

Wherever I Drop Anchor

Faroese Teenagers' View on Future Home and Migration

Hvar eg so kasti akker

Fatan føroyskra ungdómsins um framtíðar heim og flyting

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Abstract

This article investigates young people's local identities and interpretations of home as place with the liquid modernity theory and the concept of 'anchor' as main foundation. With 40 semi-structured interviews with eight graders from two locations in the Faroe Islands as material, the article aims to discuss and analyze young people's perspectives and narratives concerning future place of residence and migration. The findings indicate that young people appreciate their freedom of movement and lifestyle at the same time as they carefully negotiate their identities in order to keep their strong bonds to the family and the home. The article concludes that contemporary young people's identities cannot be fully grasped without focusing on local contexts and 'glocal' processes.

Úrtak

Í hesi greinini verða ungdómsins lokalu samleikar og tulkningar av heimi (sum eitt stað) kannaðir við støði í ástøðinum um hin flótandi modernitetin og í hugtakinum 'akker'. Við tilfari – 40 samrøður við næmingar í áttanda flokki – úr tveimum føroyskum fólkkaskúlum sum grundarlag, miðar greinin ímóti at fáa viðgjørt og greinað sjónarmiðini og frágreiðingar hjá ungdóminum viðvíkjandi framtíðar bústaði og flyting. Úrslitini geva ábending um, at tey ungu virðismeta sítt rørlufrælsi og sínar lívsstílar samstundis sum tey nærløgd samráðast um sínar samleikar við tí fyrri eyga at varðveita sterku bondini til familjuna og heim-ið. Niðurstøðan í greinini er, at ung í dag hava samleikar, sum ikki veruliga kunnu skiljast um ikki hugt verður nærri at lokalu kontekstunum og 'glokalu' prosessunum.

Introduction

In this article we look closer at young people's individual thoughts and reflections on their future. Motivated by Zygmunt Bauman's late work in general and his discussion on liquid modernity in particular (especially its implication on the role and meaning of identity and place today), I intend to explore some of his theses in the context of a relatively peripheral small-scale society. Liquid modernity, Bauman's own concept for the social processes that many other sociologists link to the concept of postmodernity, describes the condition of constant mobility and change in contemporary society. This has strong impact on contemporary approaches to self-identity. My article critically discusses and contests Bauman's presumption that durable identities cohering over time and space have become close to impossible. Most of the sociological literature on identity in liquid or late modern society concentrates on multicultural urban settings where the population can be seen as 'a collection of Diasporas' with "prospects of living permanently with variety and difference" (Bauman, 2011a: 428). The 'natural home', as a unique place for the individual, Bauman argues, is no longer available. Nevertheless, the pursuit for this 'home' continues to play an important role in everyday life activities and projects. The search for home is also crucial for the process of identification, which is seen as "a neverending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity" (Bauman, 2001: 129).

The non-finality of the task of identification, says Bauman, causes existential un-

certainty and stress (2011a: 431). This argument, together with his general illustration of the transition from solid to liquid modernity, and from pilgrim to tourist lifestyles, mirrors the theoretical work of Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens among others, arguing that classic modernity has been replaced by a new stage of modernity characterized by globalization and individualization as main social processes (Wall and Olofsson, 2008: 434). Beck, writing about risk society and, more recently, cosmopolitan society, reviews the consequences of new space/time dynamics. Today's sphere of experience is 'glocal', he says, as it has "become a synthesis of home and non-place, a nowhere place" (Beck, 2002: 31). Today children from families with 'international' lifestyles "move through the non-space of the television and the Internet like fish through water" (ibid). Identity and place are being contested and reconceptualized in so-called 'de-traditionalization', which according to Beck implies "loosening and transforming the ties of culture to space" (ibid).

The vagabond and the tourist are metaphoric archetypes of liquid modern society's most common styles and characters with the common goal of staying unbounded (Bauman, 1996: 26-35). The vagabond never knows when he will leave and where he will go, but he is always prepared and ready. Nowhere, says Bauman, can he be a 'native' like others with 'roots in the soil'. Today the vagabond cannot but stay vagabond because of the scarcity of settled places (ibid). Places to 'belong to' have disappeared, says Bauman with

global cities of constant movement (transit) on his mind. The tourist is also on the move, but he seeks adventure and new experience, well aware of his private resources safeguarding him against threats and dangers. Nothing but aesthetic principles gives tourist enterprises a purpose, says Bauman (*ibid*). The tourist has a safe ('natural') home, but as his escapades are continuously extended, the place of home becomes increasingly vague and far-off. His home is first of all an imagined place, but, ironically, the tourist fears his home-dream to ever come true (*ibid*). He feels homesick while at the same time angst of 'home-boundedness'. The tourist character demonstrates the ambiguities and complexities in (late) modern man's relation to place and home. His sense of place is relational as he, somehow, is betwixt-and-between. He is bereft an anchor to fix his position in place and avoid incessant drifting.

It is therefore my aim to reinterpret the tourist by providing him with an 'anchor' as element that can help us recognizing his capability to connect to real places and to give them meaning. The anchor is a convenient metaphor introduced to youth sociology by Singly (2003), and later adapted to identity and migration studies by Bauman (2011a). Bauman, in the context of a third wave of modern migration, claims that anchors now are "replacing 'roots' as primary tools of identification" (Bauman, 2011a: 429). Literally, an anchor is a device, usually made of metal, used to connect a boat to the bed of a body of water to prevent it from drifting due to wind or current. The anchor can fix the boat more than once, and, Bauman points

out (2011a: 433), "there is nothing irrevocable, let alone ultimate, in drawing up the anchor". The story of the anchor is a story of the intertwining of continuity and discontinuity in identities (Bauman, 2011b). The anchor can, in other words, help us better understand young people's (glocal) identification process, as well as their interpretation of home, in a more dynamic and territorialized manner than the tourist character did.

By looking at young people's hopes and expectations for the future, with the theory of liquid modernity as fulcrum, this article contributes to the study of the power of locality and the value of home. Bauman's tourist has become a captain (with an anchor) revealing the identity strategies of young people from the Faroe Islands. The anchor, a maritime metaphor, indeed fits very well to a small-scale archipelago with proud maritime traditions in the North Atlantic.

Method

This article is based on qualitative data collected in the framework of an ethnographic project on young people's future perspectives in the Faroe Islands and other Nordic countries (Karlsdóttir and Jungsborg, 2015). In collaboration with my research assistant, Ester Áarskarð, I made individual semi-structured interviews with two groups of eighth graders (aged 14-15) in the Faroe Islands in May 2014. Two classes from two schools were picked out for the purpose: one in a regional town on the island of Eysturoy (we call it 'East Town'), the other in the capital city of Tór-

shavn. The objective was to involve young people from the main urban centre as well as from a smaller more ‘rural’ community as participants, but both groups of participants were from major public lower secondary schools with more than one track for each grade. Though, some of the East Town eight graders had primary education from much smaller village schools. Choice fell on East Town because of its strong links to a network of villages at the same time as it is a place with a variety of services and businesses making it rather independent from the capital.

The population of the Faroe Islands is today just below 50,000 while the municipalities of Tórshavn and East Town have approximately 20,000 and 3,500 inhabitants, respectively (S.F.I., 2014). Both municipalities are considered dynamic and diverse as regards economic infrastructure and demographic prospects. Faroese primary and secondary schools have in general very few minority children as the non-Nordic migration to the country has been very limited, even if a moderate increase of citizens of other nationalities is observed now. Less than two percent of the total population was of non-Nordic nationality in 2014. Looking at children aged 14-16, Faroese nationals (including Danish and Greenlandic in official statistics) comprise 2030 persons, almost 98 percent of the cohort, while only 35 persons, i.e. 1.7 percent of the cohort, were non-Nordic nationals (S.F.I., 2014). Regarding the socio-economic status of families with schoolchildren, there is no significant pattern of differentiation according to the size or location of the school. There is no pri-

vate school alternative for eight graders. Potential social, cultural and religious differences are, generally speaking, mirrored in the internal composition of the schools. This makes the school a suitable arena for our project, as the school class can be considered as a cross section of society.

The decision to use the age group 14 to 15 was based on the research objectives as this period in life generally is characterized by the subjective feeling of autonomy and maturity in relation to essential choices regarding the individual’s future life, but at the same time it is also a time of emotional confusion and frustration. Teenagers under 16 are in transition between the child’s spontaneity and creativity and the older teen’s self-righteousness. Indeed, their interest and knowledge on society in general might be limited, but they are growing-up with the ‘social-democratic’ individualism of Nordic societies that teaches children to be in charge of own future through large degree of freedom and independence (Singly, 2008: 7-17). In other words, they feel autonomous but are too young to be truly independent from their family and the school. Their future perspectives, to a large extent, display strategies balancing between dependence and independence. Compulsory school is nine years in the Faroe Islands, so very soon the participants will have to take a crucial decision concerning their future educational and professional career.

Áarskarð made 21 interviews with 12 girls and nine boys in East Town while I made 19 interviews with 13 girls and six boys in Tórshavn. The 20-30 minutes interviews took place in a quiet and com-

fortable meeting room at school during and after the regular school hours. All interviews were digitally voice recorded. A few pupils from the selected classes (less than 10 percent) did not participate due to sickness or opt out. Before the interviews the participants from both schools were carefully informed about the project's aim, objectives and ethical principles at an introductory meetings arranged by me and the head teachers. Besides the interviews, I also asked the pupils to write essays describing their ideas and visions of how Faroese society would look in the year 2045. Even if the interesting essays, written privately a few weeks before the interviews, are not included in this paper, it is important to mention this task and method as participants in many cases referred to the essays during the interviews. Thus the essays also functioned as a preparation to the upcoming interviews.

Needless to say, ethical precautions are of utmost importance in any research venture involving children (Shaw *et al.*, 2011). Even if my participants were not small children, they were below the legal age of responsibility and could not participate without parental consent. In addition to positive parental consent, of course I needed the child's own consent. Participation was voluntary and no pressure was put on any pupil to take part in the project. Participants are kept anonymous, as far as it is possible in a small-scale society. As a youth researcher I remind myself that I have a role and duty as 'representative' of young people's perspectives (Punch, 2002); I have to respect them, but also myself as a representative of the scientific

community. Qualitative researchers need to display the ability to

"be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience" (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009: 59)

All translations from Faroese to English language are mine.

Findings and analysis

It is logically difficult to predict any future. How is it for a young teenager at compulsory school? His experiences might be quite limited, but the greater the visions of the future. He can imagine and construct creative scenarios. This section, analyzing data from the Faroe Islands, is divided in two parts: first we focus on the interpretation of home, thereafter we look at young people's views on future movement and migration.

Home

In this article the meaning of place is connected to young people's experiences, interpretations and expectations of home. Home, says Schwartz (1989: 11-12), "is where feelings are born and practiced, and homesickness [...] is the stuff which culture is made of". What it means to be at home – universally – is a feeling evolving while you are homesick and far from home (ibid). It is, in other words, necessary to leave home in order to appreciate home. Home will often associate to feelings of at-

tachment to territorial place induced by memories, narratives and qualities related to identification, of articulation of affect (Wise, 2010: 299). Home is attached to the local identity comprising feelings, nature and the body (Schwartz, 1989).

My empirical data make it clear that most Faroese participants have a strong intention to ‘really’ settle and establish family life in their hometown or nearby. For many participants life abroad is, all in all, just considered an interim. Many young people seem to be willing to make sacrifices on working career ambitions in order to be able to stay closer to their family and to their social network in their future. The narratives, for instance in the case of Kristina, do often unveil a deep wish to gather broad life experiences and special knowledge abroad, the repertoire of modern (world) citizens, before returning to the North Atlantic.

“I love history and such things... so I expect that I am going to really travel a lot. I am planning to learn so much, or before I turn 30 I have so many plans of travelling as much as I can... after upper secondary school, if I am admitted... THEN I will travel very much and learn as much as I can about history and such things, and then I come back to the Faroe Islands... I maybe move back because it is more secure than to be other places... if I get children and such things... (Kristina from East Town)

It is important to remember that places are given social and cultural meaning by people who – even in the context of a liquid

modern society – are “surrounded by different social and cultural contexts” (Tolonen, 2005: 344). Home is not authentic or inauthentic; it is the place we feel is ours (Boym, 1994). Thus home links us to other people – friends, relatives, partners, etc. – and other homes – houses, neighborhoods, villages, etc. – cultivating the distinctive feeling of ‘being at home’; what we consider to be familiar and homely (Schwartz, 1989). When young people, as for instance the girl Ása, negotiate their identities and reflect on the future of their life, the strategies and priorities outlined will usually be strongly influenced by their relation to the hometown and home region.

Ása is a 15 years old girl living in Valley Town (close to East Town) with her parents and three siblings. Her father works on the sea and is because of that absent most of the time. She went to primary school in Valley Town until she started in eighth grade in East Town in 2013. Ása know what she wants to do in the future: she loves children and wants to work in a preschool. She will stay in Valley Town if she gets a job in a preschool there, otherwise she will move to another place, but she doesn’t want to move far from her home town. She hopes to get the life that she wants, even if, she says, it might of course not be 100 percent... “I really hope that I can study in the Faroe Islands”, she says, “because I don’t want to move abroad”.

Most teenagers keep several options open when discussing their future place of residence(s), as they know that alternative

strategies will be needed in case something unexpected happens, like when a boy tells me that he hopes to stay in the Faroese capital, but otherwise imagines Copenhagen or London to fit well as second choice.

Home is where one starts from, so it needs a focus, otherwise you could not start from it (Rykwert, 1991: 51). Even if a house (or household) not necessarily is the same thing as home, Mary Douglas suggests, home will always be a ‘localizable idea’, yet not necessarily a fixed space (Douglas, 1991: 289). Home has a structure in time and, due to the people living in that specific time and space, aesthetic and moral dimensions attached to it (ibid). Decisions of moving or staying will always be quite personal, and many young people, for instance Lisa, point out that they do not have any intention of forcing their future children to think and act the same way as they did themselves.

“I don’t know... if I get children myself of course I would ideally like them to stay in the Faroe Islands, but it is nothing that I can decide... so if they can get the chance to do what they like to do in the Faroe Islands, I think they will stay here...” (Lisa from East Town)

Most participants in the Faroese study expect, more or less willingly, to move away from the hometown, at least for a limited period of time in the future. This seems to almost be taken for granted as a necessity, whichever the specific plans for the future otherwise are. Nonetheless, a large majority of the teenagers wish to return to their

hometown later in adulthood – or at least relatively close it. Only two out of 21 teenagers from East Town say that they do not expect to settle in their hometown in the future. Correspondingly, four out of 19 teenagers from Tórshavn are quite sure that they will not stay in the capital (or country).

When Faroese teenagers interpret home it usually associates to a house, a village or town, nature, family and friends, but first of all to symbolic meaning and social activities connected to the place. It has many dimensions, but they are close-knit and generate a strong feeling of integrity. There is a degree of homogeneity and collectivity in local identities giving the youth a strong sense of ontological security and even (relative) predictability concerning their home and their future relation to the childhood home. Young people, like for instance Ása, also like to compare their relatively small town to the contrasting capital city, stressing differences in youth lifestyles and cultural activities.

Ása says that it can sometimes be quite boring in Valley Town, “because there is nothing there... only a grocery store and bakery... and a preschool... so there is not much in Valley Town at all”. But, she adds, “we the young people just go to a church meeting or to the grocer... then we just walk and talk and such things...” We asked Ása if anything could be changed to make young people more eager to stay in Valley Town. Yes, Ása says, “because people just get bored sitting at home in front of the computer...often there is nothing to do”, she says, “and it gets

boring being at home or even in Valley Town". Sometimes, she tells, "we chat and say 'let's go Tórshavn', but we have no money for shopping". There is more in Tórshavn, she says, as they have "swimming pool, cinema and SMS [shopping mall]".

Ása describes the differences without any fatalistic statement of the village as a no future place. Her view is sober and balanced. Many Faroese villages and towns are actually, independently from the capital city, entering the global stage through new trends of working migration and social mobility. The conventional home–workplace dyad is in shift. A boy from my Faroese study is for instance planning to work in Norway while living in the Faroe Islands as an adult. This kind of international commuting is perfectly possible as many Faroese Islanders, mostly men working in offshore industries, already perform these lifestyles with work abroad and family home in the Faroe Islands. Another participant, a talkative Tórshavn girl with many thoughts on Faroese society and culture, says that she will probably either live in the Faroe Islands and be very much abroad or live abroad and be very much in the Faroe Islands. She presented a very detailed and well-founded explanation for her life project. These are just a few of the examples of young people's creative individual strategies with the aim of fulfilling dreams of family life, working career and social/cultural life.

Even if many young people, through media and school, have become familiar with some of the 'warnings' about liquid

modernity's "new restlessness and fragility of goals", which supposedly has left individuals without places "they wish to settle" (Bauman, 2001: 125), most Faroese Islanders do not seem to connect such dramatic change to their own everyday life and hometown. The material from Faroese eighth grades does not support claims that 'being on the road' has become the permanent way of life of 'chronically' disembedded individuals (ibid). General sociological presentations of solid versus liquid modernity have in many cases been affected by analytic overstatements of the opposition between the stages. Most young people, all in all, just want a 'normal' life fitting to the local community they belong to.

"I guess...I am going to upper secondary school and get a good education and a good job...I imagine that I will be living in a house and have a family and the children will be happy, I hope" (John from East Town)

Asked if they consider their hometown as a place where they can 'live the life they want to live' most participants respond pragmatically with matter-of-fact accounts of what they appreciate very much and what they accept is not 'perfect'. They express a general optimism and trust as regards the future of their home municipality and of the Faroe Islands in general.

The interpretation of home is first of all a question of being close to family and friends. When Faroese Islanders abroad say 'heima' (at home), it usually refers to the context of the Faroe Islands in general, not only a specific house or street. 'Heima' can

refer to the house and address of the small exiled family, a kind of modest shelter in an alien country, but it can also refer to the ‘real home’ comprising a dense transparent grid of individuals and families throughout the Faroe Islands (Gaffin, 1996). Moving from a house to another, within the Faroe Islands, is not considered a deep change, at least not if it is within the same town or municipality. It doesn’t change your social life or sense of belonging very much. In a small-scale island society no place will be strange and threatening compared to the social geographical complexities of larger societies (Gaini, 2013). Harry, a boy from East Town, does not like the idea of moving abroad.

Harry is a 15 year old boy living in East Town together with his parents. He has three siblings. He always lived in East Town, but he went to primary school in two other smaller schools in the same region. He doesn’t have any plans of moving away from East Town. He expects to stay there, at least for a long time. If he doesn’t find a job in East Town, Harry says that he can probably commute to Tórshavn or Klaksvík [5000 inhabitants] for work. It takes just one hour to drive to Tórshavn and even less to reach Klaksvík in the north. He looks forward to get the driving license and be free to drive between the towns and main islands [connected by bridges and underwater tunnels, FG]. Even if his parents are originally from other parts of the Faroe Islands, he loves to be in East Town. He has many very good friends there and he says that he

likes to talk to the old people in the town. So he simply expects to stay there. His dream is to become a football player; that is his goal, but otherwise he would like to work in a shop, for instance in a sports shop or clothing store. Harry wants to get trained as trader, but, as mentioned, he doesn’t want to leave the Faroe Islands.

Harry, like many other boys in his age, feels that he has what he needs in the Faroe Islands. He doesn’t feel any need to worry about the future.

Spontaneous clapping and hurrahs among incoming passengers the moment an airplane touches Faroese ground gives an indication of the meaning of place (Gaini, 2013). Immediately ‘Welcome home’ (in Faroese) is announced by the Faroese air hostess. Thereafter, in a more serious and numb tone, she will repeat ‘welcome to the Faroe Islands’ in Danish and English. The greeting symbolizes a shift in a *rite de passage*. Passengers are reintegrated into the Faroese home. In this way people are linked to many people, kin as non-kin, and this influences many young people’s calm and laid back attitude when talking about their future home and about movements between different places (ibid).

Family matters, and most participants have large family networks in their home town or nearby. Most young people are also active in a variety of structured after-school activities (sports, music, church, etc.) available in cities and main towns but not in small villages. This provides them

with a large social network, hence a connection to different families across the municipality and beyond. Their social relations are, so to speak, strongly “tied to and embedded in specific places” (Jamieson, 2000). Their feeling of social belonging seems to be quite strong in the Faroe Islands in a time when new European social surveys present young people as relatively pessimistic and unsure about their future life and identities in a post-crisis time of high unemployment rates, especially among minority youths (Galland, 2008: 27-28).

Asked why he wants to live in East Town, a boy answers “I don’t know... I grew up here... I feel like I have to live here... or maybe not, but...” Of course, many things can happen during a stay in an alien country that leads to a deep change in life, but most eight graders in East Town and Tórshavn seem to have a very strong confidence in their home town as the best place of all places. They feel that it is a safe and child-friendly place where they are recognized and accepted (Gaini, 2011). “I think that if I get children”, one girl from Tórshavn says, “then this is a safe place to be, like all children can just run around everywhere, but that is not possible abroad, so...” When several participants talk about safety, it means that they are also thinking about risk, which they associate to cities in larger countries.

How do young people view potential migration within the Faroe Islands in the future? Several participants from East Town say that they might move to other main towns of the Faroe Islands, but, interestingly, few of them show any interest

in the capital. In Tórshavn, on the other hand, most young people say that they prefer to stay in the capital, even if one boy says that he wants to move to a small village when he grows old, because the village is “peaceful, beautiful and has kept the ‘traditional’ Faroese culture”. This boy admires the villagers, but most participants in the study do not express any wish to move to small places. One girl from the Tórshavn school says that she would love to move back to the village of her childhood, where she has many relatives, in the future, but she is a bit reluctant as a consequence of the few job opportunities in the village community. It is a bit difficult to commute to and from the capital because the village in question is located on another smaller island (without bridge or tunnel to the main islands).

Clearly, few if any decisions about the future are taken without strong anchoring in the individual’s reflections on his or her future bonds to the childhood hometown. The question of continuity and discontinuity, or, in other words, of closer or looser bonds to the childhood home, seem to be at the core of young people’s reflections and negotiations on their imagined future home. The home, considered a symbol of the local ‘uniqueness’ in a globalized world, is the beginning of the voyage with the anchor.

Migration

Crossing the ocean is a big step for a young person, separating him from his family, but Denmark, with a large Faroese diaspora, is considered the ‘least’ alien of

foreign countries (Gaini, 2013). The Faroe Islands, an autonomous country within the Kingdom of Denmark, have for centuries used Copenhagen as main external centre for educational, cultural and economic enterprises and visions (Mortensen *et al.*, 2007). Practically all living Faroe Islanders have visited Denmark for shorter or longer periods for vacations, family gatherings, educational pursuits, etc. There is a constant movement of people between the Faroe Islands and Denmark, of which a major part of the travelers indeed is young Faroe Islanders moving out or back home (Gaini, 2011). Rósa's mother, for instance, wants her children to do what she didn't get the chance to do in her own life:

"...my mother says that she didn't take education in Denmark and didn't move to other countries, she says that she thinks we [the children, FG] should go abroad to get education... try it... and then come back home" (Rósa from East Town)

Experience from foreign countries is considered as cultural capital empowering the individual when he returns home to the islands to settle and make his career. These Faroe Islanders have something in common that others, never having left the country, are missing. Let us look closer at the question of identity now. How can the anchor illustrate young people's negotiation of identities today? The anchor is a tool helping the captain to fix the boat in distinct places, but it does not have any influence on the shape or qualities of the boat (Bauman, 2011a: 433-434). The captain can decide to go to new places or to return

back to familiar waters. The captain has a big responsibility and he regularly has to assess and adjust his boat's route and schedule. The captain's choice of harbor for next stop is "determined by the kind of load which the ship is currently carrying; a haven good for one kind of cargo may be entirely inappropriate for another" (*ibid.*).

The captain, it seems, has a much more serious mission than the tourist, for whom traveling is just a search for "experience of difference and novelty" in order to get a pleasant feeling in a world where "the strange is tame" (Bauman, 1996: 29). The captain carries (a part of) his home with him while the tourist deliberately keeps home out of sight. The tourist feels deeply 'rooted' and hampered at home, and that is why he convinces himself to bet on inspiring emancipation through the way of the tourist. The captain is neither rooted nor uprooted; he belongs, so to speak, to the sea yet has his 'solid' home and family on land. His life at home depends on his life at sea, and vice versa. They cannot be separated. His attachment to home hasn't, even in the era of liquid modernity, lost 'past intensity' (Bauman, 2011a: 434).

As members of a seafaring nation most people think *when not if* leaving. Loudly announcing that you are permanently leaving the country, on the other hand, is a radical resolution received by others as a disappearance. Leaving for a shorter period of time, without brouhaha, is seen as cultural capital harvesting, an enterprise improving prospects for success in the Faroe Islands in the future. Young people tell about their migration plans without feeling very embarrassed or annoyed of the dis-

closure of their dreams and projects. All of them know about others who did the same thing and came back to the Faroe Islands with something ‘new’ that gave them high social status and success.

“I don’t expect that I can be in the Faroe Island if I am going to be an animator [animation work in digital media, FG]... I will probably be either in England or Denmark... maybe even further away...” (Elly from Tórshavn)

One central push factor, as mentioned, is higher education, as available offers are very limited in the Faroe Islands. Most institutionalized training and education programs are not available, a fact somehow leaving young people determined to get their ‘dream career’ with no other option than to move to Denmark or other countries providing the relevant programs. Especially girls seem to be dedicated and to have clear ideas about their future education. Anna from East Town was asked about her plans for education:

Q: So, what about yourself, what do you imagine that you will be doing?

A: I guess that I will go ‘down’ [means ‘to Denmark’, FG] or somewhere to get training as nurse, and when I have done that, I will come ‘up’ again...or I will stay there. And then I will move sometimes between the places...

Q: Yes, so you imagine that you might be living in Denmark also?

A: Yes...

Q: and then you will come ‘home’ on holidays sometimes?

A: Yes...

Q: And how can it be that you also

imagine to be living in Denmark?

A: I don’t know...well, I always wanted to become a physician or a nurse...and I have, well since I was very small, thought that I want to become a physician and such...and I always wanted to try to get the education... and if I succeeded, I could be a physician over there [...] If it was easy to get a job here, so that I could work here, then I would have moved to the Faroe Islands. Only if it was not very easy to get the job right here, I would just have gone to Denmark.

It is not only as metaphor that the anchor can explain the life strategies and identity negotiations of young Faroe Islanders today. Many girls and boys have fathers and brothers working as seamen. In some villages and towns a large majority of the inhabitants is employed in the fishing industry – most men on fishing vessels and most women in local fish factories. Short and long term international working migration is also very common among people belonging to some specific professions. These patterns of movements, together with the large number of Faroe Islanders studying abroad, influence young people’s perspectives on imagined future migration.

The quest for the diploma, for instance, is connected to mobility as competence, and most teenagers express a hope for a future with considerably greater variety in educational programs offered by the University of the Faroe Islands and other higher education institutions at ‘home’. All participants plan to take upper secondary education, but farther ahead the group dis-

perses in different directions. Some participants, including a boy from Tórshavn, have already applied for admission to a Danish continuation school ('efterskole') right after ninth grade, thus planning to leave the islands at a relatively early age. Denmark is the most popular destination among people planning to study or work abroad, but England (first of all London) is also on the mind of quite a few participants from Tórshavn. Tóra, for instance, wants to go to USA for a year or two.

"I would like to live in Valley Town [close to East Town, FG]... always wanted to live there... I have for a long time been thinking about 'wandering' [youth low budget travelling with backpacks, FG], or to go to high school in USA, or something like that... so I have big plans before taking education... I am thinking that I must have an education before I get house and children, family and all that..."
(Tóra, from Valley Town)

As the material from the eighth grades clearly shows, most Faroe Islanders are willing to 'taste' life in foreign countries, but hope to move back home, when they are ready to settle with a 'normal' family life. At the same time teenagers are well aware of the uncertainties related to their individual future arrangements. There is usually a 'maybe' or 'perhaps' or 'hopefully' attached to their forecasts. As 'captains', rather than tourists, they know that almost anything can happen at sea, and that they will always have to be ready to change direction or speed, even if it goes against the original plan. With the anchor

they will anyway always be able to find a safe harbor to stay in.

Some teenagers would prefer to move away for educational purposes, even if their educational aspirations could be realized in the Faroe Islands in the future, for instance a Tórshavn girl with an interest in medical training. Sometimes the desire to get life experiences from the 'outside' world is stronger than the motivation for educational skills. So even if most participants express a wish to move back home, no one says that it would be a catastrophe to drop anchor and get permanent residence in another country. For some of them it is a rather exciting thought. Some eight graders, when they reach their twenties and are more experienced in life, change their mind and express a more negative attitude towards their hometown. Many Faroe Islanders meet their partner of life during studies abroad and chose to settle with their new family outside of the Faroe Islands (Gaini, 2008). In a globalized world it is more likely for many young people to establish 'international' families, but that doesn't necessarily mean that their identities are 'melting' or that it is impossible to find a 'place inside a solid frame' (Bauman, 2001: 126). Rógvi's story is interesting in this respect.

Rógvi is a 14 years old boy living in Tórshavn with his parents and two siblings. They always lived in Tórshavn, but changed address once. His dream is to become a professional football player, but in case it fails he would also like to be a vendor or a police officer. He knows many traders from his own family and, he says, it

seems to be a very interesting job. When a man from the narcotics police came to the class [May 2014] and told about his work, Rógvi thought it sounded very interesting too. He says that he might find a job that he likes in Tórshavn in the future, but if he doesn't, he is willing to be based in another country. As a matter of fact, he expects to leave the Faroe Islands anyway, and maybe return home later. He is planning to go to a special Danish continuation school when he turns 17 and follow a two year program. One of his cousins went to the same school some years ago.

With the anchor safely at hand, young people feel free to go far before, eventually, returning home. The main push factors are investments in education and working career, but anyone can find his own 'reason' for leaving the small familiar place for a while, like the girl who says that she wants to move to England because it looks like a very nice place. Jenny, another girl, says that she might be staying abroad for many years in the future before returning home.

Jenny is a 14 years old girl living in Tórshavn with her mother and two siblings. She lived in the same house her whole life. Regarding future occupation she has three professions in mind: to be a journalist, a construction engineer or a lawyer. She says that she keeps changing her mind and doesn't know which profession is on the top of her list. We ask if she expect to find a suitable job in Tórshavn. She is not so sure; she says that she will probably

stay in Denmark for quite a long time before returning to the islands. She thinks it is really difficult to get a good job here, but she doesn't know if it will be different in... 20 years... she doesn't know. Even in case she studies and works in Denmark for many years, Jenny is still determined to return home afterwards. It is her goal. Does she think she will get the life that she wants in her home town? "Yes, I guess so", Jenny answers. She knows that it is a small place that doesn't have very much of everything, she says... and that it lies far from Europe... but yes, because she grew up with this and knows exactly what it is... so, Jenny can easily make a life here.

Jenny's strategy clearly indicates that young people's neither replace 'long term' with 'short term' or have 'instantaneity' as ultimate goal (Bauman, 2000: 125). It seems like the sense of belonging stays undiminished, or is reinvented in new constellations, at the same time as young people feel increasingly free to go their own ways concerning lifestyle and career.

Unlike the tourist fearing homebound-ness, young people move away with their home as kind of excuse: 'before I return home, I want to...' They do not hide their emotional attachment to place. This is based on an assumption that the Faroese place is different; a place where things stay unchanged and where home always will be home. The Faroe Islands, in this perspective, are, more or less, free from 'non-places' or 'empty places' (Augé, 2008). In this context migration seems as a way of

harvesting experience, knowledge and skills to bring home and use for progress in own personal and social life.

Young people can always draw up the anchor and return home, in case things go wrong. Risk, as mentioned earlier, is considered as something increasing when moving away, which means that home is a place where ‘risk-calculation’ is relatively unimportant. This also means that the Faroe Islands are constructed as a unique place – home – very different from the unstable ‘outside world’ (Gaini, 2013). With an anchor as equipment, there is not much to lose while staying abroad. As long as the boat doesn’t sink, one day in the future it will come fully loaded home, but we cannot in advance know what exactly will be brought home.

Discussion

The presentation of liquid modernity as a state of fluid disengagement and ‘until-further-noticeness’ – getting rid of the “dense and tight network of social bonds, and particularly a territorially rooted tight network” (Bauman, 2000: 14) – lacks sensitivity to locality and cultural resilience. Not all young people fear ‘homeboundedness’ the way Bauman’s tourist does, as most people still today believe there are ‘places to belong to’, even if contemporary identities may not be as fixed as they supposedly were in the earlier solid stage of modernity.

The fluidity of liquids only gives meaning in relation to something else, something solid with a shape. Otherwise there would just be an ocean without any

islands or rocks, impossible to communicate in perceivable language. Even if we can agree that recent processes of individualization and globalization have changed identities, leading to new dynamic combinations connected to different social and cultural contexts, this does not mean that local identities have vanished or lost spatial character (Lee, 2006). Most people still live ‘locally’ with an everyday life attached to well-defined territories (Atkinson, 2008). Collective identities based on locality, says Paulgaard (2002: 104), “might represent a sense of security, and an attempt to ‘fix the flow’ and mark boundaries in the ongoing globalization process”. Increasing globalization, she says, gives questions about local identity a new meaning (ibid). This fits to the results from the Faroe Islands. Identity is rearticulated in local contexts where young people consciously negotiate between local and global, similarity and difference, as part of their future strategies.

Young Faroe Islanders are indeed renegotiating their local identities in relation to values and lifestyles that they learn about through media and social communication. It is a ‘glocalization’ process, a result of growing local-global interconnectedness, where local identities are reconstructed through dynamic local/global interaction (Kjeldgaard and Askegaard, 2006). This not only influences local space and identities, but also how young people navigate and find their position when they are far away. In this way the home and local identity seem solid at the same time as they are renegotiated and, somewhat, ‘hybridized’ in relation to global society.

The most nerve-breaking worry today, says Bauman (2001: 126), is the suspicion that the hard-won (solid) framework soon will be 'torn apart or melted'. This scenario might well fit some groups of individuals in urban multicultural environments yet not to many other groups, for instance most young people in the Faroe Islands. For them, I guess, it is not hard-won; it is just there, almost taken for granted. If you feel that you belong to a place, you will not worry too much about transit through non-places, while, on the other hand, if you feel that you are continually in the search of place, without much hope of finding it, you might well feel quite lost. The tourist turned vagabond, for instance, might feel that there is no way back to home and no alternative home to create ahead. The captain, on the other hand, has a 'floating home' while on the sea, but also a concrete home in a town or a city somewhere. He might be away from home for weeks and months, but he knows where his family is and that they are waiting for him. He can travel the whole world without ever losing his home.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this article contribute to emerging sociological and anthropological research on the relationship between young people's cultural identities and their perspectives on the future and life goals in an increasingly global/local interconnected world. The article has addressed limitations in the theory of liquid modernity by focusing on local identity and sense of home as compass and map in relation to

young people's navigation through contemporary liquid modern society's complex and changing social and cultural landscapes. It has demonstrated how inalienable 'home' is for young people's strategies and values, because, as in the case of the Faroe Islands, most young people do not plan to leave in order to escape, but to leave in order to *come back*.

In this way the migration cycle can be considered as a 'natural' part of local society's cohesion and continuity. Using the anchor as metaphor, this article has described how migration cycles instead of 'uprooting' people actually express a way of negotiating contemporary local and 'glocal' identities, thus also to uphold the sense of belonging. The migration is also a way of getting new life experiences, thus a symbolic capital to bring back home later. The captain has been presented as a successor to the Bauman's tragic tourist doomed to search for 'more space' that "is the last thing one would find at home" (Bauman, 1996: 31).

What we see is that young Faroe Islanders appreciate their freedom to move and to decide where to live, but at the same time they carefully avoid losing their attachment to the family and home. This defends the focus on reinvented locality in studies of identity and migration in a globalised world.

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