'This is My Home'

Pakistani and Polish Migrants' Return Considerations as Articulations About 'Home'

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Abstract

Considerations about return are a persistent dimension of identity work in migrant populations. The question of where and what constitutes 'home' for migrants is central to understanding processes of integration, sustained transnational ties, and return considerations, because reflections about 'home' are reflective of belonging. Based on analysis of migrants' and descendants reflections about the possibility of return migration, this paper asks: how is 'home' located in the transnational social field, and in which ways do the mutually overlapping spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions of home matter? The paper draws on semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 75 migrants and descendants from Pakistan and Poland living in Norway. Data from the two migrant groups with distinct migration histories are combined. Perhaps surprisingly, more similarities than differences are found between the two groups, with regard to their reflections about belonging. Considerations about return are found to be revealing of changing perspectives on home. For many there is an inherent ambivalence, reflected in home being located here, or there, or both, or neither. However, both migrants' and descendants exert agency in their own ways of locating 'home' and managing the spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions involved.

Keywords: home, return, transnational, integration, Pakistan, Poland

1 Introduction

This paper explores how migrants' conceptualize 'home' in the context of the parallel processes of integration and transnationalism, and ongoing considerations about return migration. Where one feels at home, whether in one or multiple places, and how the surroundings react to different articulations of belonging, is at the center of contemporary discussions about integration and social cohesion in Europe. The paper emphasizes migrants' own expressions about home – as one way of concretely investigating articulations of belonging. Drawing on literature about home, belonging and identity (see e.g. Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Rapport, 1998), and on the interactions of migrant integration, transnationalism, and return considerations (see e.g. Snel et al., 2006, Erdal and Oeppen, 2013, de Haas and Fokkema, 2011), particular attention is paid to four overlapping and interacting dimensions of home: *spatial, temporal, emotional and rational* which together frame the analysis of how and what migrants' and descendants locate as 'home'.

'Home' is conceptualized as both abstract and fluid, but equally with physical manifestations in the concrete life worlds of individuals. Based on analysis of qualitative data from migrants and descendants, the paper explores how individuals locate 'home' in the transnational social field. Research on 'home' within migration studies emphasizes identity and belonging, as motivating for migrants' practices across transnational social fields, and playing a role in their lives both 'here' and 'there' (Al Ali and Koser, 2002). At a conceptual level the intersection of the sociological and geographical literatures on 'home', and those from migration studies, point to questions about whether one can have more than one 'home' – in the sense of dual ties and loyalties, but also about to what extent 'home' should be understood as a fluid and abstract notion, and to what extent its concrete manifestations and real implications in individual people's lives also need to be acknowledged (Brah, 1996, Levitt and Waters, 2002, Tsuda, 2004).

This paper analyzes migrants' own expressions about where and what is home, in the context of research on *considerations about return.* Recent research on the interactions between migrant integration and transnationalism increasingly questions previously held assumptions that these are zero-sum processes (Snel et al., 2006, Carling and Hoelscher, 2013). Rather it is found that the interplay of migrant integration and transnational ties differs between contexts, where at times integration and transnationalism mutually reinforce one another, at other times not, but it is not usually a

case of either integration, or transnationalism. Migrants' agency in these processes is a key point in seeking to explain these interactions, as oftentimes migrants' strategic use of resources 'here' and 'there' result in complex 'balancing acts' staged by migrants themselves (Erdal and Oeppen, 2013). While structural constraints and opportunities affect the space in which migrants' may act, the scope of their agency in shaping both sets of processes and ties, 'here' and 'there' is significant (Erdal, 2013).

Migrants' return intentions are often covered in surveys about migrants' transnational ties (see e.g. Blom and Henriksen, 2008), but rarely is it sufficiently problematized what these kinds of questions actually measure (Carling and Pettersen, in press (2014)). Responses to the question: *Do you intend to return to your country of origin?'* perhaps with some temporal choices, such as within five years, or when you retire, trigger reflections about identity and about home, which may make a simple yes or no difficult to deliver. Saying no may by migrants be experienced as a final rejection of the home once left behind, whereas leaving the option open for the future may feel more comfortable. Through qualitative data it is possible to explore this sense of ambivalence with regard to the issue of return – and by implication – of how migrants locate 'home'. Building on the insight that integration and transnationalism are processes often running in parallel, which may or may not have a bearing on return considerations at a practical or emotional level, this paper asks: how do migrants' and descendants locate 'home' in the transnational social field, and in which ways do the mutually overlapping spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions of home matter?

The first section sets out the conceptual framework, first drawing on the literature on home, belonging and identity, second on the growing body of work within migration studies on emotional dimensions to migrant transnationalism, and third, how these relate to discussions on the interactions of migrant transnationalism and processes of integration, including a focus on return considerations. The following section lays out the methods and data used in this paper, as well as presenting the reasoning behind the inclusion of data from two distinctly different migrant groups, those from Pakistan and Poland, now living in Norway. The main body of the article sheds light on the ways in which 'home' is understood and experienced by migrants, focusing on spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions.

2 Conceptual framework

2.1 Home, belonging and identity

The literature on home in the social sciences is vast and multi-dimensional (Mallett, 2004, Blunt and Dowling, 2006). In human geography Massey (1997), has advocated a relational sense of place, where human interactions are analyzed as integrated within places. Such places can be specific buildings or structures, such as migrant houses in their countries of origin (Erdal, 2012), or people's 'homes' in the sense of dwelling places. A relational understanding of 'home' is important as 'home' is a spatial notion, regardless of whether or not it is tied to a physical place. For the purpose of this paper 'home' is understood mainly in the context of its relationships with belonging and identity. It is acknowledged that home is multi-scalar and inherently spatial. At an individual level one can feel at home both in a house, the childhood 'home, and in more abstractly defined social spaces, linked with their cultural, social or linguistic characteristics, in a particular city or a country.

While scholars such as Anthias (2002) have critiqued the use of identity as an analytical concept, due to its fuzzy nature, alternative concepts have not won significant ground. A critical perspective on identity as a constructed concept, something which changes over time, and is multi-layered, should however be noted (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Yet, identity remains important, and is inherently linked with questions of belonging, and by extension to understandings of 'home'. Identity and belonging are discussed as significant dimensions of migrants' lived experiences, in relation to the ways in which migrants' manage dual ties and loyalties (Dwyer, 2002).

How migrants relate to 'home' in the context of questions about the possibility of return is one tangible avenue into migrants' identity construction work, which allows for a focus on both spatial and temporal dimensions. Furthermore, the notion of 'home' is simultaneously very emotional, but also something about which rational decisions are made, thus allowing for an exploration of the ambivalence which is inherent to how 'home' is understood, experienced and constructed.

2.2 Emotions in transnational migration research

In studies of migrant transnationalism emotional dimensions have increasingly come into focus, in particular in work on transnational families (Skrbiš, 2008, Baldassar, 2007). Much work on migrant transnationalism during the past two decades has explored the ways in which migrants'

straddle two or more societies, and make decisions about their lives and their mobility, both based on rational and emotional considerations. Based on qualitative research within these fields it is acknowledged that migrant decision-making should be seen as highly intertwined between emotional and rational dimensions. However, neither of the two are always what they might seem. Rational decisions may more often be related to *mobility resources*, such as legal papers enabling mobility (Carling, 2008), than to purely economic considerations, whereas emotional dimensions may often change more rapidly than might be expected, for instance as the balance of *where* family is based changes in the course of a generation.

As emotions have come into focus, the notion of ambivalence has received more attention (see e.g. Kivisto and La Vecchia-Mikkola, 2013, Van Leeuwen, 2008) as part of an acknowledgment of the psycho-social challenges which the migration process entails, with regard both to relationships with people and places in the country of origin and in the country of settlement. Kivisto and La Vechia (2013) discuss this as *dual ambivalence*, with regard to 'here' and 'there'. They suggest that while ambivalence may be approached from a socio-psychological perspective, it may be as valuable to treat this as a sociological phenomenon. While the analytical value of *ambivalence* as a conceptual tool may be limited, the acknowledgment of the multiplicity of emotional dimensions in migrants' lives is significant. This is necessary both with regard to the potential for conceptual developments within migration studies, continuing to move beyond simplistic dichotomies, and taking on the challenge of conceptualizing identity and belonging – even in national contexts – with the reality of transnational social fields in mind.

Migrants' agency in managing ambivalence with regard to home, identity and belonging is significant and can usefully be understood through what Ho (2009) describes as migrants' *emotional management*. She argues that migrants' sense of identity and belonging with regard both to questions about citizenship, and in the context of return considerations or actual return migration, are highly contingent on migrants' emotional management strategies. At times these are conscious strategies, whereas at other times they may be constructed along the way, during the ongoing emotional journey of migration (Ryan, 2008). This paper is based on the premise that migrants' agency is significant for their conceptualizations of home, whether as a strategy from the outset, or as migrants' manage their emotional attachments to 'home' over time. Ambivalence with regard to 'home' then is reflective of the fluid nature of identity construction pro-

cesses, which change over time, but which are also affected by the spatial and concrete realities of the migration process.

2.3   Where is home: 'here' or 'there', both or neither?

Research on migrant transnationalism has produced a substantial body of work exploring the ways in which and the reasons why migrants' often remain active within transnational social fields spanning two or more societies and geographic locations. As a consequence, the idea that home may be 'here' or 'there', both or neither, is not new (Al Ali and Koser, 2002). Simultaneously, the conceptual implications of this realization are arguably not as well addressed yet, in the sense that understanding multiplicity of belonging is developing slowly. In the emerging literature on the interactions of transnationalism and integration (see e.g. Snel et al., 2006, Schans, 2009, Erdal and Oeppen, 2013) the fundamental question of whether an individual can really belong in more than one place is raised, and it is argued that belonging can be multiple, it is not an either 'here' or 'there' issue. This follows reasoning in research on forced migration, where naturalized assumptions about human beings as trees, belonging in one place only, have been questioned, challenging the view that mobility necessarily equates displacement or up-rootedness (Malkki, 1992).

While migration should always be a matter of free choice, it is important to acknowledge that human beings adapt, and may adapt in different ways, both depending on the structural opportunities and constraints, and on their own agency and resources to manage such adaptation. What is conceptually interesting is that some contemporary migrants today have the capacity and desire to retain dual ties and loyalties over time, neither following a classic assimilationist, nor ghettoization path, but rather embracing the opportunities that societal diversity opens up for, through sustaining dual ties over time.

Based on the growing interest in interactions between migrant transnationalism and integration processes, the question of *return intentions* has also been explored as a related factor (de Haas and Fokkema, 2011, Carling and Pettersen, in press (2014)). The question of *return intentions* is interesting conceptually, as it clearly highlights identity and belonging as important, but at the same time is also about rational migration decision-making: should I stay, or should I go? (Frye, 2012). At times answers to the question *'do you intend to return?'* relate to what migrants perceive as expectations with regard to integration processes in the country of settlement. For instance, a negative answer could be triggered if it is perceived that retaining the option of return open is not seen as compatible with

successful integration (Carling and Pettersen, in press (2014)). The interpretation of findings about the proportion of migrants in each category and who they are with regard to age, gender or reason for migration, is inherently tricky. Nevertheless, when exploring the question of return intentions, it is found that "attachments do not represent a zero-sum game: indeed, more than half of our sample have either weak attachments in both directions, or strong attachments in both directions ['here' and 'there']" (Carling and Pettersen, in press (2014):20). Findings from studies on the three-way-relationship between migrant transnationalism, integration and return intentions thus identify four possible options with regard to the question of locating 'home': it could be 'here' (e.g. in the country of settlement) or 'there' (e.g. in the country of origin), it could be 'both' (in the country of origin and settlement) or 'neither' (in the country of origin nor settlement).

2.4   Conceptualizing 'home' along four dimensions

Drawing on the literature on home, belonging and identity, the increasing attention paid to emotional dimensions of migrant transnationalism, and the interactions between transnationalism, integration and return considerations, this paper analyzes migrants' expressions about 'home' along four dimensions: the spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions.

There are important connections between these dimensions, but they are sufficiently distinct from one another to yield interesting analytical points independent of one another. The spatial dimension relates to the *geographic locations* that thoughts about home involve. Despite the fluid and hybrid conceptualizations of home in parts of the academic literature – home is very often associated with particular places and geographically located contexts. The temporal dimension relates to the differences that change *over time* can make for the ways in which home is reflected on, conceptualized and related to. Migration is for many a life-long journey, therefore life-cycle changes such as becoming an adult, establishing a family, the death of parents or spouse, the birth of own children or grandchildren, influence the ways in which home is conceptualized. The emotional dimension relates to the fact that home is often associated with *a sense of belonging and processes of identity construction*. These are emotional questions where subjective considerations, memories and imagination are important. Finally, the rational dimension relates to the fact that migrants' are rational decision-makers, who make choices about their lives and their mobility. These choices are based on the totality of migrants'

experiences and life-worlds, where economic considerations, mobility resources, and emotional dimensions come into play.

The following section introduces the data used in this paper, before providing the reasoning behind the inclusion of two distinctively different migrant groups: Pakistanis and Poles. The subsequent section presents the analysis of migrants' expressions about 'home', in the context of considerations about return migration.

3   Methods and empirical context

This paper is based on 38 semi-structured interviews with individuals and couples and 6 focus group discussions, involving a total of 75 migrants or descendants living in Norway. About half of these had Polish, and half Pakistani backgrounds. In both groups mainly migrants were included, with some descendants added, and in the Pakistani case in particular a large proportion of migrants who arrived in Norway as very young adults more than three decades ago. Children of migrants, born in Norway, here referred to as descendants, were included in order to expand the temporal continuum beyond the migrant generation. While descendants are themselves not migrants', their family history is one of migration, and of ties beyond the country of settlement, and including them therefore increases the pool of different experiences and reflections with regard to how and where 'home' is located. The total sample included about half-and-half men and women, and people ranging from their early 20s to early 70s, though the majority was between 30-50 years old. The sample also included diversity with regard to education and professional background, and geographic origin in Poland and in Pakistan, including smaller rural locations and urban centers.

Overall, the participants of Pakistani origin have spent a longer time in Norway, than participants from Poland. Among participants of Pakistani background most migrated to Norway in the 1970s, or joined spouses who arrived during this period, or are the children of such families. A few have arrived later, in the 1980s or 1990s, most often in relation to marriages. The group of Pakistani migrants' and descendants counts around 39 000 individuals. Among participants of Polish background a majority are post-accession migrants arriving in Norway since 2004, and a minority who have a longer migration history in Norway, most often since the 1980s. The group of Polish migrants and descendants, here the post-2004 migration constitutes the vast majority, is estimated to be more than 100 000 individuals.

Both interviews and focus groups were conducted either in informants' homes or in office spaces that were identified as neutral and suitable to the purpose. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to participation, and pseudonyms are used throughout where quotes from informants are cited. Interviews were conducted in Norwegian in the Pakistani case and in Polish in the Polish case. This was due to a combination of the informants' own linguistic skills, and those of the researcher. Since most informants in the Pakistani case had lived in Norway for a long time, they were able to communicate in Norwegian, and in a few instances interviews were conducted in connection with Norwegian classes were a requirement was that the interview was to be conducted in Norwegian. With regard to the Polish case, many informants had only lived in Norway for less than 5 to 8 years, so the researchers' fluency in Polish meant that conducting the interview in Polish was far more efficient.

3.1   Comparing Polish and Pakistani migrants?

This paper combines data from two distinctively different migrant groups in its exploration of 'home'. Pakistani and Polish migrants' in Norway are different with regard to the distance across which they have migrated, as well as the average length of stay in Norway. These differences are perceived to be of great significance, both among migrants' themselves and in the public eye. However, it may be argued that there are also some important similarities, in the sense that both migrant groups are predominantly labour migrants, where there have been a large proportion of men coming first, subsequently followed by their wives and families who have joined them in Norway. In both cases there are exceptions to these main patterns, yet it is important to explore these similarities with regard to labour migrant experiences.

As with the Pakistani migrants' arriving in Norway in the 1970s, the assumption with regard to Polish migrants arriving since the mid-2000s is that they are temporary migrants who will sooner or later return to Poland. The context of Polish migration in the post-accession period since 2004 is of course distinctive, in the sense of the open borders, enabling migrants to make decisions in their own time (Friberg, 2012). This context has led to conceptualization of these migration flows as 'liquid migration' following Bauman's notion of 'liquid modernity'(Engbersen and Snel, 2013), but also as 'incomplete migration', referring in particular to the fact that there is no planned end point for many people's migration projects (Okólski, 2012). Nevertheless, patterns to date do not suggest that return migration is any more the case among the bulk of Polish migrants who have settled down in

Norway, than it was three decades previously among Pakistani migrants. Yet, considerations about return migration are important for many recent migrants (Galasińska, 2010), and instances of return migration among Poles are occurring , sometimes resulting in re-migration (White, 2013). It is therefore of interest to explore the similarities and differences, with regard to conceptualizations of 'home', among two groups perceived to be so distinctively different based on particular characteristics, but who along other lines of comparison may be seen as fairly similar. While among Pakistani migrants' and descendants return migration is not very common, both sustained transnational ties, including transnational marriages, and the idea of the possibility of return, have been found to be significant (see e.g. Bolognani, 2014, Bolognani, 2007, Charsley, 2007, Rytter, 2010).

With regard to transnational ties and patterns of integration it is hard to compare these groups in a meaningful way, because of the difference in time spent in Norway. Another significant difference which challenges comparison is the fact that there is free mobility between Norway and Poland, whereas this is not the case between Norway and Pakistan, and the geographic distance itself makes an impact in terms of the prices and feasibility of travel. However, more than three quarters of Norwegian-Pakistanis hold Norwegian citizenship, and thus de facto have free mobility, so while this was a difference at the time of migration, in the present context this is less the case.

In terms of integration processes in Norway it is clear that migrants' from both groups experience a sense of being foreigners in Norway, but while the levels of discrimination may differ overall, importantly Pakistanis are culturally defined as Muslim and therefore experience more discrimination overall than a European migrant populations such as the Polish migrants (Erdal, 2013). In this article the data from Pakistani and Polish migrants' is analyzed together, thus shedding light on similarities and differences, but not aiming at structured comparison. The aim with this approach is also to contribute to the growing body of work which does not a priori assume national or ethnic origin to be *the* defining features of migrants' and descendants experiences (Wimmer and Schiller, 2002), but rather allowing for other shared experiences to take a more center-stage role.

4   Locating 'home': here, there, both or neither

Migrants' and descendants who participated in interviews and focus groups about considerations on return migration from Norway to their own or their parents country of origin were both directly and indirectly asked about where they would say 'home' is, through which their conceptualizations of 'home' emerged. The analysis includes participants' statements when directly asked about where they would say 'home' is, and reflections about 'home' which came up elsewhere during interviews and focus groups. 'Home' was often located in relation to the transnational social field, here in Norway or there in Poland or Pakistan, both or neither. The statements and reflections about 'home' are discussed thematically with regard to spatial, temporal, emotional and rational dimensions, with ambivalence as an intersecting dimension.

4.1   'Home is where we are all together'
Home in participants' responses is very often situated spatially in particular geographic locations. Frequently this is related to the physical presence of family in particular places, indicating how the concrete and spatial location of home, in many ways is an enabling factor for how 'home' is understood in an emotional or rational sense. The spatial location of home, the *where*, was a significant part of migrants' and descendants reflections about 'home':

> 'I always say that home is where we are all together, where our family is.' (Agnieszka, mid-40s, has lived in Norway for 6 years)[1]

The significance of *where* the immediate family is located is a theme which is reflected in return considerations, and which also becomes apparent with regard to how conceptualizations of 'home' change over time. Ali's statement below is reflective of the connections between 'home', identity and belonging which many participants relate to, and which are most frequently located at a national level in somewhat abstract terms, but which is simultaneously also about the physical location, locating 'home' spatially:

> 'When I've been thinking of the word "home" I've never thought of Pakistan like that. I'm thinking Norway, that here, that my home is here in a way, and I belong here. But I can't say I'm Norwegian and neither may I say that I'm Pakistani. So that's why the word we're using, "Norwegian-Pakistani", is in fact

very right. Because I feel like a Norwegian-Pakistani. It's like I'm originally Pakistani in a way, but I'm Norwegian-Pakistani. I'm in Norway and Norway is my home now. But it's sure that I'll have some cultural values from Pakistan and especially the religion you know… that I not necessarily have got directly from Pakistan but Islam is the main religion in Pakistan. So it becomes a part of it. But home is like I'm only thinking Norway. It's where we are and it's where we're going to stay.' (Ali, late 30s, has lived in Norway for most of his life)

Ali's statement also refers to culture and religion, indicating that despite the fact that Norway is home, it is somehow not entirely 'Norwegian' to be a Muslim. Therefore Ali finds it useful to describe himself with a hyphenated identity, as Norwegian-Pakistani. This is an interesting conceptualization, in a context where 'home' is so clearly is located spatially in Norway, yet belonging remains transnational and dual. It is also reflective of the importance of context, in Norway the hyphenated label Norwegian-Pakistani is generally accepted, including by Norwegian-Pakistanis themselves, whereas hyphenated identities are viewed differently in other contexts (see e.g. Ali and Sonn, 2010).

The spatial dimension of belonging is perhaps rarely as clear as in the question about where a person is buried, or 'the final return migration' (for an in-depth discussion in the Norwegian-Pakistani case see Døving, 2009, or for a contrasting perspective on Ghana see Mazzucato et al., 2006). Nabeel discusses his experiences with regard to the burial of his parents:

‘She [my mother] missed Pakistan. She liked it and it was their home country. When they passed away I buried both of them here [in Norway]. My mum died first and my dad wanted to bury her in Pakistan, but for me it was like, to move my mum to a foreign place, which I didn't have any connection to. She died pretty early and pretty young, and my children, their grandchildren and my brothers' children, they protested. They fell apart by the fact that their grandmother was about to be buried in a foreign place where they didn't even want to go. And then my father gave in.' (Nabeel, late 30s, has lived in Norway for most of his life)

Nabeel's mother was a Pakistani migrant in the 1970s and lived in Norway most of her adult life, raising her children in Norway. But for her 'home' was always in Pakistan. When she died her husband wanted to bury her at 'home', however, the family in Norway protested. The grandchildren's attachment to her was very strong, and they wanted her close by, not somewhere they felt was 'foreign'. The spatial location of 'home' thus

changed over time, during the course of a single generation. With regard to the interactions of migrant transnationalism, integration and considerations of return, the theme of final returns for burials is significant, in the sense that it is illustrative of how spatial locations of home change over time, and how dual ties during life necessarily lead to a decision about 'here' *or* 'there', when a decision about the place of burial has to be made.

4.2   'The rose today will not smell the same way as it did then'

Where and what is conceptualized as 'home' changes over time, both with regard to different life-stages, and with regard to the passage of time itself. Maria's reflection below is illustrative of reflection processes which many migrants' experience over time:

> 'For some time I felt like I was more at home in Poland… later on, I had a period where I didn't feel at home in either of the places because I was losing contact with the reality there and I didn't feel at home there and at the same time I hadn't started feeling at home here yet… I was still feeling like a stranger here, but now I don't know where I feel more at home… I feel at home here and there. When I'm in Poland, I feel at home, I don't feel like a stranger there… I may not know how everything works, but I find out quickly enough and it's not a big effort to orientate myself about things there… And here I also get orientated about what I need to know, so I feel like a world citizen [laughing]… no, really, I feel far better now both in Norway and in Poland, after all those years.' (Maria, mid-40s, has lived in Norway for 15 years)

Maria's statement moves between all four categories identified as possible locations of home: here or there, both or neither. At the time of the interview she is comfortable with describing 'home' as both here and there, and perhaps also beyond these two geographic locations, in what she describes as being a 'world citizen'. Associations to aspects of 'cosmopolitanism' are not unusual when migrants' discuss 'home' and belonging, in particular when the option of multiple belonging is articulated (Werbner, 1999, Vertovec and Cohen, 2002). In this context the dual nature of 'home' is clearly positive and stated in assertive terms, although it is at the same time indicative of the presence of ambivalence with regard to 'home'.

Zofia touches on further dimensions of change over time in her own thinking about 'home', which many migrants' acknowledge:

'… all of this is inside you and it is not that you have to go back, to touch this, because the things you miss are not there anymore. There will be something different. The rose today will not smell the same way as it did then, in my father's garden. You know… the sprinkle of dew on the flower that is yellowish like cream, with pink edges. That smell. Now there are not roses like that anymore.' (Zofia, early 60s, has lived in Norway for more than thirty years)

She describes how attachment to 'home' changes over time, but is also conditioned by spatial distance. Her reference to her father's garden is reflective of the significance of 'home' as dwelling place – in this case the childhood home – but also of the interconnections of thinking about 'home' and your family. As parents pass away, the 'home' which once existed is no more, and becomes part of your memories and continues to live in the imagination (for a discussionon belonging and memory in relation to artefacts in British Asian homes see Tolia-Kelly, 2004). Zofia clearly acknowledges these more emotional aspects of her thinking about 'home', while indicating a rational approach to how this is handled, in saying that: «*the things you miss are not there anymore*». In her case then, considerations about return migration become less relevant, as what you longed for no longer exists.

The realization that things are changing with regard to where 'home' is, and how the possibility of return migration is seen, are often triggered by visits to the country of origin (see also for the Afghan case Oeppen, 2013), as indicated by Masooda:

'In recent years we've been staying for only 3 weeks [on holiday in Pakistan]. We figured out that it's enough… because after 2 weeks you start missing home. [laughing]. I've got my home here [in Norway]. Life has moved on there as well, so it's not the same Pakistan that I left. Everybody has got their own homes and we are their guests, and for how long can you be a guest?' (…) it's not the same Pakistan that I missed. It's completely different because I start to get "oh, I want to go home to my own kitchen, I don't want to be a guest anymore". (…) And that's here in Norway, and that's why, and not just the house itself which is home, home is Norway.' (Masooda, late-40s, has lived in Norway for more than twenty years)

Masooda's reflections' on 'home' are explored through her experience with visits to Pakistan. The nature of holidays in Pakistan has changed over time, as she and her family have increasingly felt that 'home' is Norway.

She refers to feeling like a guest, and her statement resonates with Zofia's reflections about the changes occurring in what used to be 'home'. In Masooda's words: "*it's not the same Pakistan that I missed*". The realization is that 'home' is now in Norway, but at the same time, the change over time is not something which is easy, and there is clear sense of ambivalence in statements about 'home' and temporal changes.

Change over time in relation to the way in which migrants think about 'home' is a key dimension of their reflections about home. The fact that 'home' is something which can change over time – in different ways for different individuals – is an important realization with regard to understanding the interactions of migrant transnationalism, integration and considerations of return. It clearly demonstrates the need for caution in taking migrants' return intention statements at face value in terms of being related to migration-decision making. Rather, the significance of change over time is also an important reminder about the spatial dimensions of 'home' which may be located both 'here' and/or 'there', but also for some perhaps in neither location, as their migration experience may leave a sense of ambivalence with regard to 'home' and belonging.

4.3   'This is where my heart beats more quickly'

Emotional dimensions of migrants' expressions about home are often spatially located and intertwined with identity-construction. There are clear differences between descendants or those who migrated as children, and those who are more recent migrants, underlining the importance of change over time. This does, however, not indicate a linear process which all migrants follow, as will be discussed in relation to the below statements. For Iza, 'home' is clearly associated with identity, and is an emotional matter, but at the same time she has a rational realization about where the practical home now is located:

> 'I am a Pole and I will always be a Pole because this is where my roots are. But my home is in Norway because I live here and whenever I go on holidays and I'm returning home, it's Norway I'm thinking about… About my little nest, about my bed, about my shower… this is my home, this is where I feel safe and this is where my family is, my closest ones, my children and the man I love. But I am a Pole and I will never change that, I will never reject that. Poland is my fatherland (ojczyzna) and it will always stay this way.' (Iza, mid-30s, has lived in Norway for eight years)

Iza's statement echoes the duality of home for many migrants, it is 'there' in an emotional sense, often with regard to identity-construction, but in a practical sense, 'home' is here (Al Ali and Koser, 2002). She also refers to where her family is as a key consideration: where her closest family is – that is where home is. Yet, initially she also has to identify herself clearly at a more abstract level, saying that "I am a Pole and I will always be a Pole because this is where my roots are." Her statement reflects the ambivalence that emotional and practical aspects of 'home' often trigger, her belonging remains dual, both 'here' and 'there'. Ala's statement below is a good example of how Iza's logic is turned around, when circumstances are different:

> 'I would have to say Poland. This is where my heart beats more quickly. Even though I met wonderful people here [in Norway], many friends… but my family is in Poland. (Ala, early-30s, has lived in Norway for ten years)

Ala is single and for her this is defining for how she relates to 'home'. Her family are her parents and siblings, and they are all in Poland, therefore she feels that Poland is 'home', despite the fact that she has a successful career, working within her own profession in Norway. She expresses this in a very emotional manner, talking about how her "heart beats more quickly", and these emotions are also clearly translated into active plans for return migration. The emotional nature of the question about 'home' is also echoed by Zaheer:

> 'I don't know how to answer that question because I have these many… eh… I've lived in three-four countries and then I've good memories and there's things that I like and things that I don't like and then I'm here [in Norway] mostly because my… or I moved back because of my family.' (Zaheer, mid-30s, complex migration-trajectory between Pakistan-Norway-third countries)

The question about 'home' is very emotional for Zaheer, and it is a question he comes back to throughout the interview. The emotional dimensions are intertwined with memories of the past, as reflected in Zofia and Masooda's statements, where 'home' is something immaterial, something in your imagination. Zaheer is very ambivalent about home and belonging. He is in Norway because of his family, but he does not feel at home in Norway. He has moved around between Norway, Pakistan, Canada, Sweden and Denmark since he was a child, and as a contrast to Maria does not feel cosmopolitan, but rather at loss about where, if anywhere, he can belong.

In Zaheer's case the question of home and belonging raises negative emotions, where ambivalence is more a challenge than a resource. His case is specific due to the multiple migrations in his life, yet it points to the challenges which are also inherent to a reality where some migrants may feel a sense of 'home' here, there or both – while others do not feel at 'home' anywhere. This can raise particular questions about the ways in which integration processes are managed, both by migrants themselves, and by authorities, but it certainly also raises questions about the ways in which we conceptualize return migration in very spatial terms. The case of the return of Chinese Koreans to South Korea, and experiences of alienation, illustrates the sometimes counterintuitive processual nature of developments related to belonging (Song, 2009), also found among expats returning to South Africa (Steyn and Grant, 2007). In Zaheer's case there is nowhere to 'return' to, despite the fact that he may not feel at 'home' in Norway. As for so many of the informants, the crucial point nonetheless, remains where your closest family is located, for practical purposes, this is 'home'.

4.4 'But I have established, in my thoughts, it is in Norway, Oslo, that is my home'

Migrants' expressions about 'home' reflect their rational thinking and decision-making, which is encompassed in the complex location of 'home' spatially, temporally and emotionally. Abdul's statement reflects the matter-of-factedness of many of these expressions:

> 'I've learned Norwegian well and adapted well here, but Norwegian isn't my mother tongue, I've learnt it as a foreign language, and the same for the culture. So personally I will always feel divided. But on the other side, now I've lived here 2/3 of my life here, and there it's 1/3, and then it will be 3/4 and 1/4, and you're affected by that too…' (Abdul, late 40s, has lived in Norway for nearly thirty years)

His statement is very rational in dividing up his life between Norway and Pakistan and pointing to how relative time spent in each country also changes over time. Simultaneously, he points to an objective characteristic, his mother tongue, which is not Norwegian. His conclusion is that he will always feel belonging to both Pakistan and Norway, personally and culturally. But at the same time he acknowledges the changes that occur over time, even with regard to the personal or cultural spheres. He establishes home at the local level, as 'here', and it is a conscious deci-

sion, which can be linked to the inherent ambivalence that Abdul experiences with regard to what he describes as feeling "divided". His way of managing where 'home' is, seems to be a good example of the kinds of emotional management that many migrants rationally engage in (Ho, 2009).

Maryam's statement is another example of what may be seen as emotional management with regard to issues of 'home', identity and belonging in considerations of return migration:

> 'Even if I wear Pakistani clothes, with hijab and all of that, I would still say that I have a Norwegian… I live in a Norwegian society. This is my home. When I visit Pakistan, then I feel that I am there visiting. I am a foreigner. (…) And then I think… foreigners in Pakistan, foreigners in Norway, what is our home? But I have established, in my thoughts it is in Norway, Oslo, that is my home.'
> (Maryam, late-40s, has lived in Norway for twenty-five years)

The visit to Pakistan is important for Maryam's reflections about return migration, and where 'home' is located, like it is for Masooda. In Maryam's case the ambivalence of realizing that you do not belong fully, neither here, nor there, is very clear. Simultaneously, there is also an active decision, for her 'home' is here, in Norway, in Oslo. Her ambivalence with regard to belonging, neither here, nor there, is interesting in that it raises an important conceptual point with regard to interactions of transnationalism and integration in migrant settlement societies. While it is acknowledged that integration and transnationalism are not a zero-sum game, the ways in which migrants can actually belong both here and there, practically in the sense of dual citizenship[2], but also at an emotional and identificational level in terms of belonging to two nations remains under-conceptualized. Despite the fact that nations are increasingly in social scientific literature seen as constructed, the common-knowledge perspective seems to counter this, as national sentiments continue to live on, constructed or not. An interesting dimension of this is that this seems to be as much the case in the contexts of emigration. While migrant sending countries are adopting policies to attract migrant investments and remittances, often entailing the option of dual citizenship, migrants' sense of feeling foreign in their countries of origin is less in focus, and conceptualizations of belonging often remain essentialist.

5   Conclusion

Research on migrant transnationalism over the past two decades has demonstrated that 'home' is not necessarily either here, or there in the transnational social field, but rather that it might be both simultaneously, or neither. However, the realization that home may be located in one or more, or less places, also has conceptual implications. When the emerging literature on integration and migrant transnationalism also finds that it is possible to belong to more than one place or country simultaneously, what are the implications for conceptualizations of belonging?

Analysis of migrants' expressions about 'home' in the context of considerations about return migration, *along spatial, temporal, emotional* and *rational* dimensions, is an effort to try to unpack the multiplicity of belonging within the transnational social field, without falling into the trap of relativizing experiences and identities which have highly located manifestations. It is found that migrants' return considerations are clearly ambivalent, and they change over time. Furthermore, return considerations frequently have little to do with actual return plans – and all the more to do with negotiations of belonging in the transnational social field. The spatial focus allows for the salience of particular places – concrete, imagined or remembered to come to the fore. By focusing on the temporal, the changeability and processual nature of belonging is highlighted. Bringing emotions to the center of the analysis reveals the very human nature of belonging as something relational, where close family and significant others always have an important albeit varying role. Finally, through emphasizing the rational perspectives on belonging, migrants' agency is acknowledged, and the notion of belonging as something which is only fluid and abstract, is rejected.

Migrants' and descendants return considerations – and in particular their return intentions – should be understood as much as identification markers and expressions about belonging, as statements about a potential future return migration. As such, return intentions – and migrants' broad considerations about settlement vs. return – seem to speak to the center of ongoing discussions about the interactions of migrant transnationalism and integration.

With regard to conceptualizations of 'home' migrants statements reflect the tension which is present in the literature: between the fluid and the concrete, the emotional and the practical. The example of where elderly migrants' are buried is a point in case, where decisions about a final 'home' have to be made – it is either 'here' or 'there' – and despite dual ties, there

can be a single grave. In the case discussed, family considerations across three generations were decisive; indicating the great importance of families with regard to where and how 'home' is conceptualized. While 'home' may be located – in the imagination and heart, or even in practice – in multiple places, belonging is often associated with ambivalence, both among individuals, and within families.

Finally, this paper has brought together data from what could be perceived to be two quite distinctively different migrant groups, of Pakistani and Polish backgrounds, living in Norway. Through the analysis it has become apparent that there are more similarities than differences between the two groups, when expressions about 'home' are considered. One clear difference is the median length of stay between the two groups, which would at a group level no doubt produce important differences. But at the individual level, when length of stay is taken into account in the analysis of statements, it seems that the similarities in terms of the ways in which migrants' think about and conceptualize home, are much greater than the differences.

For many migrants, both with Pakistani and Polish backgrounds, a dual sense of belonging and identity continues, though 'home' in the practical sense more and more is aligned to where you live your everyday life and where your family is located. The differences between the two groups which were expected, among other as the Pakistanis are predominantly a Muslim group, which gets a lot of attention in Norway, were surprisingly small, in the particular context of questions about considerations about return migration.

For some migrants' there is a split between an abstract sense of home – and a more practical sense of home, necessitated by the simultaneity of transnational involvement and integration processes. Some manage this emotionally as a resource, while others experience it as a challenge, indicating the importance of acknowledging both the role of ambivalence and of agency with regard to migrants' identity-construction, sense of belonging and conceptualizations of 'home'. Ambivalence and agency, at the intersection of spatial, temporal, emotional and rational considerations, play a role in explaining why some migrants' see 'home' as here, others as there, and yet others as both or, as neither.

Notes

1. All names are pseudonyms. The article includes quotes from both Pakistani and Polish migrants, with differing migration histories, and includes quotes from both men and women, and as such reflects the data set as a whole.
2. Dual citizenship is not permitted (as a rule) in Norway, although exceptions and loopholes exist.

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