominantly construed as unruly and a place of lawlessness. The wide disparity between perceived/imagined fear and the actual incidence of, and/or actual exposure to, violence attests to the important role of the media in shaping mental maps and place images. Studies of mediated spaces/places and mobility suggest that the stigmatization of places impacts on everyday life routines and the social life of individuals and groups in many ways (Cresswell, 2006), and may be a contributing factor to changes in everyday mobility patterns and strategies of urban residents.

In the case of Seved we have the radicalized others, often described as people with social problems, mostly young men with a foreign background, described

as perpetrators of violence or members of criminal gangs, dealing in drugs and weapons. The negative portraying of media underscores the need for camera surveillance and constant police presence. As noted by postcolonial theory, urban discourses of “we and them” in the West often hark back to colonial discourses and images of the “non-white primitive other” as the antithesis of “white, western and civilized” society and a threat to its fundamental values (Said, 2006 [1978]). In the case of Seved, the negative portraying creates a prison-like space under surveillance, which most people probably avoid if they can. As mobility is often unevenly distributed and not everyone has the power to avoid such controlled spaces, there is a hierarchy within mobility and thus in the politics of mobility, where persons living in that particular area cannot avoid being under constant surveillance. Concurrently, we have the “outsiders”, portrayed as the victims, including for example a white educated male who coincidentally landed in Seved neighborhood for a while, which he then compares with radicalism. Or a visit of the minister of justice that had to be overseen by policemen and bodyguards.

In the case of this thesis, and with a focus on the outdoor mobility of older people, it is reasonable to question how everyday life mobility appears in a disadvantaged neighbourhood like Seved, especially since researchers address older people in such neighbourhoods as particularly vulnerable (e.g. Buffel, et al., 2013). However, it is important that “whilst social exclusion and poverty often means lower levels of wellbeing, this is not necessarily so” (Nordbakke & Schwanen, 2014, p. 106). In the case of Seved, a common statement among the seniors was that they are lucky to live in a neighbourhood doing so much for them, which is a positive rebuff of the tarnished reputation that otherwise surrounds the area, and hardly anyone agrees with the picture created by media. On the contrary, older residents interviewed and met during activities seem to agree that the negative media picture of Seved is grossly exaggerated. Programme staff are all of the same opinion. In contrast to the often strong stereotyping of older people as physically less able, vulnerable and insecure, discussed by Pain et al. (2001), only one older person in Seved of all the older people spoken to during the study period claims to feel insecure outdoors in the neighbourhood. Yet, behavioural responses such as avoidance behaviour and protective behaviour outdoors did occur.

Concurrently, the older persons in Seved describe negative reactions from both relatives and friends, where some friends even feel insecure while driving through the neighbourhood based on mental maps highly affected by media. Thus, paradoxically some of the older persons in Seved refer to fear of crime for other places outside the neighbourhood, based on what they in turn have read in the newspapers, and some of them avoid those, for them, frightful places. Yet, the familiarity and the knowledge of one’s own neighbourhood did most likely

have a reducing effect on the fear of crime within the neighbourhood, which was referred to by the older people themselves for not being insecure outdoors in the area. However, this familiarity and knowledge were not as high when it concerned other places, which probably contributed to increased fear of crime. Once again mental maps lead to restrictions in everyday life mobility, which is a contributor to the sustaining of the divided city and growing gaps, supporting securitization and the surveillance society. In the words of Doreen Massey, “a lot of our ‘geography’ is in the mind [...]. We carry around with us mental images, of the world, of the country in which we live (all those images of the North/South divide), of the street next door” (2006, p. 48). Mental maps create both social and spatial boundaries, and the moral panic in societies is a large contributor to the constant need for defining the normal and eliminating what is considered as different. Negative stereotypes are essential for creating social and spatial exclusion.

Thus, barriers for movement can occur in different forms and shapes and can mean negative social impact in different ways (James, et al., 2005). This appeared to be true even in the case of Seved: all seniors interviewed avoided being out late evenings and nights. Protective behaviours mentioned by some of the informants include crossing the street or choosing another route if a couple of youths are seen standing on the pavement, and/or having company with someone else when going out in the evenings. In the neighbourhood other protective behaviours could be observed such as door peepholes, barbed wire between backyards and camera surveillance. All these are good examples of mobility restrictions that in turn lead to lives in constricted spaces and urban divisions.

However, the seniors captured in this study are pretty active and familiar with the neighbourhood, and the result might differ if older persons beyond the senior group were included within the study. The older persons captured in this case are a part of a supportive social network where social participation acts strongly to bridge other structural barriers. Findings also suggest that social participation in the form of being a part of the senior group and knowing people in the neighbourhood seems to have a salutary effect on fear of crime and a commendatory effect on everyday life mobility. In other words, the context that the seniors were situated within and social participation in the neighbourhood seemed to have a (direct or indirect) reducing effect on fear of crime and insecurity. Senior group participants are a part of a larger network. They know where to turn if something should happen, and are familiar with the streets, and street life, and many of them have been living in the area for many years.

The meaning of contexts for everyday mobility in later life

In this case location proved to have meaning for the mobilities of older people in Seved as well as in the suburb. Thus, the place and the location of place appeared to have a different meaning in the two cases. Once again, barriers for movement can occur in different forms and shapes (James, et al., 2005), and in the case of Seved, those occurred mostly in the shape of mental barriers. Hence, the older people in Seved valued the central location that offers closeness to services and public transport. Access to a car was, in this case, not ultimately the determining factor for a mobile life; instead they all walked a lot and for longer trips they normally used public transport. On the other hand, in the case of the suburb, interviews and diaries served to explain the everyday life of an ageing couple, dependent on their car and the ability to drive to maintain their lifestyle. Over a decade ago, some researchers highlighted the fact that an increased number of older persons are living in suburbs, associated with high car dependence and a life style highly influenced by the car (Sterns, et al., 2003; Rosenbloom & Winsten-Bartlett, 2002). While struggling with mobility practices, the couple thinks of their way of living as freedom – the hallmark of mobility representations. Yet, they could, according to them, never be happy in an urban apartment, even if their mobility was constantly declining.

By this way of negotiating earlier life and mobility decisions, suburban residents used to a special kind of lifestyle, clinging to freedom narratives and defending earlier choices, may have to struggle hard to adapt and to continue their suburban everyday life. This agrees with earlier research pointing out that features like more solo driving in personal vehicles, more trips and greater trip distances have been observed and associated with new social and public health problems. Social challenges mostly deal with social exclusion and accessibility problems (Freund & Martin, 2007). The interaction between older persons and the suburban environment is characterized by environmental pressure, which in this case has proved to be striking as the competence of the person is diminishing, and the couple seemed to be heading towards social isolation in their attempts at adapting and continuing their suburban everyday life. Besides issues relating to social sustainability, in other studies as well older people have proved to use a car more frequently and are less likely to use public transport (Rosenbloom, 2001), and researchers have brought up the issue of transport footprints in later life as an urgent matter for further research, with considerations to environmental sustainability (Pillemer, et al., 2011).

Not only the location appeared to have a meaning for the mobilities of older people in this case, but the social context as well. Regarding the social context within the household, this appears to be important for everyday mobilities in

several ways, illuminated from different perspectives in the studies conducted within the frames of this thesis. In the case study of the suburb, one could see how the physical state of the woman led to restrictions in mobility for them both as a couple. Increasing constraints of the woman in turn led to restrictions for the man, indicating the social dimension of mobilities, which had limiting effects on the activity patterns of the everyday life of the man as well.

While studying context-dependent mobility in a wider perspective, a sample of older people who have transitioned from a two-person to a single-person household emerged. The results suggested that the stressful life event of transitioning into a single-person household in old age means reduced outdoor mobility for certain sub-groups. According to Mollenkopf (2004b) there is great variation in how an older person deals with such a transition point, and it may have an impact on the person's everyday life, where outdoor mobility is an important aspect. Such variations can be an outcome, for example, of the character of the relationship to the partner. In a relationship where a person has had a caring role, feelings of freedom also related to mobility can sometimes arise when becoming alone in the household (Davidson, 2001). On the other hand, in a very protective relationship the feelings can be the opposite, and work as restrictions on the mobility of the older person (Fry, 1998).

In the case of older people in Seved, a difference could be noticed between households, singles being more active in joining different activities than persons living in two-person households. In this case, the senior group had an important role for keeping older persons active in everyday life by offering a social network and different activities to fill the days and thus increase wellbeing among these persons.

Strategies for everyday mobility in later life

In the case of the older couple in the suburb, they had developed strategies to keep their lifestyle, and it was clear that it was important for them to maintain continuity in daily life. The strategies were ways to organise activities and responsibilities. Outside activities were mostly carried out together, and they had divided other activities at home between them. The study shows that the life of the ageing suburban couple gradually revolved more and more around taking care of basic needs. However, they had developed some mobile strategies, making up for lost mobilities – the replacement of strolling by driving around the country roads and the replacement of social networking by virtual networking.

Virtual mobility is a form of mobility that has grown rapidly (Christensen & Jansson, 2011). ICTs can bring people and objects closer through networked relations (Sheller & Urry, 2006), which seemed to be true even in the case of the older man in the suburb. He had developed some mobile strategies, making up for lost mobilities – the replacement of social networking by virtual networking. He could now have regular contact with friends and maybe sometimes his children through this newly discovered medium. Social media through the computer seemed to act as a substitute — an active strategy for the man to experience some kind of control over his changing life situation, acting as a complement to the loss of ordinary social networking and shrinking physical mobility. However, thus far little is known of the manifold intersections of motility, virtual and corporeal mobility, and older people (Hanson, 2010).

Keep moving in later life

Following the senior group in Seved, it could be concluded that it is important for societies to work on social participation to support mobility and wellbeing in later life, and to work for sustainable communities providing possibilities for active ageing. The implementation of broad thinking is essential in such a task, and in this case the key issue was solving “how can we in a slightly different [better] way work given our resources?” and the initial priority stressed by the working group was social sustainability, security and social participation among seniors with a special focus on quality of life and wellbeing. The result proceeding from this basic question and the initial priority is a unique cooperation from a Swedish perspective, with a line of different municipal actors, and the networking and the cooperation is an ongoing process. Without a large budget from any one source, the cooperation is resource-effective. The project has proved to be successful in different ways, and the plethora of activities both outside as well as inside the neighbourhood is very appreciated by the seniors, leading to increased social participation and networking and increased everyday mobility. Thus the study indicates that creative and user-centred campaigns do matter for the wellbeing and the everyday life mobility of older persons.

This sheds a light on the important role of societies to encourage work for framing social participation in neighbourhoods. As also stated by some informants, without the social network for seniors in Seved many of the participants would probably be more lonely and perhaps on their way towards social isolation, exclusion and immobility. During my time in Seved I also had the opportunity to see how important one worker could be for social cohesion and for the achievement of different activities among seniors. This person is

called a driving force by some of the seniors, and from my point of view he is fully involved in making life as good as possible for older people in the neighbourhood. He is working hard for keeping the project alive and for making it constantly develop both with new participants and with new initiatives. Regarding activities outside the neighbourhood, those were primarily a result of an earlier cooperation with pedagogues from the museum. Initially those activities were arranged for children, then the idea came up that this would be perfect for older people as well. The idea builds on using existing resources (like the museum pedagogues already employed by Malmö city for the work with children) to work with the seniors as well, something that surprisingly is a unique cooperation from a Swedish perspective but very appreciated by the seniors involved. This shows how the society can facilitate the everyday mobility of older persons by quite simple efforts. This is especially important in the changing neighbourhoods of today with rising barriers between neighbours, something that both the older couple in the suburb and older people in Seved had experienced, with less social networking between neighbours than in earlier years.

In the case of older people in Seved, a difference could be noticed between households as already mentioned, singles being more active than persons living in two-person households. Here society, and in this case the senior group, play an important role in keeping older persons active in everyday life by offering a social network and different activities to fill the days and thus increase wellbeing.

In the case of older people in the suburb, future policies ideally must allow ageing persons to retain cherished old customs and networks, and to go on being a part of society on their own terms. Yet, for fiscal and structural reasons, many societies will be ill prepared to deal with important functions such as social services, health care and public transport to meet the needs of the rapidly growing older population.

Finally, findings both from the study of older people in Seved and from the study of older people in the transition from a two-person to a single-person household suggest that society must put more effort into offering good walking conditions, since walking seems to be the most important mode of transport for outdoor mobility in those cases, and since access to a car was not ultimately the determining factor for a mobile life. Further, illuminating another finding from the study of older people in the transition from a two-person household to a single-person household, namely that special transport service (STS) came out as especially important for people with increased activity, society also needs to invest in the provision of special transport service to keep the most vulnerable group of people mobile when other modes of transport are no longer a reality.

Considerations of study design and chosen methods

This thesis includes a mixed method design with three studies using different methods resulting in five papers. The design includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which was successful in capturing different views of the topic in focus and for tentatively moving towards a more overall perspective of everyday mobilities - including both physical, social and mental dimensions. Although the main emphasis was on the qualitative part, ending with a quantitative part gave a wider outside perspective in contrast to the penetrating qualitative studies.

The rationale to begin this thesis with a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of newspaper articles on Seved neighbourhood published in a local newspaper, which served several purposes. One ambition was to put the neighbourhood “on the map” for the reader so to speak, and to put the study district of the ethnographical case study within a wider context. Another ambition was to illuminate and problematize the challenges that are haunting the neighbourhood, with the construction of mainly negative discourses in the media. The critical stance of CDA and the interest on dialectical processes and relations between discourses and the society, and how these both shape and are shaped by relations of power to reinforce injustices and inequalities (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010), suited the aim of the study well. However, CDA has been criticized for paying insufficient attention to features of the immediate context and instead widening its field of vision to the macro context. This has sometimes led to pragmatically inappropriate interpretations, so it is important that the immediate context with specific features be treated seriously by both researchers and readers (*ibid.*). In this thesis the immediate context has been of utmost importance, and the ambition was to give a detailed and accurate description of the negative pictures that haunt the study district.

Another critique directed at CDA is that the main focus has mostly been on unequal structures of power and the way ideology works through discourses to maintain those inequalities. Possibly because of CDA’s critical stance, the focus in earlier studies has been mainly negative, and according to some “propagate[s] a deterministic vision of society” (Breeze, 2011, p. 520). The study conducted within the frames of this thesis also takes a critical stance, and it was the focus on unequal structures of power of CDA that in this case made CDA especially attractive. The focus even in this case was mainly negative; however, the empirical material with a clear majority of negatively described articles of the neighborhood spoke for itself and did not support a more positive approach. Yet, the intention has not in any way been to give a deterministic vision of society, and the benchmark of the study is that there is a construction of mental maps of

places and images of “others” largely affected by media discourses which can have (and probably has) a negative effect on urban mobility overall. However, how different people are affected by such images and discourses most likely varies and is undoubtedly influenced by many other factors as well (such as social context, political ideology, earlier life events etc.).

Further, working with the ethnographical method as in the case of Seved, as with any method it is important to be aware of the strengths and the pitfalls of the chosen method. In the case of Seved neighbourhood and the study conducted in this area, the strengths with the chosen approach were that I was able to travel along with the seniors to different activities and that I had the opportunity to observe them in motion when being out in the area. Together with interviews, observations and less formal and more spontaneous talks with informants, it was also possible to gain an in-depth knowledge of meanings and contexts, capture experiences and opinions of the older persons, of programme, staff and of the place itself, that otherwise would be nearly impossible. Many of the experiences have naturally been captured “on the spot”, which would be difficult by only using arranged in-depth interviews, for example. Following people over time was a strength as well, making it possible to see how networking among the seniors constantly grew stronger and expanded. How new participants continued to stay in the network, how they found new friends and so on, were all important findings of the impacts of the municipal programme in the area.

However, moving forward to the critiques directed to the ethnographical approach – it is reasonable to ask if the seniors in Seved are typical when comparing to other seniors in similar contexts? Are the neighbourhood representatives of similar neighbourhoods within the country or elsewhere? Another issue is one important limitation with the conducted study - only seniors who somehow participated in the senior programme were reached. It is difficult to say whether those seniors were representative for the neighbourhood. Thus, the participating seniors were distributed in apartments over the whole neighbourhood, some were living alone and others with a partner, some had children and some had not, some had mobility devices while others did not. What they had in common, though, was that they all appreciated the senior group a lot, with all the different activities. Some even told about how their life had got a new meaning since they began participating in the group. However, it would have been interesting to compare seniors from the senior group with other seniors in the neighbourhood, but there was no space for doing that within the frame of this thesis.

Nevertheless, when it comes to generalisations of the findings from this study, I would be careful. My ambition was to conduct a well-structured study, without any claims that cannot be justified. Validation of the empirical material was made during the whole study period, by checking with informants to assure that

there were no misunderstandings or misclassifications (for this issue see Gold 1997). Ethnographical studies can through careful and structured work be relatable, which means that members of similar groups can recognize problems and similarities, and even, sometimes, find ways of solving similar problems (Bell, 2010). The study can thereby work for making comparisons, rather than generalisations. From my point of view, it therefore became extra important to give an accurate and clear picture of the local and social context that the senior participants were situated in.

Another critique of the ethnographical method has been directed to the “blind spot”, which can imply that the researcher is missing observing the “obvious”. Being out in the field, it was constantly a balancing between being involved but not to be too involved. It was important to study the seniors from the inside and within the context they were situated in, yet an outside perspective was necessary as well, to not become too involved and not to miss any obvious details. It was though easy to get into the group, and everybody was very open and cordial. They were informed about who I was and where I came from, but it mostly felt as though they did not reflect about it at all. The staff asked me several times of help with preparing activities, like settings of tables and such, and everybody treated me more or less as one among them and very seldom asked me any questions about who I was and what I was doing there. It was foremost the activities that were in focus, and the social networking with other seniors.

So, as a researcher I felt that it was easy to get inside but I constantly had to remind myself not to become too involved; for me it was important to keep my outside perspective as well. Thus, it was probably easier doing this because of the differences between myself and the persons and the context that I studied. As a younger researcher there is a gap of several generations between me and the seniors. Nor was I previously familiar with these types of activities, which probably made it easier to maintain the eyes of an observer. It would probably be more difficult if I had studied a group that I had more in common with. However, this method puts great demands on the researcher, and it was important for me to constantly have an awareness of the pitfalls, to try to avoid them as much as possible. I also wrote a field diary, and I always used my car to get to the neighbourhood, to be able to sit in the car directly afterwards and carefully write down everything I had observed and every less formal and more spontaneous talk I had had. This meant that I spent quite some time in the car, to write everything down as accurately as I possibly could.

Moving forward to the study of older persons in a suburb, the ambition here was to study the mobilities in later life with consideration to the place and social context. One obvious limitation is that only one couple is studied over time. Yet this is also one of the strengths of the study, making it possible to gain a deeper understanding of individual changes in suburban everyday life mobilities as time

goes by. Regarding qualitative research, with for example interviews, central discussions concern issues of validity, reliability and generalizations (e.g. Bell, 2010; Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2001).

During the interview situation, it was important to check for accuracy with the informants, with questions such as “do I understand you right when...”. Since it involved longitudinal interviews I had the opportunity to go back to earlier discussions and once again check the information given on an earlier occasion and even compare this information with the situation in the current occasion. When it came to more concrete information like the routes of local buses or timetables for buses, this information could easily be checked with resources on the Internet. However, regarding issues of reliability it is difficult to know my impact as an interviewer, yet it was very important for me not to ask any leading questions, but to be attentive, sensitive to the feelings of the informants, to be calm and accept moments of silence (for this issue see Denscombe, 2010, pp. 190-192). Thus, I am aware that objectivity is hard to achieve within the interview situation. Regarding generalization, this was never the ambition of such a small-scale study involving only one older couple. Is this couple representative for the suburb? Maybe so, but I cannot answer the question. However, the ambition was to gain a deeper understanding of how life can be in a suburb, and for that, the study design worked excellently. It would be hard to employ larger material, with more informants included, with the same depth as in the current case study.

Furthermore, regarding the time-geographical diaries, the informants kept diaries of all outdoor activities for one week. Diaries are a common method within studies of activity patterns, as well as in studies with a time-geographic approach, for mapping out everyday life and capturing the rhythms of life ‘on the move’ (Haldrup, 2011). However, one general problem of using diaries is that they are hard to confirm — respondents give their own appreciation of their daily journeys (Zillinger, 2007). Such personal appreciation often leads to underreporting, where a chain of stops (for buying a newspaper and then driving to the petrol station to fill up etc.) are neglected, and often referred to as only one trip. Much of the information will also be completed retroactively even if the aim is to have the respondents enter the activities throughout the day (Stopher, 1992). In this case the diaries, collected in the first time period only, included self-reported time for the activity, place to visit, purpose of the movement, mode of transport, and whether alone or together with someone else. Only outdoor activities were reported, since the ambition of using a diary in this study has not been to cover all activities, both indoor and outdoor. I can relate to the common critique directed to this method. It was hard to confirm the diaries retroactively, even though I was discussing them with the informants afterwards, and there might have occurred an underreporting, where a chain of stops was

neglected. The informants also completed the diaries retroactively, with the man filling them in, since it was too cumbersome for the woman. The older couple found it very hard to fill in the diaries, something to bear in mind when working with older people, even though this is not true for all older people. However, in the case of this study, the ambition of the diaries was foremost to gain an overview of their outdoor activities, the modes of transport they were using and if they were doing the activities by themselves or together. For this issue, the time-geographical diaries filled their function satisfactorily.

Moving forward to the quantitative study of a questionnaire capturing persons who have become alone in the household, there are of course weaknesses as well as strengths with the approach used for this study too. I will though clarify that I was not in any way involved with the creating and distribution of the questionnaire, but only used already collected data. I am aware of the many pitfalls when working with questionnaires, but since I did not participate in the construction of this questionnaire I chose not to discuss this issue any further. However, capturing data retrospectively might not be an optimal design for studying changes over time. A prospective study would have been a more adequate alternative, but the data for this study were collected in the framework of a larger project with no possibilities to follow the sample over time. It is also important to acknowledge that the target group (people having transitioned to a single-person household from a two-person household during the last two-year period) is not at all easy to enlist. In the whole sample consisting of more than 2000 respondents, only 162 persons, i.e. 8 per cent, reported that they had transitioned into a single-person household during the two years since the study was begun. Bearing in mind that it was difficult to know in advance what to expect, this seems to be a reasonable share.

Another issue worth mentioning is the choice of two years as a proper time zone for the transition. The ambition here was to study persons in transition and therefore, preferably, not too much time should have passed since they had become alone in the household. How truthful the persons have been about this is, however, difficult to know. Issues of truthfulness are also one of the common critiques directed towards this method, since the researcher often has limited possibilities to control the truthfulness overall in questionnaires (Lambert & Shoham, 2008). This also applies to the person's ability to answer questions on how the situation was before the transition.

Implications for further research

The place and the social context in this thesis demonstrated the difference for some older people between being on the move and moving towards social isolation, even though in some cases they have the physical and transport-related abilities needed for being mobile outdoors.

Thus, in the case of the ethnographical study in Seved neighbourhood, it would be interesting to compare both “active” and “non-active” seniors. Conducting such studies would offer opportunities to further analyse the meaning of social participation in the neighbourhood for everyday mobility and issues such as fear of crime. Another important topic is to include older people with foreign backgrounds. Programme staff emphasise a lack of older immigrants with a non-European background. They hardly ever see them in the area or offer them any social support in the form of home care service etc. Thereby there is a glaring uncertainty about the everyday mobility and wellbeing among those persons. One of the staff members suggested that those persons hardly ever leave their homes, and that they might be more or less socially isolated and excluded. Another concern is that already burdened immigrant women, with large responsibilities for family care etc., are taking care of older relatives. This, in turn, can be seen as a threat to the integration of already vulnerable women - since the responsibility grows too high, which in turn can have negative effects on child rearing.

Furthermore, the city of Malmö must also address the fact that media discourses affect the wellbeing in various districts, and that it is crucial to listen to local voices, which could be another field for further research. This would facilitate capturing experiences and reflections as well as neighbourhood practices and representations.

In the case of older people in the suburb, further studies are needed. Earlier research that focuses on older people in suburbs is limited. At the same time, the study conducted within the frames of this thesis is narrow, involving only one older couple. Older persons do not in any way constitute a homogenous group, and aspects of power, ethnicity, gender, accessibility, planning and social policies all intersect while focusing on mobilities. Moreover, this study indicated that the time-geographic approach might benefit from incorporating strategies offered by technology, preferably in the light of ethnographic approaches and modes of mobility. The rapid development of technology yields new forms of, and new possibilities for, mobilities, which in turn may either support or challenge ageing in place.

Finally, in the case of changes in mobility when becoming a single-person household, this study presents a group formerly not accorded much attention within mobility research. Making results about this group visible, not least the fact that access to a car is not ultimately the determining factor for outdoor mobility, is especially valuable. Older people are, however, as already stated not a homogeneous group, and this is also true for the target group focused on in this study. There might be cultural differences regarding the use of different modes of transport, not least the importance of a car for staying mobile. Therefore more research is needed to obtain wider knowledge about the phenomena studied, for example using qualitative methods to capture mechanisms of coping with critical life events such as becoming alone in later life.

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