HOMELESSSENTIALS

The Thin Line between Local and Global Identities
Contents

Preface 11
The Perfect Traveller 13

Part I: Who is the DigiNomad? 17
Advocates of a modern nomadic lifestyle 19
Who are you? 21
Three types of DigiNomads 23
Three trends into DigiNomadism 25
Freedom of the DigiNomad 27

Part II: Edges between contradicting notions 31
Place; the feeling of a space 33
Moving ‘to’ or ‘with’? 39
The Nomadic Home 45
Time; the duration of distance 51
The Duration of Distance 51
Global, Recognizable & Efficient 55
Local, Authentic & Refreshing 59
Rise of the global, end of the Local? 65
Virtual; the reality of cyberspace 69
Communication through Time 69
Is it Me? 71
Bridging the gap in the local 75

Part III: The Nomadic Space 81
Living on the thin line of local and global identities 83

Appendix 87
Case study: Amsterdam 89
DigiNomads Interviews 89
Questions and answers 91

Bibliography 101
Preface
The Perfect Traveller

Every summer I travel through a country. In my opinion there is an optimal way of discovering a whole country and that’s by bike. It’s not by train or bus, because it will only bring you to predefined hotspots. It’s not by car because you end up travelling between points over predefined lines in a speed that does not allow you to touch and feel the grass or the soil which the county is made of. It’s not by foot because, ‘yes’ it will bring you to the smallest possible scale but your range is very limited. A bike is perfect in this; you can easily bring a reasonable amount of stuff without risking back problems, you can bring your own home (a tent). Without having a fixed address, you can travel a perfect distance every day on the scale of a country without any stress about catching a train. You can make contact to the inhabitants fairly easy without first paying them for an expensive dinner but just by evoking curiosity with your bike. You can change plans within a split second. In the time-span of a few weeks you can experience a country, touch the water, feel the wind, look up a mountain, experience the good and the bad habits of its people and grasp its identity. For a few weeks you can live in a new country adopting a Nomadic lifestyle and call the country your habitat.

The word Nomad evokes images of sandy landscapes, palm trees, camels and tents. Nomads can be described as people without one continuous home address. While taking their goods and cattle they have to travel from one place to the other searching for food or places to sell their merchandise. But the nomadic lifestyle has the last couple of centuries shifted from the pastoral farmer to the domain of the holiday traveller. Backpacking around the world to explore, and grab as much as possible into his/her backpack back home. Parallel to this development a new type of nomad is developing within Western society, the DigiNomad.

This DigiNomad is depending on the networks that new communication techniques are offering. He is not bringing his cattle along, but his laptop, he doesn’t sleep in tents but in hotels and his living environment is not sandy; he prefers the city landscape. He lives in cities called Global Cities. He travels because there is the need or the possibility and dream to travel. The DigiNomad has a hotel as home and whatever place he feels comfortable as his office.

In the first part of this thesis I will give a validation for the existence of the DigiNomad. The focus will be on his characteristics and some recent trends which accommodate the rise of the DigiNomad. Finally the Freedom of the DigiNomad will be described as the most positive characteristic of the DigiNomads live. The 2nd part will discuss the thin line between local and global identities which the Nomad lives on. The three themes around which this part is structured are: place vs. space, time vs. distance and virtual vs. real. The thesis concludes with the 3rd part in which the consequences on architecture and the architectural typology needed will be presented. This way I try to generate a clear view of the implications on architectural and urban values regarding a DigiNomad.

Apart from the research into the above mentioned themes I investigated the needs and personal preferences of DigiNomads by interviewing them. The questionnaire is mentioned several times within the thesis itself and in more detail discussed in the appendix. After finishing the interviews I wrote a fiction diary of a DigiNomad named Niels Omad. On the left page you will find his adventures.

To find spots within the where global and local identities meet, a case study on Amsterdam was performed. This case study is mentioned in the 2nd part and further discussed in the appendix.

The focus in the thesis as a whole will be to create a foundation for the term DigiNomad and to find a direction in answering the research question:

“When the global city is your habitat, what are the implications of living on the edges of the contradicting notions of space and place, time and distance and virtual and real, for the city networks inside the public realm and the architectural typology of the home for DigiNomads?”

How do these spaces look like, what are its constraints?

The DigiNomad does not only cross a lot of borders during his journeys. During the prolonging of this thesis it will get clear that he also lives on the edges of a few borders. Will he have to choose between these identities or can he build bridges between them?
Nieuwe Nomaden in de openbare ruimte
Part I:  
Who is the DigiNomad?
One Week of the DigiNomad

One week of the DigiNomad exists of 7 days Monday up until Sunday description about the life of a DigiNomad named Niels Omad. Every chapter will address one subtheme; home, office, rhythm, habitat, movement, identity communication. These subthemes are organized in the already in chapter one introduced structure of, Place, Time-Distance and Material. On the left page there will be small pieces of diary to to illustrate the different thems within a daily life Nomadic situation. Now let me introduce you to Niels Omad and his nomadic lifestyle.

N. Omad

Surname: Omad

Given Name: Niels

Date of Birth: 29 JUN 1980

Place of Birth: Amsterdam

Residence: Bruxelles

Personal no.: 131725932

Sex: Male

Height: 1,80m
Advocates of a modern nomadic lifestyle

Introduction Moulinet
To clarify the term DigiNomad I would like to introduce the advocates of modern nomadic lifestyles, Yoko and Gregory Moulinet. They call themselves Nomadesigners resembling the name of their company, Nomadesign. It is a branding and logo designing office serving clients all over the world. Gregory’s life story explains a lot about his choice to live a Nomadic life.

Lifestory Moulinet
As his name suggests, Gregory Moulinet grew up in France. On his blog, called ‘cross-cultural branding’ he tells the story of his early childhood. In his class a Japanese boy unable to speak French evoked his attention. Not able to communicate with words he took his pencils and started to draw a picture of his parents and a small apartment building in Lyon, lit up by a bright yellow round sun in the right corner. In reaction to his drawing the Japanese boy started to draw a similar picture of his Japanese family accompanied of a big red circle on the right side of the paper. Unquestionably the sun or better specified a Japanese sun. As a gesture of cohesion Moulinet drew a red dot in the middle of his yellow sun. As Moulinet proclaims:

“I looked at my own flashy sun and decided to add a red circle in the center of it... my very first cross-cultural artwork” (Moulinet).

Travelling the world as a way of life
From the day he left school he walked into the world, travelling all through Europe and North Africa, later Asia and Japan. In between he managed to combine his urge to travel with studying. This became one of his major topics in life. How to combine the life of a graphical designer with that of a traveller? At first he moved to Japan and some years later to the U.S. Here he founded an online international logo design service. This gave him the possibility to keep travelling managing his online business behind his laptop from everywhere. Ranked in the Google and Yahoo top ranked for 4 years, the numbers of logo designs delivered grew explosively to 500 logos in 25 different countries (Moulinet).

Nomadism as a commercial identity
Gregory and Yoko Moulinet are not hiding the fact that they are location independent professionals. In fact they use it to distinguish their business profile from their competition. The reaction of the clients was mixed in the beginning. ‘Where do we meet?’ and ‘Where do I send my hardware mail?’ were just some of the questions asked. Right now their base is in Tokyo, they even bought an apartment there. This sounds like a strange act for a Nomad. But as they proclaim they didn’t buy it to stay there forever but as a Nomadic space to lend to other Nomads when they are on the move. Hotels can’t function like well equipped Nomadic spaces while they focus on a temporal leisure stay without offering the possibility to work.

Cross-Culture
On this moment their interest shifted back to where it once started, cross-cultural activities (branding). Gregory’s first steps as a Nomad were initiated by an interest in other cultures. While exploring them he formed his lifestyle around his constantly moving body. He even met his life-partner this way and established a life with her that still made it possible to keep moving. The way he describes it himself:

“I can’t imagine how things would be if I’d stayed in France,” he says. “Maybe I would have made more money and taken less risks. But I don’t think I would be so rich in memories and experiences” (Moulinet)

Nomadic questions
Within this short introduction to hardcore Nomads there are already some main-themes touched upon. What does the nomadic home/office look like? How can a Nomad expose his identity? What is the distance between different cultures? What is the relation between a dematerializing digital world and Local identities? These are some of the questions that rise while discussing the pros and cons of the DigiNomad his lifestyle.

The DigiNomad
Greg and Yoko talk about a Nomadic lifestyle. This thesis
networks and online applications aren’t just shifting workflow paradigms, but also social etiquette, management policies and business models. A new tribe of Bedouin has evolved, with laptops instead of camels, hopping between wifi hotspots like oases”.

New-Nomads (Klein, 2007): “Do you ever wish you could win the lottery, chuck the rat race, and take off to explore the world? Heck—who hasn’t? These days, however, there’s a group of independent-minded, techno-savvy entrepreneurs who are turning that dream into a reality. They call themselves New-Nomads, and they’ve transformed work-at-home into work-anywhere-you-damn-well-please.”

Different terms
There are many different names and definitions for the trend I want to describe. So who is the DigiNomad? There are some features in common but also some extensive differences in the terms described above.

Common characteristics (abandoning the office)
All the different definitions are including abandoning the traditional office. Some abandon the office to avoid commuting (Virtual worker/telecommuter), working at home and communicate with the office through the internet or using phones. Although they are out of the static office they are still bounded to a place that is just as static as their former office. Their motives, in addition to reducing travel-time, may include such things as increasing time at home to look after the children. A second group abandons the office to accommodate leisure-travel (New-Nomads). Explore the world is their motto. Choose a profession that can be done from basically any spot on the globe and you can be on an endless world-travel and work at the same time. Others abandon the office because they have to. They travel to perform work related tasks.

Resembling characteristics (urge to travel)
This is the second resemblance of the different Nomad types. There is the need to travel and it is not hindered by the need to work. Some travel because their clients are spread all around the world, some travel because they feel a very deep urge to stay moving and chose a job that allows them to. If you look to a less committed nomad type, for example the backpacker. They do not travel out

Who are you?
Comparable phenomenon
The term DigiNomad is a term that I introduce in this thesis but the phenomenon already exists. In different literatures they are referred to as Teleworkers, Virtual-workers/telecommuters, Neo-Nomads/ digital-bedouins, New-Nomads, or Web-workers. Why introducing a new term and what does it add to the long list of terms already out there. Different descriptions belonging to the above mentioned types are.

Teleworker (Gabaglio, 2002): A teleworker is 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.

Virtual Worker/ Telecommuter (Heikes): Virtual workers/telecommuters are employees who perform assigned duties at an alternative site (usually home) during some or all of their scheduled work hours.

Neo-Nomads/ Digital Bedouin (Thomson, 2007): The Neo-Nomad or Digital Bedouin is an IT-worker who using only a laptop and a wireless connection turns a café into an office. And therefore can work wherever they happen to be.

Web-worker (West): “Mobile electronics, wireless networks and online applications aren’t just shifting workflow paradigms, but also social etiquette, management policies and business models. A new tribe of Bedouin has evolved, with laptops instead of camels, hopping between wifi hotspots like oases”.
OUR DISPOSABLE CULTURE.

SNUGGLES

DIAPERS.

CAMERAS.

RAZORS.

IMMIGRANT LABORER

PEOPLE.
of a necessity but just out of the luxurious position that they want to enjoy themselves. This luxurious position gives a whole new dimension to the lifestyle of a nomad. If there is no necessity to travel and the necessity of settling also is just a choice when you are enjoying a free holiday experience it isn’t said that the nomadic lifestyle will be a continuous story. At some point people return to their working routine to generate money to live and be able to pay their next holiday.

Resembling characteristics (use of gadget)
Another common feature is the use of new communication techniques to stay connected to the world. This is why the term Nomad, New-Nomad or Neo-Nomad is not yet sufficient enough. Digi stands for the usage of internet, open source programs, mobile phones, PDA’s, etc.

With how many you are?
There are no numbers on the development of the DigiNomad yet. In 2001 there were already 8 million teleworkers in the US. It has been estimated that this group will grow to 13.5mil employees in 2003. Teleworkers are 25% to 45% more productive compared to their fellow office bounded co-workers. The Gartner group predicted that in 2003 130 million employees worldwide would be able to remotely access to their job files. In the US this would result in 1/3 of the workforce (Heikes).

What is your habitat?
Global Cities
The DigiNomad was capable of conquering his own place within a cultivated city landscape set up for the urban resident. The perfect habitat for the diginomad would be on the edge of the local and global identities and therefore should be redefined. The DigiNomad lives mostly in the so called collection of Global Cities. Defined by S. Sassen as follows:

“...today’s global cities are (1) command points in the organization of the world economy; (2) key locations and marketplaces for the leading industries of the current period, which are finance and specialized services for firms; (3) major sites of production for theses industries, including the productions of these innovations” (Sassen, 1994).

The use of the Local
These global cities are the hotspots within the habitat of a DigiNomad. DigiNomads will have a craving urge to get in contact with the local. He interacts with the local not only because he is searching for new experiences but also because of the simple fact he needs the functional resources of this local layer.

Three types of DigiNomads
We can distinguish three different types of DigiNomads.

The Continues Travelers
The Independent Workers
The Business Travelers

The Continuous Travellers
A beautiful example is the Atkins family with their ‘Welcome to the World’ project (Bolanos). This family of 6 people took off in a rebuilt coach bus to travel around the world for two years; on one hand sponsored by companies providing all kinds of materials to support their travel needs, on the other hand they ask individual people through their website to support them with a tank of fuel so they can keep on riding the road of the world. They are the ones that are on a continuous trip because they like to travel. Living a life as simple as possible to save money and try to earn it by asking for donations or have sponsors.

The Independent Working Travellers
Tat Tso is a Japanese web designer (Bolanos) and photographer travelling around the world. His passion for photography brings him to the most beautiful places on the planet and his profession as a web designer allows him to go. If he brings his laptop with him he can create websites wherever he wants. Contact with his clients can for a major part take place online. The independent worker is fond of
The Start: The Nomadic LifeStyle

Tuesday 5 January 2010:

Dear diary,

Today was one of those days that kept resonating for a long time in my head. Not because something very special happened, but because the opportunity to let special things happen in the future arose. My girlfriend went to the globe today. She moved out of our little apartment and into hotels. Not just for a vacation or a short meeting with some clients. No, she went there for about 4 months. She had started her own architecture firm 5 years ago and without special effort she got projects all over the world. Already she left Bruxelles quite often to meet with her clients, but always came returned after a few days. Now she entered the city she was designing for, the Global City. I couldn’t help it but I was jealous........

‘I want to live in the same city as my girlfriend’. That’s what I told my supervisor this morning hanging over my instant made machine coffee served in a paper cup decorated with 12 stars and the motto “In varietate concordia” (united in diversity). Yes I work for the EU. ‘But your girlfriend is travelling at the moment, isn’t she’? Two big eyes stared at me. ‘No, she is living in the Global City’ was my response. I already suspected this question and prepared the response. My task within the EU was to initiate cultural projects, projects exposing everything that was produced in the habitat of European cultures. For now this were mostly small local projects about local artists, organized in local buildings. My proposal was to make these things mobile, changeable per location and get them outside Europe. The idea was received with a great deal of enthusiasm. I became a Global Citizen today, my Nomadic way of life had started!!!

Niels
travelling and chooses a profession that allows him to do so. They are not obliged to confront their clients physically but handle communication through various communication techniques.

The Business Travellers

The very illustrative example of Greg and Yoko Moulinet of Nomadesign (a graphic designer company for logos) tells us that the Nomadic lifestyle can even be a cooperate image (Bolanos). Yoko is originally a Japanese fashion designer and right now the branding director of Nomadesign. Greg is a French graphic Designer specialised in visual identity (logos). They met while travelling and are joint their forces to start up Nomadesign. Right now they travel around the world meeting clients everywhere hopping from hotel to hotel with a laptop under their arm. They are not only living the life of a DigiNomad they are the apostles of this lifestyle. Their lifestyle resembles the one of the classic nomad the most only than applied to the cultivated city landscape. He travels guided by the need to sell goods (communicate with clients) and to find a living environment that serves his needs of a good habitat.

Three trends into DigiNomadism

There are three sociological trends that support the rise of the DigiNomad: disposable society, the rise of the digital empire and the effects of global shrinking.

Disposable society

Replacing
Not only consuming goods are packed in smart packages piece by piece also electronic equipment is built in a way it will fail just after the warranty period has finished and their parts are irreplaceable. Repair costs are too expensive and new product cheaper. These things are all signs of the development of the ‘Disposable Society’. Goods get replaced, especially electronic equipment, all hiding behind the motto that it is easier to replace something than to invest in repairing.

100 mile city
Sudjic adds some extra drama to the notice of the ‘disposable society’ by introducing the ‘100 mile city’. This ‘100 mile city’ connects the rise of the global city with the rise of the disposable society as a disposable city. He describes it as follows:

“The hundred mile city is where suburbs have ceased to be suburban and the whole urbanized territory can be seen as an immense force field reacting to human mobility and real estate possibilities. The dynamics of global economic competition have led to disposable cities and expendable parts of cities, which generate great waste and tragic displacement” (Sudjic, 1992)

Disposability beyond goods
Sudjic by introducing the term 100 miles city also shows that not only goods can be disposable. Disposable society is not only about disposability of goods but also for example about spaces, networks and identities. It’s the disposability of goods that made it possible to reduce the amount of hardware we take with us. But it is the disposability of spaces networks and Identities that make it possible to travel around the world as a nomad and make you feel at home everywhere.

The Digital Empire

The most important baggage of a DigiNomad however is not the things he carries around with him but the knowledge and information and abilities he owns to distinguish him from others. The information can still be very heavy if we want to take it with us on hardware media. Luckily digital appliances and services minimized its weight to that of a laptop or the virtual weight of an online storage base.

Miniaturization of computer systems
The first computers had the size of one room and only by 1981 IBM launched the first PC (Personal Computer) that could be used at home. Right now the development of PDA’s, laptops, mobile phones and other portable devices is in a major lift. From a machine which needed a special building and calculated scientific complex problems till nowadays where the PDA makes it possible to get out the
Best average speed of horse drawn coaches and sailing ships was 10 m.p.h.

Steam locomotives averaged 65 m.p.h. Steam ships averaged 36 m.p.h.

1950s
Propeller aircraft 300-400 m.p.h.

1960s
Jet passenger aircraft 500-700 m.p.h.
build world and simplify our daily life. The miniaturization of computer devices makes it in combination with the communicative powers of internet possible to add other layers of information over the real world.

Global Shrinking

Space-time compression: The effect of a relatively shrinking globe is often referred to as ‘space-time compression’. We can get anywhere within 24 hours on this globe. Global and local identities conflict within the city. The identity of the new generic city is imposed on the ancient local layer. Shopping cultures like buying products within a global supermarket makes us question the quality of the local, if we should protect it let it get conquered by new global identities.

Freedom of the DigiNomad

Because there is one thing that will never change although new communication techniques make the world shrink to very small proportions. Every space on this globe knows its own genius loci, unique for that place. Because of this uniqueness we still keep sending postcards from all over the world, although they arrive long after you came back from your holiday and cost a lot of time and money. But they have been bought on the spot, they have been written on while experiencing the surroundings and past through the hand of the local postmen when he stamped them with fresh ink. A unique and irreplaceable piece were local authenticity, global efficiency and personal touch meet on a few cm² of paper. It is the Nomad that is capable to experience these different identities merged together the best. The nomad beholds freedoms that specify his lifestyle.

As free as a DigiNomad

A DigiNomad can on different aspects be called free. He is free in some regard to choose the ‘place’ where he wants to live, to travel long ‘distances’ that are in time close together, to plan his ‘time’ the way he likes and to use ‘materials’ without owning them.

New freedom

The life of a DigiNomad is about finding a new type of freedom in a world that is getting faster, and generating more pressure than it ever did before. In the 24-hour economy it is not only possible to keep on going without stopping it is expected of people. The 8 hour work day is only meant to set a minimum amount of work-hours per day. The fact this is sometimes becoming more is something you have to accept, that you wish it is less sometimes is unquestionable. That you sometimes get a headache because of the draft air condition of the office building is a petty, that you like to work outside sometimes is impossible.

Freedom of choice

Being able to choose your own workplace and working time and getting judged on the products you deliver is an objective of the lifestyle of the DigiNomad. It is the freedom of the DigiNomad. It doesn’t only offer the possibility to be freer in your work; it offers the possibility to be freer in life. You can live were you want to live. Your life track could be guided some ones targets you have to meet or by places and cultures you want to experience; today in a café in Amsterdam tomorrow in New York for an exciting new project. Or in Thailand because there the sun shines and the profession of web designer does not obliges you to sit across the desk of your client.

Edges

The life of a DigiNomad takes place on thin line between local and global identities. Main issue is the rebalancing of the difference between contradicting notions like: place vs. space, time vs. distance and virtual vs. reality. The 2nd part will specify these contradicting notions further.
Part II: Edges between contradicting notions
Monday: The Nomadic Home

Monday 7 June 2010:

Dear diary,

On Monday the penetrating sound of my alarm clock pulled me back into the real physical world. Where am I, a question you always ask yourself on the moment you open your eyes for a split second you are in undefined areas. Usually you know the answer before you asked the question, it’s at home. But sometimes, the day after that beautiful holiday to a warm and inspiring country you get confused. Today it took me at least a few seconds to figure out it was my own cosy bed I woke up in. It was the sound of the Saint Micheals (cathedral in Brussels) that teleported me back to Brussels.

So now I was back in place again it was time to get up. With a rather smooth movement swung my body in an upright position and touched the floor with my feet for the first time this day. This earthly contact and my self-reflecting (not so charming) image in the mirror made my place in the world seem irrelevant. But in the afternoon I had a meeting at the headquarters about some sponsorship for a huge exhibition in New York next year. So I put on my clothes and slipped into my shoes suddenly remembering the running exercise of yesterday represented by a growing blister. I looked around the room, the only room me and my girlfriend’s place had. After adopting our nomadic lifestyle we decided to move to a smaller apartment while we didn’t need to live in the space that much. But while we loved the city centre of Brussels because it held so many shared memories we looked for a place right in the heart of the city. I moved here 6 years ago after growing up and studying in Amsterdam to work for the EU. I met my girlfriend and moved in with her after one year. So I can tell I feel at home in this city, although my heimat still is Amsterdam. Because of the little space we have I like to start my days in a quiet café. Something I do everywhere also when I am travelling. This morning I ended up in my favourite café ‘Het warm water’ famous for their day welcoming breakfasts, always some fresh newspapers and not unimportant a WIFI connection.

While walking to the EU quarter I saw a homeless man hiding under a big tree trying to create some shelter for himself. I wondered if he despite the lacking of a physical home still felt at home in the same city I felt at home. When I was thinking this and therefore watched in his eyes he spit right next to my leather shoes, I had recently polished, saying: ‘How dare you walking through ‘my city’ with those absurdly expensive shoes made of harmless cows’. I smiled and thought, yes he feels at home, but kept my change from breakfast in my pocket.

Niels
pushed together, eight feet long and just wide enough to sleep on, else a white Formica table used as a desk. Stacked behind the bench are a couple boxes and suitcases. At first he lived of food supplied by other passengers or airport employees who knew about his situation. At some point his story became well known, he lived of the payments he received for interviews. And when The Terminal was finally shot he got a major sum of money deposed on a bank account registered to the address of the airport. He became a homeless and rich man, although he probably didn’t feel homeless anymore. The fact Merhan Karimi Nasseri found its home on an airport is not so strange if you consider Cresswell’ description of an airport.

“With its shopping malls, restaurants, banks, post-offices, phones, bars, video games, television chairs and security guards, it is a miniaturized city. As a stimulated metropolis it is inhabited by a community of modern nomads: a collective metaphor of cosmopolitan existence where the pleasure of travel is not only to arrive, but also not to be in any particular place” (Cresswell, 2006)

Sir Alfred lived within a city supplied with everything he could ever wish for.

Homesickness

Is the DigiNomad Homeless?
Sir Alfred’s life was one long continuous sickbed, he was diagnosed with homesickness. At first homesickness for the home he thought he came from, than for the home he wanted to go to, ending up in a fake third home. Homesickness is a distress caused by the longing for home and family while absent from them (Homesick, 2009). It usually develops while travelling. The feeling of homesickness suggests that someone has a home. If you lack a solid home do you lose the possibility to get infected with homesickness or do you end up in a continuous state of homesickness like Sir Alfred.

Home substitute
The DigiNomad is always on the move from one place to another. A solid home to always turn back to is often missing or so scarcely visited that instead of an architectural space it becomes a place with memories. What is it that makes
people feel the need for a home, what are its essentials? What can be the substitute for this lacking architectural space in case of DigiNomads. In the difference between a home and a house lays the difference between a place and a space.

A House is not a Home?

A shelter should provide protection from natural threats like, rain, storm, sun, etc. or any other external attack. According to the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard:

“If I were asked to name the chief benefit of a house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the daydreamer.....” (Bachelard, 1969).

“For our house is the corner of the world..... it is our universe.... “(Bachelard, 1969)

The house protects us even in the very personal act of dreaming about our future. In here everything still seems possible. At the same time it is our reference point. We grow up in here; learn what is valuable, what is good, what is bad, what your world is and within which universe it is.

Questionaire

Within the questionnaires the question, ‘what triggers the home-feeling’ was asked? Answers to these questions could be clustered within the keywords; recognition, freedom, detail and comfort. Common answers were:

Own stuff, own music

Freedom to choose

Hissing sound of heater

Bed, warm, good smell, food, drinks, friendly staff, outside space

Let us dig in to these notions of the home-feeling. But first find out the difference between a house and a home.

A home is not a house

Reyner Banham suggests in his essay ‘A home is not a house’ that the modern house is a set of appliances and services combined to create a space (Banham, 1965). These constraints for a house are not bound to a place and therefore are free of location and rootless. Houses are essentially built to protect human beings from the external environment. Banham introduces two basic ways in which mankind controlled their environment through history. The first implies escaping hostile environments by hiding from it. Rocks, trees tents or even a roof are premature architectural interventions in this regard eventually leading to the type of architecture we know right now. On the other hand we actually interfere with the meteorological constraints, by changing for example temperature and humidity. The greatest example of mankind is the campfire. Groff Conklin quoted by Banham says: ‘a house is nothing but a shell........ a shell is all a house or any structure in which human beings live and work really is’. Reyner Banham quotes the famous line of Buckminster-Fuller in this regard:

“Madam, do you know what your house weighs?”

If we read this the text of Banham’ explaining Buckminster-Fuller’ quote interesting link to Nomadic ways of life.

If dirty old nature could be kept under the proper degree of control... by other means, the United States would be happy to dispense with architecture and buildings altogether. Buckminster Fuller is of course very big in this proposition. His famous non-rhetorical question, “madam, do you know what your house weighs?”, articulates a subversive suspicion of the monumental. This suspicion is inarticulately shared by the untold thousands of Americans who have already shed the deadweight of domestic architecture and live in mobile homes..... (Banham, 1965)

A house is not a home

The question of Buckminster-Fuller, is one never asked. It seems irrelevant. But in the case of a mobile nomadic home this could suddenly be very important. A house is more than kilo’s of combined materials. A house exists of
to cling to, but that we go alone and that our relation is to the world of reality and not only to the world of men and women, then the opportunity will come and the dead poet who was Shakespeare’s sister will put on the body which she has so often laid down”. (Woolf, 1957)

Virgina Woolf’ writings originate from a time-period in which women were not aloud to enter a library without the company of a man. Her essay breaths a scream for independence of and equal opportunities for women. It is bell hooks who specifically puts the ‘home’ forward as a place where whole revolutions in society can be born. In her essay ‘Homeplace a site of resistance’ she describes the home she grew up in herself in the times of black racism as:

“In our young minds houses belonged to women, were their special domain, not as property, but as places where all that really mattered in life took place; the warmth and comfort of shelter, the feeding of our bodies, the nurturing of our souls. There we learned dignity, integrity of being; there we learned to have faith.” (Hooks, 1990)

Home as a political neutral space
This puts us right back where Bachelard left us with his description of the home as a place where daydreaming could take place. For black families fighting for their equal rights home could be conceptualized as being a political neutral space. In this space it was possible to find back peace with inner thoughts and reload for the outdoor struggles. In the same essay the quoted Buddhist Monk Thich Nhat Hanh says:

“I think communities of resistance should be places where people can return to themselves more easily, where the conditions are such that they can heal themselves and recover their wholeness”

What is your place of birth, residence, now?
Questionaire
Within the questionnaire a group of questions was introduced to try and find out difference in the experience of places and spaces. The questions were: What is your place of
Moving ‘to’ or ‘with’?

Permanent or portable
We can distinguish two different basic types of Nomadic building typologies: the permanent (hotel, caravanserai, inn, hostel, etc.) and the portable (tent, caravan, mobile home, camper, etc). The first we travel to and the second we travel with. They contradict in inhabitation type. The portable architectural typology is permanently inhabited by its resident only on different geographical spots. The permanent typology is temporarily inhabited by its residents while its location is permanent. The portable typology can as long as it fits the requirements of portability be adjusted to the wishes of its owner. The permanent is a representation of a common level of nomadic requirements that can be personalised within much smaller details. We associate the static type with an urban- and the portable with a more rural environment. In history the static type (caravanserai) was also spread through rural areas and functioned as safe havens for tradesmen.

Historical Nomadic space

Historical references
To illustrate these two types in the next paragraphs historical examples of the two different types will be discussed: The Yurt and the Caravanserai. For a more profound analysis read my history thesis, ‘Nomaden, geschiedenis herzien’ (Toussaint, 2009)

The Yurt, rounded efficiency

Description
The Yurt is a typically round shaped tent, mostly associated with Mongolia, Literary translated it means ‘house’ or ‘home’. The real origin of the yurt is not yet determined but the Buyrat Mongols from Siberia claimed this honour. The Mongols refer to the Yurt as a Ger (گر). The yurt is a very typical form language; a round plan which is highly functional in regard to the nomadic lifestyle, a flattened dome roof with a round hole in the middle. The tent is in all the different aspects adjusted to the moving nature of its inhabitants (whole Mongolian families)
Plattegrond typologie van de yurt
Normally round plans are defined as inefficient and unpractical in the architectural practice. Where do I put my painting? How do I assemble my straight window frame into my curved facade? But geometrically seen is the circle one of the most efficient forms. The relationship between the surface and its circumference is the most profitable of the geometrical basic forms. We need less material to close of a space; less material has to be carried around. Also the rules of mechanics point in the direction of a circle and even more the half sphere which top of the yurt. Considering the construction, round plan have a lot of repetitive elements what results in a clear and easy to build construction. When we have to carry our house along with us new demands (weight, etc) will influence the form-aspect of its architectural appearance. A rounded tent suddenly does not seem to be such a strange choice anymore. The Yurt or Ger knows a very long history and still is in use as a dwelling unit in Mongolian surroundings.

Space vs. Place
The Yurt combines working and living in one single space. It should combine a workplace and a home in one architectural space (house, stable and workshop). The space is incredible efficient in use and construction. The Mongolian and Turkish Yurt are in construction different but their typical shape shows much resemblance. A round shaped base with a very recognizable flattened pointed roof. Flat enough to easily attach the skin and steep enough to prevent snow to rest on it.

Its space is clearly defined by one big covered room without any internal walls. In this room one family lives very close to each other without any mutual privacy. The usage of the space is regulated by conventions forming invisible walls. The tent is separated in 4 wedged zones. Within the plan there is a clear direction visible, one pointing in the North-South and the other East-West. The South side has a religious purpose, were the altar is placed. Facing the altar on the North-side is the entrance. The more you enter the room the more the room is dedicated to this altar and therefore more private. The Southside is only meant for family activities and guests of honour. Children can live here in the protection of their family. The entrance side on the contrary is reserved for visitors, servants, poor and animals. The East-West orientation is based the Ying-Yang relation. The West-side is for the women and the East-side for the men. Of course there is no strict line, not to cross, but the 4 quart circles are silent separations within the space acknowledged by its inhabitants.

Apart from its very specific plan the Yurt knows a vertical more symbolic zoning too. The ground area represents the earth were the roof is the separation from the heavenly. The hole in the middle is the source of light or the sun. A recognizable image when we think of the Pantheon in Rome. The oculus in the concrete dome warms up the visitor by the light shining into the dark interior, a symbol for the always present sun.

Private vs. Public
Because private and working live of these nomads are tightly connected to one another they take place within one room. Except the fact that there is no private physical space there is no separate space for the working activities too. The difference is defined in time and not in space. Daily life consists of number activities that are more or less private. These day rhythms are accepted by every member of society and naturally evolve within the space.

Home-feeling
Despite the fact Yurt users do not have a permanent home-address they are the owners of the space they live in. The ground they live on is a natural layer that they have on a temporally loan. The wooden construction in these days is normally prefabricated in a factory. The skin is fabricated by the women of a community. It is painted with family bounded symbols and colours. Other personal expressions are within the door and the wooden oculus. Both are surviving generations and are vividly painted. These personalized visual expressions generate the home-feeling of a Yurt.

Caravanserai
Intro Keller
The poem of the Swiss poet Gotfried Keller clearly defines the most important function of a Caravanserai:

“Die Zeit geht nicht, sie steht still,
Wir ziehen durch sie hin:
Sie ist ein Karavanserai,

Wir ziehen durch sie hin:
Sie ist ein Karavanserai,”
Description
Like beacons they stood along trade routes in the middle-east, big stone castles on one day travel distance (30km) away from each other. This way they didn’t only mark a distance but also a time span. They were safe havens for them who travelled with valuable trade ware along the routes of the Seljuq and Ottoman Empire.

Space vs. Place
The Caravanserai just like the Yurt combines working and living in one building. In this case the building is used by many different people and for many different purposes. This results in a lot of different functional areas within the building. The basic typology of the Caravanserai is very simple and reflects its uses very directly. The minimal acquired and sometimes also available space is the accommodation area. It consists of a raised area were the visitors could sleep and of a lower area to shelter the animals and load and unload them. Both of these areas were always covered. Most of the examples did however contain more functions. Other functions are for example an open courtyard, bathrooms, a mosque, storerooms, service-rooms, private rooms, etc. They were all arranged along a longitudinal axes starting at the majestic entrance. Often the entrance was followed up by a vestibule that on both side had service rooms to accommodate the caravanserai-keeper. This vestibule leads into the open courtyard. The space to meet, trade with and greet fellow travellers. The way all the other rooms are laid out in the plan differs. Two main plan typologies are distinguished by Yavuz (Yavuz, 1997). She describes a concentric plan and an additive plan. The first lays functional areas around a central core, usually the open courtyard. The second is characterized by clusters of functions grouped along the axes, also usually strengthened by a central courtyard. Because of this seemingly importance of the courtyard it was Erdman who grouped the different caravanserai plans by the presence, sizes and appearances of the courtyard (Erdmann & Erdmann, 1976). This courtyard-typology is connected to one of the basic Islamic plan-typologies, that of the 4-Iwan. It was addressed to many different buildings, mosques, madrassas, caravanserais, etc. It simply was constructed from an open courtyard surrounded by a wall of building-mass. Within the 4 sides of the courtyard there was an Iwan (a space enclosed by 3 sides and one open side towards the courtyard). It is a place that is covered but still outdoors, especially used in summer as an outdoor meeting place. The outer appearance of the caravanserai resembles that of castles, solid, hard and homogeneous in material. It triggered the feeling of a safe place. Its inner spaces knew the right architectural expression to accommodate the right feelings of a home, a workplace and a meeting-place.

Private vs. Public
In the case of the caravanserais there was a strict division between private, less-private and public spaces. This seemed more important than the division between working and living. The courtyard was a place where trading, meeting up with friend and enjoying meals could take place. But that it was a public space was a fact. The most private space of a Caravanserai is the place reserved for the Sultan. Some of the buildings were commissioned by the Sultan. They accommodated the Sultan and his family while travelling through their Empire or would be used as winter-residences. The most public space would be the courtyard. Once allowed to enter this was a place where people met.

Home-feeling
If the Caravanserai was able to trigger a home feeling is a difficult question. At least it should been able to make people feel protected.

Static efficiency vs. portable identity
Both nomadic typologies seemed to work well and serve the users in their needs. But these needs differ a lot per situation. The tradesman is in need of a lot of space to transport his goods. Transporting tents and other appliances will result in less space for the goods. His basic needs should be provided. The Mongolian Nomad needs grounds that can provide their animals with food. In the perspective of movement these are two essential different types. The Tradesman lives from point to point not interested in the line in between them (transit-space). The Mongolian Nomad lives in this linear space in fact only slowing down his speed to find a rest place that meets their needs. The live of the contemporary DigiNomad resembles that of the tradesman the most. Not because he wants to bring as much goods as possible, but because he wants to bring as less as possible. All should be provided by institutions
1. Kahn al-Mankur
2. Hurmuzfarra, Turkistan, 10th cent.
3. Kahn Beleuli, Turkistan, 10th cent.
5. Ode Mergen, Turkistan, 11-12th cent.
6. Dakhistan, Turkistan, 11-12th cent.
7. Standard small Kahn
8. Standard small Kahn
10. Koza Khan, Bursa, Turkey, 1484
11. Typical 15th cent. Kahn
12. Yeni Khan, 16-17th cent.
14. Armenian Khan, Adherbadjan, 16-17th cent.
that can replace standard building typologies like a house and an office. For the urban living DigiNomad the static version, that can function as a beacon seems to be the more appropriate one. Question is: What are the essentials of the space-typology of a home and work combined place.

Why not a hotel?

If we consider the lifestyle of a traveller we strongly associate this with the architectural typology of a hotel. Because of different reasons this doesn’t seem to be the ideal typology for the DigiNomad. Let’s investigate the history of the hotel to define its deficiency in relation to the DigiNomad.

The history of hotels is strongly connected with the historical development of human transport and its routes. Inn’s have existed for a long period. In the Roman Empire there was an Inn typology called ‘manisionis’. They were mainly used by people travelling for business and/or governmental activities along the Roman via’s.

The economic growth and the growth of commercial activity in the middle ages initiated the first expansion of inns. The privately owned inns were mostly used by merchants as safe places on their journeys in Europe. A distinct example of this type of inn is the hostel in the Great St. Bernard Pass in Swiss, not only a safe refuge but also a representation of physical possibilities. A embodied the human possibilities of travelling the hard to conquer Pass.

In the 18th century the first type of mutual travelling found their existence in the stagecoach (pic. ...). Along its fixed routes Inn’s popped out of the ground. The stagecoaches travelled between different stations (stages) accommodated with places to sleep and eat. Despite this enormous expansion of inns the real big boost for the hotel business was initiated by the rise of the Industrial revolution. The invention of the railroad (replacing for a big part the old routes of the stagecoaches) meant a high density network of hotels along its routes in England (hotel, 2009). Because the means of transport became more efficient, luxurious and divers it was not only the hotels at the crossing points of various routes but also the spaces of the transport itself became movable hotel spaces. Trains and steam liners became the symbol of prosperity and unlimited possibilities. It was indeed the steam liners of the Holland-America line that inspired le Corbusier to develop the concept of its later well know ‘Unite the Habitations’.

Where England amazed by its numbers the United States made the world shiver with the size of these hotel-institutions. It was these American giants that inspired the

The Nomadic Home

The DigiNomadic space gets specially defined by the need to accommodate working and living activities.

The Work-rhythm against the Nomads melody
We all know the 9-5 work rhythm, also known as the 8-hour workday. It is the DigiNomad who stretches this concept to its upmost limits.

The office-space got changed over time. From the singular small office building owned by a small business to huge office towers with multiple firms inside, all arranged per floor. Landscapes of non-permanent walls placed inside open spaces. The teleworker preferred to get out of the office and work at home. Homes had to be redesigned to accommodate this type of use. The DigiNomad makes the new step. Not only out of the office but also out of the home. Because of his equipment: laptop, mobile phone, PDA, the DigiNomad is in constant contact with everyone he needs to be in contact with and therefore can work where ever he wants to. Cafés are more and more equipped to fulfil this type of instant office use inside their space. WIFI, quick snacks, portable coffee small tables for one person, big tables for a meeting, etc., all developments that makes it possible to instantly convert public spaces into private offices.

Living through scales
The house of a DigiNomad should provide in a sense of home-feeling. The paradox is that the use the efficiency and functions of a generic global city but search a connection with cultural local atmospheres. The feeling of home is created by connecting to a smaller local scale.
Dear Diary,

Yesterday it was my last day in the office. I returned to Brussels two weeks ago after a monthly visit to New York. And this afternoon I left again to Amsterdam for 2 days in order to talk to an artist who participates in a European wide exhibition of famous artists who live or lived along the Thalys route. At the same time I could meet up with my memories again and visit some friends and family. As many employees I also do not have any personal office anymore in Brussels. I do have a guaranteed office-desk and all needed extra infrastructure in the building. I can reserve a certain spot through the internet in advance or I can just walk into the building and ask for a place there. There is always an empty spot somewhere in the building. It's always nice to be back in the office and see what everyone is doing.

Since I travel so much, I now work somewhere else every day. Most important for the perfect work-spot is a WIFI connection. And although almost everywhere it is possible to connect to a WIFI network, there are still some blank spots, unfortunately. But almost all major cities are covered.

This morning I had the ultimate office experience. I forgot to close my curtains last night, a warm beam of sunlight woke me up and I wanted to taste the air outside. For breakfast I skipped my regular café and instead took off to a local Turkish Supermarket and bought some Turkish bread and fresh humus finished with the best take away coffee in town. With this survival package I headed off to Parc de Bruxelles. There I placed myself on a bench and created my own instant office. Ever seen an office surrounded by trees and covered with leaves. I had never worked in a more comforting atmosphere. I even had a WIFI connection.

I had to pull myself out of this comfort zone to catch my train connection to Paris. The Thalys these days really is a DigiNomads haven. There is WIFI on board and good fresh coffee. So my second instant office of the day emerged right in the there in the train. A long train travel from Brussels to Amsterdam now becomes a productive one. The cabin space miraculously turns in to an office for many people, for others it becomes a bedroom and children use it as a very cool playground.

Niels
Kapuscinski elaborately choose the smaller hotels to get in contact with the local atmosphere. Big international chain-hotels do not seem to deliver this quality. Question is, why not? The concept of the chain hotel is to provide the traveller in every aspect to fulfil the needs, from inside laundries, hairdressers, swimming pools, fitness facilities, etc. The more facilities offered the more stars on the doorway. Small islands with an international identity make the traveller protected from the unknown things around them. This is the contrary a DigiNomad is craving for. He wants to connect to a local identity like Kapuscinski. We should go back in time to find the Inn as a much better representation of the DigiNomad needs.

Chain hotels started along the train-routes, soon ignoring national boundaries, forming recognizable enclaves in unknown far away cultures. Of course this expansion was again initiated by a technological invention, the airplane. Nowadays we can recognize two different types of hotel developments one for leisure and one for business. The search for new ways to combine working- and living environments with each other is still going on. New types are developing mostly around airports. From recognizable worldwide chain hotels to Japanese capsule hotels all scales are permitted in this quest.

“Apart from their capacity to provide entertainment and relaxation, modern hotels are essential in today’s economy, functioning as depots on a vast network of digitally connected sites” (Albrecht, 2002).

Hotel as a representation of the local

But why is the typology of the hotel not a good possibility to accommodate the needs of a DigiNomad? Let my use a quote from the NRC-handelsblad, describing Ryszard Kapuscinski to show the potential of the typology and why it doesn’t fit the needs of the DigiNomad yet.

Ryszard Kapuscinski was a Polish writer and journalist............... Eventually he died on 23 of January after heart-surgery. In his life he published 19 books and always chooses to write these on the place where he told about. Living in small and poorly hotels or rented rooms he tried to physically get in touch with the living conditions. (Kapuscinski, 2007)

The feeling of home can be generated using different tools. Conceptions of safety, independence, responsibility and recognisability are essential to trigger. The feeling of safety can be generated by creating a space that is comfortable. Also different levels of privacy can help here. This can be applied to living but also to office functions. Independence lays within the possibility to organise you own live. Choosing the right location for the DigiNomads is vital. Responsibility in the sense that you are responsible for the space you live in. Not the hotel room that is inverted to a status quo every day by cleaners, but a space of your own that is yours and...
were you are reasonable for. And recognisability in the sense that the building should somehow have a distinctive appearance but is not from the iconic sort we see in the generic city.
Time; the duration of distance

Introduction marathon
One second, 60 seconds make 1 minute and 60 minutes make 1 hour. 2 hours, 3 minutes and 59 seconds (2.03.59) make the current world record for the sacred distance of the marathon (Haile Gebresllassie, Berlin 2008). The magical time-barrier of 2:00 is still not broken. Everybody can link a sense of duration to a specific time-span, we can in our minds estimate what 2:03.59 stands for. Most of us know that they will never be able to run 42.195km in this time-span. Distance and time are connected in an ambivalent way. When doing the 42.195 km by car for example time-barrier of two hours seems absurd unless of course held down in traffic. When travelling, time and distance give no information if not both explicitly mentioned. They are even both used to answer the same question. When asking how long do we need to travel? Some will answer: only 10 miles; others: it is a 10 min. drive. Time does not only has an ambivalent connection to distance but also to place. The marathon of Berlin usually starts at around 11:00 but another marathon held on the same day starting at the same time still can finish before the one in Berlin even started.

Everybody who has run an official course himself recognizes one of the most illustrative sounds of the close connection between time and distance. It is the soft ‘beep’ sound of the chip that registers the time of every individual runner passing the finish line; together forming an irregular beeping rhythm creating the music of a marathon. The distance of the marathon stays the same for every single participant the time they need to finish this magical distance differs. Marathons bring cultures together an ‘Ethiopian’ man running a ‘World’ record in ‘Berlin’. Distances make local identities stronger but at the same time weaker because of the homogenising effect of globalization. It is the trend of global shrinking changing our perception of time, distance and their relation.

A DigiNomad has to be constantly aware of the notions of time and place and strictly separate them. When travelling, he often jumps over the gaps in time while travelling through time barriers. He has to adapt to the rhythms of others, he is the melody between the rhythms of his clients. Living in a global world and still staying connected to a local identity is a condition for a nomadic lifestyle. What are the constraints of this dualistic lifestyle? What are the differences in perception of the local and the global and how can they connect.

The Duration of Distance

Time within a global atmosphere
Within the DigiNomds questionnaire the following question was addressed to DigiNomads and to travellers: What is time? An interesting difference between travellers and DigiNomads came forward. Were DigiNomads mentioned a timezone (GMT +2) or an actual time plus a timezone travellers didn’t knew what to answer or just mentioned the actual time without any specifications. DigiNomads are more conscious about time and its connection to space. The concepts of mobility are changing within a globalizing world. Time is correlated with speed, the faster you move the smaller seems the distance between two places. We are more mobile within time-spans getting smaller and smaller. Because the contemporary ease of worldwide transport methods, cultures are becoming less and less bounded to geographical locations. Cities become, more and more multicultural and within the ‘www’ personal interests seem to form stronger connections than cultural heritages. These kinds of phenomenon are effects of the ongoing process of global shrinking. Perceptions of time and distance are changing because cultural differences getting smaller, personal habits more relevant and transportation speeds increasing. How did these systems develop and made our globe shrink?

Global shrinking
The effect of a relatively shrinking globe is often referred
Wednesday: Time as a Rhythm

Wednesday 9 June 2010

Dear Diary,

Wednesday, it was already halfway the workweek. The last weekend is still in your memory but you also think about the next already. The last couple of months since I do not work on the office anymore my life got a lot more differentiated. I can plan my free time whenever I like. This results in the fact that I spent evenings and sometimes weekends behind my laptop but also quiet gym classes around noon. And while sitting in a nice cafe with a beautiful view on a canal I can state that I like my new life.

This morning for example I used my new freedom on a way that never would have been possible a few months ago. I visited a good friend of me, still living in Amsterdam and played a game of squash with him. His technique had improved a lot since university. I stopped playing afterwards but he continued playing. I had no chance he was dancing on the court and i couldn't even find a rhythm. Of course we hang out for lunch in a lunch cafe along the Prinsengracht (an Amsterdam Canal) and memories floated in front of my eyes. My appointments followed up in a continuing movement. Sometimes changing direction a bit but always based on the basic rhythm of the day and night cycle and the cycle of the workweek. Because although I can schedule my own week from day to day without thinking of the difference about work and weekend days the largest percentage of working people have a sacred weekend. Weekends are therefore the best days to travel. You don't lose valuable time in which you could had have a very important conversation with somebody. But my freedom has enormously enlarged. After a hasty run to make it in time for my appointment this afternoon and a very heavy discussion with one of the artist about his sudden decision not to participate in the project, I was not capable to crawl behind my computer any more. Instead I decided to go to a Dutch new movie with an old friend. It became a late night in which I forgot my worries of the daylight.

This is unbreakable rhythm of the day of a working-man, even unbreakable with a cup of soup. Against the melodious travel of a nomadic worker changing all depending on your mood.

Niels
to as ‘space-time compression’ introduced by D. Harvey within a sociological field, borrowed from relativistic physics (Harvey, 1989); the phenomenon of distance getting overtaken by time.

“I use the word ‘compression’ because a strong case can be made that the history of capitalism has been characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us” (Harvey, 1989)

Harvey
In Harvey’s, ‘The condition of post modernity’ (Harvey, 1989) Harvey puts down a few periods in which changes of time perception took place and illustrates this with a picture in which the globe’s perceptive size is shown in relation to these different periods. The periods he distinguishes are:

1500-1840: best average speed of horse drawn coaches and sailing ships was 10 MPH

1850-1930: steam locomotives averaged 65 MPH and steam ships averaged 36 MPH

1950s: propeller aircraft 300-400 MPH

1960s: jet passenger aircraft 500-700 MPH

Connection of post-modernity
All four of these periods have a relation with changes in means of transportation. A quote out of the ‘Quarterly Review’ shows the big influence of speed in the perception of speed.

“For instance, supposing that railroads..... were to be established all over England, the whole population would, speaking metaphorically, at once advance an masse, and place their chairs nearer to the fireside of their metropolis by two thirds of the time which now separates them from it; they would also sit nearer to one another by two thirds of the time which now respectively alienated them. If the rate were to be repeated; our harbours, our dockyards, our towns, the whole of our rural population, would again not only draw nearer to each other by two-thirds, but all would proportionally approach the national hearth. As distances were thus annihilated, the surface of our country would, as it were, shrivel in size until it became not much bigger than one immense city” (Cresswell, 2006)

Irrelevance of distance
Both Cresswell, and Harveys, but also Jormakka in his ‘Flying Dutchmen’ (Jormakka, 2002) use the train as a visualisation for the transition of distance getting measured in meters to the moment when distance got measured in seconds. The train is the reason time zones were invented. The higher the travelling speed is the less important distances become. If you walk to your work every morning a difference of 2 km. will result in a 20 min. walk, while the same distance of 2 km. by car is marginal. Distance becomes more and more irrelevant. Do you know how much km. you travel every day to your work? And do you know how long it takes you every morning?

Questionaire
Within the questionnaire the question; ‘when becomes a journey a long journey’, was introduced. The answer to this question gave interesting differences in both groups. For a DigiNomad a journey became long when a detachment of certainties took place. Some answers were:

“A journey becomes long when you close up everything at home; and you don’t know where or when it will finish”

"High hassle factor, low connection with people"

When in the case of traveller’s long journeys were measured distances/ time spans or dealt with a change of rhythms. An answer:

“After about 4 weeks, because after that period daily routine really changes, things at work have to be taken over and housing/ administration etc. has to be arranged”

To prevent a DigiNomad from getting a feeling that he is continually in a moving travelling mode without having the time to get in contact with a local atmosphere, meeting people, evoking a sense of recognition and the certainty of
Charly Chaplin in ‘the great dictator’ met de aarde in zijn handen
some basic needs is essential. Also personal habits make the experience of the judgement of distance differ. A holiday to the other side of the world for some is a more than yearly event for others leaving their hometown it is a thing to do once in a lifetime.

Personal experience
The last aspect of changing concepts of distance is the personal experience. The spectrum of human habitats has widened and the judgements of ‘nearby’ and ‘far away’ have been changed. Different new lifestyles, for example the DigiNomad lifestyle made the number of people that travel all over the world grew enormously. They do not live in single neighbourhoods within single cities but have many spots in multiple cities around the world they visit regularly. What happened to the big part of the population that only left their village ones in a lifetime and were very happy with this lifestyle. What is a long travel? Once this was a journey to a nearby big city, nowadays people travel a 1000 km. to go on weekend city-trip.

This rescaling of distances made it possible to live in a global world. This global world interacts with a local atmosphere. The DigiNomad tends to have the agglomeration of global city as is habitat but tries to live on within a local field. He is the perfect example of a glocal. A term mentioned by Robertson:

Sociological usage of glocalization highlights the simultaneity or co-presence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in globalization; that is, the commonly interconnected processes of homogenization and heterogenization (Robertson, 1994; Robertson and White, 2005).

What are the characteristics of this global and local scale and were can we make links between them, creating the ideal ‘glocal’ living environment for DigiNomads.

---

Global, Recognizable & Efficient

Culture as a measurement of distance
A distance for a nomad is very subjective. A business relation, can using an instant communication medium through internet seem to be just on the other side of the table when a man from the oriental store 100m down the street speaks a strange language and worlds apart. What is happening within big cities? Are cultures growing towards each other or are they becoming more and more bounded by invisible but hard walls?

Global Cities
A new type of city has evolved; it is called the Global City, clearly recognizable as an individual layer on an aesthetic level. It interacts, sometimes conflicts, with a local identity of the city. These are the crossing points/ border-areas where the DigiNomads finds a perfect environment to live. Is this internal city battle one that enriches by interaction or causes problems by conflicts?

Generic city
Rem Koolhaas’ Generic city is perceived by people who live in the global city.

The Generic City is the city liberated from the captivity of the centre, from the straitjacket of identity. ( ) if it gets too small, it expands. If it gets old, it self-destructs and renews. ( ) it can produce a new identity every Monday morning (Koolhaas, 1995)

Lack of identity
He claims that these cities lack identity. But for the people that live in these cities it can’t be said that they have no association with the environment they live in, for them their city is filled with little spots, details and memories they identify themselves with. Koolhaas claims to live in this generic himself; a citizen of the world, free of any culture, city, country, or continental bounded nationality. Only be claiming he lives in it he validates the existence of a global identity that he can identify himself to. This habitat is a city, spread all over the globe existing of little bits and pieces (airports, city centres, tourist attractions, office buildings, etc.) of world metropoli. How can we define this
Global City? What are its links to the local and how vital is this link. Is it an ongoing battle or a match made in heaven intensifying city life?

The Global City’s Parameters

The Global city defined

The global city was first mentioned by S. Sassen in her book ‘The Global City’.

“...today’s global cities are (1) command points in the organization of the world economy; (2) key locations and marketplaces for the leading industries of the current period, which are finance and specialized services for firms; (3) major sites of production for these industries, including the productions of these innovations” (Sassen 1994)

Hinterworld

The agglomeration of global cities is not a centred world but a world that can be represented by a landscape; a landscape that changes according the viewpoint you choose, as described by J. Taylor in his research ‘Urban Hinterworlds’ (Taylor, 2002). The term hinterworld derives from the term hinterland used in relation to the area a harbour ships his delivered goods to. The term also was used by Johnson (1967, 87) and described as: The region around a town or city for which it provides services. A typical feature of these types of areas is that they do not form one continues area. Goods from a harbour can find their destination thousands of kilometres away and a city can provide a small town somewhere in the area. The hinterworld defined by Johnson is particularly used in the context of the Global City; described as: the global distribution of service connections of a city which lay behind its world city formation. A division that is always made within the Global City is the one of the cities (solid points) and the flows between them. The hinterworlds research focuses on the flows trying to catch the network forming the base of the Global City. It shows the notion of changing viewpoints and changing city boundaries. Living in the agglomeration of global cities does not mean you live in a world wide city constantly it focuses on the point of presence.

Links between

Some links are stronger than other links. These links are not represented by distance but by financial, social, economical, etc. connections between cities that take part in the game of the global cities and change over time. Links are strengthened others are broken. Some links will be more permanent.

Scales of identity

All the Global Cities in the world have their own cultural image. This image is not determined by the beautiful skyline pictures we know of them. Looking at the three pictures of the sky lines on the left page it is hard to tell where they were taken. If I would tell they were shot in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Miami it still would be difficult to pick the right city with the right picture. One thing it does tell cities with a skyline like those usually belong to the agglomeration of global cities. Architecture freaks maybe recognize the ‘Oriental Pearl TV Tower’ shining in the skyline of Shanghai. The only way for this global cities to build up a distinct image on this large scale is the use this same scale to construct recognizable icons like the Pearl TV tower. Still they remain within one and the same architectural style. Big icons of glass and steel seem to drift away from local values originating in a cultural heritage. They show the capability to produce a unique building within a global monumental architectural expression. Koolhaas his believes in this generic city are profound, as we can read in Ouroussoff’ description of Koolhaas’ generic city.

“The Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas revealed his concept of ‘the generic city,” a sprawling metropolis of repetitive buildings centred on an airport and inhabited by a tribe of global nomads with few local loyalties. His argument was that in its profound sameness, the generic city was a more accurate reflection of contemporary urban reality than nostalgic visions of New York or Paris.” (Ouroussoff, 2008)

The local cultural identity of global cities is embedded in a much smaller scale. For Shanghai and Hong Kong we think of Asia and the Asian culture. The two pictures on the right page visualize a much more associative image of Hong Kong and Shanghai. When we think of Miami, we associate
this with Miami-beach, white sand and green palm trees. Building city icons are effective methods for creating city identities on a larger city scale. But real differences between cities are created on a much smaller street scale and are driven by a local cultural input. But also within this scale we see smaller representations of the global; a large shopping mall that sells different products from all over the world or a large international franchise company selling one and the same all over the world. We can live within the same hotel room within every global city and identify us with generic representations of global cities. The global within the perspective of the generic city can be seen as a recognisable entity and highly efficient machine manifesting as encapsulated neighbourhoods within different global cities.

Although we made one scale-step down by interfering more direct with a local scale global we didn’t touched the habitat of the DigiNomad yet. The boundaries of this habitat are synchronising with the boundaries of the agglomeration of the global city but attempt to escape the generic city as a living environment. Within this glocal identity the infrastructure and efficiency of the generic city is used but the DigiNomad penetrates through the different scale-levels down to a local scale offering a unique atmosphere for every city.

If we position this local identity next to its global equivalent we can truly oversee its conflicts and opportunities within overlapping areas.

**Local, Authentic & Refreshing**

Genius locus
The smallest expression of the local can be found within Norberg-Shultz phenomenon of space. He describes the ‘genius locus’, the identity of a specific place:

> “With the word ‘place’, we mean something more than abstract location. We mean a totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape and colour. Together these things determine an environmental ‘character’. A place is therefore a qualitative, ‘total’ phenomenon, which we cannot reduce to any of its properties, without losing its concrete nature out of sight.”

(Norberg-Shultz, 1980)

**What is a culture**
Most interesting part of this ‘total phenomenon’ for the DigiNomad is the cultural shaping of the places he travels to. The need to explore the earth is a search for new cultures and their expressions. How can we describe the concept, culture? Do they only have a local influence, and can we find possibilities for linking to the global?

A culture can be described as a common conception of values and behaviour of its members in contrast to members of other cultures. But culture is a difficult word to define. In recent anthropological writing it is not uncommon to avoid the word ‘culture’ or when it is used use quotation marks to point out its ambivalence. One of the biggest reasons for this distant approach is the fact that in today’s world it is not so easy to distinguish separate cultures linked to a fixed group of people. As Gordon Matthews puts it:

> “We have come to live in a world of culture as fashion, in which each of us can pick and choose cultural identities like we pick and chose clothes.” (Mathews, 2007)

**Cultural Supermarket**
He states that there are two types of markets; the material market bringing a flood of products into the world and a cultural supermarket bringing a flood of information and identities into the world. Culture is not only a given fact in which you have been born but is also a personal choice. Not one human as part of a culture but a culture as part of a human being. Gordon Mathews describes this trend as the “Global Supermarket”.

> “Increasingly we live within a “global supermarket”, in which the worlds cultural forms, in areas from food to religion, to music, to architecture, are to some extend available for appropriation by everyone” (Mathews, 2007).
Thursday: Time as a experience

Thursday 10 June 2010

Dear Diary,

It still feels strange to sleep in the Globspot (DigiNomads sleeping and working place) in Amsterdam a city in which my earliest memories are kept I travel like a stranger in my own city. The first years I stayed with my parents but while I'm now traveling and working at the same time this didn't seem like such a good idea. This morning I visited my dear mother and father, still living in the house where I grew up. And not only it still looked like that time it still was like that time. A computer was nowhere to be found a mobile phone couldn't be tracked in this house So plans with my parents always had to be made in advance, while a quick text message isn't possible. But whatever happened to them would always be reachable and that felt comfortable.

Strangely enough the train trip back to Brussels was rather melancholic. Although I come to Amsterdam a few times a year I had big difficulties saying goodbye this time so I kept watching the city from my window while the train drove out of the city. And suddenly I realized What had started as an experiment to still keep track of something familiar after the last houses of Amsterdam had faded away, had in the next hour turned in to a way of saying goodbye. And to say goodbye to something, I thought when the train was moving on, you had to create an internal distance. You had to shift the silent- and diffuse officiousness of the thing you were strained with into a clarity that made clear to you what it meant. And this meant that it had to become something with distinct contours. It had been a month since I had been in Amsterdam. I had the feeling that the train that was moving out of the station left a piece of my behind. A little bit it seemed like I was drifting away onto an open, cold sea, on an ice rock that had been loosened because of a small earthquake (based on Nachtrein naar Lissabon, Pascal Mercier).

Back home I immediately checked my flight of next day to New York. And skyped with a contact over there to check if everything was still in order and still expecting me. I phoned my parents that I was home safe and checked my last e-mail messages. I already did some work in the train but to make up with the time I lost yesterday I worked a little more now.

And before I went to bed I wanted to chat a little bit with my girlfriend so I started my MSN-messenger and got lucky she was online. She was in Mexico right now for some weeks doing a project on housing in slumps. She was going back home on Saturday. So we wouldn't meet for a long time. She had a big surprise for me she had a ticket booked that made a stop in New York. So she decided to stay in New York for some days.

I didn't sleep that good for a long time and Sunday I would sleep with her next to me........

Niels
Cultures crossing borders
Cultures get defined by so much more than only national background nowadays. The question Gordon Matthews rightfully poses is: As a Dutch street dancer do you not have more in common with your Japanese counterpart than with your Dutch neighbour who plays a flute? These kinds of ‘sub’ cultures have the ability to cross national boundaries. It is because of for example internet that its members can influence each other even when great distances apart.

Recognizing cultural shaping
These three levels are not as clear to people in daily life but if you point them out they are recognizable as doing without thinking, doing because you have to and doing because you choose to. These three levels are also very good distinguishable for people who encounter a culture when they are on a travel visit. The well planned touristic site seeing hotspots (Eifel Tower) in the third level, the meal habits of its inhabitants (croissant with coffee) in the second level and the greeting customs (two kisses) in the first. The third level seems to be a level free of choice but gets determined by the factors embedded in the first and second level, they have to fit our social class, educational level, income, gender, age and personal histories. From the third to the first level we see a decrease in global influence; from the global influence of the cultural supermarket to the influence by the national governmental institution and

Questionnaire
What do people themselves associate with their personal characteristics? Within the questionnaire the experience of personal identity was tested by asking the simple question: Who are you? This line of questions was introduced to find out on what scale respondents consider themselves to act and to see what they identify their personality with. It turned out to be pretty difficult to find a way to link the answers to a scale definition while they were often scaleless. The answers to the second question can be divided in three types: activities (jobs, sport, etc), personal preferences (art-lover, chocolate lover) and personal characteristics (grumpy, hard-headed, etc). Most respondents answered by naming activities and preferences almost no one names personal characteristic. What counts, are achievements and things that can separate us from the crowd. Of course the characteristics belonging to the first level of consciousness were not mentioned because people themselves are not conscious about it.

Cultural shaping
Cultural shaping of people can according to Gordon Mathews be divided in three separate levels of consciousness:

The first taken-for-granted level: In this level are things as language and common social practices embedded. It is a level that we are not consciously aware of. It is difficult to grab what does and what does not belong to this level because of the fact it mostly consists of habits we do not recognize as specific. But they define our lives a lot. It is those things where we within a culture do agree about as not done without thinking about it, or immediately understand without further explanation. A level of deep shaping taking place beyond self control and beyond all but indirect comprehension.

The second it-can’t-be-helped level: The things we have to do because we life in a certain society and the way we are shaped by these things. We have to work every day or we have to go to school. It defines how people have to act in a given role. A policeman in Amsterdam will act totally different than one in Bucharest, being a woman in France is almost contradictoriness from being a woman in Beirut. Although they have the same description the shaping of culture make them a world apart. A middle-level of shaping taking place beyond self control but comprehension.

The third level of individual choice: We choose what we want to do every person makes his own choices in life. For a big part these are just highly individual independent choices but they are also often choices connected to different cultures. The choice what food we eat for dinner, Japanese sushi, Chinese duck or American meatloaf or what sport why play, or what brand of clothes we wear. In other words, cultures get represented in consumer goods and we got to choose them. A shallow level of shaping taking place with what the self sees as full control and comprehension. This third level is home to the cultural supermarket. In a western society you have the possibility to eat Chinese noodles for dinner, drink Italian coffee in the morning, put on American jeans and join a Brazilian capoeira class after working in the European headquarters or a worldwide associated company.
eventually the very local influence of your own parents.

Cultural identity
Mathews tries to catch the term ‘cultural identity’ within a few attributes that can be asserted in different ways. These include ethnicity, language, literature, history, religion, food and architecture, all of which can vary in different ways. He emphasizes the fact that today’s ones personal cultural identity is dual. On the one hand it is determined by, often mentioned by anthropologists, one’s upbringing in a particular society and on the other by its consumption patterns within a global world. For example: My Dutch money-conscious neighbour loves to eat some Thai food after the football match he plays every Saturday.

Globalisation paradox
Alsayyad takes the notion of the third level of consciousness even a step further. He claims the possibility of shopping cultures makes the necessity of locally based cultures irrelevant. Authenticity of cultures is not as important as its recognisability and adjustability.

“So it seems that what has ended, in the end, is not tradition itself, but the idea of tradition as a harbinger of authenticity and as a container of specific cultural meanings. What has ended is tradition as a place based, temporarily, limited concept, as a static authoritative legacy, and as a heritage exclusively owned by specific groups of people. We must recognize that lasting tradition is today the “transient, the fleeting and the contingent.” (Alsayyad, 2004)

Alsayyad
Alsayyad describes in his book ‘the end of tradition’ three phases in which attitudes towards heritage and tradition in the last two centuries changed (Alsayyad, 2004).

The colonial phase: There was initial interest in people and practices from other cultures but an association of distance with it.

The phase of nationalism: The independence-struggles resulted in, nations invoking nationalism and a new and enforced affection to heritage preservations as a form of resistance against the homogenizing forces of modernity.

The phase of Globalization: Nations compete in an on the other hand stronger linked global economy. Culture becomes an icon to attract external/international investors more than to provide locals in their needs.

Third phase
We are now in the third phase. Traditional architecture is losing its initiatory goal to fulfil the needs of local inhabitants. Slowly it’s emphasize is shifting towards that of a public entertainment-park. Traditional architecture should be preserved to enforce local identities but at the same time it attracts global tourists that ask for a global architecture, questioning the right to exist of the local. This is the paradox of globalized architecture:

“Here lies the dilemma of globalization: Because of the importance of the heritage tourism industry in the economy of nations, regions and cities, preserving heritage has become important not only for their economic sustenance but also in terms of global competitiveness. The paradox is that investment in heritage may encourage further nationalist sentiments, often reinforcing a sense of superiority and therefore isolationist tendencies” (Alsayyad, 2004).

Mathews
Also Gordon Matthews acknowledges this fact in his essay, ‘Cultural Identity in the Age of Globalisation’ (Mathews, 2007). He emphasizes the fact that local architecture takes on a standard western model, making cities everywhere look increasingly alike. He just like Alsayyad mentions the process of the globalisation paradox:

“Traditional architecture is thus a means of attracting cosmopolitan attention, and in particular, tourists and their dollars, euros or yen. While this architecture may escape the homogenizing “thrust of universal civilization,” it certainly does not escape the “global cultural
The local should emphasize the authentic and be the reason to keep travelling around the globe giving us refreshing insides of other cultures.

Rise of the global, end of the Local?

Qustionaire
The feeling of locality and globality on a certain place keeps a hard notion to grasp. It is not only personal and cultural influenced but also by many different aspects on a much larger scale. The questionnaire tried to touch this personal aspect. The questions linked the feeling of locality and globality to daily activities to trigger a conscious state of mind on a personal level. There are no obvious differences between Diginomads and travellers in their feeling about locality and globality. The feeling of locality has a strong link to the feeling of connectedness and feeling close to home.

Meeting local people, eating local food

Close to home base, if there are friends around.

A feeling of globality in contrary has more links to associations with things we consider global, with the unknown and a diversity of identities.

Modern buildings

No social contact, unknown language

Different cultural backgrounds

The battle
Within global cities we see en intensifying battle between local and global identities. Clustered neighbourhoods within cities literally grow above local heads. Big office-buildings of a generic uniform expression pop out of the ground all over the world. This uniformity in contemporary architecture has come under substantial criticism, not least because modernist architectural projects have often been so badly addressing the needs of their users. Mathews describes as follows:

“Within such essentially West Architecture, the regionally distinctive may be allowed in as matter of minor ornamentation, a “traditional ‘hat’ placed atop standard... (modern) forms” (Mathews, 2007).

Expression
The physical appearance of the global is connected to ‘modern buildings’. ‘Modern buildings’ covers a broad notion of architecture but can be condensed to a notion of disconnectedness. A global architecture is disconnected from its cultural environment.

We can link local and global identities by combining facilities for local and global users and exploiting the idea of authenticity in its most honest way, showing it and confronting to other cultural expressions.

Authenticity
The real connection exists in authenticity, while this is a non-faked representation of local values that is comprehensible for everyone. The development described by Alsayyad is one that can’t be ignored. The commercialisation and therefore simulation of the culture is a fact. People have and will always have the urge to look for the unknown. Columbus sailing all the way to America and people from the western world nowadays taking a plane like it is a simple metro-ride to whatever place in the world. But how much is the other side of the world still unknown to us. With the same travel guide we all try to explore the same. There is a big chance to meet someone familiar when you walk over the Chinese-Wall. This commercializing of culture seems to build bridges between global and local scales. However, the act of travelling will always simultaneously been driven by the difference between cultures and even simulated things need an original to copy from. People come back with a new type of story: ‘I ate in a very small restaurant in a small street just outside the city centre of Rome. I have no idea what was on my plate but it tasted delightful. And I am
sure it was very good food because I didn’t saw one tourist only real Italians.’ Before going on a holiday we ask friends if they have any inside tips. And with these inside tips we don’t mean the ones that are already in a travel guide but the ones that somehow touch the culture more than these predefined commercialized spots. Besides the three phases of attitudes towards tradition described by Alsayyad a forth one can be added.

**The phase of authenticity:** There is a need for vintage. The quality of products, but also architecture and other esthetical expressions gets rediscovered and fashionable again. There exists a whole market around these goods. The items get commercialized but no imitated and mass produced. The authenticity of the product makes it extra valuable.

Let scales connect by expressing their differences. Not in pre-composed and simulated packages of culture, but by stimulating interaction between the inhabitants of the different scales. Let using the same facilities within the same neighbourhoods be a fact instead of separating them on special islands.
Friday: The duration of a distance

Friday 11 June 2010

Dear Diary,

This morning I went by the headquarters, a huge building in the European Union (EU) quarter. I was again as always surprised by it’s monumentality. Only a few months ago I came in here every day, right now I passed by there like a real Nomad. Collecting new material (to provide myself with information) and leaving some material in exchange for a continuing salary. When I walked outdoors I bumped into a young Indian looking woman, carrying her suitcase in one hand and a fresh cup of coffee in her other. And of course this cup of coffee landed on her beautiful white blouse. "PODVERDOMME, waarom kijkt dat mens dan ook niet uit" (Dutch for: SHIT, why isn’t she paying attention). I immediately apologized in too many sentences. She responded surprisingly short and in perfect Dutch: ‘kan gebeuren’ (can happen). My brain made an anxious jump, never curse in front of a lady. How do you know I’m Dutch? I immediately asked her? She answered: ‘for one people from Spain do not say ‘potverdomme’ and otherwise your tag says your name is Niels, not such Spanish name either. Nomad is still a mystery to my but maybe you can explain that to me after you directed me to a dry cleaner. I showed her a dry cleaner close by and took her for a lunch in a small very cosy cafe-restaurant only known by those people whom worked in Bruxelles for a longer period. We had a nice conversation when I suddenly realized that I had to catch my plane to New York this afternoon. I apologized again, again in too many sentences. Before I left she asked me where the Berlaymont was. That was not such a difficult place to point out the route to. It’s the most iconic building of the EU quarter and visible from almost everwhere, situated along the largest axis (Rue de la Loi 200). I’m sure she found it. I forgot to ask her phone number............

Niels
Virtual; the reality of cyberspace

Intro
1984 is not only the title of George Orwells book about a rather futuristic world it is coincidently also the year in which William Gibsons book ‘Neuromancer’ (Gibson, 1984) was published, introducing the term ‘cyberspace’ to the world. 1984 tells the story of a ‘big brother’ society. Its setting is a high-tech world that accommodates the needs of the characters instantly and out of a communal reflex. Gibsons ‘Neuromancer’ as described by Robert Adrian as:

“In Gibson’s Neuromancer the protagonist ‘jacks into the net. He is not a user, he is not at the wheel of his datamobile speeding down the infobahn - he simply disappears into the net and becomes a part of the data-flow’” (Gibson, 1984).

Internet and identity
This so called atmosphere ‘cyberspace’ evolved within a virtual world, in which internet grew importance first as a source of a commercial advertising space, into a communal information platform towards a instant and very efficient way of communication. The development of communication media from a one to one verbal interaction on a physical distance towards an instant virtual message system acting on world scales communication influenced the development of movement and travelling. Within this virtual communication and travelling space personal identity sometimes gets undermined. Identities can be adjusted to the needs within certain situations. People can have multiple identities and even fake personal habits; becoming better or worse persons. Is the person presented a realistic reflection of his identity? What are the connections to the real physical world and how can DigiNomad besides the use of digital possibilities still represent themselves in a physical way when being in a continuous movement.

The Battle
In a world that is becoming more and more digitalized a battle is going on between online simulated virtual worlds and the need to escape them and trigger the physical bodily experience of the simulated real world. Will new digital communication techniques make the need to travel irrelevant and therefore the existence of nomadic lifestyles be questioned and invalid? And will the online simulated world eventually be more appealing than our real one? Who will win this battle and what are the consequences for designers?

Communication through Time

Travelling and communication
Not only the development of transport methods but even more the development of communication highly influenced the need to travel. The spreading of goods as much as the spreading of knowledge made us travel around the world. The act of travelling and the act of communication depend on each other in their development. The need to communicate evoked the need to travel. Travelling on the other hand gave us an insight view to other cultures and evoked the need to know them even better and exchange knowledge and goods. The development of communication in particular is depending on the development of media possibilities. M. Stellingwerf describes in his ‘Changing approaches to the real world’ the development the relation of humans to media in a few stages. The ‘ways of communication’ are explicitly mentioned in a chronological order (Stellingwerf).

Stage 1, isolated Communities: In this stage there are no media and no possibilities of long distance travel. Human living environments are limited to enclosed communities. There is almost no communication between different communities. To communicate with each other people go to the agora or marketplace. This is where discussions take place and where knowledge is exchanged.

Stage 2, exchange of knowledge and goods: New
Instructions

1. Cut
2. Fold
3. Cover original passport and enjoy

Universal Passport

Planet Earth
communication possibilities physically represented by for example theatres and news papers develop. People start to travel outside their own communities and try to capture new images in paintings. Because of this travelling the known world increases but the perceived world gets smaller because images are brought to the individual on centralised spots of exchange.

**Stage 3, globally distributed knowledge:** The means of mass media enters the world. If you want to know what is going on in the world, don’t ask your neighbour but watch television and hide yourself behind a PC. Travelling has other intensions than to discover what is out there and gets purely functional.

Exchange
The need to exchange knowledge and goods between cultures triggered the act of travelling. The rise of instant communication techniques made the need to travel get less and less significant. Will this introduce a new development into an era without human movement? People living in a global world from behind their computers or will we never be able to live without a present physical reality. It is in this last 3rd present stage that the battle between a physical-and virtual reality starts.

Is this a development that is likely to take place and if so will it be enrichment to human life?

**Geert Lovink in his book ‘The Principle of Notworking’** is not very positive about this modelled world of simulations and recognizes a growing gap between the human scale and the bigger scale of society. He describes this:

> ‘What we instead see happening is the collapse of the distinction between the ‘micro’ level of ‘users’ and the ‘macro’ level of society’. (Lovink, 2005)

Let us investigates the pro’s and con’s and newest trends of the virtual world to estimate the chances and possibilities of this 4th stage modelled world.
Real Identities in Cyberspace

Efficiency of virtual contact
Virtual contact is becoming a more efficient and easier way to communicate. Having real live contact with your co-workers and clients is becoming a luxury. It is the connection between the virtual and the real that identifies the type of contact. The real that sometimes is in distance to far away and the virtual that is always near for as long as there is a computer and an ‘excellent’ signal strength WIFI signal nearby. Internet is therefore an ideal tool to communicate with people far away. In a split second they seem to be right next to you. Geert Lovink describes communication as the main reason to validate the existence of internet nowadays.

‘What defines the internet is its social architecture. It’s the living environment that counts, the live interaction, not just the storage and retrieval procedure’. (Lovink, 2005)

It makes these kinds of contacts far more effective and easier. An open question remains what is the status of the communication and the value of identities within the virtual?

Body-less Cyborgs
Returning to the notion of cyberspace, a space that we could describe as the visual representation of the virtual world, the conflict with identity becomes even clearer. The virtual presence of this cyberspace implies a body less existence of human beings inhabited by cyborgs. The futuristic view of cyberspace implies a decrease in the necessity to travel. People would turn into cyborgs bridging global distances with online communication tools and virtual travels. As Jon Stratton states “The rectification of money, like that of information, leads us back to the reconstruction of communication media as transport systems. These new commodities are being transported through a hyperspace in which distance does not exist, and place and extension are replaced by pure movement” (Stratton, 1997).

This futuristic image definitely stimulates our imagination about new beautiful fairytale like world, but without a physical body and the possibility to move through physical spaces enjoying interaction how can we still represent our identities? Is this concept of pure movement a realistic possibility or is only an exciting translation of existing conventions?

Status of identities
Since the 1ste of January 2005 the law on identification obligation is initiated in the Netherlands. Anyone has to be able to identify oneself at any time whatever place he is asked to do. Of course this piece of paper is not representative for ones identity. If you could chose your friends on looking at a few ID-papers life would be simple. In the virtual world these ID-papers have no value. What is the status of identities presented on the internet? Clothes make a man, is a well known expression. Clothes can make or break your image. They represent your identity. Within the ‘Global Supermarket’ (Mathews, 2007), supported by the internet we can choose different identities like tailor-made suits with different colours and made out of different fabrics. As described by Alsayyad and Mathews:

‘Cultures are like dishes on a table. You pick up what you like.” People everywhere increasingly identify with more than one tradition and one culture: They develop multiple, flexible and simultaneous identities, no longer mediated mainly or only by the state.’ (Alsayyad, 2004)

“A rapidly expanding system of networks, collectively known as the Internet, links millions of people in new spaces that are changing the way we think, the nature of our sexuality, the form of our communities, our very identities (Turkle, 1995).

It is this bridging capacity between cultures of the internet that constitutes a growing global identity.

Multiple identities
Within virtual worlds like 2nd life we can become a sweet, caring and charming personality or the bad, greedy money-grubber we always wanted to be. We can have relationships
Saturday: Distance between cultures

Saturday 12 June 2010

Dear Diary,

Today is like the kind of day that everything seemed to have slowed down. It was a late night yesterday, promised Jake to deliver him the printable pdf this morning so he has enough time to prepare the presentation scheduled for Monday. The film night of Wednesday started to feel less and less appropriate. Although the ‘late hour’ from yesterday it was an early morning today. I woke up and fall asleep on the same day and felt it in all the parts of my body. I got out of my cabin and although I was standing straight up it felt like I was crawling out of bed towards the refreshing room. Some water splashing in my face helped to get my brain worked on an acceptable speed. First thing to do was grab a strong coffee at the nearest coffee bar. While walking my legs got straightened out and slowly I felt my feet again. The sun in my face made my brains still feel a little painful. But it was nice to notice spring was in the air. Although the lengthening of the days, seemed to go pretty fast today. Suddenly I minimized my speed because I smelled the odour of fresh coffee. I entered a satellite GlobeSpotty named SWITCH, it struck me how crowded it already was. And everyone was a lot more awake than I was, running in and out with his cup of coffee, time to check my e-mail. On my PDA I already saw there were some documents send to me on this early hour but I prefer to read them on my laptop. The welcoming ‘pling’ of the WIFI received on my laptop made me somehow finally wake up. When I checked the time for the first time this morning, I suddenly perfectly understood why it was so crowded. I forgot to change the time of my old but definitely fashionable watch after my flight of yesterday. I had slept through the alarm of my clock. The minutes on my watch made sense but the hours told a different story. The planned meeting would start in about 15 min. Only way to get there in time is to take a cab. This was the most expensive way to travel but therefore the fastest. Eventually I had to read the documents on my PDA after all, better this way than joining the meeting unprepared. My speed went up and I just made it in time. The rest of the day my travel speed seemed to accelerate in contrary to my brainpower which got slower and slower by the second. At 13:00 it really was powernap time. Speed on zero, brainpower off. Sleep one hour, and get ready for a dinner meeting this evening. I woke up at 17:00........

A Spider web just next to me; while sitting on a bench in Central Park I saw him busy fixing his new home and source for food gaining. He was a Nomad too. His network of threads kept him alive, just like me

And again I had to speed up but I still was in a slow mode. Luckily I got saved by a beep of my PDA. I agreed to meet at the central GlobeSpotty on Times Square. I took one of the metro’s to Time Square. After a few stops I slowly started to fade away in a fluffy dreamland. Again a vibration in my pocket and a beep in my ears woke me up. Times Square was the next stop my PDA told me. The amazing gadget registered that I approached my destination and kind enough to let me know; ‘saved by the bell’. I walked onto Times Square and suddenly my PDA beeped again. Oh my god Peter had just entered the GlobeSpotty. If he saw me and Jake together he definitely would get suspicious. And this project should stay out of his reach. Jake didn’t know this yet and I intended to leave it that way. I sent Jake a text message and made up some stupid excuse to meet in a bar across the street. I think it worked, I hope........

Niels
Portable computers
More and more people are equipped with PDA’s. They enable people not only to organise their lives in a very convenient way, they also make it possible to find specific information about local points of interest or to spread your information around the globe. How to handle the contradiction of a dematerializing digital world and the growing importance of local identities? PDA’s are launched with names like, Voyager, My Pal, protégé. Suggesting they should offer protection and a reliable friend.

Locative media are media of communication bound to a certain location, although the physical representation is not implemented to the location. Using for example GPS technologies on hardware like for example laptops and PDA’s that are connected in a virtual network can encourage real social interaction. An extra virtual layer of information is layered over the real materialized one. Real, local places get tagged and can therefore be used as real-time meeting places.

Locative media
“Locative media is many things: A new site for old discussions about the relationship of consciousness to place and other people. A framework within which to actively engage with, critique, and shape a rapid set of technological developments. A context within which to explore new and old models of communication, community and exchange. A name for the ambiguous shape of a rapidly deploying surveillance and control infrastructure.” (Russel, 2004)

“The availability of affordable personal mobile devices with increased media capabilities combined with pervasive computing technologies and infrastructure such as GPS and wireless networks has enabled a new medium for creative expression to emerge based around locative media. The new medium creates a digital landscape which overlays the physical world, whereby every place can become a stage for a rich new experience. We call these experiences mediascapes, applications that run on mobile computing devices such as an iPAQ or mobile phone, which

Bridging the gap in the local

There exists an inconsistency between a virtual and real identity, creating a gap between them. This tension between the virtual communal global cyberspace and a physical individual local materialized space is generating a battle between them. For long it seemed an unbridgeable gab that by some predictions would be won by the cyborgs in the end changing our world in a virtual cyberspace. But there seem a way to bridge these to identities. A new trend in which portability of digital devices become more and more a part of daily life a new layer of locative media seems to evolve.
Communication within a space
These new devices open new possibilities of instant communications, offering a new alternative for the 4th stage of communication instead of the modelled world introduced before. While every communicative relation between people takes place within a physical context there is the same urge within the ‘virtual’ world. Even and if not more these interactions ask for a physical setting. How often the first question asked when calling to a mobile phone number is not ‘how are you?’ but ‘where are you?’ or ‘what are you doing?’ We need to put the act of communication within a physical context. With the latest developments of information on the internet we can not only imagine the places someone is talking about we can experience it by searching digital information about the place that more and more gets real-time and easily accessible because of GPS tagging. The development of locative media reverses this process. By emphasizing the characteristics of a place on a virtual level it can become a potential point for social interaction. There is no need to simulate the real but instead real time representations of it make us investigate them even more deeply.

The in-between world
Fortunately it is this influence of locative media that were able to make both worlds exist next to each other. It is an ‘in between’ world that steels the best of the virtual- and the physical world into a:

**Real World with Virtual Distances:** A world which uses the advantages of new communication methods. They enable contact between people who are relatively a long way apart from each other. The use of for example computers makes distances of thousands of kilometres suddenly get as close as the distance between you and your computer. Distance measured in kilometres is less important. Time and download-speed suddenly are much better units to express distances. The act of communication may be virtual the spaces where they take place are very real and architecturally materialized. There is no attempt to simulate a reality, only to define connections between different realities. In this concept travelling as an act of exploration gets stimulated.

Ubiquitous computing
To accommodate the use of locative media two new uses of technology are introduced. Stellingwerf shows how ubiquitous computers and augmented interaction could be key aspects in connecting new digital technologies to a realistic human living environment. Ubiquitous computing is a term introduced by Mark Weiser.

‘Ubiquitous computing is roughly the opposite of virtual reality. Where virtual reality puts people inside a computer-generated world, ubiquitous computing forces the computer to live out here in the world with people. Virtual reality is primarily a horse power problem; ubiquitous computing is a very difficult integration of human factors, computer science, engineering, and social sciences.’(Weiser, 1991)

Augmented Interaction
Instead of taking unrealistic virtual representations of the whole world as starting point for new developments in computer usage the actual individual human body and it’s physical characteristics is preferred. Augmented Interaction is mentioned by Jun Rekimoto and Katashi Nagao.

‘Augmented Interaction is a style of human--computer interface that tries to make computers as transparent as possible. Using this style, a user will be able to interact with the real world that is augmented by the computer’s synthetic information. The user’s situation will be automatically recognized by applying a range of recognition methods, allowing the computer to assist the user without having to be directly instructed by the user. The user’s focus is not on the computer, but the real world. The computer’s role is to assist and enhance interactions between human and the real world.’

Input and output
Both these systems intend to gather live information from our physical environment or even our own bodies to use the data to change this same environment into an even more agreeable space. Highly efficient working networks
are vital to make locative media a commercial interesting investment.

Communication as instant input
Using locative media as a method could be very effective in linking virtual and physical worlds. The local input is easily gathered by measure equipment (within PDA’s) and processed to immediately usable information. This can be used as input for human serving activities. The world of the DigiNomad could easily fit into this type of future development. Not only the use of computers that have a central role in these approaches but also the fact that it is focussed on the individual input of human beings on the world and not the other way around. This data based society will be able to supply the DigiNomad with the latest information of whatever place he is at any moment and at the same time he will be the source of all kinds of data (weather-information, facilities, cultural features, travel possibilities) for other DigiNomads. Communication gets very simple because devices like mobile phones always allow to make contact and because it becomes fairly easy to localize and meet one another.

Towards a new stage
A world in which linking physical and virtual realities is a priory would be a perfect alternative for the modelled world; where everything is fake and local realities are irrelevant. Instead the use of information from local realities could enhance our environment. The 3th stage would be about finding methods to distribute information worldwide the 4th stage would be about linking this system to local information sources and find ways to connect them different scales.
Part III: The Nomadic Space
Dear Diary,

The beauty of my dream world this night made it still a very unpleasant surprise that the reality passed the memories of my dreams. Tonight I was back in the house where I grew up, an old house along one of the smaller canals in Amsterdam. The heavy wooden door, with a small rectangular window on eye height (a few years later it turned out to be the mailbox). On the end of the hall there was a door opening, which in my memories was a hole of light. It was the living room behind this door with its big windows on the garden side as well on the waterside that seemed to be the light source. The living room I remembered, covered with the curly shadows of tree branches and leaves and the twinkling of the diffuse reflection of the water in the canal, I felt at home.

Niels
After discussing the three main themes of the DigiNomadic lifestyles: Place vs. space, Time vs. Distance and Virtual vs. Real, some conclusion about the appearance of Nomadic spaces can be made. The edges of the contradiction notions mentioned in part II have been outlaid and can give some constraints for a nomadic home-typology.

Living on the thin line of local and global identities

A glocal thinks global and acts local. A DigiNomad enjoys the global and lives local. How to jump scales rapidly without getting alienated?

Place, the feeling of Space

Are you homeless without a house and what constitutes the home-feeling? What is the DigiNomads home look like?

The homefeeling
The feeling of home is not linked to a nationality even Sir Alfred who was diagnosed with a continues homesickness could eventually find a home within Charles de Gaulle airport. Having a passport didn’t make him run through the open doors of the passenger terminal pursuing his dream to travel to the free West. His home was the airport hall and no one could tell him differently.

The feeling of home is not the act of living in a house. Living in a house can generate a home-feeling when the conditions are right. A house is just a possible architectural representation of a home.

If we consider the examples of Virginia Woolf’ (A room of ones own) and bell hooks (Home a place of resistance) we clearly recognize some emotional attachments to the architectural representation of a home. A home should deliver a feeling of safety, independence, recognisability and responsibility.

Beacon to return to
Considering historical typologies of Nomadic spaces the static example of the Caravanserai seemed a more appropriate typology to accommodate the need of the contemporary DigiNomad. Travelling while carrying a home is not the only heavy but also inefficient. The possibilities to pin down your portable home within the city aren’t numerous, and it is the city in which the DigiNomad finds his habitat. Generating the emotional qualities needed for the home-feeling is easier within a static building than within a portable equivalent. The Nomadic should be a beacon to return to.

A representation of the local
Although a DigiNomad in a resident from the world he wants to enjoy local qualities and live within this local atmosphere. His home should be embedded within city neighbourhoods that evoke this feeling. Inserting a local function, like a café, into the DigiNomads space and providing functions not more than a normal house will stage an interaction in both directions (local towards global and global towards local)

Time, the duration of distance

Global shrinking
Through history the means of human transport became faster and faster. Because of this acceleration the perceiving of distances became smaller and smaller. A phenomenon called global shrinking. This made the relation between global and local identities more visible. Within cities conflicts between them evolved. The generic city forms hyper-efficient islands within the urban tissue. With a recognizable architectural identity it imposes on a local identity. If this generic city would grow on the world would become one homogenised sphere and the need to travel would disappear. Building bridges between local and global identities seems vital to prevent this from happening.

Stronger identities
In this quest the positive aspects of both should be strengthened. The efficient and recognizable global should meet the authentic and refreshing local. Connecting these identities would make both stronger. The ‘globalization paradox’ is on one hand showing the power of locality by attracting travellers from all over the world to exciting tourist spots and on the other the power of globality steeling these cultural representations from their real local inhabitants. It shows that interaction is possible and using this same mechanism only focussing more on the real
daily local life. Instead of over commercialising site-seeing spots the power of the already present cultural identities shouldn’t be underestimated. Travelling for a DigiNomad is about exploring cultures and not about visiting the best-spot hotlist of your travel guide. The architecture for the DigiNomadic space should represent this duality. It should fit in to a local architectural tradition but be unique enough to be recognized and stick out of an urban tissue.

**Virtual, the reality of cyberspace**

**The battle**

The battle between virtually simulated world and the real is one that is discussed about a lot. The question if we will all be body-less creatures in a digital space is dreamt about by cineastes and writers. For now they seem to be fairytales for a future we can’t yet schedule within our electronic calendar. The DigiNomad especially chooses to live within this reality. He wants to explore new cultures, new atmospheres and new people. It is the efficiency of the digital communication tools that make the live of the DigiNomad easier. But his daily life takes place in real architectural spaces

**Multiple identities**

Instead of this body-less digital identity we tend to have multiple identities. We do not only have a real-live identity but our virtual identity is one we have to develop and nurture too. Our digital identity is not a simple translation of our real identity. Creating and protecting your digital identity is a conscious process of considering what to and what not to show. Instead of using architectural representations of corporate identities the DigiNomad uses the www. more and more to create individual representations of his qualities.

**Bridging the gap in the local**

New developments in miniaturization of computers make it possible to carry our digital world with us. When devices like pda’s get linked to geographical information by using GPS a bridge can be build between virtual and real identities. Using technologies like ubiquitous computing and augmented interaction make an interaction with the physical human being possible. Input collected by personal portable devices will be used to generate input for other users. Emphasizing local qualities and making real live representations instead of virtual simulations a step towards using new technologies in an efficient and useful way.

**Let us Meet!**

The most important target of the DigiNomadic space is to try and stage a meeting. An encounter between the local and global, the encounter between the virtual and the real, an encounter within a space that can become a place with memories, an encounter that takes place in time but can be distances apart and foremost an encounter between identities. It should be a spot on the globe. The Inn of the global future is a GlobeSpot.
Case study: Amsterdam

The need of national identity
The rise of the global world does not reduce the need to fortify national identities. Within this global world the need to make national identities even more visible grows. As Theodore Levitt (a former economist at Harvard) puts it:

‘The global pervasiveness of ethnic forms represents the cosmopolitanisation of speciality... Globalization does not mean the end of segments. It means, instead, their expansion to worldwide proportions. (Levitt, 1983)’

4 layers
Where can we find places were local and global identities meet and were DigiNomads are near the things they need. Tracing local oriented functions like; bakeries, butchers, hairdressers, supermarkets, drycleaners, etc. eventually district centres that breath a local vivid atmosphere will appear. Usually these places are well connected to the public transport-system and therefore form potential or are already beautiful places where global and local identities can come together. These are the analysis’s appropriate.

Global Connectivity: It should be well connected to a global transport network. What results in places that are near cities biggest transportation hubs (airports, train stations) or are easily accessible.

Local Connectivity: It should be well connected to the inner cities transport network. The places should be near the city centre or easily accessible.

Global needs; Virtual city: It should appeal to and/or confirm the image of a city. Every city knows its own image, constructed by aesthetical and cultural features. This is a virtual image spread through all kinds of media around the world.

Local needs; Small city: To encourage a melting of local and global users it is essential that the daily needs of both users are met and therefore will be used by both groups.

Amsterdam
Taking the city of Amsterdam as a Dutch example of a global city seemed a nice case-study. The connectivity maps are created by checking the points of a grid on how many different public transport lines can be found. This ends up in a connectivity density map for local and global aspects. Out of these maps 11 hotspots can be defined. If these hotspots are shown with their real connections to the public-transport lines they all mirror their own identity. There are 4 categories in which the hotspots can be classified. The maps show further information.

Major transport hubs: Central Station, Zuid-Oost, Amstelstation, Sloterdijk, Zuid-axes

Tourist centres: Centrum, Museumplein

First ring centres: Adm. De Ruijterweg, Haarlemmermermeervestation

Centres of peripheral dwelling areas: Amstelveen, Buikslootmermeerplein

DigiNomads Interviews

Intentions of the Interviews
In the process of writing the thesis and preparing for a design task I wanted to get to know the target group better and closer. While this group essence prevents me from finding them all together on one and the same physical space, new ways of tracking them down were needed. After exploring the internet I found places were DigiNomads of all sorts would meet up. They use forums, social internet-networks and even whole specialized nomad websites to communicate with each other regardless the immense distances they are apart. The three main reasons to start questioning the target group were:

To get in touch with the people I design for and write about
To test if my presumptions are right or wrong
To find new knowledge on the subject

**Finding People**

The first step in finding DigiNomads was finding a way to enter their habitat. The web seemed the best place to get in contact with Nomadic living people. This decision was the first step; the next was finding places to introduce myself. Creating a blog (http://diginomads.blogspot.com) especially to introduce the notion of my project about DigiNomads was a good launching method; not only to be track able for others interested in the subject but also an information source to refer to. Direct links towards this space were on

http://www.thebusinessclass.net

http://www.nunomad.com

http://blog.neo-nomad.net

The first is a global online serviced network of rentable workspaces. The second is an online space where people meet and get information about a nomadic way of life. The third is a blog that handles about everything that is somehow connected to the topic of ‘nomadic lifestyles’.

**Questions and topics**

There are many ways to ask people questions. In order to make the results easily comparable and easily accessible, an online questionnaire was a good option. Most of the questions had an open character to keep them open for interpretation and to avoid imposing my personal opinions. There was a mix of direct and indirect questions, to garantee unbiased questions and to control the truthfulness of answers. In the end treating the outcomes of the questionnaires as individual interviews was a legitimate way to handle the responses. The answers were because of its open character often detailed but instead of hard scientific numbers the questionnaire delivered a more prosaic story indicating trends. Conclusions are therefore not hard statistic facts but more descriptions of common habits, believes and opinions about the Nomadic lifestyle.

The questionnaire is subdivided in three chapters, all having different intentions:

**Personal Entities:** To get an insight view in the characteristics of the persons who answered the questionnaire
Try to find out where priorities lay within a Nomadic lifestyle
Try to find out if there is a difference in scale experience

**Global vs. Local “One day of a DigiNomad/ Traveller”**: Try to find out the daily rhythm of a Nomads
Try to find out what people experience as local and what as global

**Traveller/ DigiNomad Needs (Time, Place, Distance, Material)**: How do nomads and not nomads experience notions of time, place, distance and material. What are nomads specific needs

**The contrast- and the test group**

The questionnaire has two different versions; one especially for DigiNomads and one for everyone who likes to travel. The second is the control group for the first. This control group is introduced to compare the notions of a moving lifestyle between both groups and see how much the new lifestyle differs from normal conventions. The questions posed in the different questionnaires were mostly alike apart from some additional questions within the DigiNomadic version. Respondents had a choice to fill in one of both questions. The largest parts of the respondents were travellers.

**Questions and answers**

To give a better insight in the questions and their answers they are laid out per theme with some interesting conclusions per theme. Within the thesis there are some links to the result of the thesis. The questions shown are
to try and find out difference in the experience of places and spaces. The questions were: What is your place of birth, residence, now? The answers to the questions can be divided in, geographical places (Amsterdam, Tokyo), physical spaces (a train, the gym), functional places (at work) and mobile spaces. The DigiNomads all answered the question about residence with geographical spaces. Only one time within the context of these questions someone referred to a physical space (on a train). This would imply that the experience of place is a geographical one. If we can’t refer to a geographical space a physical space is used instead. Naming functional spaces was never the case. Probably stimulated by the sequence of questions there was an emphasis on geographical places. If we compare it with the answers asked in the second part (Global vs. Local) regarding to place we see a much more dispersed image. For sure the meaning of a place is not as clear as one would presume at first.

Who are you?

This line of questions was introduced to find out on what scale respondents consider themselves to act and to see what they identify their personality with. It turned out to be pretty difficult to find a way to link the answers to these questions to a scale definition while they were often scale less. The answers to the second question can be divided in three types: activities (jobs, sport, etc), personal preferences (art-lover, chocolate lover) and personal characteristics (grumpy, hard-headed, etc). Most respondents answered by naming activities and preferences almost no one names personal characteristic. What counts, are achievements and things that can separate us from the crowd. Just a few people identify themselves by their characteristics. Special answers that DigiNomads gave were, traveller, nomad, world-citizen, free, etc. They were all references to their moving lifestyle. It can be seen as an important part of their lives, something they identify themselves with.

When becomes a journey a long journey?

This question gave interesting differences in both groups. For a DigiNomad a journey became long when a detachment of certainties took place. Some answers were:

“A journey becomes long when you close up everything at
between Diginomads and travellers in their feeling about locality and globality. The feeling of locality has a strong link to the feeling of connectedness and feeling close to home.

Meeting local people, eating local food
Close to home base, if there are friends around.

A feeling of globality in contrary has more links to associations with things we consider global, with the unknown and a diversity of identities.

Modern buildings
No social contact, unknown language
Different cultural backgrounds

The physical appearance of the global is connected to ‘modern buildings’. ‘Modern buildings’ covers a broad notion of architecture but can be condensed to a notion of disconnectedness. A global architecture is disconnected from its cultural environment. Some of these components can be deliberately staged with architectural interventions to trigger local and global atmospheres.

Place
What is your ideal accommodation type?
What defines the boundaries of a place?
If you could choose your next location where would you go?
What would be your perfect Nomadic space?
What type of accommodation triggers a home feeling?
What generates a home feeling?
What accommodation types did you stay the past year?
What do you need if you are staying somewhere to generate a home feeling?

Global vs. Local

One day of a DigiNomad
Was it a busy or not so busy day?
How many hours did you travelled?
And how many different appointments did you have?

Appointments
Description: type, when, place, with
Localness vs. Globalness of the place
Social Context
Cultural Context

Localness vs. Globalness of the place
The feeling of locality and globality on a certain place keeps a hard to grasp notion. It is not only personal and cultural but also influenced by many different aspects are on a much larger scale. The questionnaire tried to touch this personal aspect. The questions linked the feeling of locality and globality to daily activities to trigger a conscious state of mind on a personal level. There are no obvious differences

home; and you don’t know where or when it will finish”

”High hassle factor, low connection with people”

When in the case of travellers, long journeys were measured distances/time spans or dealt with a change of rhythms. An answer:

“After about 4 weeks, because after that period daily routine really changes, things at work have to be taken over and housing/administration etc. has to be arranged”

To prevent a DigiNomad from getting a feeling that he is making long journeys a feeling of recognition, meeting people and the certainty of some basic needs is essential.
Are the places available to you now good enough to accommodate your needs in relation to a homeplace?

Where is home? Why?

What type of accommodation are good workplaces?

What do you need to work somewhere?

Are the places available to you now good enough to accommodate your needs in relation to a workplace?

What kind of places do you normally work?

Time

What is an acceptable amount of time to travel per day?

When becomes a journey expressed in time a long travel?

Is time a restriction or is time a freedom?

Do you live a 9-5 work rhythm, if not what kind of rhythm do you live?

At what moment do you change your watch to local time

What is your time?

Distance

What is an acceptable distance to travel per day?

When becomes a journey expressed in a distance a long travel?

What is more important when you travel, the distance or the time you travel?

If you could chose between one very solid client next door or a constantly changing network spread all over the world what would you chose?

What is the use of travelling?

Material

How do you represent yourself, what makes your image?

If you travel in the name of a certain company how do you represent it’s image

If you travel with a group of people, do you have a shared identity and do you carry this out in a physical way?

What is the basic equipment of a DigiNomad, what do you take with you if you travel?

Could you take a photo of your packed and unpacked luggage?

Is there anything special you take to special locations?

Are there any special technological developments that resulted in a reduction of luggage?

If you can only bring one thing with you, what would it be? Why?

If you had to chose between bringing your laptop without documents or your potable hard disk with documents but no laptop what would be your choice and why?

What triggers a home feeling?

To trigger the home feeling of a place; recognition, freedom, detail and comfort seem to be the magic keywords.

Own stuff, own music

Freedom to choose

Hissing sound of heater

Bed, warm, good smell, food, drinks, friendly staff, outside space

Most of these items can be used as within an architectural expression.
What is your time?

This question gave an interesting difference between travellers and DigiNomads. Were DigiNomads mentioned a timezone (GMT +2 ) or an actual time plus a timezone travellers didn’t knew what to answer or just mentioned the actual time without any specifications. DigiNomads are more conscious about time and its connection to space.

What is the basic equipment of travellers and DigiNomads?

The luggage travellers take with them going on a journey vary from personal stuff to basic human needed things. Most mentioned were; clothes, toiletries, books and a phone. DigiNomad simply can’t live without laptops and cell phones.
Bibliography


Heikes, P. Managing the Virtual Worker/Telecommuter.

Hillenbrand, R. (1998). Islamic art and architecture, the world of art. Thames and Hudson.


