Glocal Amsterdam

Student: Reinier van Vliet
Studio: Dutch Housing Graduation Studio, *Between Standard and Ideal(s)*
Tutors: Theo Kupers, Ferry Adema, Pierijn van der Putt
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This booklet contains the results of my research that was done during the first few months of the Dutch Housing Graduation Studio ‘Between Standard and Ideals, the future of Dutch housing’. I chose to participate in this particular studio because I believe dwelling is one of the most fundamental fields of architecture and plays an important role in every human life, yet can be a complex challenge and difficult to describe. Dwelling it’s most basic form is about sheltering against natural threats and ultimately evolves into a place that we describe as home.

Today in our world we are faced with many new challenges like the need for densification, gentrification or sustainability, in order to provide people with a place where they can stay and call home. Once such a challenge has grasped our attention, research is required in order for us to gain an understanding of its nature, what makes it emerge as a challenge, take a position towards it and finally come up with an approach that will hopefully overcome said challenge.

Summarized that is the goal of this booklet; to provide an overview of my research into the assignment of the graduation studio, what I identified as imminent challenge when it comes to future Dutch housing, what my findings were about this challenge in relation to the nature of its topic, the historical context and possible approaches into dealing with it. After a manifest on how I believe this should be approached, I will describe my findings of relevant case studies and an investigation into a design location.
# Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of Assignment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Investigation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manifesto</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Analysis</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the Site</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As stated by the graduation studio, the challenge of the assignment is to marry idea with form, ideal with a concrete design proposal. In this first chapter I will elaborate on my personal understanding of the times we live in and of the future we aspire to, which will inspire my work later on. I will describe what I conceive as an imminent challenge of future housing in Amsterdam and how I will approach this.
Introduction

One might assume that a research report about the future of housing design in the Netherlands mainly deals with the study of buildings, floor plans and ways of realizing these through construction. However to me, and luckily the Chair of Architecture and Dwelling Design shares this philosophy, a design project should never be undertaken without having an understanding of the political, social or other societal issues that have been, are or even will be, present at a location. In a way the built environment around us is a solidified depiction of those matters that architects, and hopefully in line with what society required, saw as an important point of departure at one point in time.

However noble it might sound to some, I’m not considering it to be the duty of architects to be the ones who solve such matters. As great as certain people like to depict architecture, I think it has just as many shortcomings and don’t want to further feed into the hero complex that some architects might have. However I do believe the quality of design improves when it addresses matters that (will) require attention before they lead to an undesirable situation.

The course guide of the graduation studio mentions for example how the entirety of the post-war housing production tells a story of the project of the welfare state: it illustrates its conception as an egalitarian ideal and depicts its subsequent transitions as a result of changing ideals (the 60s), economic growth, technological advancements (the internet) and the like. Likewise, the 17th century merchants’ houses of Amsterdam tell us the completely different story of prosperity based on aggressive trade and risky entrepreneurship mitigated by a Calvinist obsession with austerity and frugality.1

Kees Kaan once stated in a lecture that it’s important to understand history as it gives us a unique perspective into the continuous change of architecture. According to him a historic perspective will allow us to more objectively observe current events independently from the influence of today’s fashion and trends. Consequently a historical perspective can help us be more critical and aware when evaluating contemporary issues and helps exposing the inherited ‘weakness’ of the ‘Zeitgeist’ to which we are confined.2

The concept of Zeitgeist is originally expressed in German and can be understood as ‘The Spirit of the Time’. It played an important role in the writings of Voltaire, Herder and Hegel at the beginning of the modern age. Hegel for example argued that “no man can surpass his own time, for the spirit of his time is also his own spirit”.3 Following this statement the designs of an architect will inevitably then also reflect the time of the culture in which they were made.

In our time, the western world has been dealing with a variety of challenges that need addressing. More specifically in The Netherlands, we see the issue of re-considering the welfare state and how we, at the same time, can integrate approaches to deal with challenges like sustainability, a changing climate, mass-migration, aging of the population, a shifting international position, incorporation of new technologies, etc. Thus, the questions raised in the graduation studio is:

“How do we want to live and what kind of buildings do we need to allow for that?”

Obviously these questions can be answered subjectively in a vast variety of approaches. To be able to do this in a satisfying way, one needs to depart from an ideological vision that helps formulate them together with an actual problem, a need in the real world that requires solving.

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1 Chair of Architecture and Dwelling Design, (2018)
2 Kaan, K., (2018)
3 Hegel, G. W. F. (1983)
As previously mentioned, the graduation studio Dutch Dwelling looks into housing in Amsterdam, more specifically the part of the city that until the 19th century acted as a strong line of defense of the inner city. Fortified with bastions it protected the city, it’s inhabitants and their ideals from attacks and unwanted visitors over land. However as the population grew and more territory was needed, the stronghold was replaced by a larger body of defense, torn down and integrated into the existing city. Today only a few physical elements are still visible that reference to this former stronghold and therefore it’s not burdened with the Unesco World Heritage designation that would limit more experimental, visionary and idiosyncratic approaches of building on this location.

Instead the location offers a valuable quality, by being located close to the city center that over the last decades has become increasingly popular for people to live or work nearby. Whatever advantages suburban living had in the past, they have been outweighed by the convenience and attraction of living in or near city centers. This drive toward the cities has gone from being a trend to a permanent condition which will eventually result in most of the worlds population living in urban areas.¹

As a result of urban life, housing in cities have become one of the most popular building types of our day. With people flocking to cities, urban planners, developers and governments throughout the world have been busy trying to meet this rising demand for housing. Their projects, fueled by the trend towards urbanization, are reinterpreting accepted housing plans and programs.

We can expect that this need of new housing projects will also have the effect of generating new building types and new interpretations of residential living for this quickly growing segment of urban residents. Different formulations on urban living are starting to become visible based on reorganizing apartment blocks according to the new spatial, planning and ecological parameters required by these socio-economic classes. The features of apartment buildings throughout the world, once codified into certain standard types, are now starting to transform into a mix of approaches determined by market forces.

¹ UN-HABITAT (2016)
Growth & Internationalization

The city of Amsterdam is also actively building new housing projects to meet their aim of realizing 7500 dwellings/year. This number is the bare minimum that is needed as the most recent prognosis is that by 2030, 950,000 people be calling Amsterdam their home.¹ In the future these number are very likely to grow even higher and various political parties already ave the ambition to realize 120,000 more dwellings by 2030.²

The current growth in population of Amsterdam currently makes it the fastest growing city in The Netherlands and that is mainly due to the yearly 10,000 immigrants from the USA and western Europe, but also countries like Brazil, India, China and Russia. Interestingly enough this is in contrast with the migration number that actually show the amount of Dutch people living in Amsterdam is shrinking with 5,000 each year. Based on these numbers we can already say that (at least the population of) Amsterdam is getting an increasingly more global feeling and less Dutch.³

This in itself is not a major change for the city. Amsterdam can already be considered a melting pot of culture with currently over 180 nationalities present.⁴ A number that policymakers like to mention and even used to claim it made Amsterdam the most diverse city in the world.⁴

Throughout history Amsterdam has been notorious for being a destination for immigrants. Most famously are the periods between 1530 and 1585 when thousands of Jewish merchants from Antwerp fled to Amsterdam out of fear for religious prosecution by the Spanish Inquisition. During that period Amsterdam was already known for it’s open minded hospitality and acceptance of different believes. The immigrants therefor hoped they would be able to practice their ideals in peace. In return they brought a lot of wealth, knowledge and business with them that Amsterdam was able to profit from and blossom economically. The notorious family Six is a direct example of this described situation. In 1584 they fled from Antwerp with their, already considered wealthy, assets and after setting up a cloth and silk processing business they were able to grow their fortune to perhaps unmatched numbers and increase their power substantially.

Today reasons for immigrants to move to Amsterdam are more diverse. Some come to study at universities because this is cheaper or the institute has a better reputation. Others are using their European citizenship that allows them to find work in Amsterdam because the job market in their home-country offers little perspective. Once their initial stay comes to an end and original reasons for moving are longer valid, many of these immigrants often stay longer because they have gotten accustomed to living in Amsterdam and enjoy doing so.

The Amsterdam municipality is welcoming of these foreign souls. In their international policy they recognize the need to keep increasing their competitive position in an international world. They aim to do this by continuing to focus on becoming an experienced, modern and hospitable city.⁴

But the process of strengthening Amsterdam’s international position, also comes with various side effects through the impact of globalization and is not without challenges. There is Amsterdam's persistent, but dynamic and sometimes even contradictory, association with the ‘global village’ idea: a city relatively free of the somber implications of global urbanity which seem to attach to primary world cities such as London, Tokyo, or New York, while intensely globally (inter)connected through various worldwide networks and flows. To some extent, Amsterdam may owe its ‘global village’ image simply due to its physical geography and scale, as when it is dubbed ‘the world’s smallest metropolis’ or ‘the smallest world city’. Indeed, if world cities form the ‘embodied faces’ of globalization, as often has been suggested, then Amsterdam provides it with a face that seems relatively friendly and humane. However, if the ‘global village’ image of the city has long held special attraction, it is complicated by the international interest in contemporary Amsterdam as

¹ Bevolkingsprognose 2018-2040. (n.d.)
² Couzy, M. (2017)
³ Amsterdam in cijfers 2017. (n.d.)
⁴ Herijking Internationaal Beleid 2014-2018. (n.d.)
a model of an open society, or as a space where an unmatched degree of tolerance can be seen to coexist with the possibility of licentiousness or even the breakdown of social morals.\(^1\)

An other reason why Amsterdam’s place in a modern urban and global world deserves attention is its inscription, qua ‘world city’, that is powerfully linked by historical moments. On the one hand, the idea of Amsterdam remains inseparably tied up with the Dutch ‘moment of world leadership’ during the seventeenth century, when for approximately fifty years the city formed the heart of a capitalist world system maintained through the Dutch East India Company and the West India Company, among others. The former, often considered to have been the first transnational trading company in the world.\(^2\) As the historical sociologist and world-systems theorist Giovanni Arrighi has written, these “Dutch chartered companies were both beneficiaries and instruments of the ongoing centralization in Amsterdam of world-embracing commerce and high finance ... [and] the medium through which the Dutch capitalist class established direct links between the Amsterdam entrepôt on the one side, and producers from all over the world on the other”.\(^3\)

This situation had a powerful impact on the ‘global consciousness’ that emerged in the city in the course of the seventeenth century. Nor was the Dutch mercantilistic effort short-lived, even if by the late 1670s world supremacy was lost. A walk through Amsterdam’s historic inner-city center testifies generously to this global past and colonial iconography still decorating many buildings in the city today.

On the other hand, Amsterdam and the Netherlands are in various ways caught up in the present ‘age of globalization’ – simultaneous with neoliberalism. Neoliberal globalization makes itself felt in Amsterdam in various ways. It generates transformations of urban space, most notably in the Zuidas district and the city center, which is often said – and feared – to fossilize into a ‘theme park’ of some kind. It also works on the level of the (immigrant) neighborhood, where it creates (or results in a lack of) new kinds of urban literacy, new forms of urban identification, and new models of local and communal belonging. Finally, it makes itself felt through processes of city branding and city marketing that are omnipresent in some of Amsterdam’s lived, physical spaces, as they are in images in the media (the I AMsterdam branding campaign for example).

**Sluisbuurt**

What caught my personal attention about consideration to the impacts of an increasing influence of globalization on the city of Amsterdam, in both tangible and immaterial form, was the (public) discussion that arouse following the plans presented by the municipality for the Sluisbuurt neighborhood. This location, east of the main city of Amsterdam, is one of the newest locations where the city council wants to realize the previously mentioned required dwellings to facilitate the growing number of inhabitants. Their initial urban designs, with most noticeably 25 towers of up to 125 meters high, aimed to do this with the ambition of creating a neighborhood that relies on an enrichment of high quality public space and an atmosphere of international charm while referring to highly urban areas, including New York and Vancouver.\(^4\)

Logically, for every possible opinion, position and design that is proposed, a countering argument is always possible, no matter how scientifically approved or based on common sense the initial proposal may be (Flat Earth theorists for example). This case with the Sluisbuurt was no exception to that and initially through the voices of well known Dutch architects Sjoerd Soeters and Rudy Uytenhaak, calling the plan “crazy” (van de pot gerukt)\(^5\) “Amsterdam unworthy, styrofoam urbandesign”\(^6\), a group of people opposing the plans quickly arouse.\(^7\)

Backed by a growing group that identified with the acronym and term ‘Nimby’, (Not-In-My-Backyard, often used to describe adversaries of highrise design) both designers started a media campaign and, to depict the earnestness they felt for the case, proposed an alternative design option. They claimed their design would still be able to fulfill the initial aim of the municipality to realise 5.500 new dwellings, but in a way that would be much complimenting to and elaborating on the existing qualities of Amsterdam instead of blindly trying to mimic world cities like New York or Manhattan.\(^8\) Supporters of the NIMBY movement were not only simply afraid of a changing skyline and losing their rural views, they

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3 Arrighi, G. (1994)
5 ‘Toen ik de Sluisbuurt-plannen zag dacht ik, letterlijk; “zijn ze van de pot gerukt?”’. (2017)
6 Geef mij maar Amsterdam, dat is mooier dan Dubai. (2017)
7 Note: In no way am I suggesting a direct comparison between Flat Earth theorists and Sjoerd Soeters & Rudy Uytenhaak besides both groups arguing against a notion.
8 Sluisbuurt Amsterdam. (2017)
also questioned the motivation behind the seemingly switch in approach that previously was based on the timeless success of the Amsterdam canals and Plan Zuid by Berlage. Until recent this had resulted in neighborhoods like Oostelijk Havengebied and IJburg that all-around considered a succes are starting to become a measure for high quality urban design.¹

Vital to a good discussion is the presence of a supporting position/group. Once Soeters and Uytenhaak had made their opposing ideas known, a group of supporters of the initial design also emerged and united as ‘Yimby’ (Yes-In-My-Backyard). In their reactions they called the alternative design ‘dead beer’ (dood bier)², ‘the eruption of a few elderly men’² and a mediocre plan that ignores looking to the future.³

Interesting to note about this discussion was that supports seemed to mostly use twitter, taking advantage of a free, global network to to voice their reactions and opinions, whereas their disagreeing opponents was less represented on this network and resorted to more traditional methods such as open letters to newspapers and radio interviews.

¹ Zijn we vergeten wie we zijn? (2017)
³ Soeters creëert een spookbeeld (2017)
Research Approach

My future vision for Amsterdam sees the processes of internationalization and globalization as most imminent challenges. For the goal of the graduation studio, the design of a residential building on a chosen location in Amsterdam, I need to understand how these processes (have) manifested themselves in the architectural field, what applicable responses or approaches there are, which target group is most fitting to go along with this and what site on the location in the city is most appropriate to place my design.

Therefor I have formulated the following research question and sub-questions that my research will have to provide an answer to:

What are the possible design criteria for the design of a residential building that aims to address the process of globalization in Amsterdam?

- What kind of effects has globalization imposed on architecture in recent years?

- What have been different responses or positions by architects, theorist or other experts to the effects of globalization in the built environment?

- How can these responses be incorporated in a new design?

- Which target group is most relevant to address the effects of globalization in Amsterdam?

- What can be learned from relevant case studies that were designed as a relatable living situation?

- Which site on the location in Amsterdam is most appropriate to place my design for a new residential building?

Methods

In order to formulate answers to these questions I will look into literature sources concerning this topics, consider their described findings and positions in relation to each other and conclude these by taking the results into consideration, also in regard to my own position as described in my manifesto.

Because I take the actuality of the assignment into high regard, I deem it necassery to not only limit myself to literature, but also to take other forms of media, that perhaps contain more recent information that I can learn from, into consideration. Escpecially when it comes to research into the characteristics of a suitable targetgroup.

Furthermore, I will analyse relevant case studies through axonometric representation and analytical drawings to be able to make conclusions about their spatial arrangements and other design elements that they depict as favourable.

The last part of my research will look into the location that the graduation studio has outlined. A particular site will be chosen and further studied in depth in regard to its context and character. Besides visiting the site at several different moments to document it through photography, (audio) recordings aanalytical drawings will be made about aspects that I consider to be most important.
Figure 4. Sketch of New Babylon by Constant Nieuwenhuys
Now that an imminent challenge has been identified and its relevance to Amsterdam has been described, I will elaborate on a few interesting and relevant frames of thought that were described before me. I will take them into cooperative consideration and conclude which findings I reckon are most important to be held in regard to my future design.

The second part of this chapter focuses on the description of a suitable target group that I deem to be most promising to go along with addressing this challenge of globalization in Amsterdam.
Globalization

Thanks to electronic media and high-speed transportation, the world has become a global village. Clear examples of this are visible in the advanced financial and economic systems that, even though they are spread out over the globe, they behave as a undivided market. Industries that are based on the knowledge and information, like science and technology, profit greatly from new data being instantly accessible to society.

Figuratively speaking the world is getting smaller and is, seen from a certain perspective, becoming increasingly homogenized. In a matter of days we can visit all the major business centers, sleep and attend meetings in hotels and grabbing something to eat in an airport-lounge. Yet afterwards we remain with a feeling of not really having been anywhere. The standardization of products, services and places is omnipresent. Especially at airports, the buzzing nodes in this globally connected world. Standardization is closely related to our relatively shrinking world. Fast and cheap access to markets on all continents feeds into mass-production and global services. Some people call it jokingly ‘the hamburger-economy’ since the popular fast-food hamburger is the most well known example of a product becoming available to billions of people through globalization.

In a similar way, design, fashion, architecture and other forms of visual art tend to be swiftly disseminated via magazines and quickly and indiscriminately reproduced and copied all over the world, irrespective of whether it be in a middle eastern desert or a monsoon region, that is dissociated from local qualities of a place like the climatic and cultural context.

We can already start to understand that the phenomenon of globalization is larger than ‘just’ the power of global corporations. Jürgen Habermas, a well renowned German philosopher, outlined it as follows:

“By ‘globalization’ is meant the cumulative processes of a worldwide expansion of trade and production, commodity and financial markets, fashions, the media and computer programs, news and communications networks, transportation systems and flows of migration, the risks engendered by large-scale technology, environmental damage and epidemics, as well as organized crime and terrorism” 1

Throughout history there obviously have been other forms of interchange between nations, economies and cultures like imperialism and internationalism, but none of them match the vast scale and impact of globalization.

Even though there is some discussion around the question who coined the term ‘globalization or globalization’ 2, many experts believe the modern foundation for it was created during the time when the Second World War came to an end. The establishments of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and United Nations put together an international framework based on Western or Enlightenment ideals.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the (voluntary) liberalization of the Asian economies the ideals of a free market could be realized on a global level. These free market principles were a north-Atlantic economic system and often associated with an American-style of liberal democracy. As a result globalization is frequently, and understandably, thought of as a product of American imperialism. However it should be considered that the ideals are based on those of liberalism and thus outside the grasp of imperial control and protection. True believers in liberalism will acknowledge the possibility of losing control over ‘that what has been liberalized’ and in the future we might very well see a shift towards a Chinese based association with globalization. 3

1 Habermas, J. (2014)
3 Perlez, J., & Huang, Y. (2017)
4 Kaspersen, L. B. (1991)
5 McLuhan, M., Fiore, Q., & Agel, J. (1968)
Architecture and globalization

Historically in architecture the development of globalization has always been closely associated with the dominating force of Modernism. By 1932 it had been identified as ‘International style’ and, although this was really a development of “parallel experiments” between nations 4, it was presented as a ‘contemporary style, which existed throughout the world, [...] unified and inclusive.” 1.

Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson described it through three main characteristics: the expression of volume instead of mass, dynamic balance instead of imposed symmetry and elimination of ornamental elements.

By 1948, the year the foundations of globalization were laid, Modernism had reduced traditional architecture to nothing as it came to be described as simple “modern” 2. Modernism was also, quite specifically, a north-Atlantic cultural phenomenon and based on the same ideals of Western Enlightenment thinking that shaped globalization: rationality, scientific innovation, progress and the end of tradition. Thanks to the ongoing growth of globalization, Modernism conquered the world. As Maxwell Fry noted in 1969, Modernism is an “architectural story which is first a record of dispersal from Germany and Central Europe to the ends of the earth, but first to England and America.” 3

For countries swept up in the tide of the global economy, the association of Modernism with rationality, progress and successful and dominant north-Atlantic economies was irresistible. Furthermore, the Modernist association with the principle building types identified with key aspects of globalization, the corporate office, the airport, the international hotel and the shopping mall, provided a clear symbolic link with the engines of global capital expansion. In a very short space of time, the homogenization of global consumerism had its parallel in the homogenization of city centers around the world. It was observed by Henry Russel Hitchcock as early as 1951. 4 The glass-walled office block has become the Coca-Cola of architecture. Now, without reference to signage or vehicle registration plates, it is often impossible to identify the global location of parts of San Francisco, Osaka, Sao Paolo, Brussels, Berlin or Shanghai.

1 Hitchcock, H. R., & Johnson, P. (1997)
3 Fry, M. (1969)
4 Hitchcock, H. R. (1951)
New Babylon

Someone who also observed the prevailing focus on mobility and homogenization of the build environment, was Constant Nieuwenhuys. The in 1920, Amsterdam born artist, author and musician, accused architects and urban planners of his time of only focusing on building roads for the cars, and standardized dwellings that turned neighborhoods into true ‘monuments of boredom’ with a level of genericness that even the best architecture was unable to fight against. The general acknowledged aridity was a result of sacrificing every possibility of quality and diversification in favor of infrastructure.

As a result of the quick industrialization and beginning globalization, livable housing and infrastructure had turned into tremendous problems. According to Constant, the biggest problem was the slow but steady destruction of the city as collective living environment. The possibilities offered in the city for an individual to create a personal sphere, were getting increasingly limited.4

An alternative way of living was embodied in the countless amount of sketches, drawings and models that had to depict his vision for New Babylon. He refused to label this vision as utopian, as that would mean it was the expression of existing notions. Instead of wanting to be a typical production city with a complete focus on trade, industry, the storage of goods and housing of workers, like other popularly utopian visions of his time did, New Babylon differed in the way it was based on introducing a new culture.1 Based on reality and logic his design for this new city was achievable when people, instead of using their resources for war, focused on something more positive. The opposition between the individual and the masses, something that was so strongly visible in his society, would disappear in New Babylon. Because according to Constant, this opposition was a contrast between the freedom of the individual and the collective enslavement of the masses. Humans could be freed from the enslavement because of the increasing development of technology. Where ancient civilizations didn’t have to work because they relied on slavery, in New Babylon the machine would be the modern slave. Humans would be left to take care of the creative tasks. Everyone would be creative, some more than others, and no one would be a passive observer, but an active participant.

1 Like ‘Cité Industrielle’ by Tony Garnier, ‘Ville Radieuse’ by Le Corbusier or ‘Città Nuova’ by Antonio Sant’Elia
4 Nieuwenhuys, C. (2001)
Nieuwenhuys called others, who had a dystopian perception of a world that was based on a notion of technology and rationalism having a strong presence, like for example Aldous Huxley did in ‘Brave New World’, ridiculous and only perceivable by people who cannot grasp the practical application of technology.²

New Babylon was instead based on creative use of the machine, completely subservient to the human artist. Through being anti-logical and disorientating, the confusion that was so destructive to the biblical story of Babylon, would instead be a source of unexpected new encounters and situations. This completely artificial and anti-naturalistic sphere, was then to result in a constant change of environment and ever ongoing disruption of the existing.

There would be no traditional dwellings in New Babylon. The whole city was to be an enormous, collective, roofed home. A vast shelter with an uncountable amount of different rooms, allowing the inhabitants to roam for weeks while encountering different dwelling units everywhere when the need to withdraw would arise.

Order and freedom had failed in the existing cities. An example was the freedom that everyone had to own a car, but when on a normal day 80% of them was parked in the city, they limited the other 20% in gaining speed, something the car had been fundamentally design for to do. This situation of having the freedom and desire to own a car, but in doing so limiting everyone else to fully use it with traffic chaos as a result, was an unacceptable contradiction in the eyes of Constant.³

“Nothing is more confronting to humans, than a reality that is different from their current reality.”⁴

1 Like ‘Cité Industrielle’ by Tony Garnier, ‘Ville Radieuse’ by Le Corbusier or ‘Città Nuova’ by Antonio Sant’Elia
4 Nieuwenhuys, C. (2001)
Critical Regionalism

While Constant was busy working on his countless models and plans for New Babylon, others took a more theoretical approach to the slow but increasing developments of globalization as postmodernism spread around the world. As a somewhat indirect reaction, the term of ‘Critical regionalism’ was introduced in 1981 by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre. They wanted to mainly focus attention on the approach of a group of young German architects who were searching for an alternative approach to postmodernism. Their criticism was based on the lack of local phenomenology that the Modernism style brought to a place.

According to Tzonis and Lefaivre, the most important task of Critical Regionalism was ‘to rethink architecture through the concept of region’. With this, Critical Regionalism differs from Regionalism in that it does not support the emancipation of a regional group, nor does it encourage to set up one group against another. Critical Regionalism is critical of the product of globalization as much as it is critical against Regionalism.

The ideas of Critical Regionalism later gained popularity by Kenneth Frampton and his ‘Six points for an architecture of resistance’. For his arguments he dwelled on Ricoeur’s 1961 essay “Universal Civilization and National Cultures”;

“The phenomenon of universalization, while being an advancement of mankind, at the same time constitutes a sort of subtle destruction, not only of traditional cultures, which might not be an irreparable wrong, but also of what I shall call for the time being the creative nucleus of great cultures, that nucleus on the basis of which we interpret life, what I shall call in advance the ethical and mythical nucleus of mankind.”

Briefly summarized he brought the following six points forward:

1. **Culture and Civilization**
   Ever since the beginning of the enlightenment, civilization has been primarily concerned with instrumental reason, while culture has addressed itself to the specifics of expression— to the realization of being and the evolution of its collective psycho-social reality.

2. **The Rise and Fall of the Avant-Garde**
   The building disappears and you feel that you are only in spaces. The whole idea began with that: do you really want dominant architecture? Or architecture that merges with the society and becomes part of society. There is a dialogue between the building, the space and the people.

3. **Critical Regionalism and World Culture**
   Mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities of a particular space. Architecture should be “a dialectical relation with nature” and speak more of the relationship of the building to its space.

4. **The Resistance of the Place-Form**
   A boundary is not that at which something stops, but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presence. Heidegger stated that the condition of “dwelling” and hence ultimately “being” can only take place in a domain that is clearly bounded.

5. **Culture Versus Nature: Topography, Context, Climate, Light and Tectonic Form**
   The culture and history of the region in both ageological and agricultural sense becomes inscribed into the form and realization of the work. It evokes the method allude to by the Swiss architect Mario Botta as “building the site.”

6. **The Visual Versus the Tactile**
   It seeks to complement our normative visual experience by readdressing the tactile range of human perceptions. In doing so, it endeavors to balance the priority accorded to the image and to counter the Western Tendency to interpret the environment in exclusively perspectival terms.

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1 Tzonis, A., & Lefaivre, L. (1985)
3 Ricoeur, P. (1965)
The fundamental strategy of Critical Regionalism was in Frampton’s view to mediate between the impact of our universal civilization and elements that are indirectly derived from the peculiarities of a specific place. Only then architecture could truly become part of society. He also stated that it should not be mistaken to denote Critical Regionalism as Vernacular Architecture, as this was once spontaneously produced by the combined interaction of climate, culture, myth and craft, but rather to identify those regional ‘schools’ whose primary aim it has been to reflect and serve the limited constituencies in which they are grounded. These regional schools, which are influenced by global architecture and global ideas, personalize their designs and adapt them to the specific contexts. This is why every building had a relationship to its climate, to its place, to its construction techniques, to its cultural heritage and to the place where it was built. More recently, Tzonis and Lefaivre advocate a renewed focus on Critical Regionalism now that the effects of globalization have been noticeably more intense.¹

Critical Regionalism should be re-considered because of the way it can offer complementing qualities to the effects that advanced technology and a more global culture and economy have, while only resisting against those unfavorable and conditional by-products that are a result of private interests and thoughtlessness.

To Critical Regionalists, region or place does not align with a certain nation or area of ethnical group. Instead it is about gaining awareness of the local possibilities. Critical Regionalism is an approach to architecture that aims to fight the lack of place and loss of identity in Modern architecture. It uses contextual qualities to instead enhance the feeling of place and meaning, but at the same time rejects a rugged individualism and ornamental approach of postmodern architecture. The styling of Critical Regionalism strives for an architecture that is rooted in modern traditions, but connected to geographical and cultural context. Given that this critical position distinguishes itself from picturesque and shabby, we could say that to critical regionalists places have to be continuously reinvented. This reinventing of a place seems to be connected to a ‘project identity’ where the social-agent is both critical to the legitimizing identity as it is critical to the resisting identity; a project identity that critically refers to continuance (of local potentiality) and change (influences of globalization) of atmospheres.²

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¹ Tzonis, A., Lefaivre, L., & Stagno, B. (Eds.). (2001)
² Mota, N. J. A. (2014)
The Generic City

A bit more than a decade after the term Critical Regionalism was first coined, Rem Koolhaas wrote in 1995 what would become the most well known essay on what kind of effect globalization had on, not only architecture itself, but even on an urban scale.

In ‘The Generic City’ he tries to theorize the convergence of contemporary cities becoming all the same. He describes the city like an organic organism; it grows and moves, independently of and indifferent to the people that live in it. According to Koolhaas the first signs of The Generic City can already be found in Asia, but the description that he gives is hard to relate to and remain quite futuristic. A city, stretched out and constantly a subject to change. A city without history. Only three elements make up her embodiment: roads, buildings and nature. As unexpected as it might seem, especially nature seems to be of great importance to Koolhaas because in his descriptions for the other two elements he leans on natural metaphors. The city, he writes, is like a mangrove forest. When something appears not to function in a desirable way, it simply gets left behind without any further notion. Much like the evolutionary process of natural selection. A plan exists, but it does not make a difference and could just as easily be executed as it could be abandoned. Unpredictability is the driving force: ‘the systematic application of the unprincipled’.

Other characteristics of The Generic City are it being “a place of weak and distended sensations, few and far between emotions, discreet and mysterious like a large space lit by a bed lamp.”

Koolhaas doesn't just evoke the idea of the city of the future, but also turns against the city of the past. The old, historic cities with their strong identity that we all know (Rome, Paris, Athens) are all trapped under a strong identity. This imprisons them, resists against expansion, renewal and interpretation. On closer inspection he states, their identity has been dead for centuries. As machines they routinely display their old tricks over and over again emotionless and rigid.

The price that people have to pay in order to live their lives in the Generic City is the shedding of identity. Only then can they live a general life, almost lucid in its uniformity. But exactly that uniformity offers possibilities for exuberant variation in the expression of colorful decorations and ornaments. Variation not because of a deeper need to express individuality or identity, but because of enjoyment. Felicity is what it is all fundamentally about in the Generic City. This can not be found in an thorough search with diversity, but only on a surface level. Identity is a straight jacket, something people cling on to and at the same time clinches to them. The Generic City is the opposite of anchored. It is fluent and temporary. It does not offer identity, but transformation.

Even though he doesn't go further into the (capitalistic) processes that would be behind the process of turning contemporary cities into generic ones, the logic of homogenization goes on. Koolhaas expects this trend to be so all-encompassing that the whole environment, every city would turn into a certain constellation of the same corporate brands and buildings. Every modern shopping street is already a first example of that.

Koolhaas his view on urban life may still remain a futuristic vision that is hard to imagine, but it does raise some interesting questions about the role of a cities on a persons identity.
The nomadic and settled

Considering the notion of the world as a Global Village, it is not only in the realm of information that this metaphoric description is imaginable. The issues of environment and ecology are also significant. When air pollution takes place in a country, the resulting acid rain can kill plants in the neighbouring countries. Certain hair sprays and refrigerators contributed to the enlargement of the ozone hole in the South Pole and threatened the whole of mankind. 

In short, we now have to recognize that events which used to be considered somebody else’s problem are now inevitably ours too.

It is envisioned that in future years, due to the continue development of electronic media and highly advanced transportation systems, what we now call Nation State will become obsolete. Rather the local community where people conduct their daily lives, and know each other by sight, may be directly connected to a virtual global community, enjoying meaningful feedback. This can be termed a Glocal Community.

In contrast to mobility, which is so important in the contemporary world, it is also benificial to shift our attention to the notion of stability as a condition for progress of a civilization in relation to the idea of place. Looking at the different roles of farming people and hunting people in this context of progress in a civilization, it can be noted that it is usually the farming people that gave continuous contributions. The origin of nearly all civilizations is directly linked to the settlement in a place for faming, where it gradually developed into cities and further relied on accumulation of not only material wealth but also information. One of the characteristics of information is interaction and self-increase, and that is exactly what happened in the city. However, if the settled life continues for a long spell of time without meaningful external interaction, what awaits is stagnancy and degeneration.

On the other hand, hunting and nomadic people usually roam on the bordering areas of settled civilization, but don't create independent high civilizations of their own. The concept of civilization to them is something they use to their own advantages when necessary by capturing from settled civilizations they encounter. Whenever aggressive energy accumulated within it, like Mongols attacking China and Europe, they conquered a great area by their superb mobility, assuming and consuming instantly whatever is convenient and appetizing of civilized world.

That is to say that the position of hunters and nomads are rather those of appropriator and consumer, and essentially not that of creator. Admittedly, the agriculturalists can also take the role of appropriators – like the white Americans taking over the lands of the Indians, the colonial British the lands of many African tribes, etc. However, nomadic tribes their role was that of an external energy to stimulate and promote the mixing of the various civilizations they encountered. They have been a sort of intermediary of different civilizations, and functioned as a catalyst to unintended aid in the development a civilization.

From civilization point of view, hunters and nomads are the "media" itself. Therefore when they complete their function, they disappear from the scene and only the content that had been brought by them remains in the civilization they contacted.

The reason for raising this occurrence is because there is some relevance to the contemporary situation of the globalizing world where mobility, media and hunting for information, is valued more compared to activities based in actual space, such as sitting down and conversing, community life and contemplation. We seem to neglect these activities that are so significant in the development of self fulfillment and genuine creation in favor of a mixture of superficial ideas, development of tourist oriented culture and unquestioned drive towards cosmopolitan lifestyle.

The similarities of the interrelationship between agricultural based (settled) civilizations and nomadic (mobile) civilizations illustrates the complementary relationship between stability and mobility. It also shows a complementary relationship between collection and distribution of information in a global arena, and creation and generation of information in a specific place.

If a civilization is only concerned with the collection of as much information as possible and neglects to generate, process and adapt it, there will be no essential progress.

On the other hand, hunting and nomadic people usually roam on the bordering areas of settled civilization, but don't create independent high civilizations of their own. The concept of civilization to them is something they use to their own advantages when necessary by capturing from settled civilizations they encounter. Whenever aggressive energy accumulated within it, like Mongols attacking China and Europe, they conquered a great area by their superb mobility, assuming and consuming instantly whatever is convenient and appetizing of civilized world.

It is true that in the contemporary world, exchange of information can exist without relying on personal mobility. Due to supply of information through telecommunication, the printed media and especially the internet, one can gather all the information one needs even sitting in a capsule space.

However, as the availability of those digital experiences and virtual realities increases, so does the desire to experience the actual content of the information. The very value and importance of locality therefore is to provide the actual space for human activities.

Genius Loci

When we talk about locality, we often struggle trying to express the concept of special characteristics of it. The Japanese for example use words like ‘funsui’ or ‘fudo’. These words describe both physical and non-physical aspects of a place such as climate, geology, fauna, artefact’s like buildings, kind of people and temperament of people who live there. In architectural theory we often refer to the ‘genius loci’ of a place. Where it ancient times was closely related to religious and spiritual meaning, as for example the Romans used it to describe a spirit without name, it later became a concept used to describe the physical atmosphere of the ecological qualities that were characteristic for a place. Christian Norberg-Schulz advocates in his book ‘Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture’ for engagement of local topography, Cosmology of heaven and light, and the symbolic existential meanings that as a fundamental aspect of human inhabitation are embodied in the cultural landscape.¹

When we talk about the genius loci of a place, in our minds we mentally visualize and imagine people in the scene. It tries to express a friendly relationship between man and place, or man’s feelings of respect to a place. In either case, until modern architecture came into being and dominated since the early part of the 20th century, architecture and the genius loci were inseparable. In was assumed that traditional architecture represented locality.

As I talked earlier about in this chapter, under the name of internationalism and universality, Modern architecture took it for granted that architecture could be governed by architectural design indifferent to the genius loci, making extensive use of mass-produced materials such as steel, concrete and glass, and emphasizing the functional approach.

Certainly the theme of Modern Architecture had its legitimacy in terms of technology and industry in the western world, and its appearance was welcomed in a sense that it provided a break from the depressing harness of their own cumulative civilization, bringing in a fresh breeze. However, when the same theme was blindly applied in the regions where such conditions didn’t exist, especially in the colonies of non-industrialized regions whose expected and forced role it was to provide raw materials, and at the same time provide a market for the industrial products of the colonial masters, the confusion and misunderstanding caused by being given the “new inventions” was considerable. Modern Architecture was handed down under conditions which were unquestionable and accepted as advancements by the non-West. There was no reflection as to whether Modern architecture was relevant to the locality or not.

One of the most significant phenomena of the 21st century is drastic global increase of population. The world population is currently on its way to reach 8 billion in 2023.² Due to urbanization, urban area is expanding seemingly endlessly and manifests itself in the transformation of Metropolis to Megalopolis, Megalopolis to Ecumenopolis (which covers the whole earth in the form of a network of urbanized region)³. In order for our Global environment be sustainable, the global urban habitat of man, possibly the Ecumenopolis, must be sustainable. Buildings and infrastructural facilities which constitute the greater part of the physical elements of cities must be sustainable. This simple logic hopefully becomes a fundamental value judgment in the attitude involved when one contemplates architecture in the future.

Globalization phenomena like informationalization, economic and financial systems, homogenization, consumer-oriented life style etc. are basically challenging waves which will continue to come toward our society in any way and they tend to have characteristics of inevitability. This overwhelming situation requires conscious, strong-willed and persistent efforts on the part of the local community and individuals, culture and genius loci. Otherwise the local paradigm will not survive, community may disappear, individuals may be engulfed as mere molecules in the sea of the global paradigm.

However, the tension between global and local, the challenge and response between them, the dialectic, is a potentially rich and creative process, which could open a new horizon towards the future.

For the professionals who are involved in the creation of cities and architecture, it is becoming more and more important to be interested in and be involved in the process of development in the local community of actual residence. This is the basic way people can exercise their professional ability, in the reality of their daily lives. Of course it is equally important to practice the role of expert in planning and design by making use of their global

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¹ Norberg-Schulz, C. (1980)
² UN-HABITAT (2016)
value judgment and universal knowledge and know-how. However, what is expected of them in the coming century is, wherever they work, they are to understand and obtain inspiration from the genius loci and render contribution to create relevant and sustainable architecture. A kind of common sense which is easy to say but difficult to practice in reality.

Glocal

British sociologist Roland Robertson also struggled with the question if we should fight against the dominating influence of globalization and accept the diminishing of local characteristics or embrace it in the hope that the generic will actually highlight the unique qualities of the locality. He formulated a possible approach that he called ‘glocalisation’. He found inspiration for this in the Japanese concept of dochakuka. It stands for adaptation of standard products and methods to local conditions. According to Robertson value originates out of an exchange between particularity and universality. In this exchange universality gains quality by appropriating particularities and at the same time makes the particular accessible and more valuable through inclusion in the universal. The universal can then be seen as medium and package, the particular as content and purpose. Where globalization is about increasing mobility, productivity and the distribution of concepts, localization is about content, variation and adding value. As our society gains prosperity, we can hopefully see a shift towards a combination of both in the form of glocalization.

Glocal cities, cities that are part of a worldwide network but at the same time also take a focus on local qualities in regard, could in the future very well have a favorable position in the world. Pieter Tordoir, professor in Economic Geography and Plano-logy, states that we can already see this process happening with small companies who are trying to survive in the scorching competition of the global world. They try to distinguish themselves through exclusivity, local color and innovation. Even whole regions are starting to specialize push local entrepreneurs to innovation. But their specialization is often only profitable if they aim for a global market, with its worldwide distribution options.

With this trend we can expect a worldwide network of local clusters as a glocal alternative to big corporations. Today, in the shrinking world of internet and disappearing economic borders, network organizations are much easier to start compared to in the past century. An interesting example are specialized travel agencies that offer possibilities for exotic ecotourism thanks to close collaboration with local partners in distant places. They are able to attract many consumers, yearning for distinctive and exclusive experience, through cheap digital channels.

The process of mass-production killing small local businesses might soon be over. Especially in big cosmopolitan cities, it are the small companies that excel in networking which are on the rise. They are able to take advantage of important conditions for glocalization that often occur in these places. That is, because the cosmopolitan city offers many opportunities for different cultures, lifestyles, specializations and ideas to meet, this results in innovation. After all, innovation is often the result of new connections.

The exchange between different influences and a unique local atmosphere is not enough for success. The result has to become well-known and globalize. This requires physical connections to the rest of the world. Especially world cities with their hyperconnected (air) ports are a prime candidate for this.

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1 Robertson, R. (1992)  
2 Tordoir, P. (2007)  
3 Schumpeter, J. A. (2017)
Digital Nomads

As a viable target group for my design and one that I believe is the best fit to address the raised topics I want to focus in the following paragraphs on Digital Nomads. Before I’ll go more into the specifics on why I believe this is the most viable target group, let me start by describing this relative new movement of people.

The nomadic lifestyle is both the oldest and the youngest in existence. It means being on the move. At one time, it was about finding grasslands to graze and animals to hunt; roaming was a survival necessity and shaped existence. Today few traditional nomadic tribes remain, but yet we are seeing a trend in returning to a nomadic lifestyle, but for more complex reasons.

Everything in our globalizing world is about mobility, virtually and physically. People, philosophies, ideologies, goods, currencies and even whole ethnic groups are on the move. More people and for more reasons than ever before are criss-crossing the globe, from one city to the next in search of better work or life, the excitement of another place, with no option but to flee from violence, to visit friends and relatives or just to be a tourist. Precise overall figures are notoriously difficult to come by, though we know that the scope and scale is vast.

When we compare the old and new nomadic world, we can easily spot some differences. While we romanticize those that handle animals, we are mistrustful of those itinerant people you meet in a town, thinking they could be vagrants or vagabonds and we are unsure about the new Digital Nomads. By some they are seen as hip and cool, but their skillfulness of handling technology is alarming to others.

The older nomadic lifestyle remains in fragments across the globe. These nomads cling to their increasingly fragile existence; hunter gatherers, pastoralists and peripatetic people. However their way of living is slowly diminishing.

The Mongolian herder culture is dying due to changing weather conditions. The Sami people in the Nordic countries are left with only 5000 still living from herding. There are around 50.000 San bushmen (the hunter gatherers of Botswana and South Africa). There are a few thousand Berber nomads in the Maghred and a sprinkling of nomadic Tuareg pastoralists spread across vast regions in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. The largest group of nomadic people that remains is perhaps the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with 670.000 and the longest continuous culture on earth.

Already more integrated in todays society are perhaps the 20 million people of Roma or gypsy descent spread, across the globe of which 10-12 million are in Europe. They originated from the Dalits or low caste untouchables in Northern India and reached the Balkans in the 12th century, and today they represent around 9% of that population. Traditionally they were itinerant craftsmen who repaired pots and pans or did general metalwork or basket making and horse trading and -especially- they performed music. In Europe they are linked with poverty, crime and antisocial behavior and so suffer discrimination.

The Irish travelers suffer similar prejudice and are a small sub group of itinerant people, sometimes known as tinkers or knackers. There are perhaps 35.000 in Ireland and 15.000 in the rest of Britain. Some groups moved to the USA where an estimated 20.000 live. They survive from breeding dogs, especially greyhounds and lurchers, and horses, and they also engage in casual labor, selling scrap or traditional activities like metalwork.

The journeyman (Geselle) has been prevalent since Medieval Europe, especially in Germany, and was an important step in developing from apprentice to master craftsman. Moving from town to town, they gained experience of different workshops. A small minority of carpenters in Germany today have still kept up this tradition. The institution is seen in a positive light, and the concept has spread from crafts to other occupations, including priests who set out on an extended journey to do research in monastery libraries across Europe. The travelers in the Grand Tour of the nineteenth century had a similar drive to better oneself.

A more recent phenomenon of the 1970s and 1980s is that of the new age travelers, hippies who moved between music festivals and fairs in lorries, vans or caravans converted into homes, and some still exist today. Many do seasonal or temporary work on farms, building sites or factories, pubs or they have stalls at car boot sales.

Itinerary or moving around and roving makes the settled uncomfortable, it poses a threat to their society, an implied challenge to and criticism of the values. This particular lifestyle has always been a source of

suspicion to sedentary people. So would that also apply to the youngest group, the Digital Nomads?

New Nomads, Global Nomads, Teleworkers, Existential Migrants, Mobos, Mobile Bohemians, Virtual Workers, Neo-Nomads, Digital Bedouin, Web-Workers. All names for the same group of people. With such a recent trend and new movement it takes a while before we settle on a generally accepted term and clear definition. Some of them are as follow:

Teleworker
“... a person who is carrying out work using information technology. Work that normally would be carried out at a centralized location offered by the employer now is on a regular basis performed at different place chosen by the employee.” ¹

Neo-Nomads/ Digital Bedouin
“... an IT-worker who use only a laptop and a wireless internet connection to turn a café into an office. Therefore they can work wherever they happen to be.” ²

New-Nomads
“... group of independent-minded, technosavvy entrepreneurs who are turning the dream of explore the world into a reality. They call themselves New-Nomads, and they’ve transformed work-at-home into work-anywhere-you’damn- well-please.” ³

The term Digital Nomad however was perhaps first used by Tsugio Makimoto and David Manners with their publication of “Digital Nomad” in 1995. The book tells how current and future technological possibilities, combined with our natural urge to travel, will once again allow mankind to live, work, and exist on the move. The Amazon review now reads as prophecy:

“New digital technologies promise to enable large numbers of people to work wherever and whenever they wish and to choose between a stationary or nomadic lifestyle. In Digital Nomad, Makimoto and Manners explore the new potential for modern nomadism, beginning with the technology that is making it possible.

They cite some examples of current nomads, such as the president of a major European technology company who does not have the traditional perk of the president’s office. Instead, he spends his workweek traveling around Europe from one company site to the next. Digital technology has made it more economical and efficient for the company to work this way.” ⁴

But the authors point out that there is more to nomadism than the technical ability. They discuss how nomads tend to be difficult to track, making them difficult to tax and control. Many governments see nomads as threats and some governments are currently discouraging nomadic lifestyles that have existed for thousands of years. How will world governments react then to those who opt for a high-tech nomadic life?

The authors also discuss what parts of the world may be most attractive to tomorrow’s Digital Nomads, speculating on how future technological developments may further enhance the ability to live and work on the go. It’s debatable if many people really want a life with no physical roots, but Makimoto and Manners’s speculations read like a dream come true for those who’d love more variety in their work lives.”

Now, more then 20 years later, we can clearly see that Makimoto and Manners were on to a trend that is slowly becoming an reality, yet many questions remain unanswered.

So while a general definition still seems to be lacking, a temporary one that describes the Digital Nomad quite well is the following:

“... one who relies on digital telecommunications and the internet to make a living. These people generally work remotely and tend to move around the world constantly.” ⁶

While this definition describes some fundamentals to Digital Nomads quite well, I believe this definition is also somewhat shallow and could be elaborated more in depth.

For example one of the common characteristics that Digital Nomads seem to share is their abandonment of the traditional office. Many interviewed or self describing Digital Nomads start their story about how they used to work a traditional job and at one point became aware of the absurdness of amount of time ‘wasted’ commuting or how they felt like they were slowly going insane because of the repetitive days in a cubicle.⁵

For some there was a motivating to make better use of their time by working from home and communicating with their office through digital devices, freeing up

¹ Di Martino, V., & Wirth, L. (1990)
⁴ Makimoto, T., & Manners, D. (1997)
⁵ Do, Y. (Director), (2017)
valuable time that could be spend with their loved ones. Others simply wanted to see more of the world and abandoned the office to accommodate traveling and exploring new sceneries. By finding or converting to work that can be done remotely their work can be done anywhere. A last group deserted office life because it was a necessity. They had to travel in order to perform work related tasks like visiting remote company sites or gather data. It seems to me this last group was what triggered the interest of Makimoto and Manners.

A second similarity between Digital Nomads is their traveling lifestyle and thus what makes them nomadic. Instead of letting work bound them to a place for extended amounts of time they have found a way of making a living that allows them to keep moving. While some travel to visit their clients that are spread out over the world, others have a deep urge for new surroundings. This wanderlust can be described as an intense urge for self-development by experiencing the unknown, confronting unforeseen challenges, getting to know unfamiliar cultures, ways of life and different behaviors.

There are also groups of less committed travelers that closer identify with the idea of backpacker. They only travel for their enjoyment and while funding to do so allows them to. When money runs out they might settle again for awhile, finding a source of income before they move on again. They rely less on digital means to sustain this way of living.

The amount of wandering, roaming, roving also difference greatly among the nomads. While some seem to be possessed with the goal of visiting as many foreign places as quick as possible, others take a slower approach and allow themselves to fully immerse in a culture. Not until they feel saturated they keep ingesting all possible experiences and new knowledge. Yet there is also always the possibility of an unexpected external reason coming up to change places; stumbling upon interesting stories about places, a collaboration opportunity or a change in mood and longing for some tropical temperatures. Services like Nomadlist.com provide the Digital Nomad with selecting possible destinations out a list of 1250+ cities. Based on 150+ variables such as climate, average cost of living, characteristics, quality of internet connection, LGBT friendliness, air quality, dominant religion or amount of mosquitoes, various matching cities are presented in a comparable overview.

This utilization of digital tools/service to aid in their life is another important characteristic of the Digital Nomad. It distinguishes them from more traditional nomadic lifestyles and can be considered a vital attribute as it provides them with the ability to earn a living while move around the globe.

**Landingplaces**

Traveling around, Digital Nomads often find themselves with the need to transform space in a cultivated city environment into their own place for (temporary) residency. As a first thought, we might consider so called ‘Global Cities’ as the perfect landing points for Digital Nomads. They are command points in the organization of the world economy; key locations and marketplaces for leading industries of the current period, which are finance and specialized services for firms; major sites of production for these industries, including the productions of these innovations.

Global Cities see a relative high amount of different travelers pass through and deal with many other new immigrants arriving in search of a better future. However these cities also have to do with many of the described downsides of globalization. At times it can be a challenge for the Digital Nomad to feel connected to other inhabitants because there is such a high flow of different people. Second to that, Digital Nomads crave uniqueness and particularities in their surrounding. Instead of the genericness that Global Cities are heading to, they much rather get in contact with the local. Not only because of their quest for new experiences, but also because they simply want to utilize the functional advantages and knowledge of the settled.

Perhaps one of the most important concepts that Digital Nomads value in their life is freedom. They have adapted a lifestyle that allows them to experience freedom in many aspects of their life. Free from being bound to a place by a job that requires them to come in every day, free in being able to travel longer distances due to travel costs becoming cheaper, free in deciding when they work and on what, free of possession of unnecessary products.

Life of Digital Nomads is about finding new approaches to increasing this feeling of freedom in a world that is becoming increasingly faster, hectic and pressured. In our 24 hour society it is getting

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2 Fenichel, O. (2014)
3 Do, Y. (Director), (2017)
harder to keep participating without stopping. The 8 hour workday that was once formulated during the Industrial Revolution in order to prevent excesses and abuses is slowly starting to become a minimum that is expected of people. Working more seems to become something that is not to be questioned if you want your career to move forward. Draft that is caused by air conditioning and resulting headaches are diminished as minor inconveniences. Wanting to work outside because that is where you feel more productive is denied because a manager wants to make sure you’re not spending time on social media. Digital Nomads choose not to get judged by the amount of hours they are present at an office, or by what kind of car they drive. Through technology and an open mind they choose a lifestyle that allows them to work wherever they want, for who they want, and with which philosophy they want.

There is no clear prediction yet about how the trend of people becoming Digital Nomads will develop. Depending on the ‘expert’ you talk to, some dismiss the Digital Nomads as a sub culture that won’t become more than a small (yet consistent) part of humanity\(^1\), while others believe that the trend will continue until the majority of humanity is nomadic again and this time utilizing digital means, much like Constant Nieuwenhuys envisioned the world. What makes predicting this trend a complex task, is the difficulty of getting an idea how many people currently can be identified as Digital Nomad.

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1 Hale, J., (2017)
2 Sassen, S. (1994)
Figure 11. Global corporation meets local tradition
Manifesto

What follows is a manifesto that portrays my firm beliefs in how we should deal with the effects of globalization in architecture and the built environment in general. It came to be after an extensive literature study, discussion with people around me and personal reflection. During my whole graduation phase I will use it as point of departure for taking a position and explaining my most significant decisions.
**Manifesto**

**The Glocal City**

Let me start by noting that when one wants to discuss the utopian city of the future, it should be clear that the goal should not be to describe it in a particular style, building for building. Instead the focus should be on the issue of a framework of thinking. A way of viewing the world and methodology in which the city of the future can than be embodied through urban and architectural design.

To get at that point, we need to become aware of an ongoing trend. A trend that has been quietly developing itself for thousands of years but in recent years has taken on such a prominent form that it requires action.

The concept of globalization has been around ever since human societies across the earth started establishing closer contacts between them. For some as a matter of economics through trade, others to spread their superior ideology or violently increase territory. An important factor to be aware of here is the enabling role that technology plays. Without the development of ocean worthy sailing ships or gunpowder, humans would have been a lot more limited in their expansion drift.

In recent years however the pace of this process has dramatically increased due to advancements in communication technology and the ever growing hunger for profit of capitalism. Multinational companies have made the world one big global market with products and services like airplanes, cheap telephone providers, email, computers, huge oceangoing vessels and instant capital flows. They all play their part in making the world more interdependent than ever before and transforming it into what some call a global village.

While doing so, there is a form of unification to be found in the way those products and services are being offered. Homogenization is basically imposed on people by the economic market forces and further aided through clever advertising. People are being treated as mere objects or entities instead of individuals with differing needs or preferences.

Just like historic times, this transformation of the world doesn’t limit itself to products, but is also visible in concepts like ideas and even cultures circulate more freely than ever. Laws, economies and social movements are also starting to form at an international level and display a tendency of homogenization. It is for example visible in the way business is conducted and how people treat each other. Historic references and traditions are taken down in favor of global function and market demand. Ultimately this process manifests itself in our built environment as a generic combination of buildings.

Without a clear identity this generic city looks just the same as her brothers and sisters on other sides of the world. They are colored not by their unique location, history or dominant culture, but through the flashy neon signs of the same corporate brands. People were promised a world in which technology like Artificial Intelligence was able to automate everything, an ingenious taxing system that provided everyone with a fixed income and revolutionary transportation systems that would allow them to freely travel, explore the world and enrich themselves doing so. Instead what they got was a collection of places that all seem identical, without an identity or character. Impersonal spaces that evoke a feeling of alienation and that no one feels connected to or responsible for. A contradiction arises where people feel disconnected from reality in an ever so connected world.

Let us instead take this process of globalization as inducement to look into our cultural uniqueness and local particularity. We can take endless inspiration from this and gather knowledge that can provide us with a better sense of self, community and even nation. Different cultures are the backbone of what people use to construct their identity and feel connected to a place or other humans. Through diversity we have the opportunity to learn from each other, sprout strange and unpredictable ideas and create peculiar scenes.

This focus can then result in a city that offers anonymity, diversity and the freedom to meet others. Those others might be like minded, but mainly will come from a total different background and thus allow for an interaction that produces new results, enriching all. It has the potential to make us more complex human beings. A place where people can learn to live with strangers, to enter into the experiences and interests of unfamiliar lives. Sameness stultifies the mind; diversity stimulates and expands it.

But counteracting homogenization with diversity is
not enough for our future utopia. If we endeavor to focus on the different for the sake of diversity and unexpected new results, no true progress or innovation will be reached. Counter-intuitively we will end up with a melting pot that in a way is also homogeneous compared to other places where cultures melt.

Instead we need the binding and guiding powers of locality, the embodiment of the genius loci of a place. Once common sense for many great architects in earlier times and often the departing point for their (still) praised designs. But the unfortunate truth is that a constant factor like local culture can become something like breathing air. Something that we lose awareness of when it is overflowed with a growing amount of external incentives.

We need to constitute this awareness again and use the inextricable presence of locality to provides us with guiding qualities. Only then can we shape the potential of diversity through a strong identity in a globally connected world otherwise full of mental clouding homogenization.

Reinier van Vliet
Figure 12. Exploded axonometric of Villa Almerico Capra "La Rotonda", Palladio
Plan Analysis

In the previous chapter I discussed the Digital Nomads as a target group that I will focus on during my further design process. Besides describing their characteristics and philosophy on life, I also briefly touched upon their ideal situation of co(m pact) living. In this chapter I will analyse three separate projects that offer this way of living in various arrangements.

It is no coincidence that all three of the projects are located in either Japan or South-Korea. Compared to Western Europe these countries have a more extensive amount of knowledge on the subject of co(m pact)-living situations. For example Japan once knew the Shōwa period during which homes were primarily left unlocked and functioned more as community center than a private home and were the backbone of society.\(^1\) Furthermore, East Asia has known an almost incomprehendable increase in their rate of urban densification in the last century.\(^2\) As a result they’ve also become experts on the notion of compact living in order to supply affordable and decent housing.

The research question that I will try to find an answer to is:

*How can compact private spaces (and thus privacy) be arranged inside a residence where the majority of the services are shared between (unrelated) residents?*

To do this I will use exploded axonometric drawings to depict the spaciousness and reduced axonometric diagrams to analyse the arrangements of collective, shared and private spaces. This will be complemented with floorplans, photographs and related data.

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1 Lessons from Community Design in Japan’s Showa Era: Urban Design for Living Well, (2014).
2 Visualizing Millions of People on the Move, (2015)
The concept of the Gap house is to support a new lifestyle of the young, single demographic household by sharing collective spaces such as the living room, kitchen, and balcony. The architects focused on a design that aims to create a balance between the collective and private spaces while deeply considering the 'share house' amenity. The outdoor spaces play an important role in achieving this balance. Both the courtyard and balconies create characterizing gaps that allow nature to encourage interaction and mingling amongst housemates.¹

The largest gap, the courtyard, ensures a connection between all the residents of the building by being a central space that has to be crossed in order to reach the entrance to the main staircase. Furthermore, all of the six dwellings share a visual connection to it from their common space.

The secondary gaps, the balconies, on one hand offer an extension of the common space but at the front of the building separate the individual dwellings from each other, while by being accessible from both sides, allowing its neighbors to interact.

"There is a small gap which arises between the house and the village. It fills 'the gap' in between its people" - Woohyun Kang, Archihood WXY"
In the design of LT Josai share house, spaces were created through a reconsideration of the building’s entire composition. The collective and private spaces were studied simultaneously and, by laying out individual rooms in a three-dimensional fashion, multiple areas, each with a different sense of comfort, were established in the remaining collective space.

While the entrance hall with its atrium and dining table space are perfect for gatherings of multiple people, the corner of the living room and spaces by the window are great for spending time alone. The rugged space on the 1st floor is the most relaxed of all the spaces.

Through the creation of such spaces, the residents are able to use shared spaces more casually, as extensions of their individual rooms. According to the architects the individual rooms, which seem to have the same characteristics in plan, are all different due to their different relationships to the shared space, defined through distance and route from the living room. They also all have a small shared space in front of their individual entrances in order to create a transition into the collective space.¹

¹ Ltjosai. (2013)
Figure 24. Private room, (Masao Nishikawa, 2013)

Level 0

Section EW

Level +1

Level +2

Figure 25. Exploded axonometric projection 1:300

Figure 26. Axonometric diagram 1:300

Collective space

Shared space

Private space

Figure 27. Floorplans and section 1:300
Songpa Micro-Housing

Architect: SsD
Location: Seoul, South Korea
Completed: 2014
Site: 165 m²
Size: 557 m²
Private rooms: 10
Average room size: 10.3 m²
Collective space: 408 m² (73%)
FSI: 3.4

Songpa Micro-Housing extends the limits of the private unit by also including (semi) collective circulation and balconies. The architects call this ‘Tapioca Space’, referring to the ambiguous gel around a tapioca pearl, and state that it becomes a soft intersection between collective/private and interior/exterior, creating social fabrics between neighbors.¹

Fourteen ‘unit blocks’ allow residents to either claim a single space, or in the case where a couple or friends desire to do so, recombine the blocks for larger configurations.

This flexibility accommodates changing live and work situations allowing residents to occupy the building longer and therefore more sustainably. Further generating the idea of community, exhibition spaces on the ground floor and first floors are spatially linked to the units as a collective living room.

1 Songpa Micro-Housing. (2014)
Conclusions

The buildings previously described in this case study all share the philosophy of increasing affordability through the sharing of collective space and offering private rooms that ranged between 10m² and 12m². However also a few differences to this approach could be found.

First of all there is the amount of private spaces that are present and thus the amount of people that certain amenities have to be shared with. While there are 13 private rooms in total in Gap House, they are spread out over 6 separate dwellings consisting of respectively 2 or 3 private spaces. The building is still regard as whole because of the single staircase and courtyard that unite the whole building, and the 3 balconies at the streetside that are accessible from different dwellings.

LT Josai instead offers the biggest space sharing configuration by having 10 private rooms. Concerns of a reduced level of privacy are however countered by providing places with a different sense of comfort that residents can use either alone, in small groups of all together.

A combination of such spaces with a different level of comfort and similar to the shared balconies that are only accessible to certain neighbors in Gap House, Songpa Micro-Housing contains what the architects call ‘Tapioca Space’ and acts as an extension of their individual room and places to interact with other residents.

To answer the question I asked in the introduction of this chapter, “How can compact private spaces (and thus privacy) be arranged inside a residence where the majority of the services are shared between (unrelated) residents?” I want to conclude the following:

In a design of a dwelling that aims to offer compact rooms and shared facilities, an arrangement of private spaces, between 10m² and 12m², should be complimented with various collective spaces that offer different level of comfort. Besides offering at least one space that is to be used by all the residents, other shared spaces don't have to be and perhaps should not be.
Figure 38. Lt Josai, (Masao Nishikawa, 2013)

Figure 39. Gap House, (Woohyun Kang, 2015)

Figure 40. Songpa Micro-Housing, Hyun Seunghoon (2015)
Figure 41. Weteringcircuit in Amsterdam, Google Maps (2018)
Site Analysis

The image on the left depicts the area around the Weteringcircuit, a green roundabout bordering the southside of the city center of Amsterdam. In this fifth chapter I will describe and elaborate on where and why I have chosen a site for my future design on this location. After a brief introduction on the specific location in relation to the rest of Amsterdam and its surroundings, what follows will be first an characteristic, perhaps even phemonological, description through a visual and audible representation. After that I will move towards a more rational approach and describe my findings and conclusions through analytical drawings.
Looking at a map of Amsterdam, the area surrounding the Weteringcircuit can be spotted quite easily thanks to its position of being located at the south side of the city center, in the middle of the most outer iconic canals. As mentioned in the first chapter it is located on the former stronghold of the city, an area that has become increasingly popular in the recent years.

The specific design site that I have chosen on this location is found at the east side of the area that referred to as Tweede Weteringplantsoen. It is a linear plot measuring 20 by 110 meter and follows almost perfectly a north-south direction, having only a 4° (clockwise) rotation.
Looking at the different traffic connections that cross Amsterdam in relation to the location, we can conclude that it is highly connected to the four depicted means of transportation.

The new ‘Noord-Zuid’ is set to open on the 22nd of July 2018 and will offer a 4 minute ride towards the Central Station in the north and 7 minute one to the Zuid station in a southern direction. First predictions indicate 22,000 people will use this metrostation on a daily basis, a number that could increase to 35,000 if in the future a so-called ‘Oost-West’ line is added to the metro network and this station.1

Above ground the location is crossed by 5 different tramlines, offering a connection along the edge of the city center or through it towards the central station.2

An important car connection is visible just south of the location on the Stadshouderskade and is part of so-called ‘plus networks’ indicating where a means of transportation has priority.3

The bicycle routes that are displayed above are the ones that see on average >1000 bikes/hour during the day and show weteringcircuit as an important node in this network.4

2 Plus networks infrastructure (concept for consultation) (n.d.)
3 http://maps.gvb.nl/nl/lijnen?tram&show
Location Characteristics

Figure 49. Characteristic elements

Figure 50. Typical sound fragment based on most representative recording on site
The prefix ‘Wetering’ that characterizes the names on and around the location are a result of the Weteringgate, one of the smaller gates in the former stronghold. ‘Wetering’ refers to a waterway, used to drain the farming fields on the outer, southside, of the stronghold. This waterways and Weteringgate can be seen on the leftside in the picture of 1725 on the next page. The picture of 1760 shows the outside view on the stronghold walls and its surrounding singelgracht. Mill ‘The Hope’, most closest to the viewer, is standing on the ‘Reguliers’ bastion where today the Den Texstraat is located.

One of the rare pictures of life on this stronghold is the one displaying Weteringschans in 1800. It shows small houses for the working class, constructed out of wood and with tiles on top. Children are playing on the stronghold itself while in the distance (on the far left) the top of the drawbridge to the Weteringgate can be seen. Directly next to it mill ‘De Wetering’ rises into the sky. On the map of 1842 we can already see how the location has a park like function with paths and various spots of greenery, being referred to as Weteringplantsoen.2

After in 1874 a new law brought an end to child labor, the streets and public areas of Amsterdam saw a huge increase in vandalism and other uncivilized behavior since there was no compulsory education and many children grew bored during the day. In order to bring this to a halt, in 1880 the first public playground of Amsterdam made its appearance here. It provided wooden objects like swings and climable structures, provided by the first craftschool of Amsterdam, located just north on the Weteringschans.3, 4

The map of 1900 shows some drastic changes in the area: with the (partly) demolition of the stronghold during the last part of the 19th century, parts of the Singelgracht had been straightend out in order to create more useable space. The only reference that remains to the bastions is the shape of the buildingblock at the westside of the location. While The Weteringplantsoen was able to increase in size, it also got split up into two parts, hence the name Eerste and Tweede (first and second) that those areas still carry today.4 The road and bridge splitting the park in 1875 were labeled Weteringlaan and bridge 84 and were partly financed by a horsetram company, in order to expand their network.5 Nowadays the name of the bridge been changed to Freddy Heinekenbrug.

The situation of a traffic junctioned remained until 1953, when the increasing amount of traffic, especially cars, made the municipality decide to have a roundabout constructed under the name weteringcircuit. This reduced the Weteringlaan in length, making it the shortest laan of the Netherlands.6, 7

As already stated with the analysis of the traffic connections and characteristics, today the location remains under great influence of traffic and the playground. It will be interesting to see how this might change in the future with the new metrostation opening and various talks about reverting the roundabout back to a junction.8

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1 Bakker, T., (n.d.)
2 Toelichting bestemmingsplan Vijzelgracht. (n.d.)
3 Andere Tijden: Naar de speeltuin. (n.d)
4 Bakker, T., (n.d.), Fotoquiz
5 Freddy Heinekenbrug, brug 84 in de Ferdinand Bolstraat over de Singelgracht. (n.d.)
7 A ‘laan’ is regarded as a relative wide road with trees either flanking it on both sides or as a row on the median of the road.
8 Kruyswijk, M. (2016)
Historic Development

Figure 57. Map of Amsterdam in 1725
Figure 58. Map of Amsterdam in 1842
Figure 59. Map of Amsterdam in 1900
Figure 60. Map of Amsterdam in 1948
Figure 61. Map of Amsterdam in 1969
Figure 62. Map of Amsterdam in 2018
While having undergone many transformations many elements at the location still refer to the rich history of the location. As mentioned in the first chapter, the location is not marked as Unesco World Heritage designation. The many buildings marked as municipal or even national monument depict this designated area starting just north of the location.

There are however a few monuments directly on, or bordering the location. Built in 1871, Weteringschans 6 to 10 is part of the buildingblock that still refers to the bastion that used to stand here.

Number 2 is the former Heineken Brewery, still displaying its recognizable appearance since Isaac Gosschalk designed it in 1868. Today it is a steady source of attraction for tourists. A few decades later, in 1891, the director of the brewery had A.L. van Gendt design a villa, just north of his brewery, in a neo-renaissance style, with chalet-style influences.

The last monumental building is a prominent residential building, Tweede Weteringplantsoen 1 to 17, east of my design side that was build during the same time as Weteringschans 6 to 10. More elaborate information about it proved hard to come by and will possibility have to be gathered through the archives of Amsterdam.

A monumental wall and statue are reminders and tribute to the fusillade of 30 political prisoners on the 12th of March, 1945 by german soldiers.

The last object is a bench that was gifted by the province of Zeeland as acknowledgement for the support that Amsterdam provided after the North Sea flood of 1953.
Building Block Morphologies

Courtyard blocks and row housing are the dominant building block morphologies that surround the location. The few examples that are labelled as ‘other’ are a result of such drastic changes to formerly courtyard blocks that those lost their courtyard by either being broken open or through privatization.

Site Dimensions

In regard to my chosen design site the dimensions that are most interesting to note are the 362m² that currently make up the playground and perhaps will have to re-appear in redesign of this area. Furthermore, all the different dimensions of streets, two building blocks, water and distance to Heineken Brouwerij will be taken into consideration.

Building Heights

The restrictions put on building heights by the municipality to protect the historic identity of the inner city of Amsterdam is clearly visible. With a few exceptions all buildings to the north of the location remain under 20 meters. At the southern side of the singelgracht most remarkable is of course the Rijksmuseum and the former Heineken brewery with an apartment tower behind it that reaches 42 meters into the air. Directly around the design site the adjacent buildings are 18 meters high.
Natural elements

The area consists of different pockets of green, of which some are inaccessible due to being located on the roundabout or fenced off in case of the playground. The presence of the Singelgracht and high amount of trees contribute to the feeling of the location being one big green space, but this could be further improved through removal of the roundabout and a redesign of the space. By having chosen a linear design site on the far east of the location, my design for a building would minimally interfere with the possible experience of the place being a pleasant green space in a busy city.
Functions

Being located near the city center, one never has to look far for different functions whenever a need arises. The image above marks all commercial functions in this part of Amsterdam that are present in a building. This means that while a building might show up as labeled ‘restaurant’, it might still contain appartments on other floors. Plots that remain marked with the lightest shade of grey, contain no other functions than housing.

The design site is surrounded with the full range of different functions. Besides two small exceptions the only the building plots that have a fully residential function are located at the (north-)west of the Weteringcircuit and consist of social housing with half-sunken storage on the lowest floor.

With such a prime location and high flow of traffic and people, it makes sense to assign a different other than dwelling to the lower levels of a building. Not only does it generate more income for the owner, privacy issues would quickly arise otherwise.

In 2015 the municipality of Amsterdam started with their ‘Red Carpet’ campaign through spatial improvements and focussing on active plinths (functions that see a relative high flow of different people). They aim to increase the experience of public space in the city center. At the location are currently only active plinths to be found on the northern side, leaving a possibility for my design to offer a better connection to this campaign.
**Summary**

The graduation studio Dutch Dwelling looks into housing in Amsterdam on a location that was once the stronghold, protecting the city. The location offers a valuable quality by being located close to the city center that over the last decades has become increasingly popular. This popularity not only arises from being attracted to the characterizing qualities, it is also a result of a growing demand for new dwellings to aid in the housing of new ‘Amsterdammers’. It can be observed that most of these people have a foreign background and that they thus would continue to further add to the multicultural mix of people that Amsterdam already is. Throughout history Amsterdam has been notorious of welcoming these foreign souls, and continues to do so, as the cities recognized they aid the city in many different ways. But this international outlook of strengthening the position of Amsterdam in our globalizing world, also comes with challenges.

Complications can be expected once a city wants to actively participate in the ‘global village’ and might threaten qualities like Amsterdams highly regarded degree of tolerance. It would however not be the first time that Amsterdam would actively participate in the global playing field, as it once had powerful influences. But the world has changed and Amsterdam might have missed it chance or experience some ‘soreness’ getting back in this game.

After looking into the process of globalization, the metaphor of it being an international game make less and less sense as it can be quickly concluded that it is highly complicated process with influences that spread on a scale that has never been seen before. It is being driven by the development of technology and hunger for economic growth and doesn’t leave the built environment untouched. In architecture it has always been closely associated with Modernism and received accusations of promoting homogenization, adding to a loss of identity and contributing to feelings of placelessness.

Amsterdam born artist Constant Nieuwenhuys had already been studying some of these effects, well before globalization had been defined. By working on the designs for a new city called New Babylon he aimed to fight the genericness that had turned neighborhoods into ‘monuments of boredom’. The freedom that technology offered was in his eyes leading to a lot of new contradictions and needed the introduction of a new culture. In New Babylon humans could be free and creative again, fully exploiting the freedom that technology could offer.

With coining the term Critical Regionalism Tzonis and Lefaivre took a slightly less radical and more theoretical approach to the lack of local phenomenology that the Modernism style contained. Together with Frampton they advocate the use of contextual qualities to instead enhance the feeling of place and meaning, but at the same time rejects a rugged individualism and ornamental approach of postmodern architecture.

Rem Koolhaas took a completely different approach to globalization in his essay ‘The Generic City’. He paints a picture of a city that benefits from being freed from the straightjacket that identity is in his eyes and
praises the variety and adaptability that this city could offer.

After considering these visions and ideas, the concept of Genius Loci is then described as a way of describing and experiencing a place, something that might be threatened by globalization. At the same time, the importance of global consideration as requirement for development of civilizations is raised by looking at the differences and advantages of a nomadic or settled lifestyle. Perhaps a suitable and balancing approach for this in our globalizing world can be through what Roland Robert described as ‘Glocalising’. According to some experts, this can already be identified in some cities as apply the increasing mobility and productivity that come with globalization, together with the possibility to add value, uniqueness and variation as the power of locality.

In the last part of this chapter, the youngest kind of nomadic people, so called Digital Nomads, are described. They have abandoned the traditional office and instead travel around the world by utilizing the power that digital technology allows them to earn a living from anywhere with an internet connection. Having a philosophy that revolves around ultimate freedom, they rely on local inspiration and creativity in order to sustain their globally oriented lifestyle. I propose these people as the perfect targetgroup to carry out the earlier mentioned ‘Glocal’ approach.

Based on some characteristics of the traveling lifestyle of Digital Nomads, like the lack of belongings, and demographics that predominantly consist of young adolescents, the design of a residential building that offers compact dwellings in a co-living arrangement seems logical. It provides a way of offering amenities through sharing them with like minded individuals. To gain a better understanding of such residential buildings I analysed three case studies in order to find an answer to the question of how compact, private spaces can be arranged inside a residence where the majority of the services are shared between residents. My conclusion was that an arrangement of private spaces, between 10m² and 12m², should be complimented with various collective spaces that offer different level of comfort. Besides offering at least one space that can be collectively used by all residents, other shared spaces should not be accessible to all.

In the fifth chapter, the attention is directly moved back to Amsterdam in the investigation of the Tweede Weteringplantsoen as a suitable location to realize a residential building to house Digital Nomads. This location was selected because of the increasingly high connectivity it has to the rest of Amsterdam and even beyond. Furthermore the site has many local characteristics like being a valuable green space in a dense city and a rich history to gather inspiration from. It can be suspected that with this great connectivity and inspiring character it offers fertile grounds for the exchange of different ideas and aiding Amsterdam in my recommendation to become a Glocal City.
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