Work-Life Boundary Making in Cities
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Starting point 1: Cities as ARENAS for individual’s work/non-work experiences

Work/non-work management is contextualised (Kossek & Lambert, 2006; Poelmans, 2005; Ollier-Malaterre, 2009) and cities can be such context. Based on narratives of managers, diverse parts of cities may indeed play a role in boundary management (see: Languilaire, 2009)

- “To alleviate my stress, I spend some time shopping on my way back home between 18:30 and 19:00” (Marine, 28 year old)
- “Indeed, I believe that the separation between private and professional life maybe stronger in Paris than in Mael (small city). In Paris, there is the issue of physical distance, you rarely mix colleagues; well, thinking of the colleagues I have had in Paris, I notice that once you have left the office you do not see them again. There is huge geographical distance. In a way, everyone goes home and there is no real connection.” (Marine, 28 year old)
- “I was looking for a place to live. I sent few pictures by emails to Thara from different locations but I stopped doing so. Immediately after getting confirmation about the position, I started to look more actively and it was done in two weeks. One criterion was to be close to school or to a bus line so that the kids could be more independent” (Thibault, 34 year old, looking about her life)
- “For me, I estimate to be at work or in others words away from home between 13 and 14 hours including almost 3 hours of transportation, using metro and bus to and from the office. (Sarah, 55 year old, reflecting about her life)
- “Indeed, what I appreciate is to have a little bit of time even only to go and have a coffee at a café on Saturday morning. Just use the time to lose a bit of time, well, I do not do nothing because it is difficult to do nothing but resting for 10 or 15 minutes is important. And on weekends I may see friends or go to the theatre, but I try to keep some time for myself.” (Sarah, 55 year old, reflecting about her life)
- “For me, work-related troubles stop at the office’s doors, especially when I see the few trees out of the office building.” (Paul, 50 year old, separation between work and non-work)

[Languilaire, 2009]

Starting point 2: Cities may ENABLE or HINDER individual’s work/non-work experiences via boundary making.

On the one hand, individuals may understand or make sense of their current urban context as enabling their current work/non-work process enabling them to segment or integrate as they wish to, i.e. transport is smooth and enables daily transition, or work and home are close to gym so that the three domains can be one, etc.

On the other hand, individuals may understand their current urban context as hindering their current work/non-work process, i.e. hindering work/non-work preferences to be enacted. Individuals may feel POSITIVE or NEGATIVE emotions where Cities are pointed out as their sources.

PURPOSE of this preliminary research

Describe the urban elements affecting work/non-work experiences and their roles for individuals' boundary work and management, especially in terms of Boundary that are affected.
EMPIRICAL STUDY
Malmö as case study
Content and text collected on Facebook
Content Analysis

CONCLUSIONS:
1- Centrality of Time and Space. Cities are the CONCRETE context in which boundaries are enacted.
2- Urban elements are CULTURALLY BOUNDED, here Sweden with Water, Sun and Nature; i.e. we are “sailor” at heart, we value sun that is away 6 months or more, we have the constitutional right to “nature to all”
3- Urban context affects “soft” boundaries that are underexplored in research: COGNITIVE & PSYCHOSOMATIC. To reduce stress in city to enable restoration, city planners must develop “greener” cities...
4- Emotions are central... Work/non-work management is not only rational.

IMPLICATIONS
1- Knowing the right urban elements will enable better planning so that citizens will say: ”I LOVE MY CITY” the ultimate emotion
2- CREATING the right emotions should be the objectives of city makers. Need to explore it in research and its consequences in practice for city management.
3- If people love their cities they will “fight” to maintain their context, it implies green and social engagement and possible economical consequences for cities: WORK-LIFE FRIENDLY CITIES CAN LEAD TO SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Mid-summer flowers...On the way to work on full packed bike (100 exams) so the picture was made with a light hand.

The new Malmo that is growing behind the morning clouds. Spring 2014 (close to Central train Station)

Spring sun is perfect for ending a day of study with a discussion around a coffee before one is going home but also ask much as energy when the day is about

A LANDMARK AT A SPECIAL TIME

Hi JC! Last year I often went down to "ribban" after the working day to distress and get new energy. Picture taken an evening in the fall 😊