Affective Vélomobilities of Care through the Lens of Post-Socialist Ideologies and Urbanism: Methodological Notes



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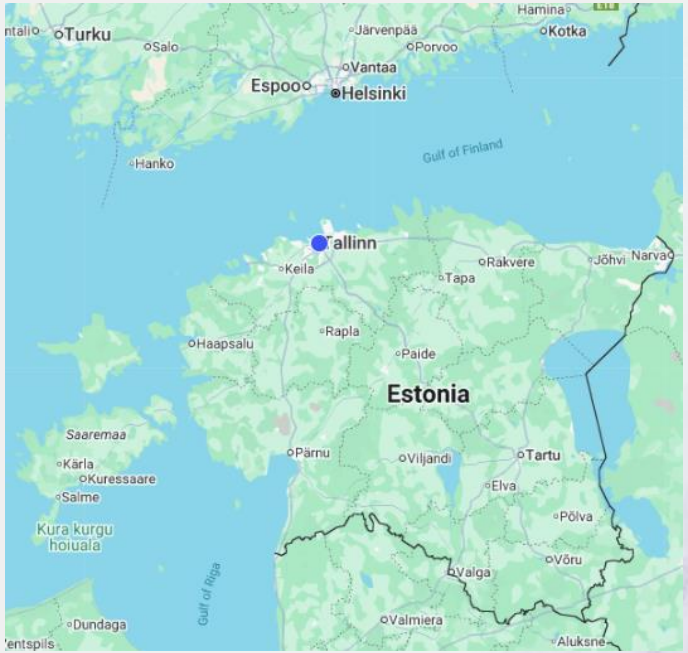
- **Affective Vélomobilities of Care: a Gender-Sensitive Approach to Sustainable Mobility (VELOCARE)**
- 24 months, 3.02.2025-2.02.2027
- Study group: 20 women participants

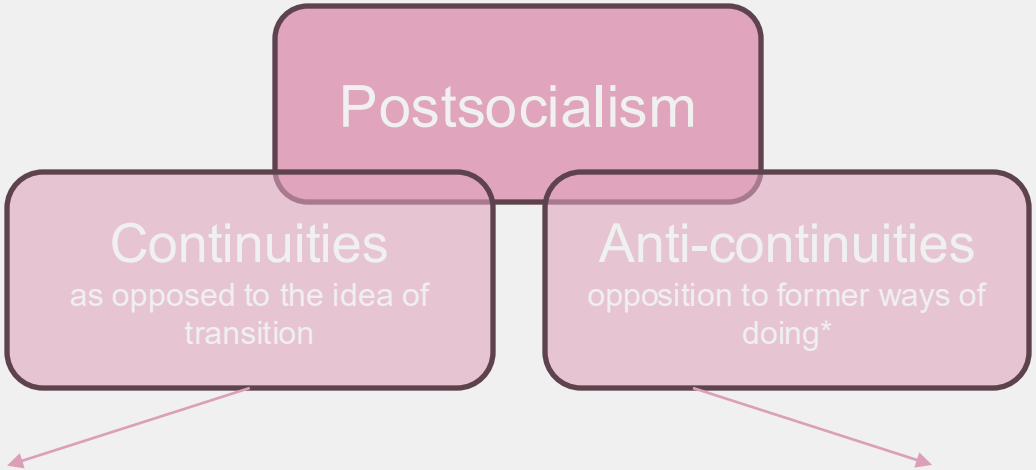
Main goal: to shed light on the role that cycling has in 1) constituting the parent-child relationship, as well as 2) children's relationship with the urban environment and 3) in shaping new generations of everyday cyclists.

Study context: Tallinn

- Population: 450.000, 2800 inhabitants/km2
- Major urban sprawl, increasing home-work distance
- Limited multimodal connections, especially with railway
- Free PT, decrease in the last 20 years
- Increase of private car ownership and usage (25% of working population in 2003; 46,9% in 2023, remarkable increase among women) (Statistikaamet, 2024).
- Low-cycling city (2-5% of everyday travel vs 22% in Helsinki) (City of Helsinki, 2024)
- Lack of legally binding Cycling Strategies



Study lens: postsocialist urbanism and ideology

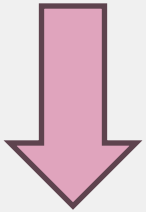


- ostentious public buildings
- major inner city roads
- housing estates
- intolerance towards minorities
- traditional gender roles

- suburbanization
- middle class detached houses, upscale single-family homes
- deinvestment in PT
- private car as a symbol of status
- material values (vs collectiveness)

* Tuvikene, T. (2016). Strategies for Comparative Urbanism: Post-socialism as a De-territorialized Concept. *IJURR 40*(1), 132-146.

Post-socialist ideologies and urbanism: set of traditional and capitalist values that have allowed maintaining the status quo of patriarchal leadership which is translated in the urban landscape into an infrastructure that lacks public sensibilities and prioritizes individual motorized traffic.

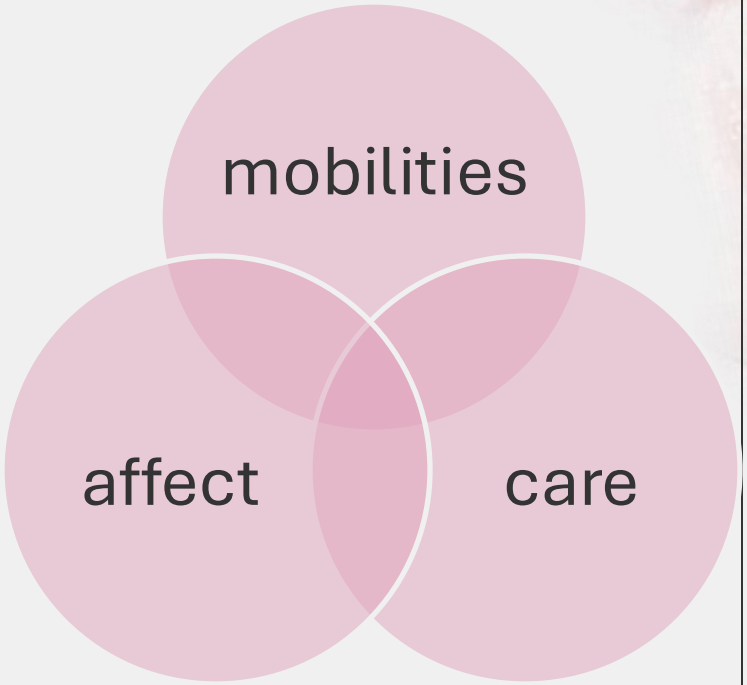


Resarch question:

In which ways, if any, does postsocialism influence women's mobilities and their everyday experiences of co-cycling?

Theoretical framework

- Mobility not as a question of rational decision-making or meaningless travel but rather, as journeying that gathers meaning through encounters with (non)humans, materialities and technologies.
- “Motion and emotion are kinaesthetically intertwined and produced together through a conjunction of bodies, technologies and cultural practices.“ (Sheller, 2004: 227)
- Emotion and affect as working together in and through bodies and spaces to connect people with place and create certain vibes or moods (Ahmed, 2004).
- Care as something that “joins together an affective state, a material vital doing, and an ethico-political obligation” (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 42)
- Mobility of care as a counterpart to mobility for paid employment (Sánchez de Madariaga, 2009).



Methodology

- Sensory ethnography as a means to analyse embodied ways of knowing (Pink, 2007)
- Video methods to explore how people use space and their bodies, and derive meanings through movement (Spinney, 2009)
- Sensory and speculative mapping as a way to connect with participants emotions and embodied experiences after these have originally taken place (Walker and Bishop, 2025).



Challenges

- Recruiting – how to reach the non-middle class, non-white and non-heterosexual women in order to avoid reinforcing heteronormative portrayals of cycling?
- Post-cycling interviews: difficulties of addressing the non-representational and affective aspects of travel.
- Doubts about the usefulness of framing the study within postsocialist urbanism and ideologies.



Thank you! Aitäh!



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