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Practices of Homing: How People with Temporary Living Arrangements Create Home(s) Through Practices

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ABSTRACT

The concept of home is complex and multi-layered, with overlapping meanings that are often used interchangeably. Following a processual understanding of home, I focus on homing as practices that take place in everyday life and are not spatially limited to the dwelling. Specifically, I am interested in a heterogeneous group of temporary residents who live in cities for a limited period of time. Drawing on biographical interviews, I illustrate how temporary residents create places of belonging and construct their homes. Temporary residents use diverse homing practices to turn their dwelling into a home despite the limited duration of their presence. In addition to one's own place of dwelling, other places of well-being are established that serve as either supplementary or substitute home-like settings. In this context, other persons take a predominant role, so that in addition to home as places and practices, a social conceptualization of home is proposed.

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Introduction

Housing is often perceived as permanent, not only in everyday life but also from an academic perspective. However, in the face of increasing mobility and individualization in many social contexts, temporary living arrangements are no longer a rare phenomenon. Postmodern living and working environments with end-standardized rhythms lead to individualized and flexibilized lifestyles that are not conceived as permanent but often as temporary. Despite growing interest in the nexus of home and temporality, the processes and practices of belonging and home of temporary residents in cities have been relatively neglected as objects of research.

In an effort to fill this gap, I investigate how homing practices enable us to understand the manifold ways temporary residents, in particular, create and sustain their homes in cities using everyday practices and routines. After outlining the literature on home and specifying why it is essential to focus specifically on the practices of homing, I briefly review research from the nexus of temporality and home. Following this, I concretize the research aim and describe the methodology used. I adopted a qualitative approach, conducting interviews with temporary residents in the two German metropolitan areas

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of Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig. In presenting the findings, I shed light on four interrelated topics: (1) From the first arrival in the city, which is linked to practices of walking and exploring one's surroundings; (2) practices of homing in the microscale of one's own home; (3) active practices of finding other places of well-being in the city; and (4) like-minded people that contribute to feelings of home. Finally, the concluding discussion illustrates that places, materiality, and, above all, attachments to people are decisive for the creation of one's notion of home.

Home – Practices of Homing

Home is a concept that individuals frequently refer to in their everyday life, often without reflecting on its use (Nowicka 2007). The conceptualization of home within the social sciences has grown significantly since the 1990s (Després 1991; Dowling and Mee 2007; Mallett 2004; Moore 2000; Somerville 1997). Common to many publications, despite different backgrounds and focuses, is that home is a complex, multi-faceted, and multi-layered concept whose meanings overlap and are often used interchangeably (Coolen and Meesters 2012). Home can be understood in many ways: spatially, socially, psychologically, and emotionally (Easthope 2004). Home is associated with different attributes, such as security in the sense of personal protection and integrity, familiarity in the emotional and cognitive sense, and control in the sense of autonomy in using a particular place (Boccagni 2017). It is common to speak of home in the singular (*the* home, *a* home), but, as Winther points out, "home can be many places and exists without walls, without localities, or an address" (2009, 51). Home can be the place where one lives or the city to which one feels a sense of belonging, as well as one's place of origin. Home can thus be perceived across different scales, from the domestic scale to neighbourhoods, regions, or even virtual spaces (Blunt and Dowling 2022). In research, a distinction has often been made between home in the domestic sphere and home in the city. An approach labelled "home-city geographies" breaks down the binary between city life and home life in favour of a broader relationship between dwelling and mobility (Blunt and Dowling 2022; Blunt and Sheringham 2019). People often develop a variety of feelings of home for differently scaled places. These attachments can vary in strength and depend on temporal and social circumstances (Boccagni and Kusenbach 2020).

Rather than defining the essence of home, phenomenological approaches focus on the diverse ways people "make", "do", and feel at home (Mallett 2004). Home-making can be seen as a significant instance of place-making, which is the individual or collective process and practice of creating and appropriating meaningful places and thus creating attachments to those places (Bruns and Daniel 2019). This can be understood as the process of turning space into place, following the debate about space and place (Tuan 2016). Home-making can be conceptualized in parallel with this understanding as a process of turning the dwelling into home. In recent literature, the concept of home-making has been used to explore how a sense of home is negotiated and mediated through practices (Boccagni 2022). By using the term "home-making practices", Blunt and Dowling (2022) emphasize how home is materially and socially created, a notion that resonates with Ratnam's (2018) use of the terminology "home building practices". In the last few years, an increasing number of studies within the social science, especially those focusing on mobility and migration research, have addressed the topic of "homing" (Andersen and Pedersen 2018;

Boccagni 2017, 2022; Kim and Smets 2020; O'Connor 2021). Homing, as a verbification of the noun home, refers to a process that is never completed and is, in contrast to the concept of home-making, not tied to a specific place (Boccagni 2022; Winther 2009). Following Winther (2009, 64) describes this as "practising, doing, and being embodied at home". Specifically, homing illuminates the interplay and tensions between home as experienced and home as an aspiration (Boccagni 2022).

The process and practices of homing take place in everyday life. Social practices locate social phenomena in particular situations and emphasize the role of physical activity in its material environment for the constitution of social reality (Reda and Simon 2019). In this context, social practices are understood as a "set of doings and sayings" and, thus, "a 'bundle' of activities (. . .), an organized nexus of actions" (Schatzki 2002, 71), that include both, bodily and mental activities (Reckwitz 2002, 249). Practices depend on the social context in which they occur and must be considered in relation to each other (Schäfer 2016). Although practices are often "a routinized type of behaviour" (Reckwitz 2002, 249), they may also be changeable and characterized by a certain degree of openness (Baumann, Lahr-Kurten, and Winkler 2021). Practice theory discusses different interrelated elements of practices: Materialities or "using particular things in a certain way" (Reckwitz 2002, 252), competences or know-how, meanings as well as the individual as carrier of practices (Reckwitz 2002, 2003; Shove et al. 2012). Schatzki (2019) describes that practices are anchored in place, with the dwelling being the most important place. Hence, everyday practices are relevant for housing studies, which often investigate consumption practices within the dwelling, though practices beyond the dwelling matter in this context too (Clapham 2023, 2024).

Temporality of Living – Emotional Attachments

In my study, I focused on people with temporary living arrangements, referred to here as temporary residents. While temporary housing is a common term in the real estate industry for short to mid-term rentals (Apartment service Consulting 2020), the term has been largely neglected in debates within the social sciences. For the purposes of my study, I establish a wider definition of temporary living, in accordance with the Oxford dictionary's definition of the term "temporary – lasting for a limited time", whereby temporary residents encompass a heterogeneous group of people who live in cities for a limited period of time. I understand two general types of temporary living arrangements, which can be differentiated by incorporating the concept of multi-locality. The term multi-local refers to living situations that involve several residences that are frequented in alternating periods of time (Weichhart 2009), thus resulting in time-limited, often rhythmic (weekly, monthly, seasonal) stays in cities. The second residence can also be located across national borders (trans-local).

As a first type of temporary living, I refer to people as temporary residents who reside in only one place of residence, referred to as mono-local, but their stay in the city is foreseeably limited. The duration of stays can range from a few months to several years. I do not determine the temporal scope of temporariness, but rather allow this to be determined by the people interviewed, an aspect that is elaborated in the methods section. The second type of temporary living arrangements includes people who have multiple residences, referred to as multi-local, which also results in absences and

presences in the respective cities. Temporary living arrangements can be motivated by various reasons, such as work, leisure or lifestyle. My focus lays on work-induced temporary arrangements, which, however, also include a wide range of work biographies – from precarious employment to expatriates and executive-level international employees – resulting in different perceptions of voluntariness and precariousness.

Whether and to what extent people with temporary living arrangements can develop attachments to places has so far been investigated primarily through concepts such as place attachment and belonging. Previous research has associated place attachment with permanence in one place, presuming that the relationship with a given place deepens over the duration of residence (i.e. establishing one's "roots") (e.g. Gustafson 2001; Lewicka 2005, 2010). At the same time, the literature assumes that mobile people in an increasingly globalized world can develop such bonds only to a limited extent (Petzold 2013). This is contrasted by the argument that mobile people positively value and develop attachments to places on the move, which are referred to as "routes" (Gustafson 2001, 2009). In addition to mobile forms of belonging, some authors have proposed that mobile people see a particularly strong need to develop local forms of belonging (e.g. neighbourhoods) (Arp Fallov, Jørgensen, and Knudsen 2013). Empirical studies have shown that multi-locality and the development of local identifications are not contradictory, as people living in such multi-local arrangements can develop place attachments to several places (Hilti 2013; Nadler 2014; Williams and Patten 2006). Different identification types (Petzhold 2013) or lifeworlds (Hilti 2013) can be discerned, which are characterized by a hierarchy of places and different weak or strong ties to places of residence or in-between places, including places of routinized travel (Nadler 2014).

Prominent in academic debates explicitly addressing the topic of home and temporality are studies on (transnational) migration and the concept of home (Boccagni 2017; Cassiman 2008; Miranda Nieto, Massa, and Bonfanti 2020; Ralph and Staeheli 2011). Studies on migration and emotional attachment to places have shown that more than one attachment to a place that is perceived as home can exist (Blunt and Dowling 2022). Furthermore, the multi-scalar nature of home clearly emerges when looking at transnational migration (home, homeland). Different scales, both mobile and located, fluid and fixed, can be identified in the construction of the concept of home (Blunt and Dowling 2022; Ralph and Staeheli 2011). Studies focusing on highly mobile professionals have shown that home is not perceived as a fixed place but rather as a set of relationships with both people (humans) and things (non-humans), with notions of home thus extending beyond single locations to transnational networks (Nowicka 2007). Studies on temporality and home in the domestic context have shown that everyday rhythms and routines, as well as pasts, memories and future hopes, influence the perception of home (Blunt, Laing Ebbensgaard, and Sheringham 2021). It is also known from migration research that things and materiality play an important role in developing a sense of home (Blunt and Dowling 2022).

Despite the increasing prevalence of research revolving around notions of home and temporality, there are still deficiencies in these debates in several aspects. For instance, the vast majority of work in this vein almost exclusively focuses on transnational migration while neglecting the impact of intranational migration and small-scale moves. Moreover, the literature often overlooks questions regarding the impact of temporary living arrangements on the attachment to the city and feelings of home. Moreover, it has

rarely been examined, as Blunt and Sheringham (2019) suggest, to take the domestic home and the home in the city together as a conceptual framework. Furthermore, specific practices of homing have also been considered only in a few studies and to a limited extent among very specific groups. Focusing on the practices of homing, is particularly promising in the case of temporary residents, whose frequent moves can be expected to result in fluid and dynamic homing practices that can be reflected in everyday life.

In order to bridge this research gap, I examine the extent to which temporary residents develop feelings of home despite the limited time they spend in cities. In doing so, I focus on the various ways temporary residents create and sustain their homes on different scales, from the dwelling to the city, using everyday practices of homing. In this context, I explore the possibilities and constraints of homing practices that different temporary arrangements might entail. Furthermore, the question arises as to what extent homing practices are differentiated among a heterogeneous group of temporary residents with varying durations, family constellations, and financial resources

Methods

A qualitative approach was adopted to gain insights into individuals' temporary living arrangements and practices of homing. This paper draws on in-depth interviews conducted between 2022 and 2023 in the two German metropolitan areas of Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig. The cities were selected because a high number of temporary residents with different work biographies and lifestyles were expected. This expectation was influenced by various factors, including the size of the city, the dynamics of the city, the high fluctuation on the housing market, the presence of universities and various (international) companies.

With the help of a postcard enclosed with a preceding quantitative survey conducted by others in the research team (for further details reference will be added after acceptance), potential interviewees were able to contact me voluntarily for a further interview. The selection of the target group of temporary residents consequently resulted from self-attribution: "I live here temporarily or have another residence in another place", a statement to which the respondents agreed by returning the postcard. To increase the motivation, a compensation of 10€ was offered in acknowledgement of their contribution to the study.

Overall, 49 interviews were conducted, among which were 23 mono-local (with one residence) and 26 multi-local (with more than one residence) residents. Out of the interviews, 35 were conducted in person and 14 via video conference. The sample consisted of 15 women and 34 men with different occupational statuses ranging from students/trainees, craftsmen, and pilots to CEOs of international companies. The interviewees also had various household constellations (some were single while others were living with their partner and children) and housing types (ranging from small, rented apartments to single-family houses). This heterogeneous group was deliberately chosen due to the great diversity in temporary living arrangements among its members, each of whom shares the commonality of temporarily staying in the cities studied.

The initial question when identifying and researching practices is about the outcome (Clapham 2023). As this is the investigation of homing practices that are difficult or impossible to identify as such during observations, I decided to use qualitative interviews.

Compared to ethnographic observations, interviews had the advantage of revealing individual meanings of the practices as well as competences and constraints (Wenzl et al. 2019). The qualitative interviews were structured using two visual methods. The first was a timeline on which one's residential and working biography could be drawn in the course of the interview, while the second was a city map on which everyday and feel-good places were mapped. The first part of the interview, in particular, was a structured narrative in the form of a biographical interview (Schütze 1983). Interviews were conducted in both English and German and lasted between 25 and 80 minutes. All interviews were recorded with the participant's permission and then transcribed and analysed using a coding process. The coding process in this research is based on the concept of "theoretical coding" by Glaser and Strauss (2008), which was developed in the framework of grounded theory. Coding and analysis were conducted using MaxQDA, a software that supports qualitative data analysis. The participants are referred to with a pseudonym in the excerpts below. All German quotes have been translated into English. The interview partners are presented in Table 1, which lists their relevant characteristics.

Findings

The findings presented in the following aim to answer the question of how a heterogeneous group of people with temporary living arrangements creates and sustains their homes through practices of homing. Practices of homing are understood as everyday practices of feeling at home, which both take place in everyday life and constitute it and consist of different activities that are used to appropriate places as homes. In order to reflect the processual understanding of home (Boccagni 2022), the interviews focused both on arriving in a city and everyday life within it, as well as future prospects. Which practices do temporary residents use to create their homes? Which practices of homing are used to maintain it? And what ideas about the future of home shape the practices of homing?

In order to reflect the interplay between home in the domestic and home in the city and because the multi-scalar nature of home has been identified as being particularly important in the study of home and migration (Blunt and Dowling 2022), this factored heavily into the following analysis. In this context, it is not necessarily the scales of home that play a significant role but rather the scales at which homing practices are realized, encompassing one's own dwelling, their neighbourhood, specific places in the city, or even the region as a whole.

In order to place the homing practices of the temporary residents in a larger context, it is essential to understand their reasons for and perceptions of the temporary arrangement. Although the majority justified their arrangement, whether mono or multi-local, with the work arrangement or, in the case of younger interviewees, with their studies or apprenticeship, the perception of the arrangements varies widely. While most of interviewees see the arrangement as a voluntary decision, a minority see themselves as being subject to external pressure due to their work. The constraints and possibilities associated with the temporary arrangement differ particularly in terms of age, job situation, financial situation, family constellation, mono- or multi-locality, and duration of residence. I estimated the financial situation of each participant based on the wage class of their job (according to Bundesagentur für Arbeit [Federal Employment Agency] 2021; ILO

Table 1. Temporary residents interviewed and characteristics.

Name	Sex	City	Multi-local	Age Group	Current Occupation	Family
Vanessa	F	Frankfurt	Yes	18–24	Business Student	No
Harry	M	Frankfurt	Yes	25–34	First Officer (Logistic)	Yes (.)
Benjamin	M	Frankfurt*	Yes	35–44	Research Assistant	Yes (.)
Tanja	F	Frankfurt*	Yes	35–44	Manager (Furniture)	Yes
Sascha	M	Frankfurt*	Yes	35–44	Research Assistant	Yes (.)
Stefan	M	Frankfurt	Yes	45–54	Manager (Auditing)	No
Hermann	M	Frankfurt	Yes	55–64	Librarian (Counselling)	Yes+
Dieter	M	Frankfurt*	Yes	55–64	Managing Director (Bank)	Yes (.)
Bjarne	M	Frankfurt*	Yes	55–64	IT Professional	Yes+
Hans	M	Frankfurt	Yes	55–64	Professional (Publisher)	No
Andrea	F	Frankfurt	Yes	55–64	Professional (Real Estate)	Yes
Julian	M	Frankfurt	No	18–24	Professional (Railway)	No
Laura	F	Frankfurt	No	18–24	Business Student	No
Finn	M	Frankfurt	No	18–24	Medicine Student	No
Vivien	F	Frankfurt	No	25–34	Controlling (Bank)	Yes (.)
Mark	M	Frankfurt	No	25–34	Research Assistant	No
Yasmin	F	Frankfurt	No	25–34	Professional (Consulting)	No
Theresa	F	Frankfurt*	No	25–34	Intern (Parish)	No
Amir	M	Frankfurt	No	35–44	Job Seeker (Security Service)	Yes+ (.)
Reza	M	Frankfurt	No	35–44	Postdoc	No
Jens	M	Frankfurt*	No	45–54	HR Professional (Bank)	Yes
Thorsten	M	Frankfurt*	No	45–54	Managing Director (Consulting)	Yes (.)
Volker	M	Frankfurt*	No	55–64	Retired (Craftsman)	Yes (.)
Reinhard	M	Frankfurt*	No	65–74	Travel Agent	Yes (.)
Nina	F	Leipzig	Yes	18–24	Pharmacy Student	Yes
Yannik	M	Leipzig	Yes	25–34	Manager (IT Start-up)	No
Nadine	F	Leipzig	Yes	35–44	HR Professional (Logistic)	Yes
Chirstoph	M	Leipzig*	Yes	35–44	Pilot (Logistic)	Yes
Sarah	F	Leipzig*	Yes	35–44	Manager (Real Estate)	Yes+
Joachim	M	Leipzig	Yes	35–44	Teacher (Vocational School)	Yes
Tom	M	Leipzig	Yes	35–45	Research Assistant	Yes
Robert	M	Leipzig	Yes	45–54	Manager (Railway)	Yes+
Birgit	F	Leipzig	Yes	45–54	Professional (Railway)	No
Steffen	M	Leipzig	Yes	45–54	Pilot (Logistic)	Yes+
Holger	M	Leipzig*	Yes	45–54	Managing Director (IT)	Yes+
Mario	M	Leipzig	Yes	45–54	Manager (Utility Service Provider)	Yes+
Ralf	M	Leipzig	Yes	45–54	Managing Director (Construction)	Yes+
Andreas	M	Leipzig	Yes	45–55	Historian (Museum)	Yes+ (.)
Ulrike	F	Leipzig	Yes	55–64	Judge	Yes+
Manfred	M	Leipzig	Yes	65–74	Retired (Project Management)	Yes (.)
Ulrich	M	Leipzig	Yes	65–74	Retired, (Lawyer)	Yes+ (.)
Niklas	M	Leipzig*	No	18–24	Trainee (Hospital)	No
Linus	M	Leipzig	No	25–34	Craftsman (Instrument manufacture)	Yes
Lena	F	Leipzig	No	25–34	Analyst (Production)	Yes (.)
Jan	M	Leipzig	No	35–44	IT Professional	No
Ansgar	M	Leipzig	No	35–44	Craftsman (Instrument Manufacture)	No
Christiane	F	Leipzig	No	35–44	Manager (IT)	Yes+ (.)
Sebastian	M	Leipzig*	No	35–44	Teacher (Special school)	Yes
Günter	M	Leipzig	No	65–74	Retired (University Professor)	Yes+

Notes.
City: * Municipality in the metropolitan area of Frankfurt/Leipzig.
Family: Yes=Partnership, Yes+=Partnership and children, (.)= Family is in Frankfurt/Leipzig.

International Labour Organization 2023) and taking into account the economic sectors and educational qualifications. Since the factors mentioned have an impact on the perception of the temporary arrangement and thus also on coping strategies and homing practices, I have included them in the analysis on an individual level.

Placing emphasis on temporality alongside homing practices, I present the findings along four interrelated topics. I first discuss practices of arriving in the city, then look at

homing practices on the microscale of the dwelling and practices that turn other places into home-like settings. Finally, I address how people can contribute to feelings of home.

"Walking Around the Block" – Exploring the Surroundings, Infrastructures, and People

During the interviews, it became apparent that for developing a feeling of home in one's city and neighbourhood upon first arrival, exploring one's surroundings was essential:

> Then you go right, left, north, south, from your street where you live. You walk in all directions to look, what's there within a kilometre around the apartment. (Amir)

In addition to one's immediate living environment, interviewees described how they explored social infrastructures, such as churches, local supply stores, supermarkets, and bakeries, as well as technical infrastructures like the closest train or bus stop. One temporary resident described this as "walking around the block" to see "where I can get my toilet paper and just the most trivial things" (Christiane). Doing so helped the temporary residents attain an impression of "what's going on here, who lives nearby, what kind of people are they" (Amir), "what makes them tick and how can I react to them" (Christiane), and "how does this city work" (Yannik). As Harry described, "You have to be kind of brave and walk the streets a little bit and just – get lost," which is how he was able to get a sense of the city. Walking with the aim of discovering the surroundings became a routine for some interviewees like Finn, who, when he went to a new city for an internship for a period of several months, "just walked around", much like he had done in the previous city: "There I just made my rounds and looked: 'Hey, what's going on there?' Without a destination or specific focus" (Finn).

The practice of walking and discovering one's surroundings was emphasized by several of the temporary residents I spoke with, who mentioned how it evoked feelings of familiarity and control (Boccagni 2017), both of which are often associated with the concept of home. This practice was adopted by mono- and multi-locals across all age and income groups regardless of their family arrangements. Even for individuals who perceive the temporary arrangement as a burden, these practices appear to be a coping strategy, a specific competence, to deal with the situation. It is precisely the routinized nature of the practice, which provides a reliable foundation to fall back on when arriving in a new city, that is noteworthy in this context.

"I Help Myself With the Few Little Flowers" – Homing the Dwelling

A specific place where temporary residents mentioned feeling at home was, not surprisingly, their own dwelling, which many described as a place of well-being where they have a sense of home. Most of the interviewees rented flats, while a small number owned either an apartment or single-family house. In Germany, flats are much more prevalent than houses, especially in cities, with over 75% of the German population living in flats (Eurostat 2021), 13% of which are rented furnished (BBSR 2023). Compared to the German housing market, a disproportionately high number of interviewees rented furnished flats, which could be attributed to the limited duration of their stay. In addition to furnished apartments, a few of the temporary residents I interviewed stayed in special

housing offers, including serviced apartments and boarding houses, which are also on the rise in German cities (Hein 2021). Before moving on to consider the practices of homing, it is important to note that all interviewees who owned property perceived this place(s) of residence as home, which was not necessarily the case for those who rented their place of residence.

The feeling of being at home in one's own dwelling is a process that is tied to certain practices. A crucial aspect of feeling at home seems to be the furnishing of one's apartment or house. Having something of their own in their current dwelling was essential for many interviewees, especially those who were middle-aged, to make it feel like home. Even if the apartment was a second home or already furnished, it could be beautified by the acquisition of new things. One temporary resident with a multi-local living arrangement mentioned that she decided against staying in hotels for her work-related stays in Leipzig and instead decided in favour of a second home in which she could leave things and could furnish herself: "I really have this feeling I'm coming home when I'm there in my little apartment" (Ulrike). She sees the opportunity to live in two places as enriching and created a feeling of home in her second home. Furnishing as a way of feeling at home was not only the case for high-income temporary professionals with several residences but also for mono-local temporary residents with fewer financial resources to spend. One temporary resident with limited financial resources described how important it was for him to furnish the apartment himself at each of his temporary living spaces, something that was made possible by second-hand furniture: "I was always very independent, I would call it. I always organized furniture and things like that myself" (Ansgar). The feeling of having something of one's own seems to contribute significantly to homing. This is realized by the temporary residents to the extent that it is affordable.

The situation was different for those living in boarding houses. Yasmin, who has lived almost exclusively in boarding houses and serviced apartments for several years, mentioned:

> For me, it is really important to keep a system or certain rituals. To keep healthy mentally. For example, in Düsseldorf and in Zürich, there is this [name of the serviced apartment provider], and they always have the same style and the same design. They have a kitchen, a sports studio, it's quite central (. . .). Always having the same system is really nice.

In the absence of anything of one's own, having something familiar and a feeling of knowing one's way around seems to contribute to homing.

In addition to these factors, practices implemented in everyday life in the dwelling also play an essential role in creating a sense of home. For those living alone, practices such as reading or listening to music were associated with home. Many interviewees specifically emphasized these activities, as they are possible anywhere and can be easily integrated into a temporary living arrangement: "I've always read a lot. Regardless of the location, everywhere. You can do it anywhere" (Nina). Particularly well-situated multi-local people who have another residence in addition to their family home appreciated activities such as reading in their second home, like Nadine, who said, "Because then I can find time to read in peace and quiet without someone having the TV on or listening to something else". Bjarne also mentioned, "If I wanted to read but couldn't find the time at home, I can do it there". The practices at the two places of residence can differ, imbuing each place with different qualities: "It's [the second home] also a feel-good place if I can sit in my

armchair in the evening, turn up the music player, listen to what I want, and choose the TV program" (Hermann). The main residence was also mentioned as a place of well-being: "If I can light my fireplace there, if I have an outside fireplace, if I have mowed my lawn and it looks nice" (Hermann). Ulrike takes flowers from the garden of her primary residence into her second home to make herself feel at home: "I don't have any houseplants at my second home, so I help myself with the few little flowers that I always wrap in newspaper here. I don't have time to go to a flower store every time I go there". It becomes clear that practices linked to "using particular things in a certain way" (Reckwitz 2002, 252) seem to have significance for the practices of homing. Things are used, especially by multi-locals, to create a home, using familiar materialities. Although among my interviews fewer women were engaged in multi-local arrangements, mainly because of family responsibilities, the homing strategies and the coping with the temporary arrangement do not differ from those of men.

As mentioned above, the majority of interviewees perceived at least one of their current dwellings as home. However, those with less financial resources often did not perceive their dwelling as home. For one job-seeking interviewee, this was partly due to the small and tight space, with limited possibilities of carrying out leisure activities within this space, which led him to not perceive his (30 m^2) apartment with his wife and newborn as home (Amir). This lack of a sense of home is related to the fact that he generally does not perceive his temporary living arrangement as voluntary; his place of residence is determined by where he finds a job. Instead, other places and associated practices come to the fore when it comes to a sense of home. This leads to the next section, which focuses on places besides one's dwelling that are perceived as feel-good places and home.

"It Makes You Feel Like You're in England" – Defining Everyday Places and Practices of Well-Being

Besides one's dwelling, other places of well-being were identified by interviewees as serving as either supplementary or substitute home-like settings. Several younger interviewees living alone described different places where they feel comfortable and at home. A mono-local temporary resident who mentioned that she frequently changes her place of residence said, "I also want to explore cafés in the area where I can spend more time and enjoy being there; in other words, to find places where I spend a lot of time and that gives me a sense of familiarity and stability" (Theresa). Places where she felt at home were, for example, libraries. She said, "[I'm] a big fan of public places (. . .) where I can spend everyday life. I think everyday life is the most important thing for me". Consequently, places other than one's own dwelling that are routinely frequented can provide the sense of stability and familiarity that is associated with home.

Nature was also described as home, primarily green spaces, which were often associated with the practice of going for a walk, either alone as "me-time" (Harry) or with one's family as a shared feel-good place. As Hermann mentioned, "Because there are so-called orchards where little bunnies and insects also feel at home and something else is harvested. We go out almost every evening for half an hour, depending on the season. We come down with our thoughts, share the day, talk". Bjarne, who moved to Germany from Denmark several years ago, liked the surroundings of his second home because the landscape looked almost like in Denmark: "The nature is also close to what I know from

Denmark. And that's the other reason why I also wanted an apartment where I can go out (into nature) because sometimes, I need that time out". Temporary residents described creating places for recreation and relaxation that also provide a sense of home through being outside and the practice of walking. One temporary resident originally from England mentioned how he liked visiting a pub in his everyday life, which is something he missed about England: "It gives you the feeling that you are in England" (Harry). For him, England was home, and this pub acted as a proxy for home. The practice of going to the pub was charged with narratives and memories, creating a sense of home. International temporary residents in particular, who have temporarily moved to another country for their work, define everyday places inspired by memories of their home countries.

For middle-aged interviewees, especially in highly qualified professions, the workplace could also be perceived as home. As Hermann said, "Even if it sounds strange, the office is also a feel-good place. I feel comfortable there. I also enjoy working there, and it gives me a sense of affirmation". This was often the case with multi-locals who have a second home in the city for work purposes, which they do not perceive as a home or only to a limited extent. This was the case for Tanja, who worked in a management position at an international company and only felt comfortable in her second home at work. Reza, a temporary employee originally from Iran who works in a postdoc position, explicitly perceived his workplace as home instead of his room in a boarding house: "I am usually in the lab the whole day. (. . .) But usually, I stay in the lab from 8 to 7–7:30. It is my home there; I have a big room there, all my computers are there, so I like it".

Interviewees also described engaging in homing practices in places that one would not initially expect, such as mobility locations like train stations, which play an important role in the everyday life of temporary residents, in particular multi-locals. For Sebastian, the train station became a feel-good place through routines like having breakfast in a café at the station every week to bridge commuting times. Nina said that she checks out the new publications in a bookshop at the station every time before a regular train journey, which helped it become a feel-good place for her. The train journey itself could also be a place of well-being through practices such as reading and listening to music, being described by some interviewees as home-like: "You can work wonderfully on the train. You can sleep, you can do nothing. You can enjoy the landscape. You can manage team calls if you just have to listen" (Stefan).

Other places that serve as home-like settings alongside or instead of the dwelling are manifold and become emotionally charged through different practices. The practices of homing take place in everyday life and are linked to the everyday places of the temporary residents.

"There is a Chess Club Everywhere"– The Search for Like-Minded People

For many interviewees, the feeling of home was person-related. The presence or visits of friends led to feelings of home. In response to a question about the place(s) perceived as home, Theresa answered, "Solid friendships are the most important places for me. I always feel I have arrived when I know I have friends who live here and also know where they live". The existence of social contacts in the city brings security and helps build attachments upon arriving. At the same time, when making friends, the time limit is often in

mind; for temporary residents, these friendships may also be short-lived. Accordingly, many participants noted that long-term friendships are especially appreciated: "Actually, the most important thing is to get to know people and to build up a social environment. The longer-term something is, the better it is for that, of course" (Theresa).

However, the mere presence of friends does not necessarily qualify as a practice of homing. Rather, everyday practices and routines used by temporary residents to make and keep friends proved to be more meaningful. One practice that occurs specifically due to the temporal and spatial constraints among temporary residents is the search for like-minded people and common activities that correspond to a specific lifestyle. Especially in life situations where temporary living seems to be normal (e.g. due to one's studies), it may be easy to establish contacts. At the same time, establishing feelings of home is perceived as more difficult when there are apparently not so many like-minded people, such as in villages, for instance, where most people live more or less permanently. Large cities like Frankfurt in this case are particularly well suited for finding like-minded people: "I find Frankfurt, in particular, to be a really great city because it is a kind of melting pot. Many are stranded here professionally" (Stefan). As Yasmin mentioned:

> If you have open-minded people, it is easy to get along because you make friendships really quickly. If you are in a small city where you have limited activities, people are a little bit cautious. People from my hometown are also a little bit cautious of foreigners. They call them foreigners, too. But in Frankfurt, every second person is either a foreigner or half foreigner, one-quarter foreigner. You get in discussions like now; I don't feel lonely sitting in my room doing nothing.

This is the reason why two interviewees who live in apartments specially designed for temporary stays (serviced apartments, boarding house) felt comfortable in these locations: "In boarding houses, I think everyone is temporary" (Reza). Especially for younger interviewees, the living arrangement of a shared apartment was explicitly addressed as a means of getting in contact with like-minded temporary people. This choice of living arrangement was often intentionally chosen to quickly feel a sense of belonging and find a new home in the city. People who lived in rented apartments described the shared practices with people from the neighbourhood as part of the feeling of belonging and home. As Andreas explained, "Two weeks ago, we were invited to our new favourite neighbours, and when you have coffee together and start to find out a bit about each other's lives, it's, of course, a massive bonding experience" (Andreas).

Besides housing arrangements, interviewees described other ways of connecting with other temporary residents. One way to socialize and feel at home in the city is to join clubs or other institutionalized activities. As Birgit said, "Let's put it this way, my lifehack is that I always look for associations. (. . .) So there is a chess club everywhere". The advantage of these leisure activities is that there are many club structures with similar offers in other cities, so people who temporarily live in different places can easily get access. Manfred, who has three places of residence, said that he "learned to get involved" and to get to know people through church, neighbourhoods, and clubs. Interviewees with children used this connecting factor to build up a network of social contacts with other parents. Leisure activities such as sports and the routines that are established through attendance were mentioned as beneficial ways of getting to know people.

However, a specific problem that was addressed in this regard was the time limit. As Theresa said, "I like to go to the gym and go to sports classes, and that's a big problem that if I'm only there for four weeks, it's not worth it for me to start anything". Many younger interviewees did not consider themselves a target group for institutionalized associations. Rather, they saw a concrete possibility of looking for like-minded people nowadays through social networks. Formal associations often have the disadvantage that the members are older, and the meeting times are not adjusted to employees.Previously mentioned as a place of well-being and home, the workplace also plays a role in finding like-minded people and friends among people with temporary living arrangements. Trains, which are perceived as home-like places due to different practices, create these feelings for some interviewees, primarily through people. It becomes clear that, in addition to places and practices, people play a particularly vital role in creating feelings of home. Many homing practices aim to build up a circle of friends at the respective location so that a sense of home can develop.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I set out to examine how temporary residents create and maintain home(s) through practices of homing. Thereby I explored homing practices on different scales, from domestic to city. I questioned the possibilities and constraints faced by people with different temporary living arrangements (mono- and multi-local) and life contexts (duration of residence, family constellations, age, and financial situation). Drawing on qualitative research with a heterogeneous group of temporary residents, this paper has shown that different practices of homing are used to create and maintain a feeling of home depending on one's life context.

In my analysis, I found out that walking and exploring one's surroundings is the first practice of homing when arriving in a new city. The act of walking itself can serve as a practice that intensifies an individual's connection between self and landscape (Lorimer 2016). Nearly every temporary resident, regardless of their financial resources, age, or family constellation, had the competence to use this practice to get a sense of home in the city, especially on the micro-scale of the neighbourhood. In this embodied practice of walking, material elements, such as buildings and streets, play a central role, as well as functionalities, including certain infrastructures (e.g. the closest supermarket). However, the practice of "walking around the block" also involves other people who are "discovered" by the temporary residents. This is less about interaction and more about gaining a feeling for one's surroundings and the people in the neighbourhood. From a processual perspective of home (Boccagni 2022), it should be emphasized that this individual practice becomes a routine that can be implemented upon moving to a new city. Moreover, the practice is used to find places of everyday life and well-being for the future. That this practice is of such high importance is due to the fact that temporary residents have many moments of movement and arrival.

Much of the literature on the concept of home relates homing practices to dwelling (Blunt and Dowling 2022). Using the category of "homing the dwelling", this study also described small-scale practices of homing that are realized in one's own dwelling, which differ widely according to living arrangement and living situation. In the case of multi-locals, their lifeworlds (Hilti 2013) are characterized by partially identical and partially

contrasting practices of homing. As with previous studies on transnational migration (e.g. Boccagni 2017), this study has also shown that materiality and "using particular things in a certain way" (Reckwitz 2002, 252) play an important role in developing a sense of home. However, for many temporary residents, this has less to do with memories of the homeland but rather with notions about the ideal home that are implemented in each (temporary) dwelling. Embodied practices with objects can trigger feelings of familiarity and stability associated with home. Although certain objects are frequently mentioned by the interviewees, for example books or newspapers, they and their specific use vary individually.

Similar to how homing practices can turn a dwelling into a home, the opposite can also be the case. Especially in the case of narrow living conditions and the resulting feelings of confinement, along with a lack of opportunities for development, one's own dwelling may not be perceived as home either. This is a condition that can be described as "non-home" (Boccagni and Miranda Nieto 2022) and has rarely been the focus of research thus far. For such temporary residents, the focus shifts to other home-like places instead of their own dwelling. Accordingly, the creation of a feeling of home in one's own dwelling is also dependent on competences in the sense of financial opportunities (Clapham 2024).

Besides one's dwelling, other places of well-being are created by temporary residents, which function as either additional or substitute home or home-like settings. While these places are often individually determined, they can also be perceived collectively as places of well-being and home. Among the temporary residents I interviewed, these are places frequented routinely in everyday life, giving a sense of familiarity and stability. The places tend to be associated with narratives and memories that can, thus, trigger feelings of home. Accordingly, seeking out and experiencing these places as a practice of homing is connected with individual biographies and meanings. Alongside individual everyday places of relaxation and well-being, typically in the home environment, the workplace also plays an important role as a point of reference and home. As described in research on multi-locals and highly mobile people as in-between or transit spaces (Hilti 2013; Rolshoven 2020; Weichhart 2009), mobility locations and means of transportation can also serve as places of well-being and home-like settings for temporary residents. Explicitly travelling by train is associated with feelings of being at home, which is defined by certain routinized practices like listening to music or reading.

This paper also addressed an aspect that has been largely overlooked in the literature on homing thus far: the importance of friends and acquaintances in developing a sense of home. As Blunt and Dowling (2022) have described, home is created not only materially but also socially through home-making practices or, as examined in this paper, practices of homing. In contrast to studies on migration and highly mobile people, the focus of homing among temporary residents is not on transnational networks (Nowicka 2007) but rather on local relationships with other people. This research has demonstrated that the focus among temporary residents is on finding like-minded people. This is worth noting because temporary residents are often confronted with various constraints, such as irregular presences, different rhythms, and limited durations in places of residence. The coping strategies and practices used by temporary residents to create a home by finding like-minded people through social contacts differ strongly depending on age, life situation, and financial resources. Finding like-minded people begins with choosing where to live. Especially for young, single temporary residents without children, choosing a type of

housing where they could expect other temporary residents, like shared apartments or serviced apartments, was particularly emphasized.

In addition to housing arrangements, leisure activities were a recurring way that people sought out others to connect with. Although associations are sometimes difficult to join with a temporary lifestyle due to time constraints, they can provide ample opportunities for homing in cities. Associations that exist in many cities or are location-independent provide an effective opportunity to make social contacts, especially for those with higher incomes. Temporary residents with children frequently meet others through their children, while younger temporary residents without children often choose social networks to maintain social contacts. Other points of contact for socializing are work and transit spaces, such as mobility locations and means of transport. In particular, many of those with past experiences in temporary living arrangements have developed a set of routines for building a circle of friends and acquaintances when arriving in new cities.

Summarising all practices of homing, there were different strategies that temporary residents adopted to develop feelings of home, which are dependent on three interwoven constituent properties: place, materiality, and people. Feelings of home can be established at different places and thus be created and maintained through different objects and materialities. This paper proposes a social conceptualization of home, as surrounding oneself with like-minded people with similar lifestyles, time rhythms, and temporalities is crucial for establishing a sense of home.

One limitation of this study is that the more precarious group of temporary residents is underrepresented in my study. In my definition, temporary residents comprise a relatively heterogeneous group, ranging from precarious employment to expatriates and executive-level international employees. Despite efforts, it was only sporadically possible to reach the more precarious group through the recruitment methods adopted in this study. Thus, future work would do well to include this group in the analysis. Additionally, it is important to note that interviews cannot fully reflect practices (Wenzl et al. 2019), and that the use of additional data collection methods such as observation could provide further insights into practices that the interviewees were unwilling or unable to articulate. Notwithstanding this limitation, this study offers preliminary insights into home-making processes and the practices of homing of temporary residents, marking a step towards better understanding the lived reality of temporary living arrangements that are becoming more and more common as time goes on.

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