PÄIVI KANNISTO

GLOBAL NOMADS

CHALLENGES OF MOBILITY IN THE SEDENTARY WORLD

Tilburg University

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1 Introduction

This research examines modern-day mobilities through a group of location-independent people, the so called global nomads. They represent one extreme of a continuum of mobilities that characterise contemporary societies including the mobility of peoples, objects, images, and information.

Mobility has arguably increased in recent years. Travel and tourism constitute one of the largest industries in the world today, and virtual mobility allows people to cross spaces and shift between different fields of life. All these mobilities shape not only individuals but also societies constituting new citizenships that challenge existing economic, social, political, and cultural orders.

As the global nomads' lifestyle is marked by continuous border-crossings and encounters with foreign cultures, they provide us with a revealing mirror of our society. They make visible societies' norms and values regarding mobility and thus, through global nomads, we can understand where the world is now and where it might be heading.[1]

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1   Foucault 2002c, 335–336.

1.1 Who Are the Global Nomads?

Global nomads are full-time travellers who wander the world of their own accord without a fixed abode, place of employment, or localised circle of friends. Their journey has lasted at least three years, and some of them have parted from their countries of origin decisively. They live in the margins of sedentary societies and many of them have chosen to forego the security that regular income, health care, and insurance in their country of origin would have provided them with.[1] Global nomads are homeless, or—depending on your point of view—at home wherever they happen to be. Their lifestyle is 'extreme' as one of the pioneers of tourism research, Erik Cohen, describes it.[2]

While global nomads' lives change as easily as the wind, sedentary societies are built with the intent of making things permanent and continuous. By choosing to be homeless, global nomads experiment with various forms of dwellingness and at-homeness, and while rejecting regular income and work ethic based on the moral virtues of hard work and diligence, they search for alternative ways of subsisting themselves.[3] They are constantly on the move, both literally and figuratively, and they blur boundaries questioning such structural divisions as between home and abroad, sedentary and mobile, work and leisure.[4]

Surveys in Europe show that such ideas and mobilities have been gaining currency since 1990s, also among the sedentary.[5] People increasingly value their independence and mastery of their own lives aiming to gain a more healthy work-life balance.[6]

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1   See also White & White 2004, 206; MacBeth 2000, 28.
2   E. Cohen (personal communication May 12, 2011).
3   E,g, Victor 2008.
4   See also Cohen, Duncan, & Thulemark 2013.
5   Inglehart 1997; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002.
6   E.g. Greenblatt 2002.

They enjoy their free time instead of committing themselves to long working contracts or mortgages that tie them down for decades.[1]

Currently, there is little research about such location-independence as global nomads', but there seems an urgent need for it because of the increased rest-lessness of Western societies.[2] This thesis will sketch, through global nomads, what life could be like if it were less tied to particular territories and the emotional attachments that this entails, and what are the current obstacles to a freer existence, if this is attainable. By travelling around the world, global nomads unconsciously test and stretch the existing limits of mobility making the current challenges visible.

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1   E.g. Haavisto 2010; Bauman 2005.
2   Richards & Wilson 2004b, 3; Papastergiadis 2000, 1–2. Let it be reminded that the 'West' and 'Western states' in this research are not considered as fixed and homogeneous entities. They consist of citizens who have diverse ethnic, religious, racial and class-related subjectivities, and the Western cultures themselves have diverse roots. Thus the 'West' is simply used as a shorthand for developed, industrialised nations. See Euben 2006, 3–4.

1.2 Research Set-Up

This thesis makes use of three research areas—tourism studies, lifestyle migration studies, and the new mobilities paradigm—as well as Foucauldian theories on power and subjectivities and Giddens' practice approach.

The chosen combination of the research areas reflects larger processes where travel, tourism, migration, and mobilities have moved to the centre of contemporary societies. They are no longer considered separate activities which would occur in specific locations and during leisure time; instead, they are constitutive of societies and of individual subjectivities.

Of the three areas, tourism studies offer a natural starting point for the research as travel-related studies are mostly conducted under its umbrella. However, as global nomads' journeys are long, sometimes up to twenty or thirty years without necessarily containing a return back to their 'home country,' global nomads also share features with lifestyle migrants who move away from their countries of origin in order to search for a better quality of life. The new mobilities paradigm, on the other hand, offers the thesis a metalevel approach to mobilities and questions of power broadening the perspective from specific travel practices to location-independence and its societal implications.

Together the chosen research areas complement each other bringing together both classical concerns about individuals' relationships to societies, and more recent questions about mobility and power. Alternative life choices such as global nomads' are never unproblematic from the point of view of the individuals themselves, people around them, or society as a whole. They involve a strong agency that may go against dominant models of thinking. From this perspective, questions of power—how power is constitutive of global nomads' subjectivities, how other people and societies use power over them, and how they themselves facilitate power—become essential.

The possible frictions that may exist in the relationships between global

nomads and sedentary societies become prominent in the 'global nomad' concept that was chosen for this research.[1] The definition derives from cultural theorist Caren Kaplan who argues that '[a] nomad is a person who has the ability to track a path through a seemingly illogical space without succumbing to nation-state and/or bourgeois organisation and mastery.'[2] Nomads are, in other words, agents who dodge familiar structures and networks finding their own way through the labyrinths of sedentary societies. In this process, they unconsciously participate in defining and redefining societies and mobilities.

Power is central in any critical research aiming to contest the nature of 'reality' as one and shared and based on immutable truths.[3] Tourism studies, however, have not been extensively engaged with it until recently although power also plays an important role in tourism, for instance in state regulations, in the effects of tourism, and in tourists' social relationships both at home and abroad.[4] Therefore discussions on the epistemological, ontological and methodological implications of conceptualisations of power are appropriate.

This research approaches questions of power with Foucauldian discourse analysis. The aim is to examine location-independence through meanings that global nomads place on their lifestyles with various discourses and practices. In the latter perspective, Giddens' practice approach will be used to enrich the theoretical approach. By choosing to focus on issues of power, this thesis hopes to contribute to the critical tourism paradigm not only with its research results concerning global nomads but also through its theoretical and methodological approach.

The research material consist of interviews which were enriched with limited participant observation. These methods were chosen in order to gain deep insights into personal lived experience, in the case of the global nomads interviewed, their travel experiences in various cultures, situations, and relationships.[5]

As qualitative methods are contextual, they help to maintain the complexity of the research subject and produce rich analysis. Instead of seeking to homogenise the subject, they are able to maintain its plurality without searching for one correct interpretation.[6] The idea is to encourage different ways of thinking outside typologies and structural divisions—the boxes of scientific research.

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1 The term 'global nomad' has also been used of backpackers and of the so called expressive expatriates which will be discussed in Chapter two. See Richards & Wilson 2004; D'Andrea 2006 and 2007.
2 Kaplan 1996, 66. See also Braidotti 1994, 24.
3 See Tribe 2007, 30; Chambers 2007, 234, 243; Church & Coles 2007c.
4 Church & Coles 2007b, 2.
5 See Seidman 2006, 9.
6 E.g. Miles & Huberman 1997, 10.

1.3 The Organisation of the Thesis

To conclude this introductory chapter, a few words about the structure of the text. Besides this introduction, the thesis comprises seven chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter two presents a review of the literature related to the thesis. The key study areas and concepts of tourism, lifestyle migration, and new mobilities paradigm will be discussed. The literature review constructs a picture of long-term travel which will then be enriched in the analysis through the findings about global nomads.

Chapter three presents the critical framework through which power and subjectivities in global nomads' lives will be investigated. The thesis assumes a meta-theoretical orientation to mobilities, societies, and power questioning—through a Foucauldian framework—some of the foundations that form the basis of our thinking.[1] At the end of the chapter, the research questions that guide the thesis will be presented.

Chapter four discusses the methodology, explaining the choice and use of tools for collecting the research material and conducting the analysis. The analysis combines Michel Foucault's theories on discourses and critical discourse analysis developed by Norman Fairclough and Teun A. Van Dijk.

Chapter five outlines global nomads' lifestyles by analysing their demographics, travel styles and reasons for leaving, and it examines their practices in relation to time, place, and money. The dominant discourses through which global nomads represent their lifestyles are analysed as forms of power negotiation.

Chapter six discusses global nomads' social relationships both in their countries of origin and on the road in order to find out how they both enable and constrain their location-independence. Issues of alienation, discrimination, and culture confusion are addressed, and global nomads' ways of coping with these feelings as well as their strategies of adapting to local ways of life are analysed.

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1 E.g. Derrida 1981, 41–42; Derrida 1997.

We also examine how global nomads place themselves among other travelling people, what kind of communities they belong to, and what kind of communities they could build in the future.

Chapter seven ponders whether global nomads, having left their countries of origin, are living in or outside of societies—or more accurately—whether there can be any life outside societies. Global nomads' nationalistic, political, and travel-related attachments are examined in order to assess the level of their freedom.

Chapter eight, conclusions, reflects on the empirical research results, theoretical framework and methods used, the goal of the research, and its added value. The chapter discusses the findings within studies on tourism, migration, and new mobilities, and gives initial guidelines for future research on location-independence and/or long-term travel.

2 Mobile Lifestyles

This chapter discusses how studies on tourism (2.1 Tourism Studies), lifestyle migration (2.2 Lifestyle Migration), and new mobilities (2.3 New Mobilities Paradigm) relate to this research, and how the phenomenon of global nomads can be explained and understood through them. Some of the key concepts in these three study areas will be introduced, and their relationship to location-independence will be analysed. The following chapter, Chapter three, will then add to this theoretical framework with Foucauldian theories on power and subjectivities (see 3 Power and Subjectivities).

2.1 Tourism Studies

As mentioned in the introduction, tourism studies are thematically closest to this study. The aim of this section is to position the thesis in the field through a review of studies conducted on long-term travel. The section examines how the research traditions have developed from 1970s' studies on drifters and wanderers (2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers) to studies on contemporary backpackers and lifestyle travellers (2.1.2 Backpackers, 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). At the end of the section, an initial overview of the (dis)similarities between long-term travellers and global nomads is presented, and the need for a possible reconfiguration of the definition of 'travel' is discussed (2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel').

2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers

Long-term travel is not a widely researched area. In tourism studies, it was first depicted by Erik Cohen in his two articles 'Toward a Sociology of International Tourism' (1972) and 'The Nomads from Affluence' (1973). They described an ideal traveller type, the drifter, based on a meeting Cohen had with a German traveller in South America.

Cohen described the drifter as a self-reliant individual who wanted to preserve the freshness and spontaneity of his experience. He (the drifter was always presumably a male) travelled without an itinerary, timetable, destination, or well-defined purpose.[1] He represented a non-institutionalised traveller who avoided contact with the tourism industry. While the mass tourist looked for familiarity, prior planning, safety, dependency, and minimal choices, the drifter valued novelty, spontaneity, risk, independence, and having a multitude of options.[2] He

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1 Cohen 1973, 176; Cohen 2004, 45.
2 Vogt 1976, 27.

ventured furthest away from the beaten track living with local people.[1]

Cohen considered the drifter's journey to be a result of his alienation from his home country. He described the drifter in a counter-cultural way:[2]

The loosening of ties and obligations, the abandonment of accepted standards and conventional ways of life, the voluntary abnegation of the comforts of modern technological society, and the search for sensual and emotional experiences are some of the distinguishing characteristics of a counter-culture in its various forms, which motivate the young to escape their homeland, and to travel and live among different and more 'primitive' surroundings.[3]

Among travellers, drifting largely remained an unattainable ideal. Cohen lamented that most young travellers would not qualify even as part-time drifters.[4] It seemed that long-term travel took much more competence, resourcefulness, endurance, and fortitude than had originally been surmised.[5]

The drifter remained in the margins also in tourism studies. Since Cohen's initial characterisation, only a few researchers touched on the topic.[6] One of the variations on the theme was Jay Vogt's article 'Wandering: Youth and Travel Behaviour' (1976) on young Western budget travellers who were mostly students coming from middle-class backgrounds. According to Vogt, wanderers embarked upon a quest of personal growth wanting to learn about themselves, other people, and foreign cultures.[7]

Like Cohen, Vogt described the wanderers' travel style as a reaction to their affluent home society. However, wanderers were not aimless but conscious decision-makers,[8] which is an interesting contrast with the chosen name for the group.[9] The origin of 'wandering' is in Latin *vagari* which means to 'wander,' 'roam,' 'be unsettled' and 'spread abroad,' which brings it very close to 'drifting.'[10] It is not well thought out or planned, and it also has negative connotations. It can refer to wandering thoughts or a wandering mind, lack of concentration, absent-mindedness. Wandering can mean being lost, lost in one's thought, or physically lost in an unknown place.

Wanderers' uncontrolled travel practices and their supposed rationality implies

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1   Cohen 1972, 168.
2   Cohen 1973, 90, 94.
3   Cohen 1973, 93.
4   Cohen 1982, 221; Cohen 2004, 51.
5   Cohen 2004, 45.
6   Cohen 2004, 46. See also Cohen, Scott 2009, 3.
7   Vogt 1976, 28.
8   Vogt 1976, 27–29.
9   See Vogt 1976, 30.
10 Wandering (2010).

a conflict which is inherent in many analyses of long-term travel, particularly when represented from the point of view of societies. Long-term travel can be considered dubious, and researchers have either exaggerated these suspicious elements, or they have tried to suppress the negative connotations it evokes. Cohen, for instance, associated drifting with drug culture and bumming,[1] often relishing the counter-cultural and rebellious aspects. According to Cohen, the drifter became a symbol for 'all that is negative, rejectable, or despicable in contemporary Western culture.'[2]

Although Vogt emphasised the worthier side of long-term travel by describing wanderers' will to learn, the contradictions in his article show that attempts to clean up the long-term travellers' reputation were in vain: meanings cannot be controlled. Rather, they are part of an ongoing negotiation in which long-term travel is being evaluated. The most important questions from the point of view of societies in this debate are regulatory: who can be allowed to leave, when, and why, and what is expected from them in return.[3] These issues play a major role in labelling travellers and deciding what is good and beneficial travel, and what kind of travel should be discouraged.

Both Cohen's and Vogt's studies were largely tentative,[4] as early research on long-term travel in general. More empirical approaches are relatively recent, dating from the turn of the millennium. While Cohen described the drifter as an ideal type, Vogt based his article on anthropological musings on his own travel experiences in four continents, and on discussions with other travellers he had met on the road. While many of the authors' statements do make sense in terms of long-term travel, there is no empirical material to support them, nor are the contexts and constraints of their research explicitly stated. Hence we do not know, for instance, if drifters and wanderers were able to immerse themselves in local cultures (or how the concept of 'local' was defined).[5] This is an interesting point when investigating global nomads because for them contacts with locals seem to be one of the most important critical success factors of their journey. It also remains unclear what is meant by 'long-term travel.' Cohen's prototype was on a seven-month journey, and one of Vogt's examples tells of a three-week trip which implies that the concept is fairly relative. It does not necessarily mean detaching oneself from one's home country but rather gaining new insights on it in order to return and contribute to it as Cohen implied when saying that even the rebellious drifter eventually settled down on a career

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1   Cohen 1973, 94; Riley 1988, 318.
2   See Cohen 1973, 102–103.
3   See Hannam, Sheller, & Urry 2006, 1.
4   Cf. Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 63.
5   Vogt 1976, 36; Cohen 1973, 89, 97.

after a period of drifting.[1]

However, the two studies represent an interesting opening to the topic. Cohen brought into the daylight an alternative travel style that challenged conventional ways of life, and he provided tourism research with a foundation for contextualising long-term travel in terms of sedentary societies which will be of interest for this research. Vogt, on the other hand, made initial explorations on the wanderer's individual psychology and the aspect of learning, which have since become mainstream in tourism studies.[2]

In 1980s, long-term travel was reconceptualised under the more neutral rubric of 'long-term international budget travel' by researcher Pamela Riley. Clearly, one of her aims seemed to be to detach long-term travel from the negative connotations of 'drifting' and 'wandering.'[3] She concentrated on the respectable side of the phenomenon saying:

> Today's typical youthful traveler is not accurately described as a "hippie," a "bum," or an adherent to a "counterculture." Western societies have undergone some major changes and the contemporary long-term traveler reflects them.

Riley's long-term budget travellers were well-organised, often professional people who expected to rejoin the workforce in their societies of origin. Their journey was educational in nature, and it was usually undertaken at the junction of major changes in life.[4]

The aspect of learning and enhancing one's possibilities in the employment market brings Riley's subjects close to contemporary backpackers.[5] Riley stressed the strong ties between travellers and their home societies by arguing that while having fun, travellers were also preparing themselves for responsibilities at home. They considered their trip as a once-in-a-lifetime experience, realising that repeating it in the future would be unlikely. Consequently, they tried to stay on the road as long as they could. Six months became a year, one year became three years.[6]

Riley's study is, as far as is known, the first empirical study based on actual interviews with long-term travellers who had been on the road for one year or more. Riley associated the long duration of the journey with the possibility of confronting identity issues on the road, thus following Vogt. She observed that many of her subjects enjoyed playing with identity, for instance by taking the

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1 Cohen 1972, 176.
2 See also Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 64.
3 Cohen 2011, 1536, 1538; Riley 1988, 327.
4 Riley 1988, 326. See also Cohen 2010b, 74–75.
5 See also O'Reilly 2006, 1005.
6 Riley 1988, 320.

role of a budget traveller although they came from middle-class backgrounds. This theme of identity formation was initially developed only in terms of budget travelling,[1] and it was not until backpacker research became mainstream that questions of identity moved to the forefront of tourism studies.

2.1.2 Backpackers

'Backpacker' refers to budget tourists who are travelling independently for a relatively long time, from one to several months before returning home to their countries of origin. The term 'backpacker' took hold from the late 1990s as long-term travel grew in popularity.[2]

The historical development of backpacker tourism has been traced to two sources. The first is the drifter culture which proved to be the most vital of the early conceptualisations of long-term travel.[3] This interpretation has been largely influenced by Cohen's own conclusion that drifting had moved in a short time from a minor phenomenon into one of the prevalent trends of contemporary tourism.[4] Today, much of the research traces the evolution of backpacking this way.[5] It has been noted, for instance, that young backpackers tend to experiment with elements that were already familiar from the drifter culture: with sexuality, drugs, and diverse religions.[6]

An alternative has been to trace the origins of backpacking from the Grand Tour of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Grand Tour was a cultural practice of the European ruling class which aimed to round off a young person's education by increasing his worldliness, social awareness, and sophistication.[7] These pre-organised journeys, guided by a mentor, were meant to familiarise young noblemen with the rich cultural heritage of the continent and its ennobling societies.[8]

The two divergent starting points naturally offer very different connotations, as tourism researcher Scott Cohen observes. While the Grand Tour was associated with education, drifting carried the derogatory connotations of a drop-out culture.[9] This discussion on the nature of long-term travel has far from faded, and it implies that the societal aspects of long-term travel are still critical.

Following Riley's work on long-term travellers, the majority of backpacker

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1   Riley 1988, 317, 321; Adler 1985, 349.
2   Loker-Murphy & Pearce 1995, 840.
3   Cohen 1973, 90; Cohen 2004, 44; Richards & Wilson 2004b, 6; Cohen 2011, 1536.
4   Cohen 1973, 90. See also Cohen 2010b, 73.
5   E.g. Maoz 2004, 113; O'Reilly 2006, 1000; Richards & Wilson 2004b, 6.
6   Noy 2004, 81, 84; O'Reilly 2006, 998; Cohen 2004, 51–52.
7   Loker-Murphy & Pearce 1995, 820; Cohen 2010b, 65.
8   Adler 1985; Buzard 2002; Thompson 2007, 234; Urry 2002b, 4.
9   Cohen 2010b, 70.

studies have described their subjects as future pillars of society who have unwavering intentions to reintegrate into the sedentary societies.[1] Most backpackers are students or graduates, usually between twenty and thirty years of age, and they undertake the journey before or after completing a degree.[2] Travelling for them is a self-imposed rite of passage,[3] an initiation into adult life through which they hope to grow into responsibilities and return home as fully-fledged members of society.[4]

Although the rite of passage is a widely used model of youth travel, the extent of its applicability has been questioned. Cohen, for instance, argues that contemporary travellers need to develop fewer skills and invest less effort in their trip than the drifter because of the emergence of an institutionalised travel industry. Their separation from home is not so severe either because of internet, which enables them to feel as 'being simultaneously at "home"… while also being "away,"' sociologists Naomi White and Peter White maintain.[5] The parent-child relationship has also changed compared to those societies where the rite of passage was commonly practised. Young backpackers decide about their departure themselves, sometimes contradicting the wishes of their parents, whereas in tribal societies parents participated actively in the process.[6] Furthermore, there is an increasing number of middle-aged and elderly backpackers who obviously do not conform to the image of backpacking as youth travel or as a rite of passage.

As the discussion shows, backpackers are not a homogeneous group that has similar motives.[7] This has implications for all tourist typologies including the differentiation between institutionalised and non-institutionalised travel. Although typologies initially helped in shifting research from tourism experiences as essentialist and unifying toward more plural conceptualisations, the downside is that typologies also froze the research subjects and failed to take into account mobilising, fluid factors in their lives.[8] This is one of the challenges that backpacker research has sought to meet by increasingly stressing the heterogeneity of travellers, their diverse backgrounds and motives.[9] In this context, being a backpacker is 'as much about self-definition as it is about conformity to a set description,' as backpacker researcher Camille O'Reilly notes.[10] What

1 E.g. Sørensen 2003, 852.
2 Pearce 2008, 39; Richards & Wilson 2004d, 16, 18; Riley 1988, 317.
3 E.g. Graburn 1983, 12–13; Maoz 2007, 124; Sørensen 2003, 853.
4 E.g. O'Reilly 2006, 1010; Loker-Murphy & Pearce 1995, 827.
5 White & White, 2007, 88; Paris 2012, 1110; Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2181.
6 Cohen 2004, 53–55.
7 E.g. Nash 2001, 494; Sørensen 2003, 848; O'Reilly 2006, 999; Loker-Murphy 1997, 41; Uriely,Yonay, & Simchai 2002, 536; Cohen 2010b, 70; Maoz 2007, 124.
8 Cf. Jacobsen 2000, 285.
9 Uriely 2009 (no page numbers).
10 O'Reilly 2006, 999. See also Sørensen 2003, 852.

backpackers do seem to have in common are form related practices such as the length of the trip, budget, and means of transportation,[1] and the same aspect will be of interest in the case of global nomads. They might be united more by their practices than by their backgrounds or motivations.

To date, backpacker research has been primarily concerned with the motivational, behavioural, cultural, and educational aspects of backpacking.[2] This type of travel is viewed to strengthen the home society and the members' feelings of belonging in the long run.[3] Another and related line of research has looked at travellers' identities.[4] Backpacking has been viewed as a way to find one's identity or construct it, depending on the theoretical viewpoint chosen. A third major research area has dealt with culture confusion and adaptation examining backpacker enclaves, safe heavens, which provide backpackers with the possibility of combining familiarity and difference and thus mastering their feelings of culture confusion.[5] Research on enclaves has paid attention to the growing gap between the ideology and practice of backpacker travel: the drifter ideal which backpackers are believed to follow, is rarely achieved.[6] Instead of immersing themselves in the local culture, backpackers tend to keep to themselves just like more conventional tourists.

It might seem paradoxical that it was the successor of the drifter, the backpacker, who brought alternative travel styles into the field of institutionalised tourism. Despite the young age of backpacker culture, it has become mainstream,[7] and backpackers are now part of the same mass tourism industry from which they would like to distinguish themselves.[8] They are a prominent target group for whom tour companies, hotels and restaurants market their services. This development has involved a shift from a de-marketing concept to a marketing label, backpacker researchers Irena Ateljevic and Stephen Doorne observe,[9] and it has been partly due to the overall movement of travel, tourism, and mobilities from the margins to the centre of contemporary societies, which has made the meaning of travel more pronounced. While institutionalisation and commercialisation has devalued the backpacker experience in some people's eyes because it

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1   Uriely et al. 2002, 536. See also Sørensen 2003, 848; Cohen 2010b, 78.
2   E.g. Loker-Murphy 1997; Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 65; Riley 1988, 317; O'Reilly 2006, 1014.
3   Uriely et al. 2002.
4   Bruner 1991; Anderskov 2002; Desforges 2000; Elsrud 2001; Noy 2004; O'Reilly 2005; Welk 2004; Sørensen 2003.
5   Hottola 2005, 2–3.
6   Richards & Wilson 2004b, 5; Richards & Wilson 2008, 9.
7   Cohen 1982, 221; O'Reilly 2006, 1014; Cohen 2011, 1536; Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 61; Welk 2004, 85.
8   Cohen 2004, 49; O'Reilly 2006, 1006, 1014.
9   Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 61.

looks more conventional and therefore less status-enhancing, the search for the extraordinary has shifted elsewhere, towards making travel an ongoing lifestyle.

2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers

Erik Cohen first observed that the search for meaning through travel can be extended into the way of life of an eternal seeker. According to Cohen, this may be the case with the most serious of drifters, who get accustomed to steadily move between different peoples and cultures, and who lose the ability to make choices and commit themselves permanently to anything.[1]

The actual concept of 'lifestyle traveller' was presented by Scott Cohen who investigated part-time travellers making multiple trips ranging from six to nine months. Some of Cohen's interviewees had pursued this kind of serial backpacking for as long as seventeen years.[2] In his dissertation, Cohen examined how physical mobility affects and challenges the ways in which travellers experience themselves, others, and places over time.

Cohen's study fruitfully extended backpacking into a lifestyle by employing sociologist Anthony Giddens' formulation of the concept. For Giddens, 'lifestyle' is a vehicle for forming a more coherent sense of the self. As self-identities are no longer so firmly structured in advance by social hierarchies and traditional authorities, individuals now face a diversity of possible selves. It is increasingly their task to maintain a sense of continuity in terms of who they are and how they should live. Thus self-identity becomes an individualist and reflexive project which consists of sustaining continuously revised biographical narratives.[3]

For Giddens, lifestyle includes a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces. They are constituted by the voluntary choices a person makes each day, be these choices habits of dressing and eating—or travelling as Cohen suggests.[4] These practices do not necessarily fulfil utilitarian needs, but they give material form to particular biographical narrative, and they can reduce anxieties over doubt, worries, and conflicts.

Lifestyles are tightly related to the individualisation of cultures. According to Giddens, all experience which seems to tell something about the self, to help define it, develop it, or change it, has become an overwhelming concern in contemporary 'intimate societies' as he calls them. In an intimate society, all social phenomena, no matter how impersonal in nature, need to be converted into matters of personality in order to have a meaning.[5]

In a similar vein, leisure scholar Tony Veal ties questions of identity and

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1 Cohen 1979, 189. See also Cohen & Noy 2005, 3; Cohen 2010b, 79.
2 Cohen 2009.
3 Giddens 1991, 5, 9, 81. See also Bauman 2008, 24–25.
4 Giddens 1991, 81; Cohen 2009.
5 Giddens 1991, 81, 171, 181.

lifestyle together by suggesting that most Western people seek coherence in their lives, although not necessarily finding it. They engage themselves in a life-long task of establishing a set of activities or behaviours that make sense to themselves.[1]

Although both Giddens and Veal formulated their views at the height of postmodernism, at the beginning of the 1990s, the same principles seem to hold today. Scott Cohen suggests that 'lifestyle' might now be particularly suitable for individuals who are engaged in alternative ways of life.[2] Extreme mobility, both repeated long-term travel and such full-time travel as global nomads', clearly have a correlation with marginality.[3] Both groups of travellers are not only marginal in terms of numbers, but they engage in travel which is counter to the norms of sedentary societies.[4] They are, for instance, away from work for long stretches of time which suggests that they do not adhere to the notions of work as a primary and leisure as a secondary activity. This division has been one of the central structural pillars of developed societies, although times of massive unemployment have undermined it. Nor are global nomads necessarily returning to their country of origin, which is contrary to the traditional idea of 'freedom' in leisure: free choice and non-work activity are bound to principles of fitness to work and responsible citizenship, leisure scholar Chris Rojek maintains.[5]

The concept of 'lifestyle,' as suggested by Scott Cohen, seems useful also in regard to global nomads. It extends travel from a periodic activity to a set of ongoing practices that define travellers and offer them particular subjectivities. However, as we cannot be sure yet if global nomads share any particular lifestyle, it is safer to speak about 'lifestyles' in the plural. It might be that they rather aspire to a range of lifestyles just like backpackers, and it is rather their shared practices that unite them.

In order to verify whether this is the case, this thesis will adopt the term 'practice' which goes along with Giddens' formulation of 'lifestyle.' According to Giddens, practices are routine-driven configurations of activities shared by groups of people as part of their everyday life and lifestyles. For Giddens, practises are the core of study:

> *The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the*

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1   Veal 1993, 244.
2   Cohen 2009, 59.
3   See also D'Andrea 2006, 99.
4   See also Adler & Adler 1999, 43–44; O'Reilly 2006; Cohen 2009, 59; Cohen 2010, 298.
5   Rojek 2010, 2.

*existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across
space and time.[1]*

Practices, in Giddens' approach, are the basic elements of which lifestyles are
made. Mobility, for instance, can be a practice or a set of practices that guides
people's daily life. As such, practices are at the root of the constitution of the
subject,[2] and by taking them as the units of analysis, Giddens emphasises the
contextuality of behaviour in specific time-space contexts which fits the pur-
poses of this research.[3] Instead of a stable, single identity, the research will study
changing subjectivities emphasising movement. Practices also remind us of the
collective features of lifestyles which is particularly interesting in relation to
global nomads. We will see whether their lifestyles are united by a set of shared
practices in the same manner as those of backpackers and lifestyle travellers, or
are they individualists creating their own practices.

2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel'

All the studies reviewed so far—studies on early long-term travellers, backpackers,
and lifestyle travellers—are of invaluable help in this research when identifying
fruitful research questions, finding supportive material as well as unanswered
questions, and putting the research results into perspective. Also, due to the
similarities in travel practices, long-term travellers offer interesting comparative
material for the findings on global nomads.

   Although all long-term travellers share common features and practices, this
research has chosen to concentrate only on global nomads. They seem to offer
a better opportunity for analysing location-independence and non-institution-
alised mobilities than other long-term travellers who by now have mostly been
included into the field of institutionalised travel. It is hoped that through global
nomads we can better understand unwritten norms about mobility and attempts
to regulate it in societies, and how such mobilities affect societies and people's
everyday practices. Naturally, global nomads are also an interesting research
object because their kind of full-time travel has not been studied before, and so
through them, we can shed light on the changes that life on the road can trigger
on a personal, social, and societal level.

   How do global nomads' travels fit into the previously presented forms of long-
term travel? Like long-term travellers, global nomads seem to follow intrinsic
motivations rather than extrinsic, for instance, financial, social, political, or purely
leisure-related motivations. This offers a unique perspective for both tourism and

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1   Giddens 1984, 2.
2   Giddens 1984, xxii.
3   See also Verbeek 2009, 70.

migration studies as their focus has been on more purposeful travel:[1] expatriates travel for work, migrants for better living conditions, refugees for political asylum, ethnic minorities such as Romany people and pastoral nomads to follow their century-old traditions, and tourists for leisure. Long-term travellers and global nomads, on the other hand, seem to travel for the sake of travel, although this frivolous-looking reason might be accompanied by more respectable rationales, such as self-development. However, those travellers following the drifter ideal most rigorously might also forsake the educational role of travel. Some similarities in travel styles and practices can also be found. Both long-term travellers and global nomads travel independently, usually with a moderate or a modest budget. They are fairly flexible and travel without itineraries, schedules, or destinations like the original drifter.

All these similarities are natural: some of the global nomads interviewed started their travels as backpackers or lifestyle travellers, and some of the older participants could have been categorised as 1970s' drifters. At some point in their lives, they simply enlarged the scope of their travels by buying a one-way ticket and not returning home.[2] In fact, this is the first major qualitative break between long-term travellers and global nomads which can help us to initially identify what exactly makes global nomads an interesting object for research. These four characteristics are: global nomads are homeless and they travel full-time without being attached to any geographic location; their journey is not extrinsically motivated for example by self-development that aims to enhance their skills in the employment market; instead of socialising with other tourists, global nomads try to immerse to local cultures in their destinations; they are marginal and some of their lifestyles' features might be contrary to the norms and values of sedentary societies.

Let us start with global nomads' homelessness. They are searching continuously for something new, and they do not necessarily want to settle down anywhere. They are 'people of many places but of no one place in particular,' to borrow the words of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman.[3] Although long-term travellers also make extensive journeys, home for them remains an important reference point, both physically and mentally. They interrupt their journeys in order to periodically work and save money in their countries of origin, and to maintain social relations at home before setting off again.[4] Furthermore, some of them are tied to their home country because of their counter-cultural position which might also be the case for global nomads: their lifestyle is formed against the dominant lifestyles in their societies of origin. For others the tie to home is strengthened

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1   See e.g. Papastergiadis 2000, 57.
2   Cf. Sørensen 2003, 852.
3   Bauman 2005, 67.
4   Cohen 2010, 294.

by their future return which is considered the ultimate goal of the trip. Thus, rather than being detached from home, long-term travellers are tied to it.[1]

Second, global nomads are not necessarily travelling in order to learn and develop themselves. Although self-development may arise from intrinsic motivations, it often requires the fixed reference point of home: the young initiates have to show to their parents and mentors at home what they have learned, and they are expected to assume adult responsibilities upon return by reintegrating into society. Global nomads' journeys, on the other hand, do not necessarily have this kind of an end and hope for return, and thus they lack the opportunity to contribute to society, at least directly. Furthermore, global nomads are in various age groups from their twenties to their seventies, and thus the idea that they would be proving themselves to their elders is perhaps not adequate.[2]

Third, global nomads attempt to immerse in local cultures—'local' meaning here a diversity of cultures they encounter on their way—while research has reported that backpackers mostly meet other travellers.[3] They can be found in tourist enclaves eating, drinking, and socialising with each other,[4] and the same holds true for lifestyle travellers. Although many of them seek to live like locals, their participation is often imaginary, Scott Cohen argues,[5] and to some extent, this might have been the case for the original drifter as well. Although Erik Cohen described the drifter as immersed in the host culture, he also described how drifters congregated in certain destinations to socialise with each other.[6] He also spoke of a specific subgroup of drifters who were more inward-oriented, and who had lost interest and involvement with local people and customs. Their focus was on the counter-cultural features of their lifestyle which were represented by other drifters.[7] While this research starts with the assumption that global nomads do engage in local life, we do not know yet whether their orientation towards the 'local' is enough to bridge the perceived gap between the drifter ideal and backpacker practices.

Fourth, while backpacking has become mainstream, the nomadic travel style remains marginal, as few people view travel as a feasible alternative for leading a settled life. Some researchers have even doubted whether perpetual travellers exist at all.[8] It remains to be seen how how detached global nomads are from sedentary societies and their conventionalities, and whether they are counter-cultural in

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1   Cohen 2004, 51.
2   See also Cohen 2004, 45.
3   Pearce 2008, 39.
4   Loker-Murphy & Pearce 1995, 825.
5   Cohen 2010, 294; Cohen 2011, 1544. See also Richards & Wilson 2004b, 5; Richards & Wilson 2008, 9.
6   Cohen 1972, 177; Cohen 1973, 89, 93–94, 98; Cohen 1979, 189.
7   Cohen 1973, 100.
8   D'Andrea 2007, 224; O'Reilly 2006, 1000.

the way the alienated drifter was perceived to be.

These assumptions on global nomads imply that a new definition of 'travel' is needed in order to include the nomadic travel style in it. The traditional formulation of the concept refers to a journey from one place to another and back which is limited in time.[1] When conventional tourists travel, they depart, enjoy leisure time in their chosen destinations, and return home.[2] Home is thus an irreplaceable reference point, as researcher Georges Van Den Abbeele points out: home is where the journey starts and home is where it ends.[3] For global nomads, however, this definition is limiting. By living on the road, they question the binary opposition between staying put and being in motion—travel and home. For them, both are intertwined.

Global nomads also seem to question another opposition implied in the definition of tourist travel: the opposition between work and leisure. As mobilities researcher John Urry notes, tourism is a leisure activity which presupposes its opposite: regulated and organised work.[4] For long-term travellers, this opposition is often true. Work and leisure for them remain two different spheres of life which are also separated by space: while work is done at home, leisure is spent elsewhere. Global nomads, on the other hand, are travelling neither for work nor for leisure. They might work during their journey but this is not always the case, and although they do have a lot of free time which could be considered leisure in the sense of being able to exercise voluntarism free from constraints of work, established routines, and practices of everyday life,[5] travelling also contains work-like routines such as planning, long periods of waiting and long and dull passages on buses, planes, and trains.[6]

Being in-between the opposites, global nomads blur the boundaries questioning the relatively stable coordinates which form the basis for the sedentary life. They illustrate the complex belongings, subjectivities, and power relations associated with sustained mobility.[7] What are the implications of this development, is a topic which addresses not only broader theoretical questions about tourism and travel but also of societies as a whole. It broadens the spectrum from recent research interests in individual traveller identities to societal level where power becomes a central concern. Similar effects have also been identified within studies on lifestyle migration.

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1   E.g. Van Den Abbeele 1992, xv–xix.
2   Urry 2002b, 2–3.
3   Van Den Abbeele 1992, xvii–xviii. See also Lisle 2006, 217.
4   Urry 2002b, 2.
5   Rojek 2010, 19.
6   See Verbeek 2009, 75; Edensor 2001, 60.
7   See Cohen et al. 2013.

2.2 Lifestyle Migration

Lifestyle migration is a phenomenon that is gaining growing interest in human geography. As lifestyle migrants share interesting features with global nomads, for instance motivations that make them leave their countries of origin behind and the will to redesign their lives, this section examines the (dis)similarities between the two groups through the following topics: authenticity (2.2.1 In Search of Authenticity), communities (2.2.2 Aesthetic Communities of Like-Minded Souls), and agency (2.2.3 Agency).

2.2.1 In Search of Authenticity

Lifestyle migrants are Western citizens who move to other countries in order to find a better quality of life.[1] What is 'better' is defined in many ways. Some British pensioners migrate to Spain in order to enjoy cheaper living costs, milder weather, and a more relaxed lifestyle, while others choose to purchase property in rural France and start renovation and gardening work.[2] Younger lifestyle migrants in Ibiza and Goa, on the other hand, practise New Age lifestyles and get involved in the local techno scene in communities of hippie traders, craftsmen, DJs, spiritual healers, and drug dealers. They reject their homelands in order to avoid regimes of state, market, and morality.[3]

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1 Benson 2009; Korpela 2009; D'Andrea 2007; Bousiou 2008; O'Reilly 2002 and 2007.

2 Benson 2010 and 2011; Casado-Díaz, Kaiser, & Warnes 2004, 353–354; Gustafson 2008, 456, 464.

3 D'Andrea 2007, 4, 43. D'Andrea uses the term 'expressive expatriates' and 'global nomads' of his subjects. However, his global nomads have more in common with lifestyle migrants than the global nomads of this research: they are relatively stable mostly travelling between a couple of countries, they acquire houses and property in the countries they live in, and they search for the company of the like-minded in communities.

Lifestyle migration is driven by diverse factors. It may or may not be financially motivated although migrants tend to go to cheaper places. Some have abandoned favourable material conditions in their countries of origin, while others have escaped harsher economical realities, refusing to survive in menial, temporary jobs looking for better opportunities. The largest group consists of retired people who live on their pension.[1] Of those who work, some seek to integrate labour, leisure, and spirituality into a holistic lifestyle,[2] while others separate work and leisure. The latter typically work in the West between their sojourns abroad like backpackers and lifestyle travellers.[3]

Despite their differing backgrounds and strategies, many lifestyle migrants are engaged in a search for authenticity. 'Authenticity' for them can mean a return to the past, or it can be understood in terms of genuine social contacts and living in close connection with nature.[4] The concept of 'authenticity' has also been widely discussed in tourism literature since Dean MacCannell's seminal work, *The Tourist* (1976).[5] The tourism industry has favoured authenticity in its rhetoric because it is a convincing sales argument, but because of the ubiquity of the tourism industry, it is artificial to try to distinguish authentic from inauthentic. Everything from events to places is recreated, and thus discussions on authenticity are rather power struggles where meanings are being negotiated.[6] However, as a site of ongoing power struggle 'authenticity' is an interesting concept to analyse also in regard to global nomads who, through their lifestyle, participate in many power negotiations by challenging and redefining such familiar concepts as 'home' and 'travel,' and 'work' and 'leisure,' as the previous section showed. Whether global nomads also transgress the opposition between the authentic and inauthentic is a question which will be addressed later, given the significance of the issue for tourism studies.

2.2.2 Aesthetic Communities of Like-Minded Souls

Lifestyle migration patterns vary greatly. They are rarely a one-time, permanent move but a continuing process.[7] Some people 'migrate, oscillate, circulate and tour only between their home and host countries. Some retain a home in more than one place, some work in one place and live in another; others simply move,

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1   E.g. Casado-Diaz 2009; Casado-Diaz et al. 2004; Gustafson 2008 and 2009.
2   D'Andrea 2007, 8
3   Korpela 2009, 14, 123.
4   Korpela 2009, 21, 24. See also O'Reilly 2006, 1006; Hoey 2009, 45.
5   MacCannell 1999. See also Cohen 1988and 2007; Urry 2002b, 7–12; Noy 2004; Smith & Duffy 2003, 114–134; Chambers 2007, 235–236; Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2179.
6   See also Edensor 2001, 60; Baudrillard 1994.
7   Gustafson 2008, 457.

while others still simply visit,' researcher Karen O'Reilly describes.[1] What is common to most of these migrants is that they tend to be tourists before they settle down in their new home. They explore various areas in order to find the one they perceive to be fit with their sought-after lifestyle, and those staying in beach areas are living permanently in a holiday space where their lives are affected by the tourism industry, although they do not identify themselves as tourists nor as being on holiday.[2]

As these examples show, divisions between tourism, migration, and mobilities are not distinct.[3] Scott Cohen, Tara Duncan, and Maria Thulemark suggest that they could be better grasped through a lens of lifestyle mobilities that may involve multiple homes, belongings, and sustained mobility throughout the life course.[4] This notion is adapted in this research as the title of this chapter, 'Mobile lifestyles,' indicates.

Despite their various migration patterns, lifestyle migrants also share common practices, the most conspicuous being that they congregate in communities of like-minded people. One such community is located in Varanasi, India. It consists of 200–300 people during the high season. The members of the community are predominantly of middle-class origin and white, men forming the majority. Most of them are in the backpacker age group, between twenty and thirty, some between forty and fifty. They all live in one particular area of the city within walking distance of each other, renting rooms or apartments in local houses, and spending much of their time socialising with each other, describes researcher Mari Korpela.[5]

Communities ideally provide lifestyle migrants with a safe place and support for identity formation.[6] Some lifestyle migrants, particularly the younger ones, consciously work on their identity aiming to transform themselves, viewing their identity as shifting and evolving.[7] This might result in a hybrid identity which can be described by the following quotation: 'Yesterday I was into rave, today I am into Wicca, tomorrow I may try Zen.'[8]

Although lifestyle migrants have the choice of multiple locations like global nomads, most of them tie themselves down to a specific territory either by acquiring property, or through their wish to socialise with like-minded people

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1 O'Reilly 2007 (no page numbers). See also O'Reilly 2003, 301–302, 305.
2 O'Reilly 2003, 304–305, 307; Casado-Díaz et al. 2004, 355; Gustafson 2008, 455, 466–467; Bell & Ward 2000, 88; Torkington 2012, 83, 85.
3 Cohen 2011, 1539, 1546.
4 Cohen et al. 2013.
5 Korpela 2009, 13–14.
6 E.g. Benson 2011, 66–67.
7 D'Andrea 2007, 6, 55.
8 D'Andrea 2007, 225. See also Bousiou 2008, 101, 130.

and belong to a community.[1] Studies have shown that reflexive projects of the self are often spatially located.[2] Lifestyle migrants, for instance, have left one home behind in order to search for a new one, and the place they choose for themselves is an important and often an aesthetic marker of their identity. Researcher Pola Bousiou, who has studied the sojourners in Greek island of Mykonos, acknowledges that the island is the symbolic spatialisation of the Mykonites' subjectivities drawing on several local myths.[3] Mykonos for them is fetishised, and it has become synonymous with hedonism and marginality. This communal ideology has persisted through personal style. The idea is to turn everyday things such as a breakfast or a satisfying sexual intercourse into elements of style.[4]

Such an aesthetic of existence has its roots in antiquity. The ancient Greeks already aimed to create themselves a beautiful life by following certain values and making their life into an artwork. This ideal was later reproduced in nineteenth-century dandyism under which French poet Charles Baudelaire (and later Walter Benjamin) created the self-inventing modern personage of the artist-dandy-flâneur. Modern man, for Baudelaire, was not the man who goes off to discover himself, but the man who invents himself and puts himself on display.[5]

A similar, although more dubious culture, that nurtured the idea of the aesthetics of the self, can be found in fin-de-siècle bohemianism in France and in England. Most of the bohemians were either artists or scholars, but they were not only creative individuals but also created and performed an identity which became a stereotype. This identity was calculated to shock and outrage the audience, and it came to be associated with the gutter, the low life, and the forbidden.[6] This ideal has found its successors in lifestyle migration studies,[7] and it also bears reminders of Cohen's drifters representing the shady side of alternative travel cultures.

Such self-aesthetics, whether aiming at an aesthetically pleasing or a shocking life, are closely related to contemporary lifestyles. As remembered from the previous section, lifestyle is a means with which individuals decide who they want to be and how they want to live their lives. The self becomes a practised art of self-creation, for which the individual is responsible.[8] According to sociologist Mike

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1   E.g. Benson 2011, 66, 69.

2   Giddens 1991, 147.

3   As D'Andrea's nomads, also Bousiou's have more in common with lifestyle migrants than with the global nomads of this research.

4   Bousiou 2008, xi, xiii, 101.

5   Foucault 1997f, 310–312. See also Foucault 1997b, 271; Nietzsche 1974, 232–233; Habermas 1987, 8–10; Bauman 1996, 26–28; Jokinen & Veijola 1997, 24–29; Turner 2003, 87; Urry 2007, 6–71.

6   Wilson 2003, 3. See also Nord 2006; Burke 2009.

7   See D'Andrea 2007.

8   Giddens 1991, 32, 75–76.

Featherstone, all postmodern lifestyles have in common the privileging of the aesthetic which has features of calculating hedonism.[1] To pursue such lifestyles, the new middle-class needs to have 'the necessary dispositions and sensibilities that… make them more open to emotional exploration, aesthetic experience and the aestheticization of life.'[2] Distinctive consumption can become a life project wherein various products, brands, and practices such as travel, appearance, and bodily dispositions are designed together into a lifestyle.

Considering how prominent the concept of 'lifestyle' is in studies of lifestyle migration, it has remained surprisingly under-explored. In fact, most of the researchers in the field do not touch the topic at all, but take 'lifestyle' as a given.[3] In some cases, it is considered as synonymical or metonymical with 'aesthetics' or 'aesthetics of self' which are, without doubt, more swinging terms.[4] Although it is widely accepted that aesthetics is relevant to almost every aspect of human activity and cognition, and that in principle everything, also movement and ethics, can be approached from an aesthetic standpoint,[5] in the name of conceptual economy and clarity the term 'aesthetics of self' will be replaced in this research with a more commonplace expression of 'redesigning' or 'reshaping' one's life, and whenever ethical point of views are included, they will be discussed under the concept of 'ethics.'

2.2.3 Agency

Because of lifestyle migrants' strong will to redesign their lives, 'agency' has become a central concept in the research.[6] The underlying idea is that sedentary societies restrict personal choice and the individual pursuit of happiness.[7] For all lifestyle migrants, leaving their countries of origin behind is a conscious choice which involves agency in the sense that Giddens defined the concept: 'Agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator.'[8]

The existence of such individualisation in Western cultures has been empirically verified in numerous qualitative interviews and studies. According to sociologists Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, they all point to one central concern: people want to control their own time, money, body, and living

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1 Featherstone 1987, 55, 59.
2 Featherstone 1991, 45. See also Bertens 1995, 204.
3 E.g. Benson 2010 and 2011; Bousiou 2008; Casado-Díaz et al. 2004; D'Andrea 2007; Korpela 2009.
4 See D'Andrea 2007, 18.
5 Naukkarinen 2005; Määttänen 2005.
6 Korpela 2009, 22; D'Andrea 2007, 189; Benson & O'Reilly 2009b, 613; Ackers & Dwyer 2004, 469, 473; Bousiou 2008, e.g. 20–21.
7 MacBeth 2000, 28; Benson 2011b, 224; Korpela 2009, 22.
8 Giddens 1984, 9.

space, and they want to form their own perspectives on life.[1] The 'self-culture' that emerges requires agency, that is the will to act.[2]

When lifestyle migrants recreate themselves and their living conditions, they may be viewed as resisting the notion of 'push and pull factors,' which academia has frequently used to explain why some people choose to leave their countries.[3] While pull factors are supposed to make another country appear more tempting than one's 'own,' push factors that drive people away are considered to be negative. They can include financial crises, unemployment, discrimination, and lawsuits. The person is viewed to have no other option but to go.

The problem of push and pull factors is that their focus is often on a national and economic level and, as a result, migrants are perceived to be passive, merely reacting to external stimuli.[4] Sometimes the model also includes a deterministic point of view: migrants are viewed as having roots from which they are suddenly cut off due to unfortunate circumstances, such as unemployment and financial crisis, and doomed to live the life of an immigrant, exile, or refugee.[5]

The push and pull model has been discredited,[6] and in lifestyle migration it is opposed by the notion of 'counter-hegemonic' or 'alternative' subject positions (which refer practically to the same thing as 'counter-cultural' in tourism studies).[7] For lifestyle migrants, leaving is usually a choice, or at least it is represented that way, and thus their lifestyle pays attention to agency. They leave their countries of origin behind in order to construct their own space, communities, and identities. Many of them dislike being recognised by their pasts, because the past was imposed on them rather than chosen.[8]

A similar counter-hegemonic approach will be of interest in relation to global nomads. For them, location-independence appears to be not only a cherished choice but a statement. A slightly different approach will be applied, however. The often politically laden concepts of 'ideology,' 'hegemony,' and 'state apparatus' that have been used in tourism studies and lifestyle migration studies,[9] will be replaced with concepts of 'discourse,' 'dominant discourses,' and the notion of power as a network. This reorientation represents a detachment from Marxist theories that separate material and ideological realities from each other, and they are intended to avoid the sometimes simplistic view of Marxist theories

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1 Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 32.
2 Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 43.
3 E.g. Korpela 2009; Casado-Diaz et al. 2004; Iso-Ahola 1982, 258; Dann 1977, 186.
4 Papastergiadis 2000, 35
5 E.g. Worsley 1990, 87. Cf. Papastergiadis 2000, 17, 30–32.
6 Papastergiadis 2000, 31. See also Nudrali & O'Reilly 2009, 141.
7 E.g. D'Andrea 2007, 38.
8 D'Andrea 2007, 189.
9 E.g. D'Andrea 2007; Hannam & Knox 2010, 25.

that assume that the majority of people are being guided by false consciousness. The differences between ideological theories and Foucauldian approaches will be discussed in more detail in Chapter four (see 4.1.3 Knowledge and Power).

In both cases, the analysis of lifestyle migrants' and global nomads' relationships with their countries of origin are interesting. While tourism studies have largely ignored the wider context which produces the phenomenon of tourism and instead concentrated on individual experiences, lifestyle migration studies pay attention to the home context and the ways in which migrants form their identities against those ideals that are dominant in their home countries. Yet, as also migration studies lack a systematic investigation on the home context's impact,[1] this research hopes to offer fresh viewpoints with which to identify and analyse these issues.

Other points to be considered are related to the differences between lifestyle migrants and global nomads that appear to be, at this initial stage of the research, the following: lifestyle migrants' travels are geographically more limited and they search for a new home, home country and a supportive community of like-minded souls, while global nomads travel full-time without settling down for long stretches of time. Thus, mobility for lifestyle migrants is rather a means to an end, whereas for global nomads it seems to be an aim *per se* that is not only accepted but usually also enjoyed. An interesting question is, are global nomads also adrift—that is without ties, guidance, or security—in another sense: do they form communities or do they prefer to travel alone? Finally, we need to consider their relationships with locals. While lifestyle migrants tend to socialise with their counterparts creating socially isolated spaces where their contacts with locals are limited to service providers such as maids, shopkeepers, and taxi drivers,[2] global nomads challenge themselves by attempting to engage with local cultures. These similarities and differences offer interesting perspectives for the analysis.

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1   Benson 2010, 46.
2   E.g. Korpela 2009, 192. See also Aramberri 2001, 746; Molz & Gibson 2007, 7.

2.3 New Mobilities Paradigm

As the two previous sections showed, the practice of differentiating between temporary moves such as tourist escapes and permanent migration is arbitrary.[1] Recent studies have suggested that it would be more productive to speak of the same continuum of mobilities in time and space.[2] In this research, this perspective is assumed in order to blur distinctions between different kinds of travellers—tourists, drifters, lifestyle travellers, backpackers, global nomads, and lifestyle migrants[3]—and to capture the similarities and changes that are essential to all mobilities alike.[4] As the new mobilities paradigm emphasises change and flux instead of stability and structures, it appears to be fit for the purpose. The paradigm also examines issues of power more explicitly than tourism and lifestyle migration studies,[5] and it can thus offer new horizons for analysing the manifold ways in which mobilities create and are the object of power struggles. This section aims to present some of the founding ideas of the paradigm (2.3.1 Societies or Mobilities?) and the challenges that mobilities research face (2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?).

2.3.1 Societies or Mobilities?

The new mobilities paradigm was born at the turn of the new millennium as a critique of sedentarism, stillness, and rootedness that were viewed to prevail in social sciences.[6] British sociologist John Urry was in the vanguard of the movement with a mobilities manifesto *Sociology beyond Societies* (2001), suggesting

1   Bell & Ward 2000, 88, 104; Frello 2008, 27.
2   See e.g. O'Reilly 2003; Molz & Gibson 2007, 8.
3   Cohen 2011, 1539, 1546.
4   See also Cohen 2004, 57; O'Reilly 2003, 315.
5   Church & Coles 2007, 278–279.
6   Cresswell 2011, 648.

that mobilities rather than societies should be at the heart of the reconstituted sociology. Urry maintained that 'people's rights and duties are increasingly owed to, and derived from, entities whose topologies criss-cross those of society.'[1] Thus, it is not through the inhabitation of a shared sedentary structure or space, such as a society or a nation-state, that people produce meaningful subjectivities and lifestyles. Instead, they are produced through networks of people, ideas, and things moving.[2]

For Urry, the point of view of mobilities is productive. It draws from a multitude of disciplines, and it employs various theories, methods, questions, and solutions.[3] It is clearly one of the advantages of the paradigm that it is not producing a totalising theory, nor is it trying to suppress different kinds of travellers, mobility devices, travelling cultures, and tourism and travelling infrastructures into one—hence the use of the plural both in the name of the paradigm and in its research objects.[4]

The new mobilities paradigm examines corporeal, imaginative, virtual, and communicative travel thus broadening the concept of 'mobility' which has traditionally been a synonym for 'social mobility,' an individual's movement up or down in the social hierarchy.[5] The paradigm covers a wide range of subjects from different modes of transportation to various implications mobilities have for example for social inequality, networks, governmentality, control, the nature of places, and future scenarios. The paradigm looks at both movements and those forces that drive, constrain, and are produced by those movements, and thus it offers useful approaches also for the study of global nomads, particularly from the point of view of power. As mobilities researcher Tim Cresswell notes, rather than just smooth movement, mobility is always accompanied by friction, turbulence, and power asymmetries.[6] It is both empowerment and disempowerment.[7]

This research adopts the paradigm's view of mobilities as power. Mobilities are viewed as practices that make visible individuals' relationships to societies rather than as a mere collection of intrinsic or extrinsic motivations that prompt people to travel, migrate, or stay still. When issues of power are acknowledged in this way, the question is not only 'who travels but when, how, and under what circumstances,' as sociologist Avtar Brah notes, which directs the analysis to contextual issues.[8]

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1   Urry 2001, 19.
2   Urry 2001, 210. See also Cresswell 2010, 551; Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2181.
3   Urry 2007, 18; Sheller 2011, 1–2.
4   See also Verbeek 2009, 13.
5   E.g. Byrne 2005, 133–142; Hirsch 2005, 80.
6   Cresswell 2010b.
7   Cresswell 2011, 650.
8   Brah 1996, 179.

By placing mobilities in the centre of contemporary societies and questioning the pre-eminence of stable structures such as societies and nation-states, and searching for viable options for concepts of social location (such as home, class, occupational group, ethnicity, gender, religion, social layer, citizenship, and nationality),[1] the new mobilities paradigm gives way to (non)-typologies of the precarious, the ambivalent, and the transient which seem to characterise also global nomads' location-independence.[2] Having left their countries of origin behind and having lowered their social status by choosing homelessness, global nomads experiment with many of these things in practice. Thus the new mobilities paradigm has paved way for posing such questions as in this research that challenge some of the foundations that form the basis of our thinking, and for conceptualising them.

2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?

When applying an emerging paradigm that is still searching for a way out of the dominant scientific discourses in related fields, researchers are bound to encounter challenges. In regard to the new mobilities paradigm these challenges include—from the point of view of this research—the shift from theory to empirical research, and the varying definitions and valorisations of 'mobilities.'

To start with, while some of the differing theoretical motivations and orientations within the new mobilities paradigm challenge and shape research,[3] some also create fundamental discrepancies. It has been questioned, for instance, whether mobilities theories form a fully-fledged paradigm at all, or whether they simply represent new perspectives which 'foreground aspects of society that have been allegedly neglected by earlier theories,' as Erik Cohen and Scott Cohen argue.[4]

To date, mobilities research has remained on a rather abstract level, mapping opportunities and main areas of concern. It has found few followers for instance in tourism studies although mobilities are, without doubt, part of their very essence. Cohen and Cohen suggest that the gap between innovative theories and more conventional approaches in empirical research has been too great: there is no set of basic propositions which could be applied. The two critics also argue that the scope of the paradigm's claims is vague as they are meant to be of universal significance.[5] While these claims are accurate, it should also be remembered that not all the people involved in mobilities studies see themselves

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1   Baerenholdt 2013, 21.
2   See Sheller 2011, 2.
3   Büscher & Urry 2009, 109.
4   Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2185.
5   Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2185–2186, 2195. See also Baerenholdt 2013, 26.

as part of the new paradigm.[1] Thus the actual scope of mobilities research is much wider than it seems.

The second challenge is related to the characteristics of mobility. It has been hyped and used as an evocative keyword for understanding contemporary social and cultural phenomena,[2] and a similar fascination has occasionally marked the paradigm's views on technologies. While it is true that technologies enable mobility, from the social construction viewpoint that guides this thesis,[3] the interesting questions about mobilities start with people and the ways in which they use technology to reach their aims.[4] Technology is like a bottle-opener: it is fairly useless if there are no bottles to be opened. The new mobilities paradigm, on the other hand, is sometimes fascinated by new technologies and applications themselves.[5]

The excitement around mobilities (and technologies) is related to the fact that they seem to generate 'new social relations, new ways of living, new ties to space, new places, new forms of consumption and leisure, and new aesthetic sensibilities,' as tourist researchers Adrian Franklin and Mike Crang argue.[6] Mobility as a phenomenon, however, is not as novel and unforeseen as visionaries lead us to understand, nor is it unprecedented in speed and scale; it had its equivalents already in the distant past, as researcher of politics Roxanne Euben reminds us.[7] Even though global nomads, for instance, seem to represent a novel and extreme case of mobility, they too reproduce age-old forms modelling themselves after conquerors, explorers, philosophers, poets, gypsies, hoboes, and wandering monks, as will be shown in Chapter five (see 5.3 Two Discourses).[8]

Furthermore, while mobilities are widespread, the whole world is not on the move now, nor is mobility always desired. In the economic, social, and political context where this dissertation was made, the American and European financial crisis that began in 2008 prompted the media to represent very different images about mobilities. The crisis, which resulted in cuts across both public and private sectors, forced many people to give up their houses and familiar living surroundings because they had become, almost overnight, too expensive for them. TV

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1   Cresswell 2010, 555.

2   E.g. Ateljevic & Hannam 2008, 253; Cresswell 2010, 555; Frello 2008, 29. Cf. Giddens 1991, 16; D'Andrea, Ciolfi, & Gray 2011, 150.

3   E.g. Hacking 1999; Berger & Luckmann 1966.

4   Verbeek 2009, 71. Cf. Urry 2001, e.g. 33, 35.

5   E.g. Urry 2001 and 2007; Hannam et al. 2006, 5.

6   Franklin & Crang 2001, 12.

7   Euben 2006, 174. See also Cresswell 2010, 555; Cresswell 2011, 646. Cf. Rojek 2005, 1; Sheller 2011, 1.

8   The mobilities paradigm itself is not without predecessors either. It stems from the Chicago School that studied the itinerant lives of hoboes, gangs, prostitutes, and migrants in the first half of the twentieth century (Cresswell 2006, 18).

cameras showed villages of tents where people lived trying to transform their identities to better suit their new mobile and transient circumstances.[1]

Judging from the desperate images that the media created about the mobility of the age, people hardly yearned for fluidity in their lives but rather stable coordinates—whether in a form of a house or a job, or social relationships tied to their home environment. These material and social anchors are one of the most important means for gaining access, belonging, inclusion, and, ultimately, power in societies, historian Todd DePastino argues.[2] This issue is particularly interesting in relation to global nomads who are homeless and, in this sense, powerless from the point of view of sedentary societies.[3] The question that arises is, whether their kinds of mobilities are wanted and encouraged, or rather the opposite.

It seems that there are different kinds of mobilities, mobilities mean different things to different people, and they are enacted in different ways, as geographer Peter Adey points out.[4] Mobilities gain meaning through their embeddedness within societies, cultures, politics, and histories where power is involved, and thus they have to be analysed in these specific contexts. Some mobilities may turn out to be coerced, all mobilities are distributed unevenly, and some include wars, illegal mobility, forced migration, and statelessness, as mobilities researcher Mimi Sheller maintains.[5] Thus, a mere celebration of mobility does not necessarily do justice to this diversity of movements.

The hype around mobilities derives not only from the possibilities that it seems to offer but also from the very concept. 'Mobility' has judgemental connotations that value physical and emotional distance over the concrete attachments to particular cultures and places, as Euben argues. The judgemental standpoint is evoked because 'mobility' is associated with travel, imagination, curiosity, knowledge, and reflexive self-understanding in the travel tradition that views it as education. These synonymic relations produce an opposite image of those who do not or cannot travel, and thus immobility becomes implicitly linked to stagnation, inertia, narrow-mindedness, and provincialism. It makes those who do not travel look like they lack curiosity and philosophical reflectiveness, Euben says.[6] Mobilities researcher Cresswell goes even further by arguing that privileging of mobility is one of the foundational narratives of modernity.[7]

Although mobilities seem to be comprehensible only when contrasted to more

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1　Chernoff 2011.

2　See also DePastino 2003, 271. See also Arnold 2004, 164.

3　See e.g. Clok, May, & Johnsen 2010.

4　Adey 2006, 83.

5　Sheller 2011, 2. See also Franklin & Crang 2001, 11.

6　Euben 2006, 29. See also Cresswell 2011, 648; Frello 2008, 46.

7　Cresswell 2008, 9–10.

sedentary lifestyles, it is doubtful that the two actually are opposites. This is not a return to the metaphysics of sedentarism; rather, it is a realisation that mobilities can only be considered in relation to stillness and relative immobility, as Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry maintain.[1] Lifestyle migration studies have, for instance, pointed out that privileged mobilities can lead to privileged forms of immobility, or to an achievement of a particular balance between mobility and immobility,[2] and this might also be the case for global nomads.

To conclude, all the alternative forms of mobility discussed in this chapter—global nomadism, long-term travel, and lifestyle migration—show that the ontological questions of what mobilities are, what are their functions, how they should be conceived, and whether they should be encouraged are ambiguous. In tourism studies, discussions on long-term travel have been heated. It has been viewed as dubious and rebellious (drifting), but also as a beneficial rite of passage which strengthens travellers' ties to their home countries (backpacker travel). Also studies on lifestyle migration have shifted between similar interpretations. While some researchers view lifestyle migrants as fleeing problems in their home society,[3] others consider that these acts involve agency with which migrants are able to transform their lives and pursue a better quality of life.[4] In regard to mobilities, on the other hand, the two antagonistic representations have sometimes led researchers to analyse people either as static entities who are tied to specific places, or as nomads who search for globalised modes of existence.

What is global nomads' role in these discussions? Through their alternative lifestyles, they make visible societies' norms of mobility. At the moment we do not know where the fine line between accepted and rejected forms of travel lies, but as this literature review indicated, some mobilities clearly seem to be more desirable from the point of view of sedentary societies. This conclusion can also be drawn from the analysis of the concept of 'travel' which relates journeying to home (as opposed to being away) and to leisure activity (as opposed to work).[5] It seems to indicate that mobility is encouraged only as long as it strengthens the practices of sedentary societies.[6] Whether this assumption holds in the analysis, remains to be seen.

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1 Hannam et al. 2006. See also Adey 2006, 83–84; Cresswell 2010, 552; Cresswell 2011, 648; Franquesa 2011, 1019–1020; Molz 2009, 284.
2 Benson 2011b, 226; Torkington 2012, 89.
3 E.g. Korpela 2009, 221.
4 E.g. D'Andrea 2007.
5 Cohen 1979; Urry 2002b, 2.
6 Rojek 2010, 2.

3 Power and Subjectivities

Power is an integral part of mobilities, or—as Urry formulates it—unforced movement *is* power. The ability to move, as well as the ability to stay still, are a major source of advantage for individuals and groups.[1]

From the point of view of global nomads, mobility represents a choice which, when made reflexively, is constitutive of their lifestyles and subjectivities. From societies' standpoint, such mobility is ambiguous because it has the potential to shake the ordinary, the static, and the norm. It can be both an act of domination and an act of resistance.[2] As mentioned in the introduction, alternative life choices not only touch individuals themselves but also people around them as well as wider societies, thus implying negotiations of power. Drifting is one example of such disputed mobilities, and it has created a substantial discussion on where the limit between too much and too little movement should be set (see 2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers).

These discussions show that questions of power are inherent and critical also in tourism research,[3] although they may not be particularly obvious at first.[4] Power, in tourism studies, has been mostly discussed on a general level of power theories,[5] or by concentrating on visible and accountable forms of power such as governance analysing, for instance, government regulations, policy texts, and committee papers focusing on the level of the state, although the manifold ways

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1   Urry 2007, 51–52.
2   Adey 2006, 83.
3   E.g. Tribe 2008, 246;
4   Hannam & Knox 2010, 25.
5   E.g. Church & Coles 2007; Hannam 2002; Cheong & Miller 2000; Hollinshead 1999.

in which power works might have also been recognised.[1] The emphasis has thus been on surveillance and control where tourists and other mobile subjects are viewed as targets. The questions that these studies ask include: who can be let out, when, and where.[2] While such analysis is legitimate, there is the risk of seeking the explanation for power in institutions, to explain power by power,[3] which does not help us to understand the role of mobilities in people's everyday life and subjectivities. Feminist and other gender oriented tourism studies have offered different perspectives in terms of social groups, ethnicities, nationalities, and cultures.[4] However, more comprehensive investigations, particularly on subtle forms of power that are at work in people's everyday practices and codes of conduct, are still needed. Among tourist researchers, So-Min Cheong and Marc Miller have initially pointed to the existence of these hidden forms of power:

> …*power relationships are located in the seemingly non-political business and banter of tourists and guides, in the operation of codes of ethics, in the design and use of guidebooks, and so on.*[5]

On an empirical level, there is very little to support their statement, although examples of subtle forms of power also abound in tourism studies.[6] One such example is the model of rite of passage (see 2.1.2 Backpackers) which builds a power network between initiates, their elders, and home societies—yet there is no research on the subject from the point of view of power. Furthermore, current analyses tend to build on the idea of the pre-eminence of societies and institutions, and their nature as static. While travellers are viewed as leaving their home in order to acquire new skills, the underlying idea seems to be that society remains the same. It is the travellers who need to change and develop themselves in order to serve society better.

The reason for ignoring these implicit issues of power is not tourist researchers' unawareness of power discourses, as Andrew Church and Tim Coles maintain.[7] It simply appears that the gap between theories and methods with which to approach power has been viewed as too wide, and thus the question is how to build a bridge between the two.

We do not need to look far as the new mobilities paradigm has witnessed a similar development. Mobilities researcher Jørgen Ole Baerenholdt argues that contemporary Western societies are less and less regulated by laws; instead,

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1   E.g. Hannam & Knox 2010; Hall 2007; Church & Coles 2007, 278.
2   Baerenholdt 2013, 26.
3   Foucault 2002c, 343.
4   E.g. Hottola 1999.
5   Cheong & Miller 2000, 378. See also Hannam & Knox 2010.
6   Cf. Holloway, Green, & Holloway 2011.
7   See also Church & Coles 2007, 273.

they are governed through individual mobility, circulation, and freedom.[1] Thus, mobilities themselves have become new forms of power. For research this means that it has to proceed from bottom to top by focusing on individual mobilities gradually enlarging the perspective on economic, social, political, and cultural contexts.[2]

In order to pay attention to the grassroots practices involved in building societies, Baerenholdt has introduced the notion of 'governmobility.' It offers a welcome reminder of the fact that societies and mobilities do not form a simple binary opposition; they are in many ways intertwined as the concept literally shows.[3] Thus a mere reversal of the dichotomy where society would be replaced with mobilities as Urry initially seemed to suggest is not enough (see 2.3.1 Societies or Mobilities?). Both societies and mobilities are in a state of flux, in constant creation and recreation.[4] Thus, when speaking about 'sedentary societies' in subsequent chapters, they are best thought of as in brackets which remind us of their fluid nature.

Governmobility opens up interesting perspectives for the analysis by making allowances for transnational socialities that participate in the making and/or unmaking of societies, and by contesting the dominant formulations of citizenship and belonging. However, as the concept and related theories are still on an introductory level, more theorising of power is needed. With this aim in mind, this chapter discusses power theories and how they can help us to analyse power as part of global nomads' everyday life that shapes their individual subjectivities.

A few words on the order of presentation. The chapter opens up with the positioning of power theories within the context of tourism studies, and their critique (3.1 Why a Foucauldian Approach?). After that, Foucault's ideas on power (3.2 Power) and subjectivities (3.3 Subjectivities) are introduced. Power is detached from discussions on 'identity' in order to take into account wider contexts where individuals create subjectivities. The chapter ends with the research questions that will guide the thesis through the main research question: What are the factors that facilitate and constrain global nomads' location-independent lifestyles within sedentary societies (3.4 Research Questions).

1   Baerenholdt 2013, 26.
2   Baerenholdt 2013. See also Jensen 2011, 260.
3   Baerenholdt 2013, 20, 31.
4   Baerenholdt 2013, 21. See also Urry 2002, 263.

3.1 Why a Foucauldian Approach?

Let us start by pondering the criteria that the power theory needed for the analysis of global nomads has to meet, and what are the available options. Answering these questions will help us in identifying and describing the research problems at hand, and finding ways to address them.

The challenges that the power theory has to encounter are many. First, it has to be able to question existing structures and notions such as societies and citizenships that need redefining in terms of location-independence; second, the theory has to be able to question dominant models of thinking which include such binary oppositions as mobilities/immobilities, home/away, and work/leisure which compress power relationships as we will later see (see 4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality); third, the theory has to be able to critically assesses existing concepts such as 'travel' that, in regard to location-independent people, can no longer refer to a stable coordinate such as one's home or country of origin; fourth, it has to offer viewpoints for creating new concepts and new knowledge.

During its short history, tourism studies have been dominated by positivist research,[1] although the number of qualitative studies have also been growing steadily. In this research, positivist and quantitative approaches would not have been suited for the task at hand because of their affirmative nature. They distinguish facts from values and take the existing categories, definitions, and binary oppositions as given.[2] Those questions that cannot be verified by empirical facts, for instance questions of power and subjectivities, have simply been ignored.[3]

Undoubtedly, power and subjectivities are a challenging topic for any research.

1   Airey & Tribe 2007, 5; Tribe 2007, 31; Ateljevic, Morgan, & Pritchard 2007, 4–5; Pritchard & Morgan 2007, 12, 18; Riley & Love 2000, 180; Franklin & Crang 2001, 15.
2   Tribe 2008, 246.
3   Cheong & Miller 2000, 378.

They cannot be measured, nor are there data available about them.[1] This is one of the reasons why it is tempting to concentrate on the analysis of government regulations rather than on power relationships between people. In order to switch the viewpoint, it is clearly a critical approach that is needed[2]—an approach that is equipped for analysing how everyday discourses and practices are infused with power.[3]

Critical research views society as the product of interaction, constant creation, and power relationships.[4] It identifies approaches that challenge taken-for-granted norms, and it focuses on issues of power, particularly from the point of view of the disempowered. Critical research is not a unified doctrine but represents many different types of research.[5] It might, for example, examine how tourist spaces and experiences are produced and consumed, and how their intersection reproduces power relations of injustice and inequality. It might also study travellers' identity formation,[6] or, as in this study, the role of power in their lifestyles.

For addressing these topics, the ideas of French philosopher Michel Foucault offer one approach.[7] Foucault extensively discussed issues of power,[8] and he has inspired critical theorists across disciplines, including tourism research,[9] although his approaches have often been reported via secondary sources only. However, there are a few useful Foucauldian applications available such as the 'tourist gaze' conceptualised by Urry.[10] In order to have a picture of the possibilities that Foucauldian approaches can offer, and how they could be developed further, let us have a look at this popular concept.

The tourist gaze stems from the Foucauldian notion of the disciplinary gaze (see 3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?). With it, Urry seeks to elaborate the process by which the gaze is constructed and reinforced, and to consider who or what authorises it.[11] The aim is to examine the ways in which tourism normalises some activities and behaviours and defines others as bizarre or deviant. This is

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1   See Byrne 2005, 74, 86.
2   Critical research was developed by the Frankfurt School in the early to mid-twentieth century. Philosophers Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse and psychoanalyst Erich Fromm were one of the leading figures of the paradigm, and later philosopher Jürgen Habermas.
3   See also Feldner & Vighi 2007, 9.
4   Tribe 2007, 29–30.
5   See Riley & Love 2000, 180; Tribe 2007, 31; Airey & Tribe 2007, 6, 8.
6   E.g. Desforges 2000; Elsrud 2001.
7   Tribe 2008, 252.
8   Cf. Foucault 1998c, 452.
9   Church & Coles 2007, 2, 8, 29. See also Hannam 2002; Hollinshead 1994.
10 Urry 2002b.
11 Urry 2002b, 1–2.

particularly interesting from the point of view of global nomads whose travel styles are an anomaly in the contemporary context of tourism as discussed in Chapter two (2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel').

Although Urry's tourist gaze has gained widespread support, it has also been the object of criticism. Keith Hollinshead observes that the nature of the gaze is never explicitly stated,[1] and neither is Urry directly concerned with the gaze as a means of disciplinary power unlike Foucault, Cohen and Cohen add,[2] and thus the concept employs only partially the possibilities available. However, the tourist gaze has helped tourism studies in moving forward in the explorations of power by emphasising the centrality of the tourist rather than the state, other institutions, or systemic power relations,[3] and by showing that Foucauldian approaches can offer insights for critical tasks involving questioning of the superiority of certain structures and traditional categories.[4]

The tourist gaze has brought about a range of new studies. Among Urry's followers we can find, for example, Tim Edensor's study on backpacker culture in tourist enclaves, which analyses permissible and prohibited practices and the manner in which backpacker behaviours are regulated. Donell Holloway, Lelia Green, and David Holloway, on the other hand, have further conceptualised the tourist gaze by the notion of the 'intratourist gaze,' which focuses on the codes of conduct among long-term travellers.[5] This concept will also figure in this thesis (see 6.3.1 Intratourist Gaze). Furthermore, there is also the concept of 'host gaze' or 'local gaze,' with which locals gaze upon tourists, and the concept of 'mutual gaze' which recognises that gazing is reciprocal.[6]

As this short glimpse demonstrates, power has started to attract more attention, implicitly or explicitly. This research aims to provide one model for building a theoretically informed framework for analysis. It moves on from the explicit level of rules, regulations, and governmentality in order to investigate subtle forms of power which guide global nomads' everyday practices and their social and societal relationships. In this framework, power is not about empowerment and disempowerment, access and exclusion only—dichotomies implying notions of stasis and creating stereotypes and prejudices.[7] Instead, the chosen approach focuses on the complex, situated, and contested nature of power.

Before starting building the actual framework, a few words on critiques of Foucauldian theories may be pertinent. As can be expected with such a sensitive

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1   Hollinshead 1994, 388.
2   Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2180.
3   Urry 2002b; Chambers 2007, 237–238; Church & Coles 2007, 26; Hollinshead 1999.
4   See Foucault 1998d, 261; Foucault 2002d, 131.
5   Edensor 2001; Holloway et al. 2011.
6   Maoz 2006; Moufakkir & Reisinger 2012.
7   Church & Coles 2007b, 7.

topic as power, there are no unproblematic approaches,[1] and this also applies to Foucauldian theories. Although they have been said to pioneer a 'properly philosophical form of interrogation,'[2] they are probably among the most controversial in the Western philosophy in the twentieth century.

Among the many critics, Jürgen Habermas, one of the leading figures of the Frankfurt School that pioneered critical research, rejected Foucault's work as 'presentistic, relativist and crypto-normative pseudo-science,' longing for a more structured approach;[3] a contemporary superstar of philosophy, Slavoj Žižek, has called Foucault 'a perverse philosopher' who 'liked to present himself as a detached positivist' implying that Foucault's own position as a researcher was not always as transparent as it should have been;[4] French philosopher Jean Baudrillard related Foucault's ideas about power with Gilles Deleuze and Jean-Francois Lyotard's 'desire,' and regarded his genealogical inquiries lacking in transformative potential.

> It [power] is there in the same way as desire in Deleuze and Lyotard: always already there, purged of all negativity, a network, a rhizome, a contiguity diffracted ad infinitum.[5]

Of these, lack of transparency is the most common critique against any qualitative research as self-criticism is not inherent in it; on the contrary, it is often altogether absent, as tourism researcher Donna Chambers points out.[6] Qualitative research requires a considerable amount of self-reflection in order to make visible the paradigmatic assumptions and mechanisms of the research and its own positioning.

In this thesis, transparency is being created in the current and next chapter on theory and methodology, and in the analysis, major assumptions, possible influences, and various readings of the research material will be explicated. This work is necessary as Foucauldian theories do not form a coherent theory. On the contrary, Foucault often emphasised the heterogeneity of his thinking speaking of his former ideas as if they were someone else's so that he could modify or reject them.[7] In his works, Foucault occupied several positions and consequently, his theories were in perpetual movement as is becoming for the theme of this research. As Foucault examined precisely the things that are in diametrical opposition to the notion of coherence such as discontinuities, discrepancies, changes,

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1   Church & Coles 2007, 3, 270.
2   Deleuze 2006, 49.
3   Habermas 1987, 276.
4   Žižek 2000, 174, 251, 257.
5   Baudrillard 2007, 35.
6   Chambers 2007b, 114. See also McCabe 2005, 95; Franklin & Crang 2001, 6.
7   Foucault 1997, 131; Foucault 1969, 26, 149.

and events, it could well be asked how could there be a coherent theory in his work. It would seem a paradox, a negation of this attempt, for if all knowledge is bound to the context in which it is produced, it is subject to change. For those, however, who believe in permanence and continuity, and who search for unambiguous research results, this view is naturally a reason for criticism.

For any researcher in any field, however, the idea that research is a work in progress, more a becoming than an end, is perhaps not strange. The process includes numerous setbacks, breakthroughs, and surprising turns, as researchers themselves are bound to the complex and contingent networks of power.[1] Furthermore, their audience will create their own representations on the basis of their work. As Foucault once sarcastically stated, the reader is 'free to make what he will of the book he has been kind enough to read. What right have I then to suggest that it should be used in one way rather than another?'[2]

This research has purposefully chosen to refer to Foucauldian approaches in the plural in order to make their heterogeneity visible. It suggests using Foucauldian theories as a set of approaches rather than as an omnipotent theory that would explain everything. A further point in favour of such an approach is that in qualitative studies, the theories have to be developed in relation to the research material, because they are based on a dialogue between theory, methodology, and the research object. Consequently, many of the theories that are presented in this chapter will be brought up again and developed further in the methodology section and in the analysis. This is the precise strength of the approach: all research results must have evidence and support for argument in a singular research material.

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1   Foucault 2005, xv; Foucault 1969, 171.
2   Foucault 2005, ix.

3.2 Power

This section will discuss Foucauldian theories from two major perspectives that view power as relationships (3.2.1 Power as Relationships and Network) and as productive (3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?). Both viewpoints open up new ways of understanding how power is present in everyday practices.

3.2.1 Power as Relationships and Network

Although Foucault's work has been called 'notoriously cryptic,'[1] his approach to power is most practical.[2] For Foucault, power never exists as such; it only exists when exercised.[3] Power is therefore not an abstraction, nor is it a privilege that a group of influential persons might acquire and possess. It is a network of relations.

> *…one should decipher in it [power] a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess; that one should take as its model a perpetual battle rather than a contract regulating transaction or the conquest of a territory…*[4]

Foucault purposely uses the term 'relations of power' instead of mere 'power.' The problem with the latter is that people immediately think of a static political structure such as a government, a state apparatus, or an elite, or repressive relationships such as between masters and slaves.[5] Foucault, on the other hand, wanted to indicate that power pervades the whole of the social body from bottom

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1   E.g. Feldner & Vighi 2007, 13.
2   Foucault 2002c, 336. Cf. Deleuze 2006, 71.
3   Foucault 1998c, 452; Foucault 2002c, 336. See also Deleuze 2006, 71; Verbeek 2009, 71. Cf. Church & Coles 2007, 275.
4   Foucault 1991, 26.
5   Foucault 2002c, 337; Foucault 1997c, 291.

to top,[1] which is essential in the analysis of global nomads. They embody Urry's notion that societies are, fundamentally, built up of different socialities transgressing national boundaries and consequently, power cannot be examined as a static notion but as something that fluctuates and circulates in social and societal relationships.

Power is being produced in all relationships—within an institution, an administration, in family relations, pedagogical and amorous relationships,[2] even between the pet owner and the pet, and it is constantly susceptible for alterations.[3] Power comprises strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others,[4] but it is not merely repressive. Instead, it can be exercised in various ways: by the effects of speech, emotions, seduction, in the guise of help, control, systems of surveillance and rules, through economic disparities, and with or without the material means of enforcement.[5]

Global nomads are confronted with power in various ways as the following summary indicates. Most of these power relationships become prominent because of global nomads' alternative lifestyles that raise questions in the sedentary. Global nomads might have to justify themselves and their lifestyles to their significant others, officials or locals in their destinations which implies unequal power relationships between them and the sedentary (see Chapter 5 Global Nomads); they engage in social relationships with other people—partners, friends, family members, locals, and other tourists—which include power (Chapter 6 Social Relationships); they seek to detach themselves from societies' power networks which involves struggle (Chapter 7 In and Outside of Societies). As these small examples will show in the analysis, power cannot be escaped; it is part of being a human.

As power operates in a capillary fashion from bottom to top,[6] also the analysis of power has to proceed in the same way, starting from the microlevel of individual global nomads and their relationships with other people advancing to the macrolevel of societies. Power is at work at all levels, and it is in this sense highly mobile. While Foucault never explicitly spoke about 'mobilities,' which was not such a popular word in the 1960s and 70s, his views on power relationships are very much in line with mobilities studies.[7] Foucault explicitly argued for replacing the prevalent conceptions of power as sovereignty and property with the analysis of 'a multiple and mobile field of force relations,' which is never

1   Feldner & Vighi 2007, 79.
2   Foucault 1978, 93; Foucault 1998c, 451.
3   Foucault 1997c, 292.
4   Innes 2003, 2.
5   Foucault 2002c, 344.
6   Foucault 1997c, 283.
7   Baerenholdt 2013, 26.

stable but constantly negotiated and renegotiated.[1] To adapt Baerenholdt's interpretation of Foucault's significance for mobilities studies, 'If power relations are fundamentally mobile, government and governmentality do not only deal and cope with mobility; they work through mobility.'[2]

3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?

The ever-present nature of power has led to the conclusion that Foucault's notions of power would be negative and repressive. This view is often based on a negligent and partial analysis of Foucault's voluminous work, and perhaps it is also partly due to the subjects he chose to study—prisons and mental hospitals—where power is often used repressively. However, Foucault showed that even in these restrictive institutions power has complex procedures. They include the governing of conduct, ensuing of self-surveillance, the shaping of individuals' bodily attributes, capacities and functions, and continuous surveillance through the Panopticon—a prison which has a form of a particular architectural structure allowing prisoners to be are all the time gazed at without knowing it.[3]

These so called 'biopolitical' measures of power allow an access to individuals, their acts, attitudes, and everyday practices. Biopower includes, for instance, norms, values, ideals, and the effects of peer pressure—what people can do, and what they cannot do without becoming objects of aggression or despise. Biopower also uses emotions, for instance anxiety and fear, and it uses desire and alluring lifestyles which are interesting in regard to global nomads.[4] Before proceeding to these topics, however, let us start with a short description of biopower in order to understand its effects in global nomads' lives. The aim is to produce a knowledge base which broadens the dominant notion of power as negative, and which can help us to gain access to the implicit measures of power.

To start with, biopower is disciplinary. It aims at moulding people, but not in a coercive way; on the contrary, it might work under the guise of improving the welfare of the individual and the population. In contemporary European societies, biopower includes things that are considered some of the basic rights of citizens such as education, health care, and law. It is a result of a hundreds of years of development where teachings of mercantilism, capitalism, and nationalism were bound together to an idea that citizens equal the state's power: the more citizens a state has, the more powerful it is. Thus the fostering of life, the growth and care of populations became a central concern of the state. Biopower sought to answer the problems of birthrate, longevity, public health, housing,

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1   Foucault 1978, 102.
2   Baerenholdt 2013, 27.
3   Foucault 1991; Foucault 2002d, 58. See also Feldner & Vighi 2007, 89.
4   Hannam & Knox 2010, 26.

and migration which served the state in order to exert a positive influence on life, to optimise and multiply it.[1]

Biopower also aims at individual self-governance. It is the product of a process which starts early in life, the family being the pivotal primary group. Through family socialisation, subjects learn to acquire roles and perspectives on social hierarchy.[2] At school, internalising is primarily designed to instil obedience in the subject through self-monitoring, or the internalisation of the gaze of the all-powerful, all-seeing parent.[3] In Freudian terms, this is the birth of the superego, the ethical component of the personality which provides the moral standards by which the ego operates.[4]

Biopower, like all forms of power, is not only practised by parents, teachers, and other significant others but by everyone: by doctors, priests, judges, social workers, bosses, co-workers, friends, neighbours, the media, and—most importantly—by the individuals themselves. But although biopower is omnipresent and interventionist, it is not confrontational. It is exercised through invisibility and anonymity, because its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms.[5] People need to feel they are in control. They are not coerced, but persuaded or subtly threatened; they are not told what to do but they are consulted and advised; they are not violated or harassed, but even their most mundane practices are being kindly intervened in.[6] In a well-meaning society citizens cannot usually decide, for instance, whether they should take vaccinations or not. In principle, they are free to choose, but if they do not take the prescribed precautionary measures, they are seen as irresponsible and a threat to others.

The concept of 'biopower' is particularly useful when analysing how people come to recognise themselves as a part of a social entity be it family, community, society, nation, or state (see Chapter 7 In and Outside of Societies).[7] It produces collective practices that people follow, often unconsciously, because they have become normal to them. In fact, the binary division normal/abnormal is one of the most pervasive forms that biopower assumes when trying to ensure desirable behaviours.[8] It is social control, which is based on constant supervision: it compares, differentiates, orders, homogenises, and excludes. The same applies to all binary oppositions: they compress complex power relations guiding people to particular behaviours.

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1   Foucault 1978, 140; Foucault 2002d, 125.
2   Rojek 2005, 58.
3   Sass 1987 quoted in Woods 2011, 97.
4   Freud 2010, 4515.
5   Foucault 1978, 86. See also Bauman 2008, 137.
6   See Ojakangas 2005, 5–6, 47, 53.
7   Foucault 2002b, 404.
8   Foucault 1991, 183, 199, 304.

The related controls have become so embedded in our everyday life that we are all subject to them, whether our behaviour could be considered deviant or not, as researcher of social control, Martin Innes, says.[1] They are also subtle as biopower needs cooperation in order to work. If one of the participants is completely at others' disposal, there are no relations of power.[2] This means that individuals themselves are involved in using biopower both as agents and subjects to it, and they might even enjoy it. Power is, in this sense, positive and productive. This creative role of power is essential, for who would obey power that was solely repressive and exploitative as Foucault points out:

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network that runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.[3]

In fact, power can be so seductive for all parties involved that they are not necessarily ready to give it up. Foucault cited sexual and amorous relationships as an example saying that to wield power over the other is a part of love, of passion, and of sexual pleasure.[4]

To summarise this section, power in this research is understood as a network of relations which embraces global nomads. All their social and societal relationships, and even their very own subjectivities include power. These power relations require a certain degree of freedom from all parties, which means that global nomads also facilitate power and collaborate with it, and they might even take pleasure in it. Thus power is not merely repressive. Of all forms of power in societies, biopower represents an integrating force that binds citizens to societies. It is internalised social control which shapes individuals, their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behaviour.

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1   Innes 2001, 5.
2   Foucault 1991, 27.
3   Foucault 2002d, 120.
4   Foucault 1997c, 298.

3.3 Subjectivities

Although power is viewed as being present everywhere, it is not always readily exposed for analysis. This is why it needs to be examined at work, in a direct relationship to its object. For this, another critical standpoint is needed: subjectivity. This section addresses the topic by introducing the concept of 'subject position' and its relationship to 'identity,' which is a more commonly used concept in tourism research (3.3.1 Subject Positions). Another viewpoint is offered by agency and resistance, which in the case of global nomads is linked to their alternative lifestyles whereby they seek to detach themselves from traditions and societies (3.3.2 Resistance).

This section makes the necessary preparations for examining the subject positions that are available to global nomads, whether global nomads accept these subject positions, and if not, what are their alternatives. The aim is to understand global nomads' agency: how do they build their subjectivities through mobile lifestyles.

3.3.1 Subject Positions

Subjectivities are about who individuals are, and they involve power relationships that are present in individuals' day-to-day life, as Foucault maintains:

This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and

others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power that makes individu-
als subjects.[1]

A classical example illuminates how the process of subjectification works in
practice. French philosopher Louis Althusser describes a situation where a
person is walking down the street when he suddenly hears a police officer call
out, 'Hey, you there!' When the hailed person turns around, he becomes a subject.
He recognises that the hail was addressed to him and he obeys it.[2]

The process of becoming a subject, the hailing and succumbing is an effect of
power that is fundamental to human societies. The very example of Althusser
is familiar from the history of the mobile lifestyle. Vagrants, masterless men
and women who had no home and work, could be stopped at any time when
wandering in the streets and required to give an account of their idling. If they
failed to explain themselves, they were arrested and punished. The process aimed
at subjecting the undesired to the law.

In contemporary societies, it is not so much laws and other repressive meas-
ures that subject global nomads as discussed in the introduction to this chapter;
instead, it is the subtle measures of biopower that attach them to temporary points
of attachment, that is, to subject positions.[3] They are hailed to particular subject
positions for instance by various emotions or by the effects of peer pressure.

The notion of 'subject position' is useful as it detaches us from the concept of
'identity,' which still, even when identity is understood as processual, develop-
mental and actively constructed,[4] implies an existence of a relatively stable core
self. This can be seen for example in the notions that travellers are 'in search of
the self,'[5] or that they have 'true' selves and motives, and 'original' acts of think-
ing, feeling, and willing.[6] In these cases, 'self' and 'identity' are used as 'easy
shorthands for something amorphous and unanalysable,' as discourse analyst
Sara Mills would argue.[7]

Such views are commonplace and not without reason: strong belief in a fixed
and intentional self is one of the cleverest points in the process of subjectification.
It inserts subjects into practices that—whenever they work well—are lived as
if they were natural, logical, rational, normal, and even desired. These subject
positions become part of the subjects' identifications: they categorise them,
mark them by their own individuality, and attach them to their own identity,

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1   Foucault 2002c, 331.
2   Althusser 1971, 173–174.
3   See Hall 1990, 222; Hall 1996, 3–4.
4   See Anderskov 2002; Desforges 2000; Elsrud 2001; Noy 2004; Welk 2004.
5   E.g. Cohen 2011, 1536; Cohen 2010, 295–297.
6   Giddens 1991, 191.
7   Mills 2005, 37.

as Foucault argued.[1] When subjects believe in their own agency, they defend their right to act in the way the discourse in question suggests they act. In other words, they reason for power, and they start to speak in favour of power thus governing themselves.[2]

From the point of view of Foucauldian theories, the speaker's self is never a coherent entity nor is it guided by unambiguous motivations. The speaker may assume varying and even contradictory subject positions, and not only diachronically but synchronically.[3] Global nomads, for instance, can be both adventurers and vagrants depending on the context, as Chapter five will show (see 5.3 Two Discourses). Furthermore, speakers do not entirely control their subjectivities (because discourses speak us rather than the other way round as will be seen in Chapter four, 4.1 Analysis). Thus power relations are at the same time intentional and non-subjective:

> …there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objec-tives. But this does not mean that it results from the choice or decision of an individual subject; let us not look for the headquarters that presides over its rationality…[4]

The question is how to address a subject who is both an agent and a subject.[5] The advantage of the concept of 'subject position' is that it does not privilege one form of homogeneous self, nor does it refer to a transcendental continuity.[6] This view is significant when examining global nomads' societal relationships. These relationships are far from unambiguous: global nomads can act both for power as agents, facilitating and enjoying it, but at the same time also rebelling against it.

For most global nomads, who welcome change and transience, the idea of occupying several subject positions, some of which can be contradictory, poses no problems as will be seen later (see 6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps). For those global nomads, however, who believe in a constant self, this view is more difficult to accept. Bauman argues that few people, in fact, view a life of constant change and various subject positions as desirable.[7] Most seek a personal identity that reflects unity and purpose just like leisure scholar Veal also suggested in regard to lifestyle: people search for meaning and coherence whether it is through identity or lifestyle, or both, and whether this venture is successful

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1   Foucault 2002c, 331. See also Hirsch 2005, 141.

2   See also Baerenholdt 2013, 23.

3   As Foucault sarcastically stated, 'Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order' (Foucault 1969, 28).

4   Foucault 1978, 95.

5   Foucault 2002c, 331.

6   Hall 1996, 10.

7   Bauman 2008, 138.

or not (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers).

The crucial question is, therefore, whether subjectivities are viewed as permanent and stable identities, or as evolving and changing subject positions.[1] Cultural critic Stuart Hall forecasts that the political significance of subjectivities is likely to grow when both the necessity and the impossibility of identities are fully and unambiguously acknowledged.[2] In a similar vein, Bauman argues that shifting subjectivities are 'the hallmarks of today's liquid-modern life-politics.'[3] People assume various subject positions and they can always choose and re-choose, although some individuals are obviously more privileged than others. According to Bauman, hybrids tend to occupy top ranks in the emergent scales of cultural superiority and social prestige, and at the same time, being condemned in perpetuity to one invariable set of values and behavioural patterns is increasingly viewed as a sign of sociocultural inferiority or deprivation.[4] Naturally, such views of subjectivities as a play are not without critique. Habermas attacks theories of subjectification by saying,

> …*socialized individuals can only be perceived as exemplars, as standardized products of some discourse formation—as individual copies that are mechanically punched out.*[5]

What Habermas fails to take into account in his critique is the multitude of subject positions, their combinations, and the ways in which they are created and recreated.[6] The concept does not imply that subject positions were adopted uniformly by a particular group of people or even by members of that specific group.[7] What should also be remembered is subjects' capacity to resist, which means that they cannot be reduced to the effects of power relations. They have an agency, which—according to their awareness, courage, and will—can be used or left unused as the next subsection demonstrates.

3.3.2 Resistance

Power includes its own critique as Foucault famously pointed out, 'Where there is power, there is resistance.' Subjects can never be ensnared by power because they can always modify its grip.[8] As discussed in Chapter two, resistance is to some extent characteristic of those lifestyle migrants who form their subjectivities

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1   Woods 2011, 177. See also Hall 1990, 222; Bauman 2001, 129; Foucault 2004, 15.
2   Hall 1996, 4.
3   Bauman 2008, 187.
4   Bauman 2008, 24.
5   Habermas 1987, 293.
6   See also Mills 2001, 103.
7   Mills 2001, 103; van Dijk 2006, 162.
8   Foucault 1978, 95.; Foucault 1988, 123.

against the dominant discourses in their countries of origin (see 2.2 Lifestyle Migration), and it seems that the same might apply to global nomads. They too exert their agency when leaving, whereas backpackers and lifestyle travellers only detach themselves from the dominant subject positions temporarily and readopt them upon return.

The conventional nature of most travel means that resistance has been rarely discussed in tourism studies.[1] The notions that are available point to how tourism development is increasingly subject to forms of resistance. Resistance is understood as opposition to companies' and states' policies and actions,[2] in other words to the explicit measures of power, while the resistance addressed here is a struggle where individuals contest power relations in their lives and try to minimise their effects.

In early research on long-term travel, resistance was spoken of in terms of alienation. This was the case of the original drifter who was said to be estranged from his home country, drifting being both a symptom and an expression of broader alienating forces. According to Cohen, such alienation was widespread among young Western people especially in the United States and in Western Europe in the 1960s. It led to the student revolution and to various attempts to create alternative lifestyles. Today, the extent of alienation has been viewed to have receded to a significant extent. It is now the stresses and uncertainties of life that are considered to be pushing people to take time out,[3] the quest for authenticity being one of the suggested symptoms of alienation: the more alienated an individual, the more intensive will his or her quest for authenticity be.[4]

What is the resistance global nomads practise? If all is power, how can they step aside and resist it? Foucault speaks of three types of resistance: against forms of domination (ethnic, social, and religious); against forms of exploitation that separate individuals from what they produce (Marxist class struggle); and against that which ties individuals to themselves and submits them to others (struggles against subjectification).[5]

It is the last mode of resistance—not against domination but against certain forms of subjectification—that is interesting for this research. In global nomads' case resistance includes rejecting some of the dominant discourses of the sedentary societies. This resistance is not necessarily an active rebellion as the word 'resistance' implies; it can simply be a subtle refusal or indifference towards the dominant discourses. It is based on an idea that power should neither be hated and confronted, nor loved and passionately followed because any passionate

1   See Hannam & Knox 2010.
2   See Hannam 2002, 232.
3   Cohen 2004, 44.
4   MacCannell 1999, 160; Cohen 1979, 179; Cohen 2004, 50.
5   Foucault 2002c, 331.

attachment is only bound to turn resistance into new, possibly even more intense forms of subjection, as Foucault researcher Sergei Prozorov argues. When power does not get the attention it wants, it is reduced to a pure form.[1]

Perhaps the most convenient word for describing global nomads' resistance is 'agency,' which pays attention to individual will and responsibility. Agency requires encountering power within oneself, which is one of the most difficult phases in the task. As Žižek says, 'liberation hurts.'[2] It leaves one with a bitter regret about all that 'could have been,' because the new freedom shows the full extent of one's voluntary servitude in the past.[3]

Agency does not free global nomads of all power relationships either. Most often one power relation is simply replaced with another, which implies that when global nomads create themselves new subjectivities, they will be positioned in a new power grid. If the concept of power has negative connotations, it is here that they can be found: people continuously succumb to repressive but some-how tempting subject positions that are proposed to them because they seek familiarity, security, and continuity. Previous research has noted, for instance, that those lifestyle migrants who want to free themselves of Western regimes of state, market and morality, might go to trendy meditation resorts whose organisation employs control mechanisms that are typically found in totalitarian institutions.[4] Similarly, it can be assumed that although global nomads have left their countries of origin behind, there will be other power relationships which turn them into subjects. Thus the analysis has to find out not only what are the dominant subject positions available to global nomads, but also what are their alternatives and where do these alternatives lead global nomads to.

Answering these questions is not straightforward, as there are still many things we do not know about subject positions. Very little is known, for instance, about why people occupy some subject positions rather than others as Stuart Hall points out:

> *…what remains to be accounted for is a theory of what the mechanisms are by which individuals as subjects identify with the positions to which they are summoned as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and per-form these positions, and why they never do so completely, and some never do, or are in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting,*

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1   Prozorov 2007, 20, 145. See also Foucault 2002, 109.
2   Rasmussen 2004.
3   Prozorov 2007, 150.
4   D'Andrea 2007, 163.

*negotiating, and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with
which they confront and regulate themselves.[1]*

While Hall calls for a theory that would explain the assumption of various subject
positions, there is also a danger attached: if the reasons could be predicted, it
would be easy to manipulate people. Now there is always the element of surprise.
It is not possible to know, for instance, why some sedentary people suddenly
decide to become nomadic because the reasons making one person to opt for
the nomadic lifestyle might drive another person to become sedentary. One
example of this is the dangers that are viewed to be inherent in travel. Danger
may make some people stay at home, while others want to challenge themselves
by facing their fears.

To summarise the contents of this section on subjectivities in relation to global
nomads: in this research, the concept of 'subject position' will be used instead
of 'identity.' It detaches global nomads from the constraints of one coherent
identity and draws attention to power negotiations in their lives. Global nomads
are subjects in both senses of the word: they are subjects who assume dominant
subject positions and they are also agents who search for alternatives.

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1   Hall 1996, 10, 13–14.

3.4 Research Questions

Having outlined the theoretical approach, it is time to move on to research questions that guide the methodological choices and the analysis in the subsequent chapters.

This thesis takes as its starting point location-independence and a particular group of mobile people, global nomads, in order to examine what happens when home is no longer the immediate point of return of the journey (see 2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel'). The aim is to analyse what are the prerequisites and implications of such lifestyles both from the viewpoint of individuals themselves and the sedentary societies. Let us encapsulate this main research question as follows:

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT FACILITATE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LOCATION-INDEPENDENT LIFESTYLES WITHIN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES?

The plural form 'sedentary societies' in the question is deliberate. Global nomads are not only positioned in relation to their society of origin or Western societies in general; they also have ties to other sedentary societies, either by having attachments to them, or by trying to seek detachment from them.

In order to approach the main research question in the analysis, an auxiliary inquiry, which corresponds to the thematic structure of the thesis, is defined. The auxiliary questions are:

(i) HOW CAN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES BE CHARACTERISED, AND WHICH PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN THEM? (Chapter 5 Global Nomads)

(ii) TO WHAT EXTENT ARE GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN THEIR SOCIAL RELATION- SHIPS? (Chapter 6 Social Relationships)

(iii) TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THEIR LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES? (Chapter 7 In and Outside of Societies)

Question (i) is geared towards generating knowledge about global nomads and their lifestyles. As the topic remains under-explored, a rounded picture of global nomads, as well as of those practices and discourses that formulate and support their location-independent lifestyles, is needed.

Global nomads' practices will be approached with discourse analysis enriched with Giddens' practice approach as discussed in Chapter two (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). In Foucauldian thinking, 'discourse' and 'practice' imply one another, 'discourses *are* practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak,'[1] and thus they have practical consequences. This initial definition of 'discourse' and 'practice' will be developed further in the next chapter (see 4.1 Analysis).

Question (ii) analyses global nomads' subjectivities and the role of (bio)power in their lives as both enabling and constraining. As it is only in relation to other people that a subjectivity can be formed, the topic is approached from the point of view of global nomads' social relationships.

Question (iii) moves on to societal level. As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, global nomads' location-independence includes problematic features from the point of view of sedentary societies. These norms concerning mobilities are not explicitly stated facts but they manifest themselves in an implicit level of everyday practices. Thus the research needs to delve not only into forms of sovereign power such as government regulations but also into the hidden forms of biopower.

The chosen research questions guide the thesis to contextual analysis that takes into account wider economic, social, political, and cultural environments. Although this work thus deviates from the mainstream of tourism studies (see 2.1.2 Backpackers), the chosen contextual approach is not new. When Cohen examined the drifter's journeys in the 1970s, he concluded that they were a symptom of the alienating forces in his home country. Since then, however, this macrolevel approach has disappeared into the margins in favour of psychological, consumerist, and statistical studies.

In this research, contextual approach is vital. As location-independence ques- tions some of the basic values in sedentary societies, it cannot be examined in a vacuum as a series of individual choices only; it also has important social

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1   Foucault 1969, 66–67.

implications. Thus the academic relevance of this thesis to tourism studies is not only generating new knowledge about location-independence but also developing comprehensive approaches that include issues of power.

In regard to social implications, the research will locate the fine line between encouraged and rejected mobilities by examining the factors that both facilitate and constrain global nomads' lifestyles, and reflect its repercussions. Analysing this line is essential as it tells not only of the status of mobilities in contemporary societies but of sedentary societies themselves. As Urry maintains, just why various activities, such as particular kinds of mobilities, are suppressed or denied or treated as alternative or deviant, can illuminate how societies operate much more generally.[1] Thus, by making societies' norms and values regarding mobilities visible, global nomads' lifestyles can provide us with a revealing mirror of sedentary societies' power struggles—what are their strengths and weaknesses and threats and possibilities in regards to contemporary and future mobilities.[2]

Before moving on to the methodology, let us conclude this chapter on power and subjectivities from the point of view of global nomads. Power appears to be omnipresent in global nomads' lives, as all their social and societal relationships and even their very own subjectivities include power, and thus they themselves facilitate it and collaborate with it. From the point of view of research this means that investigations have to proceed from bottom to top, from global nomads' subjectivities and personal relationships to the level of societies.[3] We need to discuss whether power can be escaped at all, even by detaching oneself from society, and is it at all desired. These viewpoints pay attention to the fact that power is never just about empowerment and disempowerment, winners and losers. Power relationships are much more complex than critical research has traditionally assumed as they emanate from our very own subjectivities.

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1 Urry 2002b, 2. See also Foucault 2002c, 320, 335–336; Foucault 1978, 83.
2 Foucault 2002c, 335–336.
3 Foucault 1997c, 292.

4 Methodology

This chapter discusses how to translate Foucauldian theories on power and subjectivity into actual methods with which to analyse global nomads' lifestyles as vehicles for subjectivity forming and as sites of power struggles. As discussed in Chapter two, the notion of lifestyle has taken on a particular significance in contemporary societies (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). When people's subjectivities are no longer so firmly structured in advance by social hierarchies and traditional authorities, there is a diversity of subject positions available.[1] As these subjectivities are produced as an effect through and within discourse, as Stuart Hall suggests, they also have to be examined through discourses.[2]

The current chapter represents the chosen methodology. It starts with the basic principles, concepts and approaches of discourse analysis (4.1 Analysis), and continues to the methods with which the research material was collected (4.2 Collection of Research Material). The chapter ends with a discussion of the researcher's own position in regard to global nomadism and ethical considerations (4.3 The Position of the Researcher and Ethical Concerns).

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1 Giddens 1991, 5, 9, 81. See also Bauman 2008, 24–25.
2 Hall 1996, 10.

4.1 Analysis

Discourse analysis has not been widely used in tourism studies, and thus it is pertinent to start by positioning the chosen methodology into the field. As mentioned earlier, this research is qualitative. Statistical methods would not have been suitable because of two main reasons: the affirmative nature of positivist methods (3.1 Why a Foucauldian Approach?) and the small number of global nomads which makes wide-scale surveys impossible.

In qualitative tourism studies, ethnographic research has by far been one of the most common approaches, and it will also be employed in this research for the gathering of the research material in the form of interviews and limited participant observation (4.2 Collection of Research Material). Other methods used in tourism research include phenomenology, hermeneutics, constructivism, and narratology. Of these, narratology has been gaining currency in recent years, and as discourse analysis shares some aspects with it, let us have a look at the similarities and differences.

Both discourse analysis and narratology examine the ways in which travellers construct, represent and narrate their experiences, and both also analyse how these narratives construct travellers' identifications (be they under the label of 'subject position,' 'identity,' or 'self,' see discussion in 3.3.1 Subject Positions). Both methods are based on the idea of social construction, but while narratology seeks to understand the individual,[1] discourse analysis takes into account the broader context in which individual discourses are produced.

It is here, in the notion of 'context,' where the paths of narratology and discourse analysis most visibly fork. Another difference is that narratives are sometimes understood as 'mere narratives,' implying that there is a truth behind them which is beyond the scope of the research.[2] In discourse analysis, on the

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1   E.g. Marvasti 2004, 97.
2   E.g. Elsrud 2001, 613.

other hand, discourses are viewed to be social practices that construct the reality rather than mask it. A third point to consider is that narratology is interested in how a story is made coherent and meaningful,[1] whereas discourse analysis is more interested in frictions and discontinuities.

This change of perspective that discourse analysis offers is needed in order to understand whether mobilities are constitutive of societies as the new mobilities paradigm argues (see 2.3 New Mobilities Paradigm), and where the sedentary societies draw the line—that is, what kind of mobilities are considered as anti-constitutional, counter-cultural, and maybe even destructive. Another aspect favouring discourse analysis is that it is fit for a meta-theoretical analysis which critically assesses existing structures, thinking models, and concepts.

Discourse analysis was first developed in the field of epistemology but it later became even more popular in social sciences and humanities. This shift is known as the 'discursive turn.' It made 'discourse' one of the most popular terms in Western scholars' vocabulary, although in most cases it was used as a mere conceptual import in some other methodological context. To avoid the same mistake, this chapter discusses the chosen methodology and its basic principles before proceeding to actual methods.

The methodology of this research comes from three sources: Foucault's, Norman Fairclough's and Teun A. van Dijk's theories. Foucault developed discourse analysis early on in his career in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) in the first wave of the discursive turn. Fairclough (particularly *Language and Power,* 1989) and van Dijk (particularly works *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach,* 2008 and *Discourse and Power*, 2008), on the other hand, represent the newer version of the methodology, the so called critical discourse analysis. It is a branch of sociolinguistics which is concerned with the exercise of power through language.

The chosen mixed-method approach is in line with the aims of discourse analysis: it rejects a singular overarching methodology and instead seeks to develop methodological tools in relationship with the research material.[2] The main division of labour so to speak is to create a general methodological view with Foucauldian approaches that have influenced both Fairclough's and van Dijk's works, and employ the more practically oriented methods of the latter to the analysis, but without assuming their sometimes simplifying views on power and ideology.

Both Fairclough and van Dijk focus on social power abuse, dominance, and inequality, thus following the path marked out by traditional critical research. Fairclough, for instance, investigates how language contributes to the domination of some people by others. He asks whose interests are served, and whose

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1   E.g. Marvasti 2004, 98.
2   See also Brown (forthcoming).

are negated, although he does detach the concept of power from class, and he also believes that resistance and change are not only possible but continuously happening.[1] However, Foucault's notion of power is more useful for the purposes of this research because it shows the omnipresence and seductive nature of power thus adding depth to the analysis.

To offer a detailed description of the concepts, methods, and processes used in order to allow the reader to understand how the conclusions will be arrived at, this section discusses the following topics: the overall aim and principles of discourse analysis (4.1.1 The Aim and the Basic Principles of Analysis), discourses themselves (4.1.2 Discourse), the relationship between discourses, power, and knowledge (4.1.3 Knowledge and Power), the analysis process (4.1.4 The Process), and the actual methods to be used (4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality and 4.1.6 Contextual Analysis).

4.1.1 The Aim and the Basic Principles of Analysis

Discourse analysis starts with the idea that the world around us is socially constructed, and it is constructed through discourses.[2] Although discourse analysis works with language, it is neither linguistic nor narrative research. The use of language is viewed as a form of social practice that is socially conditioned and that has social effects.[3] No theory of language could explain, for instance, how a subject is constituted. Language may be essential in the process, but the problem is not only what is said, but what is done, as philosopher John Rajchman argues.[4] The aim of discourse analysis is to systematically explore the two, discourses and practices, and the wider economic, political, social and cultural structures, relations, and processes entailed. It investigates how discourses and practices arise out of and are shaped by relations of power, and it explores how the opacity of these relationships is itself a factor which is securing power, as Fairclough encapsulates.[5]

What we need for such an analysis in the first place is an understanding of the concept of 'text' which is the primary object of analysis. Although a 'text' is traditionally understood to be a piece of written language, discourse analysis has assumed a broader conception: a text may be transcribed interviews and other recorded information about social life that do not need to be linguistic at all.[6] Any cultural or social artefact—a picture, a building, a piece of music, or

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1   Fairclough 1989, 4–5, 34, 46. See also van Dijk 2008b, 1–2, 85.
2   Fairclough 1989, 22–23.
3   Fairclough 1989, 20.
4   Rajchman 1986, 169.
5   Fairclough 1995, 132–133.
6   E.g. Marvasti 2004, 90.

act—can be analysed as a text which creates meanings.[1]

Discourse analysis is a strategy of reading and interrogating, that is, posing meaningful questions to the research material. No computer programme or other automated tool can be used for the task as the methodology is based on contextual analysis.[2] Merely counting, for instance, how many times certain key words such as 'nomad' or 'society' occur in the interviews with a data analysis software would not help us to understand the phenomenon of global nomads nor the role of power and subjectivities in their lives, and nor is any piece of software capable of posing critical questions or analysing the answers. Thus, discourse analysis is a highly labour-intensive task that builds on nuanced, explicit or tacit, knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

4.1.2 Discourse

How to define the concept of 'discourse'?[3] To start with, discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak, to follow one of Foucault's formulations.[4] In regard to global nomads this means that a discourse is a model of thinking with which they represent their lifestyles. They might employ, for instance, such metaphors as nomadism or hoboing, or they might speak about their lifestyles in terms of freedom. All these meanings build them particular subject positions, and they have actual implications on their lives influencing, for example, how they travel, structure time, make decisions about their next destinations, and organise their consumption to support their travelling lifestyle. This initial definition of 'discourse' will be developed further in the current section, and there will be a summary of the meanings at the end (see 4.1.3 Knowledge and Power).

Discourses always differ in time and with the kinds of institutions and social practices in which they take shape. Thus there exist no 'truths' about the nomadic lifestyle but only different discourses. In fact, one of the main contributions of the discursive turn was to show that all of our most firmly held beliefs about ourselves, societies, and social relations are embedded in contingent discursive representations.[5] The same applies to lifestyles, philosophical ideas, ethical maxims, aesthetic preferences, and everyday beliefs. All are equally fluid, mobile, and contextual, and thus without supreme authority. They are constantly being

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1 Fairclough 1995, 4.

2 See van Dijk 2008, 4.

3 Foucault used 'discourse' to mean, first, all language and the system of rules whereby utterances/texts are produced; second, all texts and utterances produced by those rules, regardless of their literary or factual status; third, groupings of texts/utterances. (Macdonell 1986, 4.)

4 Foucault 1969, 66–67.

5 Foucault 1998d, 261.

produced anew in various competing discourses.

Discourses differ, for instance, with the positions of those who speak, and those whom they address, discourse analyst Diane Macdonell encapsulates.[1] If the speaker is a global nomad who addresses other global nomads, the discourse in question is probably different than in another situation where the sedentary form the audience. Because of the high number of possible variables, discourse analysis examines not only discourses but also constraints of production and reception. It is these constraints which explain what manner of information can be represented at a given context.[2]

Various historical situations have, for instance, given rise to such representations of long-term travel as vagrancy, Victorian explorations, wandervogelism, working tourism, drifting, and backpacking.[3] They are not mutually exclusive, nor have they been developing in a linear fashion so that the new representations would have just replaced the old ones. Some of the representations are emergent, others dominant, and yet others residual existing side by side—to borrow the terms of cultural theoretician Raymond Williams[4]—and they might still influence the way in which the phenomenon of long-term travel is understood in contemporary societies.

The existence of discursive constraints raises an interesting question: if people say only what they are able to say, who or what dictates the rules? As discussed in the previous chapter, Foucauldian analysis seeks no authority nor institution who would use power over people; instead, it reveals an implicit and anonymous stratum of knowledge (see 3.2 Power). This stratum of knowledge is a set of conditions of knowledge—a regime of truth—which restricts what is possible to think in a given domain and period.[5]

What are the constraints that make global nomads create their lifestyles in specific terms? Why is it that they might represent their lifestyle as nomadism or hoboism, and why do they choose the notion of freedom when speaking about it? In short, the answer is negotiations of power. Discourse analysis views discourses as part of a vast power network where various discourses size each other up and compete with each other for the dominant position. Those discourses that lose their contingent nature in the battle become dominating and they are treated as the truth. As such, they influence on social conventions, mentalities, feelings, actions, and behaviours, and in this sense, they become 'real.'

To summarise the concept of 'discourse' presented so far from the point of

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1 Macdonell 1986, 1.

2 'Representation' as used here bears no relation to mimesis nor objects, facts, descriptions, or ways of seeing (Cf. Tyler 1986, 130; Jensen 2011). It is a construction, a set of artificial meanings which are put together and made function as true.

3 Cohen 1973; Cohen 2004, 50.

4 Williams 1977, 121–127.

5 Foucault 2005, xi; Foucault 1998d, 261.

view of this research: discourses are models of thinking and acting that comprise a particular view and subject positions on global nomadism, and they have practical consequences shaping and supporting global nomads' lifestyles. All these discourses are part of power struggles where the nature of 'reality' is being negotiated and constructed. Global nomads may employ various discourses which represent their lifestyles in different terms, sometimes even contradictorily. The chosen discourses depend on various factors such as the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts that global nomads find themselves in; the kinds of institutions, subject positions, and social practices in which discourses take shape; the audience, and the reasons why they are addressed. As these variables show, discourse analysis cannot be conducted in a vacuum by focusing on travellers' motivations and behaviours only. These things exist within wider societal structures, relations, and processes.

4.1.3 Knowledge and Power

Let us move on to examine the relationships between discourse, power, and knowledge in order to make a comparison between 'discourse' and 'ideology.' Of these two concepts, ideology has been more commonly used in tourism and lifestyle migration studies, and thus a short clarification why discourse was chosen for this research is pertinent.

Discourses, knowledge, and power are closely knit as all three, according to Foucault, imply and require each other.[1]

> *…power and knowledge directly imply one another… there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.[2]*

When making knowledge possible, discourses entangle people in a complex web of power relationships. This can be witnessed, for instance, when trying to understand global nomadism in the field of tourism studies. Various issues of power emerge which require taking sides: should global nomads be identified with the counter-cultural drifter or with educational tourists on a rite of passage (see 2.1 Tourism Studies)? Or should they be thought of as gypsies and hoboes as some of the interviewees in this research suggest? As this example shows, whenever discourses produce knowledge, that knowledge is open to dispute.

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1 Foucault 2002c, 119, 131; see also Foucault 1991, 26–28.
2 Foucault 1991, 27.

> *…discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle.*[1]

If discourses create realities and truths and involve power struggles as just described, are they ideologies? Let us next consider three points in which these two concepts differ from each other.

First, ideology is associated with the idea of false consciousness. It is viewed to be in direct opposition to something else that is supposed to count as truth. Discourse analysis, on the other hand, denies the existence of fundamental truths. Discourses are ontologically neither true nor false. Each society has its own regime of truth, in other words their own types of discourses that are accepted and made to function as true.[2]

Second, ideology is supposed to have a subject, someone or something that oppresses others. This often leads to a simplistic view on power where the dominant ideology is viewed to serve the dominant class. As discussed in the previous chapter, from a Foucauldian viewpoint power is not something to be possessed and acquired; it is a network of relationships. Furthermore, it is a complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced to any repressive master and slave type of relationships (see 3.2 Power); instead, power might be alluring and pleasant.

Third, ideology is viewed to be in a secondary position in relation to something which functions as the infrastructure (or economic or material determinant) for it.[3] Ideology, then, is nothing but a reflection of the material reality. Discourses, on the other hand, are part and parcel of that infrastructure. There is no reality which would precede discourses because reality, as such, is a discursive construction.

Discourses are, therefore, not just about semantics. They are models of thinking that comprise a view of society and its organisation. They constitute realities and direct the way in which people think and see the world, themselves, and others, and they lead to concrete actions, for example guiding the way they interact with other people, and the way other people view and treat them. If global nomads, for instance, presented themselves as full-time travellers who have no home and work when crossing a border, they would probably raise suspicions in the officials that might lead to a refusal of entry. This kind of experience, or the mere anticipation of such an outcome, might make global nomads represent themselves in a less provocative way.

To summarise the lines of thought presented so far on discourses, power, and subjectivities in relation to global nomads:

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1   Foucault 1981, 52–53.
2   Foucault 2002d, 131. By 'regime' Foucault refers to a system of habit, rules, and incentives that pattern behaviour.
3   Foucault 2002d, 119.

- Discourses are practices that systematically shape global nomads, their lifestyles, and their relationship to sedentary societies.
- Discourses on global nomads' lifestyles are ontologically neither true nor false. Each society has its own regime of truth, that is their own types of discourses that are accepted and made to function as true.
- The various discourses on global nomads oppose and challenge each other of the dominant position. Those discourses that lose their contingent nature in this struggle are treated as the truth, and they have practical consequences shaping global nomads' lives and their encounters with other people and sedentary societies.
- Discourses invite global nomads into particular subject positions, and when they succumb to these hailings, they become subjects in the double sense of the word: they become both agents and subjects to it. This inserts global nomads into practices that, whenever they work well, are lived as if they were natural, logical, rational, normal, and even desired.
- Global nomads have, at least in theory, a capacity to resist dominant subject positions and create new ones.

4.1.4 The Process

The concept of 'discourse' having being defined, this subsection proceeds to the actual analysis which will be applied in subsequent chapters. The aim is to offer a description of the process, and to indicate where each stage will figure in the thesis. How to proceed? Fairclough suggests the following stages:

- text analysis (description)
- processing analysis (interpretation)
- contextual analysis (explanation).[1]

The first stage, text analysis, aims at preparing the research material for further analysis by characterising the global nomads interviewed and by paying attention to their travel practices (Chapter 5 Global Nomads).

The second stage, processing analysis, is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction. It sees text as a product and as a resource in the process of interpretation.[2] The second phase also takes place in Chapter five where the discourses which shape and support global nomads' lifestyles will be analysed (5.3 Two Discourses).

The focus of this research is on the third phase, contextual analysis, which pays attention to the fact that global nomads' lifestyles are formulated in relation to sedentary societies. The analysis will examine global nomads' proximity and

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1 Fairclough 1989, 26; Fairclough 1995, 98.
2 Fairclough 1989, 26.

distance from societies as well as their freedoms and constraints. Contextual analysis will be conducted in Chapters six and seven (6 Social Relationships and 7 In and Outside of Societies).

The presented stages of analysis are not always linear as they are in many ways intertwined and cannot be done in isolation. As Fairclough reminds us, the descriptive phase already requires a fair amount of interpretation when deciding what to bring out from the research material: what topics to discuss and what to ignore.[1] Consequently, the indication of where each stage is conducted should be viewed as suggestive.

4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality

This and the following subsection detail the stages two and three, processing and contextual analysis. Of these, processing analysis is the stage which most closely resembles linguistics as it requires morphological analysis. Those units of meaning that support each other and form a relatively coherent system of meaning-making, that is a discourse will be identified, and the elements of which they are made of will be examined. In this task, the structures of discourses and the rhetorical devices used will be dismantled. These include:

- argumentation
- agency (active and passive structures of the discourse)
- modalities (expressing necessity, probability, possibility, obligation, permission)
- degrees of precision and vagueness
- rhetorical devices (such as synonyms, metaphors, metonymies, binary oppositions, causal relationships, and means of legitimisation)
- choice of words, their etymology, and connotations.[2]

Of these, for instance such rhetorical devices as binary oppositions (the discussed oppositions home/away, leisure/work, mobility/immobility, sedentary/nomad) build subject positions with which global nomads can identify with certain groups of people and at the same time distinguish themselves from other groups of people. Such binary oppositions mark the norm with which acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are distinguished from each other, and they are thus a form of biopower which is based on constant supervision: it compares, differentiates, orders, homogenises, and excludes trying to ensure a desirable outcome.[3] Questioning these antagonisms, which prevail both in colloquial talk

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1   Fairclough 1989, 26–27.
2   Van Dijk 2008, 178–190; Fairclough 1989, 110–139.
3   Foucault 1991, 183, 199, 304.

and in science,[1] is one of the tasks of critical discourse analysis.[2] The aim is to show that they create prejudices which impede understanding, and that they are essentially effects of power.[3]

Together all the elements to be investigated—structure, organisation, argumentation, rhetorical devices, choice of words—form a loose closure, a discourse, in which statements are accurate only in that particular context. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, discourses are not universal nor ahistorical but tied to various contextual constraints (see 4.1.2 Discourse). At any given point of time, there exist several competing discourses.

In this research, two discourses will be identified: the dominant and the opposing one. The underlying assumption is that global nomads do not have clear, unambiguous motivations, aims, and practices, nor that their relationships to societies are similar in each case. With the two discourses, a more multidimensional picture of the phenomenon can be drawn, and at the same time, one of the main principles of discourse analysis will be respected: namely that it does not propose a single, correct representation. Instead, the analysis shows that meanings are constantly negotiated and contested.

The division into the dominant and the opposing discourse is naturally artificial and it will only be used for analytical purposes. It would be far too simplistic to say that discourses were just 'subservient to power or raised up against it,' as Foucault says.[4]

> …discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.[5]

Thus, instead of black and white interpretations, the processing analysis pays attention to a multiplicity of discourses and practices. In the name of analytical efficiency and economy, however, the number of discourses analysed have to be limited. In this research, two opposing discourses were judged to be enough for showing that there exist tensions and struggle about the subject of global nomadism. These discrepancies exist not only between different persons but they can also exist within the same interview of the same person.

For a discourse analyst, such contradictions are a fascinating object of study. The contradicting material will not be explained away as is often done in the

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1   Urry 2002b, 1.
2   See also Franklin 2007, 139.
3   Frello 2008, 26, 47.
4   Foucault 1978, 100–101.
5   Foucault 1978, 101.

name of analytical coherency; instead, attention will be paid to the diverse representations that global nomads' lifestyles inspire. These discontinuities reveal much more than anything else: they show the contradictory meanings that could be created in the context, and thus they show power at work, in the process of negotiation.

Maintaining plurality, especially when the discourses contradict each other, may be challenged at the level of academic representation, particularly if the paradigm favours unambiguous interpretations with which to predict future behaviour. However, the same methods are not suitable if the aim is to create a picture of living beings whose lives are full of events as is the case in this study.[1] As global nomads do not always know what happens next and why, it is unlikely that the researcher would have such knowledge at hand either. Instead of logic, it is chaos that dominates and thus fitting research objects into a rigid analytical frame does not serve the purpose.

However, it should be remembered that this thesis is also bound to the academic requirements of systematisation, order, and logic, and it contains definitions, statements, and assumptions about its objects which all threaten plurality. All of the formulations (e.g. the definition of 'global nomad,' see 1.2 Research Set-Up) made so far are already bits and pieces of power struggles that aim to classify, organise, and keep global nomads in order. The only way to answer this challenge is to make the conditions and constraints of the research transparent by critical reflection. This means pointing out chosen approaches, their alternatives, reasons for choosing a particular approach, and the overall aim of the research.

4.1.6 Contextual Analysis

The contextual phase is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context, in other words with the processes of production and reception and their social effects.[2] In this phase, discursive constraints—those anonymous economic, social, political, and cultural factors that are determined in time and space, and which lead to particular discourses—are examined.[3] They determine the underlying assumptions which direct knowledge production: what can and cannot be said. The analysis pays attention to the positions and viewpoints of the speaker (that is the institutions which prompt people to speak about a certain subject and store and distribute the things that are said), their reasons, and the audience.[4]

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1   See Hottola 1999, 79; Franklin & Crang 2001, 6.
2   Fairclough 1989, 26.
3   Mills 2005, 68.
4   Foucault 1981, 52; Foucault 1978, 11.

With seemingly simple observations—who, what, when, where, to whom and why—the analysis is able to tackle power at work, in a direct relationship to its object. It shows how global nomads are constituted as subjects of their own knowledge and as subjects who exercise, submit to, and resist power relations.[1]

Discursive constraints are not extradiscursive in the sense that they would exist outside discourses. On the contrary, they are also discursive, for the social and discursive realities are in a dialogical relationship with each other (see 4.1.3 Knowledge and Power). Foucault refers to these constraints as 'extradiscursive' only because they are not part of a particular discourse but consist of several discourses. They form the stratum of knowledge in which individual statements can be produced and launched as truths.

The aim of the context analysis is to ascertain what kind of coexistence of discourses is possible and what kind of constraints give rise to these specific models of thinking and acting. There is always dissonance, and this is the most important and interesting part of the analysis. Why is there disagreement on global nomadism? What are the conflicting interests? What are the conflicts' repercussions?

In this task, attention is paid to global nomads' subject positions by analysing the different rationales with which they justify their travels (see 5.1.3 Reasons for Travel). When global nomads explain their reasons, they appeal to a number of rationales which position them as subjects. These might be (and often are) contradictory, because they depend on the discourses employed, not on the person speaking.

A short clarification is pertinent in order to avoid misunderstandings. Discourse analysis does not aim at digging out from the interviews something that is hidden—what the interviewees' were really saying in spite of themselves. Instead of searching for the ultimate truth or pointing out incoherences in the answers, attention is paid to the mode of existence of statements: why particular statements appeared when and where they did—these and no others, as Foucault argues.[2] Global nomads—nor anybody else—are fully in charge when speaking. Discourses speak us rather than the other way around.[3]

In the same manner as there are constraints concerning production of discourses, there are constraints concerning reception. Readings of global nomads' interviews may, in theory, be infinite, but as there are various constraints how to read at any historical, cultural, social, political, and theoretical context, there is essentially no absolute freedom.[4] This thesis is not only bound by academic constraints of production and reception mentioned in the previous subsection but

1 Foucault 1997f, 318.
2 Foucault 2004, 85.
3 See Foucault 1998e.
4 De Man 1979.

also by the constraints of critical theories which lead, for instance, to questioning of ready-made and already tried and accepted concepts. Thus these contextual presumptions have to be acknowledged and taken into account in the analysis.

To summarise the processes and methods of analysis, the starting point will be in 1) descriptive analysis which prepares the research material for further analysis. 2) In the processing phase, two discourses on global nomads, the dominant and the opposing one, will be identified in order to show the plurality of discourses. The method used is morphological analysis which examines structure, organisation, argumentation, rhetorical devices, and choice of words. 3) Contextual analysis will investigate discursive constraints on production and reception which determine the underlying assumptions that direct knowledge production: what can and what cannot be said in a given context. For this purpose, the method used is an inquiry which examines the position and viewpoints of speakers, whom do they address, how, and why.

4.2 Collection of Research Material

As this research sets out to examine lifestyles, power and subjectivities, extensive knowledge on global nomads, their travel styles, and social and societal relationships is needed. The main material of the thesis is based on interviews enriched with participant observation. This section discusses how the material was gathered (4.2.1 Interviews, 4.2.2 Participant Observation, and 4.2.3 Follow-Up Interviews), and how the interviewees were found (4.2.4 Finding the Interviewees).

4.2.1 Interviews

The main research material was gathered in semi-structured, in-depth interviews in 2010. The same set of questions was used to guide all thirty interviews (see Appendix II: Interview Questions). The questions probed the interviewees' daily life, motivations, decision-making processes, directions, schedules, livelihood, possibilities, challenges, and their relationships with other people and their encounters with sedentary societies. Most of the questions were open-ended, treated as openings for discussion, and guiding their direction was avoided in the interviews.

When the choice of a semi-structured interview was made, it was clear that formal interviewing methods might hinder the collection of research material rather than help it. However, a set of premeditated questions was made in order to ensure that all the important topics would be covered, and to facilitate the flow of discussion with the majority of interviewees who were not personally known to the interviewer beforehand. Ensuring the flow was considered particularly critical because the interviews were made through video conferencing, which is neither a natural nor a comfortable medium for everybody. The choice for video conferencing was made as the respondents were scattered around the

world from Alaska to Fiji, and meeting everyone in person would not have been possible neither logistically nor financially.

While information technology made the interviews possible, it also posed constraints on the research. Some of the interviewees were in countries where internet connections were poor. Sometimes the call was hanging and it was difficult to make out what the interviewee was saying, or Skype crashed before the first question could be asked. In these cases, the interviews were delayed until the interviewees had moved on to another place, or until they were visiting their families so that they had a good internet connection and a possibility to do the interview in a peaceful environment rather than in a noisy internet café.

The interviews were recorded with a software package called VodBurner, which recorded both video and audio streams offering additional data for the analysis. The assessment of answers was easier when seeing the interviewees' facial expressions, their movements, and the surroundings they were in.[1] As useful as VodBurner was in the process, it has a weakness: it is designed for recording short, couple of minutes' clips, and so there is the risk of losing the file if the interview is too long. For this reason, all the interviews were interrupted after one hour, and a new call was placed.

The interviews lasted from 45 to 180 minutes. As the majority, 60 per cent of the interviewees, are not native English speakers, the obvious language mistakes in quotations have been corrected. Naturally the fact that English is an acquired language for many also affected answers. The most fast-flowing and detailed answers came from native speakers who were better able to express themselves. This fact will be taken into account when analysing those interviews in which English was clearly a limitation.

The answers were transcribed once all the interviews had been conducted, and the material was organised by themes that correspond to the chapters of the thesis as indicated in relation to the research questions (see 3.4 Research Questions).

4.2.2 Participant Observation

The collection of research material included participating in respondents' lives outside of the interview situations. Participant observation was challenged by global nomads' travel styles. They avoid commitments, they are constantly on the move, and they prefer to travel alone or in pairs without planning their travels too far ahead. Under these circumstances, instant ethnography was considered the most viable option. It was done whenever the occasion arose, that is, when the interviewees were travelling within the same continent as the researcher, at a distance of a couple of thousands of kilometres so that the travel expenses could be kept to a reasonable level. However, as the Skype interviews were the

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1   See also Pereiro 2010, 183.

only way to reach all the participants, more attention was paid to the interviews in the analysis than observation in the name of participant equality.

The chosen method of instant ethnography is an emerging methodological area which has been used in similar situations where research objects are not staying and living only in one place, guiding researchers to use multiple-site data gathering.[1] Naturally, instant ethnography is significantly limited compared to traditional ethnographic studies that require several months' of observation, but the move towards new methods is paralleled by social and physical changes, as John Law and John Urry maintain.[2] When people's lives are ever more transient, single-site ethnographies are bound to become rarer guiding researchers to more mobile approaches.

The researcher met fourteen of the interviewees personally in Italy, Greece, Malaysia, China, Australia, Thailand, India, and Turkey, and she had met earlier three of the interviewees in Argentina and in China. During the observation period, the researcher was hosting the interviewee or the other way around, or both were hosted by the same hospitality exchange member, or they stayed in a hotel or a hostel. Naturally, when living together for a couple of days, the circumstances were most favourable for observation because the situations were not constrained by appointments, and the venue was more relaxed and allowed everyone to go about their daily lives. Consequently, also those interviewees who had been a bit shy in the Skype interview, became more open, and so the observations offered valuable complementary material.

Participant observation broadened the views which were formed on the basis of the fairly static Skype interviews. In the interviews, the respondents had to sit in one place, they had to comply to a fixed time and date, and their lifestyles were discussed according to a semi-structured approach which were all rather antithetical to the nomadic lifestyle, whereas participant observation allowed an immersion into the subjects' lives.[3] The time together included everyday living such as walking, sitting, talking, cooking, watching films, and exploring the surroundings. This kind of observation method has been called 'participant-observation on the move' or 'being mobile-with' in ethnographic literature.[4]

In addition to the personal meetings with the interviewees, the researcher dwelt permanently in the loose-knit community of global nomads which formed around this research. Most of these encounters happened on the internet involving a combination of proximity and distance, nearness and farness, as ethnographer Christine Hine describes the characteristics of cyberethnography.[5] As many of

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1   E.g. Marcus 1995; D'Andrea 2007.
2   Law & Urry 2003, 1.
3   Büscher & Urry 2009, 103–104.
4   See Büscher & Urry 2009; Benson 2011b, 222.
5   E.g. Hine 2000.

global nomads' social relationships are maintained on the internet (see 6 Social Relationships), cyberethnography was a revealing part of their lives. The interviewees share many intimate things to their networks in social media, and this material enriched the interviews particularly in regard to those global nomads who could not be reached for participant observation. The interviewees' paths were followed in various social networking sites, hospitality exchange services, blogs, and by email, and the material used will be documented in footnotes.

4.2.3 Follow-Up Interviews

A second round of interviews was made in 2012, approximately two years after the initial interview in order to add a temporal dimension to the research. The aim was to find out whether participants continued travelling, and had their lifestyles changed. Follow-up interviews were made using chat or email as the internet connections in India, where the researcher was travelling at the time, were too poor for videoconferencing.

The material collection itself became more flexible and informal in the second round because the researcher had been in contact with most of the interviewees since 2010. A few open-ended questions were prepared from which the discussion could develop freely (see Appendix II: Interview Questions). Because many of the researcher's relationships to the interviewees had become more personal at this stage, consequently the role and influence of the researcher in the interviews grew greater. The interviewees could, for instance, reflect their lifestyles to the interviewer's, which may have made them formulate their answers in a way they thought was expected of them.[1] This kind of mirroring often happens in the interviews, and when analysing the results, this will be taken into account.

As qualitative studies involve time-consuming and laborious activities, it is not uncommon that some of the respondents fail to fully engage. This was also the case for this research. One interviewee dropped out and a couple of interviewees were not reached for the follow-up. However, the drop-out level was so low that the research could be continued.

As the purpose of the second round was to provide a temporal aspect to the research, the main issues addressed concerned changes. Through the analysis of these questions, the understanding of the fluid nature of the nomadic mindset gained more depth. While the first interviews sometimes gave a rosier picture of the interviewees' lifestyles, some of the follow-ups were simply stunning as the interviewees seemed to have altered their views on the nomadic lifestyle totally as will be seen later in the analysis. These changes demonstrate that the trajectory of the nomadic lifestyle is far from coherent and linear. Thus critical methods, which are able to maintain this incoherence and plurality, are clearly

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1   See also McCabe 2005, 95.

applicable here.

4.2.4 Finding the Interviewees

When searching for the interviewees for the research in 2010, the criteria were that they have been on the road continuously for at least three years without a fixed abode and a stable job. Based on these criteria, thirty global nomads were interviewed.

The chosen criterion of three-year minimum travel time[1] was to exclude those who are on a one- or two-year sabbatical.[2] Although people on sabbatical also have an extensive travel experience, they usually return to familiar circumstances having a home, a job, and perhaps even a partner waiting for them upon return. For the interviewees in this research, on the other hand, travelling has changed their lives and living conditions dramatically. Their life is in a suitcase, backpack, trailer, trunk, or a cabin—wherever they happen to be.

The phenomenon of global nomadism is predominantly Western and, as a consequence, most interviewees come from Europe and North-America like backpackers and lifestyle travellers.[3] There was also a language barrier which made the search for the interviewees difficult in other parts of the world. A couple of prospects were found from Thailand and Iran, but they felt uncomfortable doing an interview in English, and as there was no other common language, there was no means to proceed. Finally a couple of interviewees were found from Argentina, Japan, and Russia to broaden the spectrum of nationalities.

Sampling was purposefully acquired so that responses from people at different age groups, nationalities, and travel styles could be captured, and the impact of these factors could be examined on the ways the interviewees travel, their reasons for hitting the road, and their life philosophies. For this aim, the number of American interviewees had to be limited as there seemed to be more American global nomads than other nationalities, probably because of the country's large population compared to European countries. Another reason for restricting the number of Americans was that some of the prospective interviewees had never travelled outside the United States,[4] whereas the theme of this research required travellers who wander in countries and cultures other than their own so that border crossings, rootlessness, culture confusion, and adaptation could be discussed.

Five cyclists were interviewed and many others would have been available if the research focus had been on bicycling. Cyclists have websites, they actively

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1   See also Riley 1988, 317.
2   O'Reilly 2006, 1009; Wilson, Fisher, & Moore 2009, 6.
3   E.g. Cohen 2012, 294. Cf. O'Reilly 2006, 1001; Riley 1988, 319.
4   See also Holloway et al. 2011 on grey Australian nomads.

exchange experiences, and most of those who have travelled for a long time know about each other, or they have met on the road. No other groups of global nomads have such good networks. However, as in the case of Americans, this research was not to focus on one nationality nor one means of transportation only. As there is little prior research on location-independence, the aim was to retain the complexity of people and practices involved so that a rounded view of the lifestyles could be drawn instead of narrowing the focus into different subgroups. Because of purposive sampling, the selection of participants is not positioned as being representative. The selection process was guided by the theoretical framework, focusing on plurality and contrasting cases rather than on making generalisations.

Most of the interviewees were found through a hospitality exchange organisation called CouchSurfing which offers a tool and a network for people to connect with each other, host strangers in their homes, and surf with strangers while travelling. The researcher had joined the organisation in 2006, and in 2010 her husband opened a discussion group in the organisation's website for long-term travellers to exchange experiences and trade tips.

A similar method of using discussion groups for finding interviewees has been employed fruitfully in backpacker research.[1] Alternatively, researchers have selected a single site, a popular backpacker destination, where to meet backpackers in person. In case for global nomads, finding of the interviewees proved to be more difficult because of their geographical dispersion and the small number of people in discussion groups who met the research criteria. However, the researcher's own position as a global nomad and her personal networks facilitated the task. Those interviewees who were not part of the hospitality exchange organisation were found from social networking sites on the internet and by spreading the word. This kind of snowball method is commonly used when surveying members of a small population to ensure that information-rich cases and diversity of the range will be reached. Naturally, these contact methods also had restrictions. The fact that all the prospects were contacted by email meant that those global nomads who do not use internet remained beyond the reach of this study.

During the course of the research, a body of approximately one hundred prospective interviewees was accumulated, but in the email discussions it turned out that not all of them met the research criteria of the three-year minimum travel after all. The remaining prospects were contacted for the interview, but there was also a degree of self-selection among the group. While most of the contacted people were enthusiastic and supportive of the endeavour (perhaps because they were eager to increase the awareness of the lifestyle),[2] not everybody

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1 E.g. Richards & Wilson 2004; O'Reilly 2006, 1002.
2 See also Cohen 2011, 1539; Sørensen 2003, 851.

liked the idea. Some waited for financial compensation which was not available, and others were shy of the idea of video conferencing in a foreign language which poses obvious challenges for the kind of cyberethnography practised in this research. It is therefore to be remembered that the chosen methods favour subjects who are confident in using technological appliances.

In the end, thirty interviews were agreed. After twenty-five interviews, the answers started to saturate and no new evidence emerged, but those interviews that were already scheduled were conducted as agreed. Based on the number of prospects found, the current number of global nomads can probably be counted in the hundreds, and it is likely to remain under one thousand.[1] Nobody knows the exact figure as global nomads are beyond the reach of statistical surveys and censuses.

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1   Cf. MacBeth 2000, 25.

4.3 The Position of the Researcher and Ethical Concerns

Researchers are always part of the subject they study, and thus they also direct and influence it in many ways. They have gender, colour, age, abilities, interests, and a complex psychology of likes and dislikes, as tourism researchers John Tribe and David Airey point out. Thus, from the point of view of critical research, objectivity is unattainable. There is not only one but several regimes of truth (see 4.1.2 Discourse),[1] and therefore admitting values, moral issues and repercussions into the research and making them transparent is vital in giving readers a chance to assess where the researcher stands.[2]

The researcher's role in this work is even more pronounced than in an average qualitative study because of sharing the same lifestyles with the interviewees. I have been on the road since 2004, and I will use a few of my own experiences in the research as illustrations in which my point of view is explicitly subjective. As tourist researchers R. Riley and L. Love state, fully reflexive research is constructed from the investigator's experiences, but it privileges no one voice.[3] The change of subject positions will be shown by the use of narrative voice of 'I' which is present in this section and will then fade away in order to show up again whenever subjective experiences will be used.

My roles in the actual research process were many. I was an interviewer, participant, and participant observer both explicitly and implicitly. The plurality of roles gave me insights and made this research possible. Without being a global nomad myself, I doubt that I would have been aware of the existence of the lifestyle, or that I would have been able to find the interviewees. It also helped

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1   Airey & Tribe 2007, 7.
2   Tribe 2007, 30; Fairclough 1989, 5.
3   Riley & Love 2000, 173.

that I knew the requirements and challenges of the lifestyle in order to address the crucial topics and gain the participants' trust. Naturally, my own involvement in the lifestyle also hid certain things. Interviewees might have left some topics unmentioned, because they thought them to be too commonplace in a discussion between two colleagues. An outsider would have got more detailed answers, and these explanations could have directed the research to areas which are now ignored.

Considering my role as a global nomad, it is relevant to ask whether I can critically assess the phenomenon. When viewed from a Foucauldian viewpoint, criticism is not dependent on an individual researcher *per se* as a person, however; instead, it is dependent on the subject positions assumed, which the research has to make transparent. To clarify these positions, this research is made from a non-institutionalised point of view focusing on global nomads' voluntary detachment from sedentary societies and the power struggles involved. A study that were made from an institutional subject position would have been completely different paying attention, for instance, to global nomads' social exclusion. Such a study would have probably included biopolitical and normative aspects paying attention to global nomads' indebtedness to their society of origin, and the measures with which they could be reintegrated to society.

As the example shows, the chosen subject position guides the researcher to pose the research questions in particular ways, and this is where the researcher's main influences become visible. This is not to say, however, that aspects of my person had no influence at all in the research. Naturally, these became obvious in the interviews and in participant observation. Someone else—of different lifestyle, age, gender, nationality, marital status, and profession—would have got different answers. This was most clearly seen in questions about relationships. The interviewees knew that I am married, which seemed to affect some of them. A few of the solo travellers had a defensive attitude when asked why they were travelling alone. These and other possible influences of my person will be explained in more detail in the analysis.

From the point of view of ethics, the researcher's overlapping roles, allegiances and loyalties pose most of the ethical dilemmas in research,[1] and this was also the case in this research. When observing, for instance, I was in situations where participants knew I was observing them and in other situations where they were unaware of my observation, perhaps thinking I was just one of them.[2] In formal appointments, global nomads were naturally aware of my endeavour, but the more informal the situations were, the more likely it was that they no longer remembered it.

I took various precautions to protect the privacy of the interviewees and to

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1   De Laine 2000, 17.
2   See also O'Reilly 2005, 61–62.

make sure that they had none of their physical, social and psychological well-being adversely affected by research.[1] The research was solely based on freely given, informed consent of those being studied in order not to involve an intrusion on privacy. To guard against placing any of the interviewees in a stressful position, each of them were informed of their right not to answer any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time.

When doing the follow-up interview, I gave participants an information sheet and asked them to sign a consent form (see Appendix III: Information Sheet for Participants and Consent Form). The consent form states that the interviews and observations were made for a research project. It clarifies the purpose of the research, the duration, and the procedures used. Getting the consent forms signed by the participants proved to be challenging as global nomads rarely have a printer and a scanner at their disposal, which meant that delivering the documents was rather forgotten. In the end, the majority of the consent forms were received, and in those cases where the interviewee could not be reached any more or the interviewee failed to send the form, I made a choice to present these interviews under a pseudonym based on the oral consent the interviewees gave on the video interview recordings.[2]

Most of the interviewees wanted to participate in the research using their own names, and they also provided me with links to their blogs to be utilised as research material. As most of the subjects are public figures in the sense that they write blogs, newspaper stories, and books about their journeys and life, there was no serious concern about violating anybody's privacy, although what they publish is naturally selective. Many of the interviewees talk relatively freely on the internet about their health, relationships, sex, and events in their life, and they were not necessarily shy in presenting these matters in the research either. Although sexual orientation, for instance, was not part of the questionnaire, in some cases it came out naturally as part of the conversation.

Only three of the interviewees opted for a pseudonym initially. Their names, as well as the names of those participants who did not deliver the written consent form, have been altered in order to protect their privacy. In one case also the nationality of the interviewee was changed on the participant's request. As the interviewees presented under pseudonyms cannot be recognised by any of their destinations, their professions or other data, these measures were considered sufficient for protecting their privacy.

Ultimately, however, there is never complete privacy when using internet for interviewing, communication, and data storage as the US National Security Agency scandal, where Skype collected video calls with the help of Microsoft, has proved. Even the most private information can be accessed and handed over

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1   Israel & Hay 2006, 110.
2   See also Israel & Hay 2006, 68–70.

to governments and companies.[1] To prevent this risk, the only means would be to use the traditional face-to-face interviews without recording or storing any data in computers connected to the internet. Although this approach is in many ways to be preferred, it was not possible in this research. Because of the high mobility of the participants; the only means to contact them was by internet. This raises the question, should this research have been left undone. I made the choice to take the risk.

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1   Greenwald, McAskill, Poitras, Ackerman, & Rushe 2013; Rushe 2013.

5 Global Nomads

This chapter begins the analysis by giving an overview of the demographics (5.1 Demographics and Travels) and travel practices (5.2 Practices: Time, Place, Money) of the thirty global nomads interviewed. This mostly descriptive phase of text analysis positions global nomads in regards to long-term travellers and lifestyle migrants. It is followed by processing analysis which examines the discourses with which global nomads and outsiders alike represent and make sense of their lifestyles (5.3 Two Discourses). The chapter thus proceeds from bottom to top, from individual global nomads and their everyday practices to the overall thinking models which formulate and shape their lifestyles. The next chapters then continue the analysis by adding the contextual layer through the examination of global nomads' social and societal relationships. As a whole, this first empirical chapter answers the first research subquestion: HOW CAN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES BE CHARACTERISED, AND WHICH PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN THEM?

5.1 Demographics and Travels

This first section introduces the interviewees (5.1.1 Thirty Nomads) and their daily life (5.1.2 Life on the Road), and reflects the reasons that made them hit the road (5.1.3 Reasons for Travel). Some figures of the global nomads are represented but it should be remembered that they are about the interviewees only. They cannot be generalised because of the purposive sampling.[1]

5.1.1 Thirty Nomads

Let us start with the story of Tor (61) who is one of the veterans among the interviewees. He quit school at the age of eighteen, stood out on a highway, and lifted his thumb. Later he found his real passion at sea after a day sailing aboard a friend's 35-foot yacht on Long Island Sound.

> *I had never been aboard such a big sail boat and was instantly struck by its potential. There was a kitchen, dining table, bathroom, beds, books. You could actually live on a boat like this, and travel the world.*
> *TOR, 61*

To realise his dream about sailing, Tor started crewing and working on sail boats and learning how they worked. Eventually he bought his first boat and earned a captain's license. Since then, he has been travelling around the world for more than thirty years. Asked when he will stop and settle down, Tor replies with a laugh, 'Probably when I die.'

Tor's travel experiences are extensive, even compared to the other interviewees. On average, the interviewees had been travelling for nine years at the time of the first interviews in 2010. The table below shows the interviewees' basic

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1   The comparative statistics about backpackers in this chapter originate from the ATLAS Backpacker Research Group's (BRG) quantitative survey that was conducted in 2002 (Richards & Wilson 2004b).

coordinates including age, sex, nationality, education/profession, travel experience, and travel style.

Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Education/ Profession	Interview location	Travel experience	Travel style
Guillermo*	M	42	Spain	PhD	Italy	10 years	Bicycle
Jukka	M	27	Finland	Student	Finland	4 years	Bicycle
Andy	M	54	US	Real Estate Agent	Dominican Republic	12 years	PT
Rita	F	72	US	Author	US	20 years	PT
George*	M	31	US	Student	US	6 years	PT, bicycle
Tor	M	61	US	Captain	Grenada	30 years	Sail boat
Elisa*	F	54	US	PR	Costa Rica	7 years	PT
Claude	M	50	Switzerland	Social worker	Switzerland	15 years	Bicycle
Jens	M	30	Germany	Student	Ireland	4 years	PT
Phoenix	M	49	US	Yoga teacher	US	15 years	PT, van
Stefan	M	47	Austria	Radio broadcasting	Costa Rica	6 years	PT, sail boat
Glen	F	53	UK	Entrepreneur	UK	13 years	PT, RV
Max	M	39	US	IT entrepreneur	Brazil	7 years	PT
Jérémy	M	26	France	Student	Belize	3 years	Hitch-hiking
Ludovic	M	32	France	Business Consultant	France	5 years	Hitch-hiking
Michel	M	47	France	Video Producer / Entrepreneur	France	3 years	PT, budget flights
Ingo	M	36	Germany	IT entrepreneur	Germany	15 years	PT
Jeff	M	25	US	Various	Indonesia	7 years	PT
Noam*	M	32	Israel	Musician	Peru	11 years	PT
Ciro	M	29	Portugal	Business Consultant	Japan	3 years	PT
Barbara	F	52	US-Canada	Various	Canada	8 years	PT, car
Anthony	M	35	Belgium	Business Manager	Italy	8 years	PT
Anick	F	29	Canada	Student	France	8 years	PT, hitch-hiking
Gustavo*	M	51	Argentina*	Business Consultant	Greece	30 years	PT, bicycle
Taro	M	27	Japan	Office worker	Japan	4 years	PT, bicycle
Alberto	M	39	Mexico	Gardener	New Zealand	8 years	PT
Ajay	M	24	Russia	Student, DJ	Indonesia	3 years	PT
Maria	F	32	Russia	Web Designer	Indonesia	3 years	PT

Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Education/ Profession	Interview location	Travel experience	Travel style
Scott	M	33	US	Kindergarden teacher	Australia	12 years	PT, hitch-hiking
Cindie	F	51	American	Geologist	India	9 years	Bicycle

*) Pseudonym and/or nationality changed. PT is Public Transportation.

In 2010, the interviewees were between 24 and 72 years of age. Less than one third (7) of them were under 30, one third between 30 and 40 (11), and the rest over 40 (12). As for gender, male travellers dominated. There were 7 women and 23 men. Four of the interviewees were travelling as a couple, and the rest were single or had temporary travel company.

Age seems to be one of the most conspicuous factors that distinguishes the majority of global nomads from backpackers. As we saw earlier in Chapter two, most backpackers are between 20 and 30 years, and they are either students or graduates for whom travelling is an initiation into adult life. Among the global nomads, on the other hand, there are people in their fifties, sixties and seventies, some of whom have travelled for twenty or thirty years. They question the assumption presented in backpacker research that young travellers would travel more and for longer periods than older travellers.[1] However, this might also be a more general trend as the situation seems to be changing also among backpackers. The New Horizons research 2012 shows that there is a growing proportion of travellers over the age of 35 indicating that a number of backpackers continue the lifestyle also when they get older.[2]

In terms of nationality, the global nomads interviewed originate from seventeen, mostly Western countries, the largest group coming from the United States (9). Some of the interviewees come from multinational backgrounds, mainly from immigrant families. Most have a higher education, usually a Master's Degree, but not all had completed their degrees. The majority of the degrees are from economics and engineering sciences. Other studying and working fields include biology, biophysics, geography, geology, journalism, international relations, literature, music/composing, philosophy, and taxation. Two of the respondents joined the navy when they were young, but neither continued on to pursue a military career.

Global nomads' sources of income on the road are varied. Those who consider the nomadic lifestyle as a temporary phase in life, have usually saved for their journey. They have a budget and when the money runs out, they will work, usually in any odd jobs that are available. The interviewees have been working, for instance, in construction sites and restaurants, as photo models, assistant actors in Bollywood, as guides, cooks, and bus drivers. Many of these jobs are

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1   Cf. Richards & Wilson 2004d, 15.
2   New Horizons III, 2013.

in the informal economy where income taxes are not paid.

Those interviewees' who work more or less regularly have jobs that are related to computers (web page design, IT support, consultation, programming, web hosting, maintenance, and selling advertisements to travel websites), artisan work such as massage and making jewellery, writing books or newspaper stories, and teaching English. A few have their own company, while most work as freelancers or taking temporary jobs. Those interviewees who do not work any more live on their savings that were either earned before adopting the nomadic lifestyle, or through stints in the midst of travelling.

> One thing I knew I could make money with was selling boats, I was really good at it. I worked seven days a week and I worked all the time and I didn't spend the money. I didn't buy cars and clothes. At the end of those five years I owned one of the best little cruising sail boats in the world. It was mine and I had plenty of money in the bank for travelling the next ten to twelve years non-stop.
> TOR, 61

A few of the interviewees do not necessarily need to work, but they might find it hard to explain their privileged status to other people, and for this reason they might also use the anchor of a job.

> I usually tell people about my sailing because they can deal with that. People always ask 'What do you do?' It's difficult to explain that you don't want to work and you don't have to work.
> STEFAN, 47

In 2010, global nomads' average consumption was 460€/month per person and it varied between 150€ and 1,500€. One third spent 300€/month or less, and the majority spent between 300 and 600€/month. Those who spent more than 600€/month were in the clear minority. These sums include all costs: accommodation, food, travel, medical services, clothes, repairs and spare parts for the vehicle. Four of the interviewees felt uneasy about revealing their living costs.

A daily budget between 5 and 15€, which is less than an average backpacker budget, is common among global nomads. Although backpackers are also budget travellers, according to the New Horizons 2012 survey, they spend on average 50€ a day.[1]

> My budget is 15€ a day, 450€ per month. A year's average spending varies according to the place. I have budgeted 5€ for transportation, 5€ for eating, 5€ to everything else (entrance fees, doctors, etc.) No budget for accommodation. In Asia, I eat with 1€ and with the remaining money I get a room

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1 New Horizons III, 2013. See also Riley 1988, 320; Binder 2004, 103; Speed 2008, 66.

in a guest house.
MICHEL, 47

The interviewees stay in hotels, hostels, B&B's, and guest houses like backpackers and other tourists, and if they have their own vehicle, they sleep in it or in a tent. When staying put for some months, the interviewees rent an apartment or share a house with locals. In addition, more than half (18) are members of internet-based hospitality exchange organisations such as BeWelcome, Couch-Surfing, Hospitality Club, Servas, and cyclists' Warm Shower's List which also offer direct contacts with locals. Some of the interviewees are heavy users who also volunteer and work as ambassadors for the organisations.

The rest of the interviewees (12) are not familiar with hospitality exchange, or they have tried it but have not been satisfied with the experience. Some think that free accommodation is not worth the trouble since they have money to stay in hotels. For active members, however, hospitality exchange offers more than just a free bed. They enjoy the opportunity to get to know locals and learn about the culture.

> *I wanted to be voluntarily homeless and CouchSurfing [a hospitality exchange organisation] gave me two keys: free couch and an interesting topic. I'm bored of visiting sites. Meeting people is more interesting and being a volunteer [in the organisation] gives me a possibility to give something back.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

Formalised organisations are by no means necessary to experience hospitality. Drivers may invite hitch-hikers to their home, and the same applies to cyclists whose humble travel style makes them approachable to locals. Sometimes just asking where one can pitch a tent, prompts the landowner to offer a room instead.

> *Cycling opens people's hearts.*
> *GUILLERMO, 42*

When necessary, the interviewees sleep wherever:[1] in airports, squats, schools, stations, temples, beaches, forests, park benches, on the street, in gasoline stations, or in ATM cabins. A few sleep like the homeless: under the bridges, on empty lots, in tunnels, and in the bush. They choose a place where people will not be able to see them sleeping, and at dawn they are up and back on the road.

The interviewees' travel experiences are fairly extensive.[2] At the time of the first interviews, they had visited between 9 and 192 countries. One third (10),

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1   See also Cohen 1972, 176.
2   The number combines their earlier travels and the journeys made during their nomadic existence.

mostly the younger nomads, had been in less than 25 countries, a half (15) in 25–75 countries, and the rest (5) in more than 75 countries. The majority (19/30) uses public transportation, mainly aeroplanes, trains, buses, and ferries on their journeys. The rest hitch-hike, cycle, drive their own car or motor home, or sail, and some rent a car or a moped for a period of time in their destinations. The type of vehicle is most important for those who hitch-hike or have their own vehicle as it is an important part of their lifestyles. Some are even fanatical about their choice:

> *It's a true love story, vélostory, like we say in French. Bicycle is man's best friend—before the dog.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

When asked about the duration of their nomadic journey, two thirds of the interviewees believe it has no end. They had travelled between 3 and 30 years at the time, and their journey had included various stages, both travelling and staying put in chosen destinations.[1] One third, consisting mostly of the youngest nomads in their twenties, considered their journey as a temporary rite of passage.

The interviewees' plans concerning return seemed uncertain, and they could be interpreted in various ways. Many had started their journey regarding it as a temporary phase in life, but they had later changed their mind. This was the case of Glen (53) and her husband Steve. The couple used to have a postal service and general store in the UK, and whenever they needed holiday, Steve's parents took over. When they got too old and the couple's adult children were not interested in running the business, it was time to choose between the store and travelling.

> *Because we love travelling so much, we said: if we can't travel, we don't want to run the business. We sold the business and bought a motor home.*
> *GLEN, 53*

Originally Glen and Steve planned to travel for a couple of years and then return back to the business, but they soon noticed that they could be living off the income of the property they had rented out. The decision was, would they go back and live in their house, or would they keep going a bit longer? Thirteen years later the couple was still doing it a bit longer.

5.1.2 Life on the Road

None of global nomads' plans or decisions—if such have been made—can be considered permanent. Plans depend on various factors such as curiosity, energy, interests, family matters, friends, financial situation, and health. The same flexibility can be seen in the interviewees' daily practices. As discussed in Chapter

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1   See also Vogt 1976, 37.

two (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers), these everyday practices consist of routines situated in time and space, and they may be shared by the group as part of their lifestyles. The interviewees' daily schedules, however, vary greatly and appear to show no particular shared patterns. Some keep themselves busy by working or engaging in work-like activities such as volunteering, giving lectures, or visiting local schools, while others take pleasure in their free time choosing the slowest vehicles available and refusing to fill up their calendar.[1] They might spend their days by socialising, getting to know new places, exercising, reading, or simply idling preferring to keep their minds open to opportunities. This could also be witnessed in participant observation. None of the interviewees had agreed any other schedule for these days except socialising with their hospitality host and the researcher.

When moving on, some unavoidable routines appear: next destinations must be pondered, tickets have to be reserved and accommodation searched, and friends and family kept informed about one's whereabouts. Those who work also need to set deadlines and schedules. Michel (47) describes his daily schedule saying,

> I eat my brunch around ten, go on CS website [a hospitality website] hourly, check flights, CS groups, leave references, make new friends, visit the city, hike. Doing nothing is a full-time job. My job is managing my travels.
> MICHEL, 47

As the statement implies, to say that the interviewees have no routines at all is misleading. Rather, they want to create their own routines and avoid those that are forced such as regular working hours. In fact, most interviewees believe that certain routines are necessary in order to facilitate adaptation to new environments.

> When you hit a new country, there's an inevitable period, about 5–6 weeks, where your mind sort of doesn't have familiarity and it freaks out a little bit. You haven't developed a social circle thinking why did I bother to go from the old place to the new place.
> MAX, 39

Max's statement suggests that routines can sustain a sense of ontological security.[2] According to Giddens, this is an important perspective. Routines are not necessarily directly motivated but ordered within the reflexive project of the self. [3] They are the everyday lifestyle choices mentioned in Chapter two, by which people decide who they are and who they want to be (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle

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1   See also Verbeek 2009, 38–39.
2   Giddens 1984, xxiii, 282.
3   See also Giddens 1991, 167; Butcher 2010.

Travellers). Thus they have an important role in subjectivity formation. In global nomads' case, ontological security can also be sought with risks, which for them can paradoxically provide the feeling of security through insecurity. When they do not know beforehand what each day will bring along, they are safe from the monotony of everyday life.

Of all interviewees, cyclists seem to share most routines. They wake up early, have breakfast, and start cycling, and in the evening, it is time to find accommodation, have a meal, and rest. All those travelling with their own vehicle are also required to spend some time in repair and maintenance.

> *Sailing around in a boat is not just sipping piña coladas at sunset but a tremendous amount of work, almost a full-time job.*
> TOR, 61

Those interviewees who work regularly seek to integrate labour and leisure. They appear to enjoy their work so much that it is like leisure to them. Claude, who cycles and writes travelogues about his adventures, explains:

> *I'm living out of my passion. I'm not an artist but that's the closest I can think of. A painter will paint even if he breaks his arm, because painting is his life. For me, it's the same. If I couldn't ride any more, I would be deeply unlucky. I don't earn much, but I'm independent. I don't have a boss. On my tax report, I'm a cyclonaute and a globetrotter. That's my official status.*
> CLAUDE, 50

Some lifestyle migrants nurture a similar passion for work,[1] but another question is whether paid work can be considered leisure. According to leisure scholar Rojek, such activities are still work, because they involve doing something contrary to leisure as it is conventionally understood:[2] 'leisure' means to have time off or freedom which is not the case if one is immersed in work-like activities.

However, ideas about which endeavours, times, and spaces are suitably characterised as leisure are continually contested and transformed, and in the process the conventional boundaries have become more permeable.[3] Academia has started to talk, for instance, of a leisure-oriented lifestyle where work and leisure operate as allies.[4] It adds to the subjectivities travellers can have on the road and allows more allegiances.[5] The same view seems apt for describing those global nomads who work on the way.

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1   Benson 2010, 52.
2   Rojek 2010, 5.
3   Edensor 2001, 60; Boon 2006, 595; Fincham 2008, 619.
4   Boon 2006.
5   Edensor 2001, 60; Boon 2006, 594–595; Fincham 2008, 619; Cohen 2011, 1547.

What then separates regularly working global nomads from expatriates, white-collar workers who follow their work ? While expatriates are wage earners who are in service of big corporations, global nomads' work is usually their own creation as Claude's case shows. They are their own bosses, they take entrepreneurial risks, and their work ethic differs from that of regular wage earners. They value autonomy and the opportunity to express themselves over money and the security afforded by regular income.

Not all of the interviewees are passionate about work, however.[1] Some readily take whatever odd jobs are available to get money for travelling, just like the drifter, and then travel until they run out of money.[2] In some cases earnings are used on accumulating a buffer to tide one over between jobs. If the buffer is big enough, global nomads will forgo earning opportunities.[3] For them, leisure is more important, and this view encapsulates a critique towards work-oriented and materialistic values in sedentary societies.

> *I want to enjoy my life. Most Japanese only think about work and business.*
> *They are in such a hurry that they don't even have time to live their lives.*
> *TARO, 27*

The interviewees' pastimes are varied. They meet new people, read and write, exercise, dive, meditate, or cook. Some go sightseeing, others avoid it. A few have volunteered, which, like hospitality exchange, can offer a way to get to know locals and structure time whenever idling seems boring, meaningless, or inappropriate. Language learning, either by attending a course or by studying on one's own, is considered vital among the interviewees as they want to explore cultures from within. The most avid language learners are solo travellers whose social life depends directly on their ability to communicate with locals, while couples can be lazier. After all, they always have each other as company.

Wandering the world has made global nomads polyglots. Half of them speak more than four languages, the extremes being two and seven different languages.[4] All speak English, which is one of the most common languages among travellers. It was also a prerequisite, and thus a constraint, for this research as mentioned in methodology section (see 4.2 Collection of Research Material). Other popular languages the interviewees speak are European: Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, and German. Speakers of non-Western languages are surprisingly rare, although many know scraps here and there including Turkish, Czech, Japanese, Chinese, Thai, and Indonesian.

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1   See also Cohen 2011, 1547; Boon 2006, 594.
2   See also Cohen 2011, 1546–1547; Uriely 2001, 6–7.
3   See also DePastino 2003, 20 and DePastino 2006, xxiv on hoboes.
4   See also D'Andrea 2007 52–53: Korpela 2009, 205.

5.1.3 Reasons for Travel

The interviewees started to wander the world at different stages of life. Some dropped out of school, a few as early as at the age of fourteen, or they hit the road right after school like Tor (61); others studied, worked, and grew tired of the rat race like I did; some middle-aged or elder men and women first had a family and then started to travel after their children left home, often after a divorce; finally, a few of the respondents have been building a career as freelancers or entrepreneurs on the road.[1] For most, travelling was already an important part of their lives before they left, and gradually it just occupied a larger and larger part of their life. Many described travelling as a long-time dream:

> *It was a childhood dream to go round the world by bike. I did my first trips during summer holidays. I read a lot of travelogues and met people who had travelled. I took cyclists home. My mother was open enough to accept it.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

In some cases, the will to travel seems to have arisen from contradictory circumstances: if there were no possibilities to travel as a child, the drive found its outlet later. This was the case of Ingo (36) who was born in former East Germany. Foreign places were a dream that he began to pursue when the communist rule broke down.

> *I went out as soon as they let me.*
> *INGO, 36*

A few of the interviewees were not interested in travel before becoming a global nomad. Although they had the opportunity, they chose not to go.

> *My English wasn't so good so I could only work in Austria and Germany. I never liked to go on holidays so I didn't get out much. I was interested in other things.*
> *STEFAN, 47*

What made the interviewees, not only coming from various backgrounds but also having such different stances on travel, start to live on the road? The following analysis concentrates on three reasons for travel, which came up repeatedly in the conversations with the interviewees: learning through challenge, freedom, and escapism. These rationales are not unique, as they also figure in studies on other multi-mobile people such as backpackers [2] However, the approach taken here is different. Instead of searching for external stimuli and intrinsic individual

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1   See also Beaverstock 2002; Manson 2012; Paris 2012.
2   See Cohen 2009, 26–38; Wearing, Stevenson, & Young 2010, 19; Pearce & Lee 2005.

motivations that prompt global nomads to travel, the focus is on the ways in which they socially construct their journeys. Subjectivity is thus viewed as a work in progress which is formed in different contexts, sometimes in contradictory terms, rather than as something constant. The difference in perspective is similar to the one described between narratology and discourse analysis (see 4.1 Analysis): while narratology seeks to make sense of individual motivations through coherent interpretations of interviewees' narratives, discourse analysis takes into account the wider context drawing attention to frictions that imply issues of power.

For the proposed change of perspective, the analysis needs to take a leap to contextual analysis in order to take into account the economic, social, political, and cultural environments in which global nomads produce their discourses. The idea, then, is not to dig out the interviewees' 'real' motivations, but to examine what prompts them to use specific rationales. The chosen approach pays attention to power negotiations between global nomads and the sedentary. While being sedentary is considered to be the norm, global nomads need to explain themselves and in this process, they become subjects of power.

Let us start with learning through challenge, which is one of the most common reasons for travel for backpackers as discussed in Chapter two (see 2.1.2 Backpackers). Those global nomads who are most likely to be looking at travel as a learning opportunity are among the young in their twenties and early thirties. Like backpackers, they seem to unconsciously follow the tradition of the Grand Tour aiming to learn about the world and engage in challenging situations that allow them self-testing and broadening of views.

> *Business school taught me many interesting things, but it didn't teach me anything about the world's wonders and miseries. The French population comprises about one percent of the world population. I wanted to learn about the lives of the other ninety-nine percent.*
> *LUDOVIC, 32*

As the school of life, global nomads' journey is basically a long rite of passage, an exit from everyday life before committing to a career and setting up a family, although not everybody returns. Many get hooked on this hands-on learning method and find it hard to stop as the following statement implies.

> *I thought of it as a value-added process. I was utilitarian thinking this could be beneficial. That was how I came to it, not necessarily why I stayed afterwards.*
> *ANICK, 29*

Those global nomads who do not have a time limit for their journeys, are not necessarily searching for experiences which they could later benefit from—after

all, they are not planning to go back to reap return on their investment.[1] For them, other rationales, such as freedom, are more important.

Freedom is the single most commonly cited reason for travelling as a lifestyle.[2] It is characteristic for all lifestyles that include a detachment from such predetermined fixities as traditions (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers), and as such, not uniquely present in global nomads' lifestyles. While traditions are binding, lifestyles are about individual choice and self-determination:

> *It's important to do something what I want. I'm living for travel. Even if*
> *many people say don't do that, work and save money, this is not what I*
> *want. I want to experience as much of this world as possible.*
> *JENS, 30*

But what, in fact, is 'freedom'? Although repeatedly used, also in tourism research, the meaning of the concept often remains obscure.[3] Most commonly, freedom is associated with its opposite, constraints. As Rojek formulates, freedom is voluntarism, 'a realm of behaviour in which minimal constraints over subjective choice apply.'[4] All alternative mobile lifestyles from drifting to lifestyle migration seek voluntarism by avoiding, or at least by reducing, constraints of freedom and the power of others to decide for them about their life. To find out how free one is, Derrida suggests a simple analysis of the 'I can' of the 'it is possible for me,' which reveals the predicate of freedom.[5]

For the purposes of this research, the concept of voluntarism is broadened with the concepts of positive and negative liberty. These concepts date back at least to Immanuel Kant, but it was philosopher Isaiah Berlin who examined them perhaps most thoroughly in the 1950s and 60s.[6] According to Berlin, negative liberty is freedom from constraints (voluntarism), whereas positive liberty is the ability to master one's life. For global nomads, negative freedom usually means freedom from constraints of home, places, and work, which mean that they are able to go anywhere they please at any time they want. Positive liberty, on the other hand, means exerting their agency in an individual pursuit of happiness.

Freedom: I wake up in the morning knowing that I don't have to do

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1   See also Rickly-Boyd 2013, 61.
2   Cohen 2009, 86–87.
3   E.g. Ateljevic & Doorne 2004, 60; Cohen 2004, 54–55; Richards & Wilson 2004b, 5.
4   Rojek 2010, 5.
5   Derrida 2005, 23. See also Baerenholdt 2013, 23.
6   Berlin 2002, 30–54.

something I don't want to do. I feel happy, that is very important.
JEREMY, 26

The link between freedom and happiness has been made by many philosophers, among them John Stuart Mill,[1] who argued, 'The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way.'[2] For global nomads this means freedom to decide about their time, body, money, and space without anyone interfering with their lives.[3]

Freedom being of such a great importance for global nomads, it is perhaps no surprise that global nomads' lifestyles can be a reaction to attempts to limit their freedom as the following story shows. Max (39) started to travel the world post 9/11.[4] He had been living nine years in Manhattan working for a dotcom company, but after the collapse of the World Trade Centre, he realised he no longer wanted to live in the United States. He did not feel free.

> *What bothered me was the kind of police state that the US turned into.*
> *Suddenly they were wanting to search my bags in the subway and every*
> *time you would get into an elevator, there would be a message to be afraid.*
> *I didn't feel comfortable any more. I don't have a great love for people who*
> *are telling me how to live, where to live, or what to live.*
> *MAX, 39*

By his decision to leave the United States and his former safety nets, Max assumed the responsibility for his own life, thus opposing biopower. All global nomads have, to varying extent, done the same. For some, it might be waiving their rights to social security and renouncing insurance and retirement plans (see 7.2.2 Health Care, Social Security, Insurance), while for others it might be quitting working and starting downshifting, thus reducing their participation in the monetary economy (see 5.2.3 Downshifting). The more global nomads take responsibility of their own life, the less they want biopower to intervene in their life, as Max's statement showed.[5] They consider this an important step in their path for freedom.

> *Taking one's life and future in one's own hands, taking responsibility for*
> *one's life, health, wellbeing, and future, is always a rewarding and fulfilling*
> *way to engage the world.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

A similar indication to agency can also be found in the negative rationales that the interviewees mentioned under the theme of escapism. These reasons include

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1   Mill 1998, 66–67. See also Berlin 2002, 39.
2   Mill 1998, 16.
3   See Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 32.
4   See also Molz 2005, 526.
5   Foucault 1997b, 255–256.

divorce, failed relationships, death of a close relative, health issues, and political
dissatisfaction that have usually been interpreted as push factors that force people
to move, thus undermining their agency.[1] Global nomads, however, consider
these as significant turning points which made them change their lives.

> *The thing that got me into it was divorce. I said to myself: What are you*
> *going to do with the rest of your life? And the answer was: You're going to*
> *live your dream.*
> *RITA, 72*

Giddens calls the negative incidents in which individuals depart from the collec-
tivist dominant discourses 'fateful moments'[2] that either mark their empowerment
or disempowerment.[3] One such fateful moment commonly experienced today
is unemployment, but strikingly, it was only mentioned twice in the interviews
with global nomads. In lifestyle migration studies, on the other hand, unem-
ployment is among one of the most popular motivations for leaving. British
lifestyle migrants, for instance, move to Spain in order to make 'a go of things for
themselves and their families,' as researcher Karen O'Reilly describes.[4] Back at
home, they might have had low-paid jobs, or they were unemployed, redundant,
or struggling entrepreneurs.

An interesting question is why unemployment did not figure so prominently
in global nomads' interviews. One reason might be that for the majority, work
is not such a central factor in their lives as discussed in the previous subsection.
Another reason might be the timing of their departure. Most respondents hit the
road during an economic boom, and none of them had made their decision after
the 2008 financial crises which prompted hundreds of thousands of Europeans
to search for new opportunities abroad.[5] A third explanation is that for global
nomads, the decision to live on the road is voluntary, as is typical for leisure,[6]
which might make them ignore some of the negative reasons that could have
had effect on their decisions. They thus turn the unfavourable conditions upside
down by stating, for instance, that they were escaping the dull and monotonous
sedentary life rather than a lack of job.

Many interviewees used precisely this argument. They find falling into rou-
tines as one of the main dangers associated with leading a stable life in sedentary
societies.[7] They dislike the idea of full-time work and related routines and rather

1   See also Maoz 2007, Cohen 2011, 1542; Vogt 1976, 36; White & White 2004, 204.
2   Giddens 1991, 112–113. See also Hoey 2009, 37, 42–43.
3   Giddens 1991, 142.
4   O'Reilly 2007 (no page numbers). See also Casado-Diaz 2009, 97.
5   Beck 2012; Callegari & Cintra 2012; Sarcina 2012.
6   Rojek 2010, 68.
7   See also Cohen 2009, 81–82.

escape them.

> *I realised that fitting into a regular lifestyle and having a long-term job*
> *didn't seem to fit my mental health. Maybe it's because of my personality.*
> *Perhaps I wasn't managing stress properly, or perhaps it's because of my*
> *experiences, or the rhythm of the society. All these things together didn't*
> *seem to keep me healthy.*
> *ANICK, 29*

Anick's two statements in this subsection show that the interviewees' mobilities may have several, sometimes interacting, at other times conflicting reasons. They are not only escapists or students in the school of life, but more often both at the same time. This is one of the reasons why searching for intrinsic and coherent motivations and categorising the subjects into related typologies do not give us the full picture. When focusing on frictions instead, the changes and contradictions in their lifestyles, that are indicative of power struggles, can be made visible.

All the rationales global nomads use to justify their lifestyles imply such power struggles. While being sedentary is considered to be the norm and thus natural, global nomads need to explain themselves. This is biopower at work: it favours some lifestyles over others, in this case the sedentary. Hence, global nomads' statements that their journey is a dream-come-true and a manifestation of freedom can be interpreted as an objection against biopower. They represent themselves as agents who challenge ready-made models.

When global nomads thus turn the power position upside down, it is the choice of being sedentary that seems to require explanation. They replace the question 'Why travel?' with 'Why stay? Why do people get stuck in one place?' This is a negotiation of power in which power fluctuates between the participants leading to different reasonings. It shows that a contextual analysis is clearly needed.

To summarise this section, global nomads are a heterogeneous group of travellers. Just like backpackers and lifestyle migrants, they comprise people in different age groups, ethnicities, nationalities, professions, classes, occupations, and likings. They emphasise their individuality instead of aspiring to particular lifestyles, and thus the analysis has to pay attention to individuals rather than to the group as a whole.[1]

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1   Cohen 2004, 57.

5.2 Practices: Time, Place, Money

An interesting question that remains from the previous analysis is, why do global nomads choose mobility instead of changing their lives in their countries of origin? There would also be radical alternatives available within sedentary societies, for example assuming a minimalist lifestyle, becoming an activist, choosing not to work, or withdrawing oneself from the monetary economy and aiming at partial self-sufficiency. What is so great about travel that it makes global nomads switch their relatively comfortable sedentary existence to life on the road? The question will be approached by examining global nomads' relationship with time (5.2.1 Seizing the Moment), place (5.2.2 Searching for Novelty), and money (5.2.3 Downshifting), and the related practices that support and formulate their lifestyles.

The practices global nomads have assumed will be approached from the Foucauldian viewpoint which equates discourses and practices (see 4.1.2 Discourse), and this view is further enriched with Giddens' structuration theory as discussed in Chapter two (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). The principles in both approaches are fairly similar: practices are related to social construction, as it is only in practice that an object can have meaning.[1] Just like Foucault, Giddens also views that there are traditions, institutions, moral codes, and dominant ways of doing things, but also resistance. These 'structures,' as Giddens calls them, can be changed, replaced, or reproduced just like dominant discourses. They give form and shape to social life, but they are not themselves the form and shape, nor do they have physical existence. Structure exists only in and through the activities of human agents—much like dominant discourses again—and structure is not external to individuals nor is it just constraining or enabling but both at the same time.[2] The main difference between the two approaches,

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1   See also Verbeek 2009, 71.
2   Giddens 1984, 25.

from the point of view of this research, is that while Foucault is more interested in power and subjectivities, Giddens is more oriented towards practices, which makes his theories useful in this section.

Through Giddens' viewpoints, the following subsections will characterise what global nomads' shared practices are by first outlining the upsides global nomads appreciate in their lifestyles, and then analysing the related practices they have assumed or created. These practices often oppose the dominant sedentary discourses, and thus they also serve global nomads in detaching themselves from their country of origin and sedentary societies in general. Through practices, this section continues to position global nomads in relation to other long-term travellers using concepts and models that have been applied in tourism research, for instance the concept of 'flow' and different models that have been designed to predict travellers' trajectories. The aim is to examine both supportive material as well as unanswered questions in order to assess whether global nomads' practices differ significantly from those of other long-term travellers, or whether the qualitative break that their lifestyles seem to represent should be localised elsewhere.

5.2.1 Seizing the Moment

One of the most frequently mentioned upsides of the nomadic lifestyle in the interviews was the opportunity to live in the present moment without planning too far ahead. Global nomads relate this experience to the overabundance of stimuli: colours, smells, sounds, the hustle and bustle of cities, strange faces, the way people dress, act, and run their everyday errands. Immersing into this sensual regime produces a heightened sense of reality.

> When I'm travelling, when I'm riding and experiencing a new place, my sense of time is expanded. Everything is new when I look around me. Everything is different from anything I've seen before, and so my senses are working overtime and I'm perceiving constantly and I'm focused and much more present. The present moment is so full of new experiences that it occupies me.
> TOR, 61

Enjoying being surrounded by new stimuli and discovering strange places is an important part of travel experience. As Rojek points out, leisure theory that fails to recognise the enjoyment and pleasure that travel brings about is not worthy of the name.[1] Elisa (54) describes the intensity of the experience:

> If I'm in a place that is alien to my point of reference or completely new culturally, I say 'Wow!,' and I feel like I'm alive. I feel like I'm learning. It's

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1   Rojek 2005, 12. See also Franklin & Crang 2001, 14.

just so exciting to me. You meet new people all the time, exchange ideas.
It's just really stimulating.
Elisa, 54

Conversely, when staying long in one place, routines seem to settle in and the exhilaration disappears. At the time of the first interview, Elisa had been staying a while in Costa Rica, but the place had started to displease her. She had been robbed seven times, there were too many tourists around, and her life had become boring. Wow-effects had faded, which was a sure sign that it was time to move on.

How unique global nomads' experiences of seizing the moment are? Despite the exotic backdrop of their journeys, they resemble the flow experience of creative work described by Mihály Csikszentmihalyi.[1] Flow is an optimal interaction between the individual and the environment that can also occur at work. It is a feeling of energised focus and full involvement. When feeling the flow, one discovers, composes ideas, and creates new information.

Flow is not merely a positive concept. Although it is inspiring and productive, it is morally empty and offers no distinction between those behaviours that confirm wellbeing and those forms that violate it, Rojek reminds us. Even serial killers might experience flow.[2] Certain negative consequences can indeed be found. Flow is often accompanied by a feeling of omnipotence: everything seems possible. Flow stops time itself and thus works like a drug.[3] The feeling is addictive, and it might appeal to certain personality types.

Among the interviewees, two former alcoholics and a workaholic were found.[4] For addictive personalities, the flow experience of travel has replaced the heightened energy levels that were previously related to binge drinking or work. One of them is Andy (54) who now entertains himself by reading books, walking around in office supply stores (he is a gadget freak), and getting to know new cities and people. He recognises the restlessness in himself.[5]

I need the daily rush of entering the ring of the city. It's a euphoric feeling
of trying to learn about the city, all the changes. I am a person that needs
something very different every day. When I am here [in the Dominican
Republic] for about—I don't know—two months, I know I'll be bored and

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1   Csikszentmihalyi 1975. See also Rojek 2005, 35; Cohen 2009, 102–103.
2   Rojek 2005, 36.
3   See also Vogt 1976, 33.
4   The questionnaire did not specifically probe these subjects but they came out in the course of discussion. Thus it is possible that the number is higher.
5   See Chatwin 2008, 9.

the routine will set in I and I'll start looking down the road somewhere.
ANDY, 54

Although flow can create an addiction, its creative and constructive nature offers a plausible excuse for indulging into the enjoyment and pleasure of travel. A similar finding was made in Scott Cohen's research on lifestyle travellers,[1] which indicates that travel can indeed be an engaging activity.

In order to focus on living in the present moment, global nomads have adopted various practices of which slow travel, giving up schedules and plans, and living in an inner rhythm or in a rhythm of nature are discussed here.

Travel pace, slow or fast, can both constrain and liberate travel, as backpacker researcher Germann Molz points out.[2] Many global nomads choose to travel slowly in order to better focus on the present moment instead of hurrying to experience everything at once (cf. 2.1.2 Backpackers). Some deliberately choose the slowest vehicles possible such as sail boats because they dislike arriving too quickly at their next destination.[3]

> *When you have a lot of time, how do you travel? I didn't want it to be as fast as flying. Sailing is an ancient thing. It is very different to approach the country on the boat. You have to be aware, you have to look out, you have to be alert: where's the entrance, where's the port. In the train you relax, but on the boat you run around, you make yourself ready.*
> *STEFAN, 47*

As the quotation shows, global nomads slow down in order to experience and grab more of their environment here and now. Such slow travel, which favours sailing, walking, and cycling over motorised transportation, has become something of an emerging trend in Western countries just like slow food.[4] Slow travel might be ecologically informed, although it is also a status enhancing practice as it is only available for the time rich in high-pressured working cultures.[5]

For global nomads, slow pace usually comes with experience. The longer the global nomads' journeys are, the slower they tend to go and the less structuring of time is needed. They take one day at a time refusing to plan, while most backpackers do the opposite: the more experienced backpackers are, the more grows the number of activities undertaken. Richards and Wilson suggest that backpackers justify their travels by experiencing as much as possible,[6] and a similar motivation seems to drive round-the-world travellers whose itineraries

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1 Cohen 2009, 102–103.
2 Molz 2009, 272. See also Verbeek 2009, 39.
3 See also Verbeek 2009, 39.
4 Molz 2009, 277.
5 Cresswell 2008, 14.
6 Richards & Wilson 2004d, 25, 27.

are about timing. They constitute the world as an object that can be bought and consumed with time, Molz analyses.[1]

Timing is a practice that shows efficiency. It is supported by the dominant Western time concept that most backpackers, who are tied to the dominant discourses of their home country, follow.[2] Those global nomads who consider travelling as a temporary phase in life seem to be bound by the same ideals. They keep themselves busy by attaining such skills and connections they expect to be profitable later as the following quotation shows. Ludovic's travel experiences prepared him for his new career in a volunteer organisation upon return.

I did many things. I was staying with members of hospitality exchange, gave lectures, and shared my life on a daily basis with kids suffering from cancer in a hospital in Strasbourg. I sent them emails and photos of kanga-roos and other animals, and sometimes we had web cam discussions. I also organised NGO discussion days in San Salvador, Jakarta, and New Delhi. At other times I was reading, visiting historical sites, and relaxing.
LUDOVIC, 32

A busy schedule can either be a rewarding experience or it can make the jour-ney as tedious as a nine-to-five job. If the latter interpretation holds, various mishaps such as getting lost on the way can lead to frustration, and sleeping in might make one feel guilty. The travellers' perspective is in future objectives which are expected to make the sacrifices made today worth the trouble. This delaying of the fulfilment of needs forms the basic idea of the Protestant work ethic which is a form of biopower exercised through ideals and related sanctions.[3] The downside of this ethic is that the future-oriented traveller cannot enjoy the present moment and therefore the travel itself. It becomes a means to an end.

For global nomads, detaching themselves from the dominant discourses is a process that often takes several years. Time related values and practices are taught at a young age and they are hard to change as they also change the person's subjectivities. As Giddens maintained, practices are at the root of the constitution of subject (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). Global nomads cherish this transformation which relieves them from the constraint of being condemned to one or only few invariable sets of practices. They can reconsider their priorities.

Travelling gave me an opportunity to step back from my busy life and think. It changed my perception of time and of what's really important in

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1 Molz 2010, 338.

2 The dominant discourses in question are, naturally, not the only existing dis-courses. As discussed in Chapter four, there are also opposing discourses. What is meant by the dominant discourses in societies will be discussed in more detail in Chapter seven (see 7.1.2 Cultural Baggage and Biopower).

3 Weber 2005. See also Foucault 2002c, 332–333.

life.
LUDOVIC, 32

For Ludovic, the process of slowing down was greatly facilitated by hitch-hiking. He estimates that he received 1,300 rides during his five-year tour and watched 20,000 cars rush by. For lifts and border crossing he waited a total of 10,000 hours, the longest continuous waiting time having been 28 hours. Also travel in general has a slow down effect as even in relatively low risk environments there are always unintended and unforeseen outcomes[1] that teach travellers patience. As an answer to these challenges, global nomads have given up planning and scheduling in order to be open to the opportunities that the present moment might provide them with.

> *I live very much in the present, where I am is where I am and I'm enjoying every minute. An invitation comes my way and I say yes. When someone smiles at me, I smile back. When they invite me to sit down on their porch, I often do. I accept the cup of coffee I'm offered and I play with their kids, sometimes blowing bubbles with a wand or reading them one of my books.*
> *RITA, 72*

However, the practice of living without plans and schedules is only one truth as global nomads' lifestyles do include things that need planning as discussed in the previous section. By not mentioning these constraints, global nomads pay attention to positive freedom, the mastery of their own lives instead of constraints. Naturally, this freedom is relative. In most cases but not all, the interviewees can be said to be living more in the present moment than in their previous sedentary lives that required more planning and timing. They are able to act more spontaneously and give in to the circumstances, and thus they are able to give up some of the Western societies' most cherished values, efficiency included.

Those who consider their journey indefinite might spend time leisurely eating when they are hungry and going to bed when they feel sleepy, or living in the rhythm of nature like cyclists who get up with the sun and go to bed with the sun thus detaching themselves from civilisations that proudly demonstrate their potency by turning the laws of nature upside down. These practices detach the interviewees from such time concepts where time is measured in money and commodified.[2] Getting rid of these metaphorical connections means overriding the reality principle by the pleasure principle to use Freudian terms. Needs and dreams are no longer delayed in order to pursue a brighter future; they are realised here and now.[3]

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1   Giddens 1991, 112.
2   Urry 2001, 113.
3   Freud 1961, 4.

I have a dream and then I go actualise it, and by the time it's finished, I've got a new dream. I go from one dream to another.
PHOENIX, 49

None of the three practices that guide global nomads to live in the present moment (slow travel, giving up schedules and planning, living according to an inner rhythm or the rhythm of nature) are inherent features of the lifestyle but rather practices that global nomads assume or create on the way. The nomadic lifestyle can also be made as stressful, busy, and enslaving (or as rewarding, depending on your point of view) as a nine-to-five job. If this interpretation holds, travelling becomes a work-like performance and achievement. This might be the case of some of those interviewees who work as freelancers or as entrepreneurs.

Anthony (35), who is the founder and CEO of a non-profit organisation called 'Art in All of Us,' has a calendar which looks like that of a busy businessman's: it is fully booked months ahead. Anthony visits schools, works with children drawing and photographing, and promotes tolerance and creative cultural exchange. His work requires a lot of planning because school visits have to be agreed well in advance with school officials, travels have to be booked, and visas obtained. Anthony is not entirely happy with his current situation. He feels there is too much routine in his work, and the rhythm is too fast.

We [Anthony and his partner]only stay one or two days and then we're off to the next destination. I am not able to stay longer even if I wanted to because that would ruin our schedule, flights, visas, everything.
ANTHONY, 35

At the time of the first interview, Anthony hoped to find himself a successor in order to step aside and enjoy a more planless life. What had started as a passion and from his own agency, had become enslaving, which is perhaps not strange for sedentary entrepreneurs either. In the follow-up interview, the situation was still the same, and it seemed that getting rid of plans and schedules was not an easy task, particularly because the organisation was his creation. Anthony's example illustrates biopower discussed in Chapter three (see 3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?): people continuously succumb to repressive but somehow tempting subject positions because they seek familiarity, security, and continuity. As practices can offer such rewards, they are often the forms of power which subject them—thus the negative connotations of the word 'routine.' Practises may become, in the long run, boring and enslaving.

However, as global nomads' gradual transformations, which either slow down or speed up their travels, remind us, this subjection is not a permanent state of affairs. The nomadic lifestyle includes different subject positions and related practices. Thus we must go even further in our notion of heterogeneity. It is

not only individual differences that need to be recognised but also the changes within individual trajectories.

5.2.2 Searching for Novelty

Global nomads' wish to live in the present moment surrounded by an abundance of extrinsic stimuli implies that they are driven by the same experience hunger that is considered typical of contemporary societies.[1] Global nomads just satisfy their hunger differently. While backpackers and tourists seek the thrill from temporary escapes and pack everything possible into their journeys that are considered once-in-a-lifetime experiences, global nomads have made search for novelty a continuous lifestyle. Whenever they make the places visited increasingly like home, they direct their search further.[2] This subsection examines what kind of practices global nomads have assumed in order to facilitate this search, and what kind of itineraries these practices lead to.

All the interviewees seem to be drawn to novelty to the extent that they prefer to travel one-way searching for new routes instead of returning to the same ones to which they have already travelled. They also avoid long stops and rather keep on moving. Andy (54), who calls himself a hobo despite not bumming rides on the rails but flying, tours around the world enjoying a change of scenery at least every two months when he gets bored and runs out of interesting sights for photo shoots. According to him, staying around longer in one place would be living, not travelling.

> *If I didn't like this place [the Dominican Republic], I could be on the plane tomorrow. When I was in St. Martin in the Caribbean one time, I got up in the morning and said: I can't take it any more. By one o'clock I was on the plane flying to Guatemala. I try not to enter to countries when I am in a bad mood [laughs].*
> *ANDY, 54*

Andy feels he has the luxury that nobody else on the planet has: he can 'enter a culture' and he can 'leave a culture.' While anthropologists would disagree—entering a culture is not a superficial game but takes a lot of time (see 6.2 Meeting Locals)—it is indisputable that compared to conventional tourists, Andy and the other global nomads have a much greater degree of choice in their search for novelty. They are not caught up in the often repetitive products offered by the travel industry.[3]

Most of the interviewees appreciate drastic changes. If they have been in a

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1   Bauman 2000, 62; Richards & Wilson 2004, 5.
2   See also De Botton 2002; Richards & Wilson 2004b, 4.
3   See also Maoz 2006, 221.

Latin country speaking Spanish, they might want to go to an Asian or European country next. This seems to indicate that it is not, strictly speaking, only novelty that attracts them but also change and contrasts. This is increasingly true for those global nomads who have already toured around the world many times. The repetitive features of the countries get faded when the contrast from one country to the next is great enough. Sometimes the interviewees jump from one continent to another to increase the experience. Such travels for them represent both ultimate freedom and ultimate constraint: whenever the novelty value of their destination wears off, they *have to go*.

Global nomads' moves are greatly facilitated by their travel practices: they are not tied to mortgages, long leases, or sedentary jobs. The same applies to possessions. Most global nomads can fit their items into one backpack, and they might keep their backpacks always packed, just in case.

I can be off in 5 minutes, my bag is unpacked.
STEFAN, 47

Global nomads feel their life is in a constant transition where inner movements are accompanied by physical movements. In this context, the packed backpack can be viewed as a sign of freedom, both negative freedom from constraints of places, ties, and obligations, and positive freedom in the sense of being able to decide about their own lives. In order to examine the repercussions of these mobility practices, three models that have been used in tourism and lifestyle migration studies for predicting travel and migration patterns are discussed: travel career, identification of hypermobile locations, and tourist biography.

In backpacker research, the concept of 'travel career' introduced by Philip Pearce and Uk-Il Lee has gained currency in making sense of people's destination choices. It is based on the idea of rational choice and linear progression: people's motivations are viewed to change with their travel experience. In the beginning, they choose easier destinations gradually proceeding to more challenging ones. Pearce and Uk-Il argue that many people systematically move through such a series of stages, or at least they have predictable travel motivational patterns.[1]

At first glance, the concept seems to ring true also in global nomads' case as it is the familiar Western countries in Europe and North America that were most often mentioned in their country lists, which does not suggest a very strong level of novelty. However, in most cases this was due to the fact that the interviewees had started their travels by visiting nearby countries with their parents as a child. After Western countries came North and South-East Asia, Africa, and South-America. The most seldom mentioned were Central Asian countries and the crisis-stricken Middle-East.[2]

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1   Pearce & Lee 2005, 227.
2   See also Cohen 2011, 1542.

Among the interviewees, the choice of countries with a bad reputation, measured for instance in crime rate, diseases, and conflicts, was more related to age than to travel experience, if anything.[1] Younger interviewees seemed to be more eager to challenge themselves while the elderly, who were more experienced, favoured the so called easier destinations. This is naturally a generalisation and does not apply to everyone, nor in all situations. In the light of this finding, the concept of travel career merely seems to lead to a territorialising of spaces of danger. It reproduces the old colonial space maintaining the ethnocentric position of the West.

In anthropology, translocal ethnography has been proposed as suitable for studying multi-mobile subjects. The goal is to identify two, at most three hypermobile formations (similar to backpacker enclaves) in order to verify their horizontal integration.[2] This approach has been applied to lifestyle migrants who limit their travels to two, at most three destinations. The same approach might be applicable to backpackers, as they often share mental maps of popular backpacker destinations such as Banglamphu in Bangkok or King's Cross in Sydney,[3] but in regard to global nomads similar recurrences were not detected. South-East Asia did seem to be one of the nodes just as for backpackers and lifestyle migrants because of good weather and affordable costs, but so was one of the then most expensive countries in the world, Australia, as well. It had attracted a couple of the interviewees to work there. For other interviewees, Australia was just as much a part of the world as any other country and thus deserved visiting, but once done, it quickly lost its allure.

The interviewees themselves were rather reluctant to formulate and analyse their reasons.[4] Anick illustrated her decision-making:

> [i]t's just coming back and forth and going to all directions. It's not organised, trying to cover certain areas. It just happens.
> ANICK, 29

Global nomads' reluctance seems to imply an existence of latent rationales that, for one reason or other, are just not pondered. The interviewees might, for instance, want to make their journeys look more interesting and free. As mentioned in methodology chapter, it is fairly typical for interviewees to play down some of the activities which might not be fitting the way they want to present themselves (see 4.2.3 Follow-Up Interviews). Thus the interview situation itself is a major constraint which influences the answers. If this interpretation holds,

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1 See also Cohen 2011, 1536.
2 D'Andrea 2007, 34. See also Marcus 1995.
3 Cohen 2004, 47; Richards & Wilson 2004d, 20, 33.
4 On rational decision-making e.g. Bargeman & van der Poel 2005, 708; Johnston 2001, 181; Verbeek 2009, 85–86; Reichel, Fucs, & Uriely 2009, 223.

global nomads seem to consciously build a romantic image of their lifestyles by taking pride in incoherence and spontaneity. However, this is not the whole picture, as constraints were also mentioned:

> *The countries I select are nothing more than a series of random events. I'm motivated by many things and without putting too much thought into it, I would say it is usually a spur-of-the-moment decision. Of course, I am influenced by numerous other factors, like when I am travelling with others, or when I'm limited by the amount of cash I have.*
> *JEFF, 25*

Global nomads' constraints include, as Jeff points out, money and travel company. Also travel infrastructure poses restrictions. The availability of budget flights, for instance, probably directs global nomads' travels to big hubs rather than to remote areas because prices tend to be cheapest on the busiest routes. Similarly, roads define where global nomads are able to travel comfortably, and lack of internet might be an obstacle to go to undeveloped and rural areas, at least for those who need internet connection for their work.

Another interpretation for global nomads' reluctance (to ponder their reasons) might be that destinations for them are, eventually, rather irrelevant; it is movement and the journey itself that count. Many mentioned that although places had been important in the beginning of their travels, in some respects they had lost their magic.

> *I've realised that everywhere is a little bit the same—depending on what you make of it—but transitions can be interesting and entertaining.*
> *MAX, 39*

The longer the interviewees' journeys are, the more they seem to pay attention to differences, contrasts, and transitions, as is typical for search for novelty, and if carefully considered, it would be an oxymoron to try to analyse location-independence through the significance of places.[1] Thus any socio-economic contextualisation of global nomads' mobile scene will be fragmentary as well as futile because their plans and destinations keep changing as the following story illustrates. When Elisa (54) was in Israel and had trouble deciding where to go next, a friend of hers put an Atlas in front of her:

> *He said, 'Hey, look at the Atlas, figure out what makes the most sense in terms of travelling.' I decided to go to Morocco but I couldn't find a reasonable flight so I flew to Spain thinking that I was going to take the boat back to Morocco but once I got to Spain, I was contacted by some friends in India who were all living in Pisa and so we were all living in a squat in*

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1   Cf. Cresswell 2010, 552.

Pisa. I just follow my gut.
ELISA, 54

Under these circumstances, Erik Cohen's concept 'tourist biography' is probably most apt for analysing global nomads' trajectories, as it relates travel choices to individual aspirations which can change drastically to random direction even on a single trip.[1] The downside of the model is that it does not help to predict travel patterns; rather, it recognises the fact that they cannot be predicted, which seems to apply to global nomads.

When places are no longer of interest *per se*, they gain meaning through their relationship to other places, people, and images, which create systems of difference. They are constantly put into play with other places, researchers of mobility, Mimi Sheller and John Urry, argue putting forward the concept of 'playfulness of place' in order to detach places from essence and reconceptualise them in terms of meanings, processes, and contexts.[2]

I cannot have a discussion without referencing a place I was before.
JEFF, 25

For global nomads, one of the most important drawing factors seem to be—in addition to change and contrasts—people and social relations. When asked why they had chosen the place where they were at the time of the interview, most said they were looking for a place where they could make new friends, for instance through hospitality exchange or by choosing a country where they had a common language with locals, or they were visiting old friends who are also mobile and change locations. Thus, places for global nomads could be described as 'open networks of social relations' rather than 'bounded areas' to borrow the words of Cohen et al..[3]

One of the repercussions of this 'placelessness' is that the more global nomads travel, the less they create expectations of their destinations. Consequently, they also experience fewer disappointments as they have not formed the norm to which their actual travel experiences would have to be compared. This is another reason—in addition to global nomads' attempts to connect with locals—why nomadic travels may bridge the gap between the ideology and practice of backpacker travel discussed in Chapter two (see 2.1.2 Backpackers). While the journey for backpackers is essentially a long holiday that is filled with expectations about self-change and stimulating experiences, and planning the trip and daydreaming about it can be an equally important part of the travel experience as the journey

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1   Cohen 1979, 192. See also Uriely et al. 2002, 535.
2   Urry & Sheller 2004, 1, 6. See also Cuthill 2004, 57; Frello 2008, 26; Hannam et al. 2006, 13; Butcher 2010, 24.
3   Cohen et al. 2013.

itself,[1] global nomads regard travel as their normal everyday life.

> *For me, travelling is a lifestyle. It is not a separate function outside of me.*
> *I can blend in in a lot of places and have a more multicultural approach*
> *to a new culture. I'm certainly not imagining how things will be, like I was*
> *before I started.*
> *ANICK, 29*

Finding a suitable comparative point for global nomads' travels is challenging as places are an essential part of individual identity for many as discussed in regard to lifestyle migration (see 2.2.2 Aesthetic Communities of Like-Minded Souls).[2] Even global nomads' namesakes, pastoral nomads, followed customary paths conscious of various points such as water, dwelling, and assembly points, as Gilles Deleuze and Félipe Guattari observe in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). However, Deleuze and Guattari also point out that although places did matter for pastoral nomads, they had an instrumental value only. Pastoralists reached water points in order to leave them behind,[3] which implies that motion, for them too, mattered over particular destinations. It was the in-between, the travel itself, that had both autonomy and a direction of its own. Nomads' life was an 'intermezzo,' which might also well describe global nomads'.

5.2.3 Downshifting

How do the interviewees organise their finances to support travelling? Many of them are minimalists enjoying the simplicity of the life on the road. They are anti-materialists and anti-consumerists,[4] and rather emphasise those features in their lifestyles which are not tied to products such as freedom, experiences, health, happiness, and wellbeing.[5]

> *Travelling has taught me that everything I need is right here with me [taps*
> *his chest], that really I don't need anything to be happy. I can be happier*
> *with one backpack on my back and everything that I own in that backpack*
> *than living in a house full of crap.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

The interviewees believe that money and possessions do not limit their freedom in any way, nor has freedom anything to do with material things. It is freedom to go whenever and wherever. Most global nomads have budgets, but some of

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1   See e.g. Noy 2004; O'Reilly 2006, 1011.
2   See e.g. Hoey 2010, 238.
3   Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 380.
4   See also Adler & Adler 1999, 40; Binder 2004, 103–104; Rickly-Boyd 2013, 60.
5   'Consumption' is used here to mean financial transactions (cf. Douglas & Isher-wood 2002).

those who use very little money do not necessarily keep track of their expenses.

> *I have no idea. [Laughs.]I don't even know if I have any money in my wallet now. Money has never limited my travelling experience. My usual style is to drive until I run out of gas.*
> *BARBARA, 52*

Global nomads are proud of their survival skills. Getting by with little money can be a source of satisfaction, and the more global nomads travel, the more they pay attention to those sensations of travel that are free and do not require anyone to invest anything. All the interviewees have experienced altruistic friendliness on their way. It might mean a free ride, an invitation to come over for a cup of tea, or to stay overnight. In Japan, the interviewees reported having been able to pitch a tent anywhere, even in a central park in a big city without anyone disturbing them. Also a smile from a stranger, a friendly greeting, and a nice little chat are free of charge. These are the things the interviewees remember from the places they have been to.

> *The best is when I do find a shelter from the storm, when I find people who open their doors and hearts. I think that travelling really shows our need to be open to other people. I believe we are all interconnected. We do rely on each other.*
> *BARBARA, 52*

Global nomads' practices stand in an interesting contrast to the theories that relate lifestyles to products and brands. People are viewed to buy things in order to replace a perceived loss of meaning in everyday life.[1] Global nomads, on the other hand, practise downshifting and the exchange economy, guided by their work ethic which prioritises leisure over work. They rather consume less and keep their freedom than earn more money. Downshifting can also be ecologically informed. Many of the interviewees oppose commercialisation and commoditisation and the amount of waste and pollution that follow. Some were anti-consumerist already before leaving, and the majority of the rest has given up buying things along the way. One of the interviewees mentioned anti-consumerism among the reasons why she left.

> *I started to look around at my boss at the time. He didn't have any children, he made a lot of money, he had a bigger house, a couple of extra cars and a Harley-Davidson. One day I took a hard look at it and said, 'Is that what I get for working for the next fifteen years, is a bigger house and a bunch of cars?' As soon as it dawned on me that I'm not working for any kid's education, I don't really have a reason to have a bigger house than I*

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1   See Cohen 2011, 1538.

already have, I felt I had everything I needed material wise. There is no
reason to stay here and put all this energy to buy things.
CINDIE, 51

Global nomads are content with fewer material goods than most of their com-
patriots, and even fewer goods than some homeless people who try to keep
furniture, pictures, and other valuables as signs of hope of their future lives as
settled.[1] Still, they are not hard-core ascetics but rather technomads carrying
with them laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and cameras.[2] Many of them also
fly often, and they buy other travel-related products and services. They might
also crave the comfort foods or products they are used to buy. When one of the
participants came to Hong Kong where my husband and I were hosting him, he
had been spending a long time in the Chinese countryside and found the product
offer of the half-Western city irresistible, hoarding cheese and deodorant bottles.

Hence, it would be misleading to claim that global nomads' lifestyles are
detached from sedentary societies and the monetary economy. Even when
criticising them, global nomads are their products. In fact, sometimes down-
shifting can paradoxically lead to a strong attachment on the monetary economy,
particularly if global nomads' lives are all about saving and living on the cheap.
Cindie (51) describes this as one of the reasons that drove her and her husband
apart on the road:

> *I felt I was just doing it [travelling]to live cheaply. My husband's and my*
> *ideals of what we wanted split. He was all about living on the cheap and*
> *I was about finding meaning in what we were doing so the two really*
> *clashed quite a bit.*
> *CINDIE, 51*

Despite the primary position that money has as a form of exchange in Western
societies, downshifting global nomads pay attention to the fact that it is not the
only media of exchange.[3] There are also other currencies such as giving, shar-
ing, and serving other people, which do not show in the figures that are used in
describing income in societies.[4] Global nomads cherish these forms of exchange,
which they view as antithetical to the dominant values in their respective societies.

> *I grew up in a society where the goal is to earn as much money as you can,*
> *to get as much social status and power as you can by any means necessary.*
> *But I think the true goal, the true meaning of life, is to give as much as you*

1 See Arnold 2004, 66.
2 See also Paris 2012, 1095; Manson 2012; Snedden 2013.
3 See also Vogt 1976, 34.
4 Byrne 2005, 86.

> *can to other people.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

For the interviewees, hospitality exchange is one the most common forms of exchange. The host offers accommodation, and guests can participate for instance by cooking, buying ingredients, and washing dishes, or they might tell stories in the manner of hoboes and tramps of old, entertaining the host with their travel experiences. The interviewees were not necessarily aware of hospitality exchange organisations or other alternative forms of exchange before leaving, but they have learned about them on the road.

> *When I started travelling in 2007, I didn't know about hospitality*
> *exchange. I did voluntary work. Then my mother, who is seventy-four,*
> *read a review about it and said to me, ironically: 'Look at this Michel,*
> *with this service you can be homeless for the rest of your life.' I joined right*
> *away.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

As the ironic undertone in Michel's mother's quotation shows ('you can be homeless for the rest of your life'), various forms of exchange are susceptible to criticism of freeloading. Wary of such interpretations, global nomads usually provide accommodation for other members of hospitality exchange whenever they have a chance. Although there is no limit how much one can request couches without hosting, there is a sense of reciprocity that make members search for a balance.

> *We have stayed in peoples' homes, parked on their drive in our motor*
> *home and had people show us their town. Just love being with local people*
> *and learning how locals go about their daily life. Looking forward to*
> *having more visitors stay with us in the motor home.*
> *GLEN, 53*

Naturally, neither the exchange economy nor downshifting are related to travelling only. Both have grown popular also in the Western sedentary societies during the last decades. Downshifters choose to spend more time with their families, enjoy a healthier lifestyle, and do things they consider meaningful instead of just earning money and paying bills. According to philosopher Clive Hamilton, in the United States one fifth of the work force has voluntarily switched to a lower paid job and reduced the amount of working hours, and in Australia 23 per cent of people aged between 30 and 60 have done the same.[1]

Research has suggested that the growth of alternative social practices is an unintended effect of capitalism. They are viewed to be sites of resistance that

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1   Hamilton 2003, 206. See also Ravenscroft & Gilchrist 2009.

evade the logic of the market.[1] While commodity and monetary exchange is about receiving individual gain, alternative forms of exchange emphasise creating and reproducing of social bonds and communities.

Alternative forms of exchange show that it is possible to connect with people without the intervention of states', corporations', and tourism industry's biopolitical intrusion. For the interviewees, these direct contacts are the key to get to know locals and local life, and share some of their cultures as will be discussed in Chapter six (see 6.2 Meeting Locals). They also rely on other people when for example hitch-hiking and cycling, or when asking for accommodation, a glass of water, or directions in order to find their way.

> *I'm grateful because I have been able to travel thanks to the help of local people. People accommodated me, they gave me directions or fruits. To experience this hospitality was fantastic, to rely on someone else that you don't know on daily solutions.*
> *GUILLERMO, 42*

Other forms of exchange the interviewees mentioned include work exchange and volunteering. They have worked, for instance, as pet-sitters and house-sitters, or exchanged their workforce for food and accommodation in farms, construction sites, voluntary organisations, and private companies. Sometimes these money-less transactions also give global nomads a plausible excuse for travelling if they feel such is needed (see 5.1.3 Reasons for Travel).

> *I was volunteering in CouchSurfing [a hospitality service]. It was not a job that was paid but it was my life for three years, and I've done a lot of conferences so it kind of justifies the fact that I'm travelling a lot. It shows that I'm not working but there's some sort of occupation that I'm doing.*
> *ANICK, 29*

While some travellers and members of subcultures such as hoboes and the homeless also have various forms of mutual aid which include money to help each other in times of need,[2] rejecting these forms of help can be a constitutional element of global nomads' subjectivities and ethics. The underlying idea is that money complicates relationships posing the other person as a debtor or as an object of charity. However, a bed or a glass of water do not cost anything to the host, and, moreover, the guest has a chance to contribute to the host without entering a work-like pact.

It is these kind of practices that are said to test the culture's relationship to

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1   Berking 1996 quoted in Urry 2001, 146.
2   DePastino 2003, 70; DePastino 2006, xxiv–xxv; Dordick 1997, 31, 48, 75. Israeli backpackers also have mutual aid centres in the most popular enclaves (Cohen 2008, 271).

'unconditional hospitality,' Derrida maintains. According to him, any politics that fails to sustain some relationship to unconditional hospitality, has lost relation to justice.[1] Although 'unconditional' seems unattainable because hospitality also includes power relations, in particular the asymmetrical and much disputed relationship between the host and the guest,[2] it nevertheless describes the kind of relationships that global nomads pursue. They want to free themselves from the interference of money, states, and corporations that are important locations and vehicles of biopower. Of these, money can be interpreted as a metonymy for the latter two as it is a territorial monopoly of the state, and it is used as a medium of exchange for buying goods that have use-value.[3]

Unconditional hospitality, where no money changes hands, requires a fair amount of trust, particularly when involving highly mobile people such as global nomads. While in sedentary societies different forms of exchange are often based on bilateral basis, the more people move, the lower are the chances that social contacts are directly reciprocated, as economist Fred Hirsch points out.[4] This leaves global nomads in some cases debtors or the objects of unconditional hospitality (again, depending on your point of view), because although they are fairly self-sufficient, they do rely on other people. Without their encounters with locals, they would not get an introduction to local cultures which for them is a critical success factor of their journey (see 6.2 Meeting Locals).

To summarise this section, the practices that shape and support global nomads' location-independence detach them from the dominant sedentary discourses related to time, place, and money. Global nomads free themselves from efficiency, plans, schedules, itineraries, places, work, home, and possessions in order to live in the moment searching for novelty. Most of them also downshift and practise the exchange economy, thus detaching themselves from biopolitical networks of states and corporations. All the mentioned practices represent negative freedom from sedentary constraints, and positive freedom in the sense that through them, global nomads aim to gain mastery of their own lives.

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1   Derrida 1994 quoted in Arnold 2004, 171. See also Bauman 2008, 227.
2   E.g. Aramberri 2001; McNaughton 2006; Molz & Gibson 2007, 12; Sherlock 2001.
3   See Schlichter 2011, 29, 61.
4   Hirsch 2005, 80.

5.3 Two Discourses

Having familiarised ourselves with global nomads, their travel styles and practices, this section moves on to analyse the two main discourses with which global nomads represent their lifestyles. These discourses encapsulate the thinking models with which global nomads and outsiders alike make sense of the nomadic lifestyle and of sedentary societies, as the two are intertwined. These discourses show how different kind of mobilities are valued, why, and where do these meanings stem from.

The first two subsections (5.3.1 Adventurers and 5.3.2 Vagrants) examine the dominant and the opposing discourses, their contents, structures, and the rhetoric employed as explained in the methodology section (see 4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality). The third subsection will look at the tensions between the two and the factors according to which they appear (5.3.3 The Discursive Battle) thus showing how the fine line between acceptable and rejected mobilities is drawn.

5.3.1 Adventurers

We start this section with forty-nine-year-old Phoenix whose story serves as the material for examining the dominant and the opposing discourses. The analysis starts with a description of the discourses in question, a breaking down of their morphological elements, and an interpretation. Let us remind ourselves that the purpose of this analysis is not to find the truth but to examine how the story is constructed, why, where does its discursive elements emanate from, and how does it formulate both the nomadic lifestyle and sedentary societies.

The protagonist of the story, Phoenix, has been on the road for thirty years. He started when he was eighteen by saving three hundred dollars and buying a plane ticket to San Francisco.

The instant I got out of the plane, I felt the energy vibrating. I had never

seen anything so beautiful: the mist coming from the mountains. I fell instantly in love with it.
PHOENIX, 49

At the time, Phoenix was just a child, 'lonely and shy,' as he describes himself, and he had only five dollars left in his pocket. He wanted to become a writer and so he started living on the streets to gather life experiences. Soon he changed his mind, however:

I decided to do something really crazy and I joined the Marines.
PHOENIX, 49

Phoenix spent three years in Japan, Korea, and the Philippines living in the jungle and tracking down revolutionaries, but in the end decided not to pursue his military career. Instead, he became involved in human rights activities in Central America. Following in the footsteps of Che Guevara, Phoenix roamed around Central and South America with the help of some magic mushrooms. He was in Nicaragua for the war and Panama for the uprisings.

I visited the same places as Che Guevara on my two and a half year journey through Latin America. I was the same age as he and as penniless.
PHOENIX, 49

On his trips, Phoenix learned that hunger is the best motivator. When his stomach was gnawing, he found a diversity of talents in himself. He performed in bars playing guitar and singing, taught English classes, wrote dispatches for an international press, set up community projects, and opened an underground club in Argentina. Although he never had much, money did not limit his travels. For Phoenix, lack of money is just an excuse for not having the courage to let go.

You decide where you want to go next and you go there. It's that simple. If you don't have money, you hitch-hike; when you get hungry enough, you will find a way to eat.
PHOENIX, 49

After Latin America it was India that called Phoenix next. He studied yoga and ayurvedic medicine, rock climbed in Nepal, and hiked in the Himalayas. Yoga has taught Phoenix what he really wants: to live in harmony with his values. At the time of the interview, he had just turned down a lucrative job offer explaining:

I didn't want to teach English to foreign soldiers so that they could go and

drop bombs.
PHOENIX, 49

Now Phoenix lives modestly in his van in the USA. He loves to live outdoors, in rhythm with nature, surfing and hiking. Although he is happy with his life, he says his family is worried about him and wishes he had taken another life path. At fifty, Phoenix has no money, professional career, or immediate family. His parents are afraid that he is going to die homeless and in the gutter, and many of Phoenix's friends have expressed a similar worry:

> *Lots of my friends, quite surprisingly, think in a similar way. At the same*
> *time, they see me as an icon who is living the way they always dreamed of*
> *living, but were afraid to live. I'm sort of a romantic warrior.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

Phoenix's story follows closely Cohen's drifter ideal including the sensational drug scene. Phoenix also started his travels around the same time as the original drifter, following the 1960s youth movements. Similarities are conspicuous and suggest that some of today's global nomads might have started as drifters as assumed in Chapter two (see 2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel'). This also implies that Cohen's idealistic model probably did have other actual counterparts besides the original German drifter.

What is to be made of Phoenix's story with discourse analysis? As the methodology section explained, the processing analysis pays attention to story's agency, modalities, degree of precision and vagueness, rhetorical devices, and the choice of words (see 4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality).[1] Phoenix's story has plenty of material for deep analysis, but in the name of efficiency, the following analysis is kept concise.

The story builds Phoenix a strong agency. He is free (he can go anywhere, any time); he masters his own life and he has no one to tell him what to do (a boss, a girlfriend, or a government); he has the courage to follow his dreams and he cares little about the constraints of life such as money or social pressure (he turned down a lucrative job offer in order to live in harmony with his values); he is independent (he can support himself with his talents). Phoenix emphasises his own aspirations in decision-making and his will to encounter the new which is typical for global nomads as the previous section showed (see 5.2.2 Searching for Novelty). For Phoenix, the nomadic lifestyle is about constant adventure.

> *I guess I especially love the feeling of having backpack on my back, guitar*
> *by my side, my thumb out. When it starts getting dark, I go out in the*
> *woods with my sleeping bag and go to sleep under the stars. When I wake*
> *up in the morning, I never know where I'm going to be the next day. I love*

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1   See van Dijk 2008, 178–190.

sleeping on the ground, under the stars and I love new languages, I love
new cultures, I love meeting people. But above all, I love the adventure.
PHOENIX, 49

'Adventure' seems to best describe also the discourse in question. It has its origins in Latin *adventura*, which implies something that is about to happen.[1] It can refer to an exciting experience or an undertaking which involves discomforts, danger, and unknown risks. Both interpretations have their place in Phoenix's story. He has had his share of exciting experiences and risks while hanging out with revolutionaries in Central and South America.

Every now and then I paid thirty bucks for a tiny aeroplane to get out of
the country in the middle of the night before something bad happened.
PHOENIX, 49

Adventuring constructs a similar dichotomy between global nomads and the sedentary as the binary opposition mobility/immobility discussed in Chapter two (see 2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?). When the nomadic lifestyle is associated, explicitly or implicitly, with freedom, courage, and independence as in Phoenix's story, these synonymic relations automatically produce an opposite image of the sedentary who lack these attributes.

The nomadic lifestyle	The sedentary lifestyle
freedom	constraints
courage	fearfulness
taking risks	avoiding risks
hardships	comforts
independence	dependence
agency	passivity
spontaneity	routines

The dichotomy is not global nomads' invention as already pastoral nomads and sedentary farmers have long been opposed in the same way.[2] Neither is the discourse of adventuring new. It has a long history in travel writing and fiction, particularly in the Romantic imagery. Romantics defined adventuring in terms

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1   Adventure (2010).
2   Khazanov 1994, 160.

of risks, close calls, and suffering,[1] often putting their heroes on the stormy seas and on desert islands where cannibals reigned. These experiences were thought to measure them as men. In the words of Lord Byron, 'A man must travel, and turmoil, or there is no existence.'[2]

In Phoenix's story the past and the present day of nomadism entwine seamlessly. 'I lead a very romantic life, I can't deny that,' he says and adds, in the spirit of Romantics, what has been the price of his manifold adventures:

> *I've spent more nights lying in freezing mud or snow, steaming jungles, ditches, trenches, with things crawling over me, had more tropical diseases, been through more hardships and almost lost my life more times than anybody would want to even think about. I have bullet holes, knife holes, burn scars. You might say I've earned my twenty years of alternative living the hard way.*[3]
> *PHOENIX, 49*

Phoenix's story is not one of its kind. Also other interviewees, both men and women, paid attention to the hardships of the lifestyle.

> *People see my life as a temporary realisation of a dream but it's not my reality. It's not a dream. There are downsides: there's fasting, there's walking forty kilometres because you don't have a ride, there is being tired and sick and having to go to a new place, and constantly taking care of yourself.*
> *ANICK, 29*

Some global nomads believe it is precisely the pain of travelling that makes a real nomad. This includes encountering death where and whenever it comes.

> *If you're afraid of dying, it's hard to be a traveller. I'm not afraid of dying. If I die, I die. You have to be willing to accept the risk, and I do.*
> *ANDY, 54*

By risking their life, the Romantics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries hoped to speak more authoritatively on metaphysical themes such as religion and philosophy. Travelling was regarded as a means to attain life in its quintessential form.[4] A similar meaning still persists. In the discourse of adventuring,

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1   This meaning of travel as an arduous business was already implied in the supposed origin of the word 'travelling.' It is said to come from the French word *travail* meaning 'work' (Travel 2010). See also Euben 2006, 38; Fussell 1980, 39; Cohen 2010b, 65.
2   Thompson 2007, 239.
3   Phoenix (n.d.). Hearts of Space [travel letter].
4   Thompson 2007, 100.

global nomads (or other producers of the discourse) set them as role models to be admired because of their extreme experiences. They are thought to have traversed not only difficult terrains but made profound discoveries of life, of the world, and of themselves.

> *People think my life is glamorous and they consider me worldly because I have seen so much.*
> *INGO, 36*

In participants observation, the aura of adventuring could be witnessed in many ways. Some of the participants were celebrated heroes in their circles, for instance in their hospitality exchange organisation. They visited meetings in their destinations giving speeches and gathering a group of admirers around them. They also received spontaneous invitations from other members to visit their house, and their references were expected to raise the host's status in the community. These observations showed that both travellers themselves and their audience are still drawn to the Romantic imagery of adventuring. Global nomads, for instance, might style themselves as explorers who overcome suffering to make significant discoveries about the world.[1] Sometimes these historical influences are recognised as the following quotation, where Ciro (29) explains his sources of inspiration shows.

> *There's very few Portuguese travelling and doing long-term trips compared to the old days and great explorers—which is also one of the things that thrilled me. It made me more curious to go travelling, continue the kind of legacy that seemed to have stopped in recent years.*
> *CIRO, 29*

The discourse of adventuring is not a mere story as it influences travel in many ways, and it also gives rise to related practices among all travellers. While global nomads might ignore their latent decision-making processes to make their journeys look even freer as discussed in the previous section, backpackers might enhance their road status by recounting the diseases and dangerous experiences they have encountered, or by smearing their backpacks and roughening their shoes in order to appear more experienced and adventurous, backpacker researcher Anders Sørensen describes.[2] The greatest difference between backpackers and global nomads in regards to adventuring is that for the former it is the dominating discourse,[3] while the latter also employ another, rather different discourse.

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1   See also Thompson 2007, 274–275; Elsrud 2001, 597–598.
2   Sørensen 2003, 856–857. See also Elsrud 2001, 611–612.
3   See Noy 2004, 90.

5.3.2 Vagrants

Side by side with the discourse of adventuring, within the story of the same person, there is a discourse that characterises the nomadic lifestyle in terms of homelessness and poverty. It is no longer a celebrated choice of an individual who is willing to sacrifice his own comfort in search of sublime goals. On the contrary, lack of roof and ceiling is regarded as a despicable state,[1] which forces global nomads to sleep like the homeless: in their clothes grasping their belongings, subject to violations. Global nomads are no longer agents but victims of unfortunate circumstances who are unable to get a grip of their lives, lacking the important reference point of home, permanent address, and a job which still make citizens respectable members of society as will be discussed later in Chapter seven (7.2 Political Attachments).

This discourse, which is also responsible for the notorious connotations of 'drifting' and 'wandering' in early research on long-term travel (see 2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers), has long roots. The problem of vagrancy became a significant political and social issue in early modern societies (roughly the period between 1500 and 1650). Most of the early vagrants were unemployed, seasonal agricultural workers, professionals of rare trades, or peddlers who were floating from job to job, living in alehouses, and sleeping outside. Another group of vagrants comprised of beggars, con men, and criminals who rather begged and stole than condescended to labour. Under the law, all vagrants were treated equally—as criminals[2]—and officials placed restrictions on their wanderings. Vagrants were arrested and sent to workhouses, prisons, and hospitals.

Since the Middle Ages, Western societies have had a hard time trying to draw the line between the honest and industrious vagrants living in misfortune, and the job-shirking idlers. They have sought detailed information in order to determine who really needed and deserved assistance, and who were merely exploiting the system.[3] Often the measures the officials took to root out vagrancy seemed disproportionate, especially considering that as a social group, vagrants exerted very little social power and posed little direct economic, political, and physical threat to the dominant culture.[4] Exactly the same could be said of the drifter or contemporary global nomads. They are marginal but they can awaken strong antipathy because of their lifestyles. Researcher Roxanne Euben links the intensity of anxieties to the unpredictability of travel: it has the capacity to radically transform people and politics.[5] The same reconfigurative power that was revered in the discourse of adventuring as knowledge-producing, courageous,

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1   See also Cohen 2011, 1543.

2   Beier 2004, 6, 30–31, 35.

3   E.g. Beier 2004.

4   Amster 2003, 196.

5   Euben 2006, 41.

and enriching, came to be viewed as despicable and corrupting in the discourse of vagrancy.

As this short exploration to history shows, discourses always bear meanings that their users are not fully aware of, yet they have a significant effect on their objects: they shape them.[1] Global nomads can, for instance, evoke both connotations of job-shirking and courageous heroism.[2] Most of the global nomads interviewed have encountered both discourses.[3]

> *When I'm travelling, some people think I'm on vacation, but usually they think I'm either a millionaire or a vagrant.*
> *GUSTAVO, 51*

The first encounter with the two discourses typically occurred at the time when the interviewees told their friends and family about their decision to start travelling for a long or an indefinite period of time. While some friends and family members admired their decision, others warned against it.

> *Many thought I was crazy. Why would I sleep on the floor and on the streets when I could have a nice job and a comfortable life instead? On the other hand, other people understood and pushed me to follow my dreams.*
> *LUDOVIC, 32*

Most of the paradoxes that are related to mobility (see 2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?) emanate from these two discourses and their residual meanings that are built into societies. The stigma associated with long-term travel remains,[4] and this cultural baggage has many practical consequences upon which global nomads stumble during their travels as will be discussed in Chapter seven (see 7 In and Outside of Societies).

To name just one example, the international visa system fails to recognise the phenomena of long-term travel. Travelling to a country needs a purpose such as tourism, business, or a family reunion. Furthermore, the journey's duration must be limited, and often also a return or an onward ticket is required. Global nomads might have to lie about their intentions, bribe officials, or forger travel documents in order to avoid suspicions. These assumptions that complicate global nomads' location-independence are based on the most common definition of 'travel': it starts from home and it ends at home. This is not the case of global nomads. As George (31) pointed out in the interview: 'I don't have any

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1   This is a genealogy which is not in search of origins. See Foucault 1998b, 369–370.
2   Erik Cohen has suggested a similar bipolar approach to the history of drifting. See Cohen 1973, 50.
3   See also White & White 2004, 206.
4   See Urry 2000: 145–6; Bianchi 2000, 109; Riley 1988, 313–314. Cf. Adler & Adler 1999, 32, 52–53.

backup. If I don't make my way, I can't go home.'

5.3.3 The Discursive Battle

This subsection seeks to explain the coexistence of the two discourses with contextual analysis. It asks who speaks in the discourses, what are the positions from which they speak, whom do they address, and why, as explained in the methodology section (see 4.1.6 Contextual Analysis). These questions approach issues of power by examining the processes of production and reception of discourses—what can and cannot be said in a given context—and their social effects. Again, the aim of the analysis is not to prove a point nor capture the exact essence of the phenomenon. It will not be argued that global nomads should be viewed as adventurers instead of vagrants or the other way round. Different discourses are only different models of thinking that are used to get a grasp of the phenomenon. More interesting is to ask why people, both global nomads and the people they meet, resort to these two extremes and what are their repercussions.

In order to assess the interviewees' positions as speakers, they were asked how they present themselves to other people. Most said they keep a low profile, only telling where they come from and that they like to travel. In general, the interviewees regard telling their story merely as a hassle because it raises too many questions and suspicions, or embarrassing and persistent admiration which might draw attention to global nomads even when they would rather be anonymous.

> *I'm not always telling people I'm travelling long-term. It's easier to let them assume.*
> *GUSTAVO, 51*

When the interviewees tell more of their story, they have to feel that the audience is really interested in hearing it. In these situations, it is the discourse of adventuring and stories about the upsides of the lifestyle that dominate. This seems natural, for why would they purposefully try to belittle themselves?

Whenever the discourse of vagrancy is employed, it is typically told with less precision and only when the interviewees know their discussion partners better. Participant observation showed that some global nomads are painfully conscious of the repercussions of the discourse of vagrancy and try to avoid it by all means in order not to be looked down on or being labelled as a bum. When I was hosting one of the participants, my husband and I had cooked a dinner for him but before he accepted our offer, we had to assure him that we wouldn't consider him as a freeloader. He felt bad that he didn't have any groceries with him, coming straight from the airport.

Sometimes the interviewees like to provoke, however, and for this purpose

the discourse of vagrancy offers a perfect means. For instance stating that one is 'homeless' raises many emotions. When Michel (47) was at the US border with Canada, he declared himself homeless ending up in an interrogation.

> *I think it wasn't a good answer [laughs]. The interrogation took forty-five minutes and all other passengers of the Greyhound bus waited for me. I avoid American airports because of risk of being kicked out. I rather fly to Canada.*
> MICHEL, 47

For women, the discourse of vagrancy is particularly provoking as it bears the connotations of being a tramp, that is a prostitute. Although female nomads use both the discourse of adventuring and that of vagrancy, historically they are masculine and rarely used by or of women. Female global nomads still encounter these gender specific stereotypes especially when travelling in cultures where women are considered homemakers. In these cultural contexts, female nomads rarely provoke because of the fear of drawing unwanted attention. This implies that female nomads might encounter more biopolitical pressure on the road than males, and it might lead them to alter their behaviour, for example to lie about their marital status. This does not necessarily save them from questioning, however, as Anick's (29) statement describing her encounters with locals in Turkey shows:

> *I pretended to have a husband but then locals asked: 'Who is taking care of the house?'*
> ANICK, 29

Whenever the discourse of vagrancy is employed for creating a picture of the downsides of the nomadic lifestyle, it is often presented through indirect speech. In the interviews, the respondents quoted suspicions and comments they had heard or sensed from other people. When hitch-hiking in the USA, Jérémy (27) felt he was looked down on as a beggar or a bum, and sometimes even as a potential killer or a rapist.[1] Despite his sympathetic manner and appearance—in participant observation he charmed all middle-aged ladies in a party—he was stopped thirty-five times by the local police during his tour and ordered to vacate the area, just like vagrants of old.

Sometimes the discourse of vagrancy is projected onto other travellers because the interviewees do not want to be labelled vagrants themselves. Andy (54) associates vagrancy with heavy-duty travellers who have been on the road for more than two years. This is a group that he represents himself as well, but he takes distance from the group's other members by describing himself as an honest person (note the change from 'us' to 'them' in the middle of the story).

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1   See also O'Regan 2013, 41.

Travellers are very selfish. **We're** *doing everything to be happy. This is the
sad part… If you meet someone who has travelled two years, lock up your
stuff.* **They** *have to have money, right? 90% of them will do any kind of
compromise to continue their travel. That means if they can run on the
bill, they will. You can live pretty cheap if you didn't pay your hotel room
and you got people to buy your lunch. These guys, they have no remorse,
they are sociopaths. They are more than capable of running into debt and
stealing their fellow traveller's guidebook.*
ANDY, 54

When asked who are these dishonest travellers, Andy replies that most of the
time they become jewellery sellers. They burn all the bridges in one city and
then move on to the next one. 'They are like tramps or bums that way,' Andy
says, and after a short pause admits that there is a fine line between a hobo such
as himself and a tramp.

There is also a fine line between the discourse of adventuring and that of
vagrancy as both spring from the same roots; they just represent the ambivalent
disposition of desire and hate (or pity) that sedentary societies display towards
the nomadic lifestyle. The same black and white picture dominates interpretations
of travel more generally as the previous subsections showed. For centuries, it has
been considered a double-edged sword which can transform people for better or
for worse. Ethnographer James Clifford ironically describes what seems to count
as acceptable travel: it is that which is 'heroic, educational, scientific, adventur-
ous, ennobling' (in other words the kind of travel represented in the discourse
of adventuring), and only rarely it is 'the movement of servants, slaves, beggars,
concubines, mistresses, and wives that represent either the detritus or trappings
of the mobility of men of a certain class or race'[1] (the discourse of vagrancy).

The negative connotations of vagrancy have most often been silenced by trav-
ellers and researchers alike by paying attention to the beneficial effects of travel
with the discourse of adventuring. Instead of substance abuse, bumming, and
worthless idling associated with drifting, they rather speak of self-development
and rite of passage, although both are equally present in the imagery of travel as
the current chapter and Chapter two showed (see 2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers).
This negotiation of power is a means with which the fine line between accept-
able and unacceptable mobilities is being drawn. Underlying is the concept of
'travel' which binds acceptable mobilities to home. What is not related to home
and contributing towards is to be rejected and constrained.

Both acts, enabling and constraining travel through the two discourses, are
biopolitical means to decide who should be let out, for how long, why, and what
should be expected from them in return as discussed in Chapter three (see 3

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1   Clifford 1992, 105. See also Galani-Moutafi 2000, 204.

Power and Subjectivities). Discourses are always about power, and such opposites as adventuring/vagrancy function as its vehicles marking the desired pole. They employ biopower either in the form of ideals or warning examples which influence people's lives, travels, and everyday practices.

To summarise this section, the discourse of adventuring represents global nomads as risk-takers who travel in order to learn and develop themselves. The discourse of vagrancy, on the other hand, represents them as shady characters who are feared to idle their life away without contributing to society, or, in the worst case, to be living on welfare at the expense of others. The two discourses represent the ongoing power struggle about mobilities and their role in societies.

5.4. Conclusion

It is time to draw preliminary conclusions on the first research subquestion: HOW CAN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES BE CHARACTERISED, AND WHICH PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN THEM? As already assumed in Chapter two, it is more exact to speak about a range of nomadic lifestyles rather than about a particular lifestyle or a homogeneous social group. Consequently, it is suggested that global nomadism is best seen as a heuristic concept with which extreme forms of mobility can be analysed rather than as a definitive category. If global nomads were described in a nutshell according to what we know so far, their lifestyles could be characterised by their non-institutionalised travel practices, homelessness, and their will to rid themselves from sedentary societies. This initial characterisation will be completed in the subsequent analysis, and the conclusions will give us the full picture in Chapter eight. The discourses that give a context to global nomads' practices were identified as the discourse of adventuring and that of vagrancy. They differentiate acceptable mobilities from those that are to be rejected, and they have practical consequences on global nomads' lives influencing their behaviour and relationships with other people.

What is to be made of these findings so far? It seems that global nomadism is not a unique phenomenon in the sense that global nomads share many practices with other mobile people such as backpackers. However, due to their homelessness and indefinite length of their journey, they seem to carry these practices to extremes thus opposing the dominant discourses of sedentary societies unlike travellers who are attached to fixed reference points (their old or new home). Detaching oneself from the dominant discourses and related practices is a long process, which might never succeed completely. Thus the status of alternative lifestyles such as global nomads' is always relative. They too are in many ways tied to sedentary societies and their dominant discourses and practices, if not otherwise, then by the mere the fact that they are opposed to them.

6 Social Relationships

This chapter examines global nomads' intimate relationships (6.1 Sex and Companionship), as well as their relationships with locals (6.2 Meeting Locals) and other travellers (6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps) in order to answer research subquestion two: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN THEIR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS?

While the previous chapter discussed practices and discourses at the root of subjectification, this chapter focuses on the process of subjectification itself and its role as a vehicle of power. The topic is examined through global nomads' social relationships, as it is only in relation to other people that a subjectivity can be formed (see 3 Power and Subjectivities).

The analysis is structured around three major dichotomies that compress global nomads' subject positions and power relations in their lives: man/woman, I/other, and tourist/global nomad that lead us to discuss issues of gender, race, and status. We see how global nomads represent their subject positions, what kind of alternatives they have, and what the repercussions are of their chosen subjectivities. From the point of view of the analytical process, this chapter moves on to the contextual phase in order to add depth to the previous analysis of global nomads' travel practices and discourses, and to understand them in a wider context of production and reception of discourses that place restrictions on things said and done.

6.1 Sex and Companionship

Sex and the need for social contacts are some of the most powerful drivers in life, and they can also motivate global nomads' travels, influence their choice of destinations, and give a purpose to otherwise aimless wanderings. In this section, the interviewees' travels are analysed from the point of view of these two basic needs. The discussion starts from solo travel (6.1.1 Travelling Solo) and the factors that have an affect on the high number of single travellers among global nomads (6.1.2 The Myth of the Lone Ranger). The latter half of the chapter addresses travel with a partner or a friend (6.1.3 Travelling with a Partner or a Friend), and the interviewees' relationships with family and friends (6.1.4 Relationships with Family and Friends).

6.1.1 Travelling Solo

As mentioned in relation to the demographic data in Chapter five, five of the interviewees travel as a couple. The rest, that is the clear majority, are either single or they have occasional travel company. Travelling alone is thus the most common way to go, and it is often represented as a cherished choice because it allows independent decision-making.[1]

> *I don't want to argue about decisions. I like mute boyfriends who are shy*
> *and just follow me—who agree and let me make all the decisions.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

Although Michel is half joking, the nomadic travel style is individualistic. The interviewees want to be able to make their own decisions,[2] to the extent that they avoid serious involvement with people who could constrain their freedom by

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1 See also Riley 1988, 324; Elsrud 2001, 604.
2 E.g. Mill 1998, 16.

using biopower over them for example with emotions such as guilt, sympathy, or love, and tie them down.[1] Global nomads' strategy is thus one of avoidance, just like their namesakes', pastoral and warrior nomads', was, although in a slightly different sense. While pastoral nomads avoided sedentary societies and their constraints, they travelled with their significant others.

For those global nomads who consider travelling as a temporary phase in life, solitude can be a challenge with which they test their limits in the spirit of the discourse of adventuring. Also this undertaking is highly individualistic. While young initiates on their rite of passage showed to their elders that they were capable of taking care of themselves, the interviewees of this research prove themselves—for themselves.

Global nomads' individualism makes travelling with another global nomad challenging if not altogether impossible. They are not necessarily ready to commit themselves to anything, as I witnessed in participant observation. When I was already hundreds of kilometres on my way to one of the agreed meetings that was scheduled to take place in two days' time, the participant informed me that he had already left the place and continued his travels. It is easy to imagine that issues of commitment and trust pose even greater challenges in intimate relationships. If something is not working out, one or the other will just pick up and leave. This is not a rule, however. Sometimes the yearn to have company can also make global nomads compromise, at least temporarily.

> *If you want to travel with me, it's fine, but I find it difficult. It's difficult to compromise what is the next path and what will be the leaving time. I tried to do that with some guys I was interested in. It's possible to compromise for a few days or weeks, but it needs some planning in advance, and some nomads are really reluctant to plan so it's difficult to find the difference between compromise and sacrifice.*
> *ANICK, 29*

As the statement implies, solo travellers are not ready to confront power issues in their relationships on a regular basis by quarrelling over the details of their travels. Although global nomads are flexible in dealing with changing conditions during their travels as discussed in the previous chapter (see 5.2.1 Seizing the Moment), they might not be as flexible in regard to their relationships, whether casual or intimate. I also got a taste of this. When being hosted by one of the participants, I came to notice that the house had a great number of rules, for instance how to open and close the kitchen cupboards so that they would not make noise, what dishes could be used, what kind of cooking was allowed, whether windows and balcony doors should be opened or closed, where to hang the clothes, and how long showering could take. In order to maintain the order and minimise the

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1   See also Adler & Adler 1999, 44, 51.

possibility of errors, the host did almost everything by himself, including his many guests' laundry and dishes.

Another way for global nomads to avoid power clashes is to escape such conventionalities that are inherent in social relationships, for instance routines and small talk which could bind them to biopolitical networks of building a *modus vivendi*, an agreement that would require adjusting.

> *The repetition in the United States is what people need, but I don't. I don't need to hear the same person complaining about the same problem every week. I don't need to hear the same opinion every week.*
> *ANDY, 54*

As the statement shows, global nomads might project negative interpretations of other people to their former compatriots or to sedentary people in general consciously forgetting that not everybody in their country, in the West, or in sedentary societies are similar; they are also individuals. This simplification is their way to use biopower over others in order to emphasise their own individuality. It reproduces the old dichotomy nomads/the sedentary discussed in the previous chapter (see 5.3.1 Adventurers) limiting both their own and the sedentary's subjectivities.

Global nomads' attitude towards locals in their destinations is different as they consider contacts with locals a critical success factor of their journey. Consequently, being alone is often represented as a cultural challenge. The interviewees feel that by being alone, they are more easily approachable to locals, and they thus get a better insight into other cultures.

> *It was important for me to stay alone. If I wanted to go somewhere, then I just went there. I was much more flexible. It was also a way to get an insight to the culture. When you travel with someone, you speak your own language and you carry a little bit of your own culture with you. When you go alone, you have to be one hundred per cent inside the other culture. On the other hand, you don't share as much as you would like to, but it was a personal choice for me.*
> *LUDOVIC, 32*

That single travellers would be totally immersed in the other culture is naturally an exaggeration, for how can an outsider who is staying in the destination for a couple of days or weeks be part of its cultures? As no culture is one and shared, people are not even one hundred per cent inside their 'own' cultures; they too consist of individuals who have different gender, colour, ethnicity, and age, and thus belonging or being part of it is a question of shades of grey, as will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter (see 6.2.4 Culture Confusion). However, many single interviewees share Ludovic's ideas. They consider their

singleness as an advantage, thus producing the discourse of adventuring that represents solitude as an attractive choice.

> *I find people are much more open [for single travellers]because a couple is*
> *seen as a closed group that doesn't need anyone else.*
> *BARBARA, 52*

Those global nomads travelling as a couple were not complaining about the lack of contacts with locals, which indicates that singleness does not necessarily correlate with the number of social contacts. In fact, sometimes it might be easier for a couple to approach locals who are single, whereas a solo traveller could be viewed as having a hidden agenda, for example, sex in mind, which might put locals to the kind of subject positions they are not willing to take.

Although praised, being single is not always a choice for global nomads. In the discourse of vagrancy, it is an unwanted destiny which leads to loneliness and alienation from other people. This is also true historically. Celeste Langan, researcher of vagrancy, points out that loneliness, together with idleness, have usually been considered the most important signs of vagrancy.[1] However self-sufficient global nomads feel, they admit suffering from loneliness from time to time. What they find particularly hard is having no partner with whom to share their experiences.[2]

> *I have never been in a situation where there was a special person who*
> *could travel with me. The odds of finding someone of similar interests,*
> *some open-minded enough, and someone who you are attracted to are*
> *astronomically low.*
> *JEFF, 25*

The quotation draws attention to a particular detail: the shift in agency in the middle. The statement starts with an active 'I,' but suddenly shifts into a passive 'you' structure which generalises Jeff's situation and implies that loneliness relates to the lifestyle rather than to himself as a person. Thus, while the discourse of adventuring represented global nomads as agents, the discourse of vagrancy shows them as powerless objects, victims of unfortunate circumstances.

Those, usually young men, who consider the nomadic lifestyle as a temporary phase in life, seem to endure loneliness better than those who are on an indefinite journey. The former expect, or at least hope, that their family and old friends will be waiting for them upon return, and they will have time to invest in intimate relationships when they are again settled. They expect, in other words, the situation at home to freeze, which is one more manifestation of power through the subject positions nomads/the sedentary. While global nomads view that their

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1   Langan 1995, 87.
2   See also Cohen 2011, 1548.

own subjectivities are defined by constant change and evolution, the sedentary for them represent stagnation.

Many of the temporary global nomads reject the idea of having a long-distance relationship while travelling, presumably because that would make travelling harder pulling them back to the sedentary life. In other words, they delay the need for relationships into the future, which is in an interesting contrast with their will to live in the present moment (see 5.2.1 Seizing the Moment). It shows that for global nomads, any long-term and emotionally loaded relationship is a potential constraint unless their partner is willing to travel with them. Thus intimate relationships are rather avoided.

6.1.2 The Myth of the Lone Ranger

For those interviewees who consider their journey indefinite, relationships seem to pose significant challenges for location-independence. Most of them would rather travel with a partner, and some are actively searching for one.

> *I've been using the internet to find women who would like to go sailing and live this kind of life. I actually have one coming from London in about a month. We have been corresponding, but who knows. I wouldn't call that a relationship, but at least there's hope.*
> *TOR, 61*

Global nomads' relationships tend to be short if the biopolitical factors that tie the other person down such as sedentary work or the need for a home and stable relationships, turn out to be stronger. This is a negotiation of power where global nomads have to decide how strong their will to travel is compared to their need to have a relationship.

As long as global nomads stay on the road, lack of a permanent partner might drive them to short relationships, buying sex, or conscious abstinence. Although the interview questionnaire did not include sex or prostitution, a couple of the interviewees talked about their experiences spontaneously. Some of the solo travellers consider buying sex a good solution because there is no commit-ment—after all, the practice tends to pose the other person as an object—but most would rather have short-term relationships for the same advantage.

> *If I started to date, it would have to be a perfect match. Maybe I will start missing it [a relationship], but I enjoy my freedom now. I have my encoun-ters. They're brief and they're quickly over.*
> *STEFAN, 47*

Sex outside a stable relationship was not an easy subject to talk about for all, and the researcher's position as a married female nomad probably made it even more

awkward for some. Had the interviewer been a single male, the stories would have probably been less evasive and defensive. In some cases, defensiveness seemed to push interviewees to represent their singleness with the discourse of adventuring, emphasising the upsides of solo travel. Another, equally popular reaction was to refer to the 'fact' that 'with this kind of lifestyle, maintaining a relationship is impossible.' A third alternative was to shrug the question off with a retort or a joke.

> *In Asia I was often asked where my girlfriend is. I always told them that I'm engaged to my bicycle and we will get married as soon as our trip is over. People were always happy with my answer and accepted me. They understood how unfortunate my situation is.*
> *JUKKA, 27*

While defensiveness shows that global nomads find their subject position as solo travellers difficult, or at least wanting a reason, humour renders it to their favour: they show that they master the situation instead of the other way around. They are able to step aside from their subject position and make detached observations about it.

The proportion of solo travellers being so high among global nomads, it is relevant to ponder the reasons and consequences for the gender disproportion. From the point of view of male nomads, the answer is clear. According to them, full-time travel fails to attract women.

> *It's really hard to find company for the kind of trips I do [going by bike and staying with locals]. I did a lot of really risky travelling and I never had a girlfriend that really wanted to do a lot of those things.*
> *GEORGE, 31*

However, as this research has shown, there are also female global nomads travelling in the same way as men, a total of one third of the interviewees.[1] Still, the male dominance is conspicuous. Among backpackers, on the other hand, female respondents dominate although the number of women appears to have dropped: 67% of the respondents were female in the 2002 survey and 56% were female in the 2012 survey.[2] However, it is possible that this research result also reflects a change in the response rate by gender.

There is no denying that wandering is often represented as a male challenge,

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1   In travel literature, which offers the little information there is available about perpetual travellers' intimate relationships, the root of the problem has also been traced to the small number of women on the road. The author of *Ghost Riders* (2003), Richard Grant who travelled with American nomads, assesses that the gender ratio on the road is 12:1 (Grant 2003, 161).

2   Richards & Wilson 2003, 14; New Horizons III, 2013.

as Cohen also implied of drifting (see 2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers). This is biopolitics at its barest: it defines norms, in this case what is acceptable behaviour for men and women, and it assesses individuals according to this norm limiting their subject positions. From this point of view, lack of women seems to be due to the fact that children cannot be brought up on the road, or at least it is not a prospect that all women find appealing.

The source for this view is easy to find. It springs from the genre of adventure, western, which is dominated by the figure of the lone ranger. The lone ranger is a courageous, lonely man who searches for a way out of organised society, and he lives in a world where tramps are harsh, manly men.[1] The myth is still alive among travelling males if travel literature is to be believed,[2] and some of the interviewees of this research also chose to recreate it as George's quotation earlier in this subsection showed.

The myth offers global nomads a limited amount of subject positions:[3] for men as lone rangers who need to avoid emotional entanglements, and for women as frail home-makers who would be better off at home, or, if women insist on travelling, they have to accept that they will be regarded as tramps. As the subject position of the lone ranger is put forward as an admirable ideal—idealising being a measure of biopower—some global nomads, both men and women, might eagerly assume this position avoiding restrictions that commitment entails.

> *My first few years of travelling, I was definitely more social with men. My first year, I was crazy, I was totally promiscuous having a great time, I've had I guess three relationships since I started travelling. The third one was with a Bedouin in Jordan. He wanted to marry me and I actually considered it until I realised that the cultures were just too disparate.*
> *ELISA, 54*

At some point in their nomadic existence, however, global nomads might search for alternatives for the myth. Although Ingo (36) is single, he would like to have a family but he sees his lifestyle as an obstacle. Working in electoral observation missions around the world, he finds maintaining a traditional relationship difficult. Ingo's assignments last from weeks to months, and like most single travellers, he has had his share of encounters on the way, in the subject position of the lone ranger:

> *Basically I've had a woman in every port, many women at the same time.*

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1 The lone ranger first appeared in folk tales and ballads, and it gained its mythical status in James Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking stories and later in the heroes of the Wild West movies (Grant 2003, 166).

2 E.g. Vollmann 2009.

3 See also Euben 2006, 30; Elsrud 2001, 614; Cresswell 1999.

Nothing stable and long-term.
INGO, 36

Ingo has been living nomadically for fifteen years, and he analyses the lifestyle more critically than any other interviewee. He tries to grow roots whenever he is in a new place, but as he usually stays in his destinations for a short time and does not necessarily return to the same place ever, he has not got the same kind of support as people who live in a community which has been built, maintained, and fortified over decades.

Ingo feels he is in a sense afloat, not belonging anywhere, and although this is precisely where most solo travellers aim by detaching themselves from biopolitical networks of intimate social relationships, Ingo's experiences indicate that it does not necessarily satisfy all of them in the long run. What used to be a discourse of adventuring now turns into a discourse of vagrancy where transience is understood through the negative connotations of impermanence and lower status (the metaphor of patches compared with solid leather jackets in the following statement).[1]

It's a very transient existence. You're always feeling you're building some-
thing like a patchwork. I feel my life is a bit like that. I have all this life and
it's in these patches. Whenever I go to a new place, I have a new patch,
but patchwork jackets are not as good as solid leather jackets made of
one piece so even though it looks interesting and it's got interesting stories
around it, it doesn't feel like one solid life.
INGO, 36

It seems that the subject position of the lone ranger has served its time, which as an idea is fitting for the nomadic lifestyle—after all, the lifestyle is about constant change. An interesting question that remains is, is the only available option to reject the travelling lifestyle and reintegrate into sedentary life, or can these opposites be transgressed just like other opposites presented in this research? Let us see what kind of solution Ingo has had in mind.

Being an independent consultant, Ingo would like to connect with people on a more stable basis and belong to a community, which is not an uncommon wish among those global nomads who have travelled alone for a long time. What they mean by a 'community' remains unspecified in most cases. It might be related with working together with other people or otherwise doing meaningful things with others, as in Ingo's case, but all in all it seems that 'community' expresses rather a wish to be with other people than a specific kind of community.[2] It is used in the discourse of vagrancy as criticism towards the nomadic lifestyle.

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1   See Adler & Adler 1999, 3.
2   See also Papastergiadis 2000, 198; Bauman 2003, 7–10.

Some of the global nomads interviewed, who had already quit the travelling lifestyle, had settled down in local communities. Their solution could be considered one form of transgression which is in-between the nomadic and the sedentary. Despite settlement, it includes a search for novelty inside the local culture. Among the settlers is Cindie (51) who used to bicycle the world with her then husband for nine years. After the couple broke up, Cindie chose to live in a Tibetan community in Dharamsala, India. Cindie reflects her reasons:

> *I became real detached from my family and friends and I felt a real need to connect with a community. I ended up in Dharamsala teaching English for Tibetan refugees and going to Dalai Lama teachings and I found a community I could connect with.*
> *CINDIE, 51*

Both Ingo and Cindie's cases show that solo travel and even travel with a partner can cause strong feelings of alienation from other people. In fact, some tourist researchers have posed the question whether a life of mobility outside stable communities and solid relationships can be pleasurable in any way,[1] and it seems that some global nomads would also rather choose the metaphysics of presence belonging to a face-to-face community and accepting the biopolitical constraints that follow, thus shifting from individualism to collectivism where meanings are no longer centred on the care of the self but of others. Cindie explains:

> *Social wise I like staying better because I build friendships… On the road everything was short-term and it seems like I kept saying the same thing all the time. I was just talking about myself. It seemed so me-centric: I'm doing this, I'm going there, I need this, I want that… Look what I'm doing, it's a great thing. Now it's much more like: 'Hey can I help you, what do you need?' It's more anonymous and more focusing on other people instead of myself.*
> *CINDIE, 51*

The alternative Cindie chose bears many similarities to lifestyle migrants discussed in Chapter two (see 2.2 Lifestyle Migration). The main difference is that instead of a community of like-minded expatriates, Cindie chose to connect with a local Tibetan community. Hers is probably a solution that some other global nomads are also likely to take if they get tired of travelling alone. Unlike lifestyle migrants, global nomads are not attracted to the nomadic communities of Westeners that can be found for example in Ibiza, Bali, and Goa. Although many of the interviewees have been to these places, they are individualists and seem to find it hard to adjust to the rules and obligations that collective living requires. This indicates that any tight communal solution with strong biopolitical

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1   Franklin 2007, 138. See also Adler & Adler 1999, 53. Cf. Urry 2007, 47.

networks binding people into controlling relationships might not satisfy global nomads in the long run, although some occasionally dream about it, forgetting the limitations that it brings along. However, if the community is local, global nomads are more eager to make compromises because they regard it as a cultural challenge, whereas in contacts with other Westerners such a challenge is perceived to be missing.

   If the number of global nomads grows in the future and they want to connect with each other, it seems likely that new types of nomadic communities of Westerners will emerge. Most of these communities will probably be virtual because of high mobility and individuality of global nomads, but some might be temporal in specific geographic locations. There are a few examples of the latter among Russian and Serbian backpackers who form travel clubs.[1] One of the club activities is to collect donations in order to rent an apartment in a chosen destination for a couple of months, and offer accommodation for free for both members and non-members. Similar arrangements might offer global nomads temporary communities when life on the road feels too consuming and lonely.

6.1.3 Travelling with a Partner or a Friend

Those global nomads who travel as a couple, have found their tribe, their best friend, their love, their family, their home, and sometimes also their colleague in their partner. Of thirty nomads, five travelled with their partner in 2010.

> We [Glen and her husband Steve] have never travelled separately. In actual fact, since we met, the longest time apart is one week so we're pretty close to joined at the hip. We have actually been together 24/7 since 1985 when we bought the business, we're best friends and maybe because we met when we were very young, we grew up together. We sort of melted together. We wouldn't have it any other way. We are very lucky.
> GLEN, 53

In order for the relationship to work, both persons' motivations and aims—and thus subject positions—need to be compatible so that major power conflicts can be avoided, just like in any other relationship. As most of the interviewed couples spend a lot of time with each other, usually around the clock, life on the road can either be a rewarding or an irritating experience. While some couple relationships become fortified thanks to the hardships overcome together, some couples want to take distance from time to time.

> We lived together 24/7. It's good to be separated. We haven't seen each other for one month. I used to travel quite a lot alone before, I enjoyed it,

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1   Travel Club 2013; Academy of Free Travel 2002.

too. It's different kind of travel.
ANTHONY, 35

The follow-up interviews in 2012 showed some changes in the interviewees' relationship status. Two couples had split, and thus three of the five couples remained. On the other hand, also one new couple had emerged, and two couples had a baby. Among the new parents was Phoenix (49) whose life had changed drastically. At the time of the first interview in 2010, Phoenix was single and conformed very much to the myth of the lone ranger, but some months after the interview, he had found a new love with whom he now had a family. He had also assumed a more sedentary lifestyle, and he reflected the change in his subjectivities:

> *One thing I learned travelling, maybe the most important thing, is that I want to have a home. I want stability, my own piece of land in nature, where I can build a little house for my family and have a garden, and be off the grid and surf and hike and do yoga and the things we love to do. Travelling, if you don't ever have a home to return to, is not travelling, it's being a constant nomad; and that's very different from being a traveller. I don't want to raise my children being nomads, nor do I want to be a nomad, but the place I live must be perfect for me and my family, and that means our own land, in nature, by mountains and an ocean, with surfing and hiking, and far from any cities or development.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

The birth of the child appeared to have altered Phoenix's subject positions and his lifestyle completely, perhaps because of conventional expectations of what parenthood means, or because of his own experiences on the road. If the reasons were related to conventional expectations, it would be biopower's workings persuading global nomads to offer their children a stable living environment as the notion of 'stability' in Phoenix's statement suggests. In many Western welfare societies, states have a say in how to bring up a child, and in the case of global nomads, these biopolitical measures might make them move to their country of origin to ensure, for instance, that their children get a proper health care and education in their mother tongue.[1]

As the example shows, even though global nomads are relatively self-sufficient and in charge of their lives, they too are susceptible to biopolitical networks, particularly the kind of power that is related to intimate relationships. As Foucault maintained, sex and love are primary examples of how power is wielded over

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[1] As both babies born during the course of the interview were still little, it is too early to say if having a family includes a rejection of the nomadic lifestyle. Although this research included also other mothers and fathers, they had gone on the road only after their children were adults.

the other.[1] It seems that the line between the sedentary and the nomadic lifestyle is thin, as global nomads readily admit. Another interpretation which seems to hold, also in Phoenix's case, is that those who have lived most of their lives on the road without having their own home, find the sedentary subject position and the idea of their own place and family at some point attractive, and vice versa, those who have lived most of their lives in a house, might want to liberate themselves from solid structures and tight social relationships. Both solutions can be interpreted as a particular kind of search for novelty; global nomads are eager to try out subject positions of which they have no previous experience.

None of the interviewees had travelled together with a friend for an extended period of time although many had had temporary travel company. In their individuality, global nomads differ considerably from long-term travellers such as backpackers who tend to form partnerships on the road for practical reasons, mainly for safety, frugality, and company in the manner of hoboes of old.[2]

Travelling together is an intensive experience which makes friendships as tight as romantic relationships and therefore the pros and cons are eventually similar. The partner has to be carefully chosen so that constant power negotiations about everyday travel practices can be avoided and neither party has to make sacrifices.

I have been travelling with partners in the past and I've enjoyed that, too. I've been asking people to travel along, I call them my road sisters, and they would travel for a short period of time with me. But I have to know them well enough. I had one bad experience. It is quite hard to travel with someone who is quite provincial.
BARBARA, 52

As the word 'provincial' in Barbara's statement implies, global nomads might find it hard to hear reminders of such dominant discourses that they want to get rid of. In this sense they resemble those lifestyle migrants who rather avoid talking about the past as discussed in Chapter two (see 2.2.3 Agency). They have started a new life, and this venture might mean excluding some people who could compromise their new subjectivities.

6.1.4 Relationships with Family and Friends

Many of global nomads' relationships on the road are transient. People drift into and out of their lives regularly, and encounters are brief and non-repetitive as Vogt also observed of the wanderer's social contacts.[3] For global nomads, making

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1   Foucault 1997f, 298.
2   DePastino 2003, 69; Dordick 1997, 20, 27.
3   Vogt 1976, 34–35.

new friends can be as thrilling as visiting new places, as it also includes novelty.[1]

The downside of transient friendships is that they include neither commitment nor long-term reciprocity,[2] which form some of the allures of being part of biopolitial networks, and thus the interaction might remain shallow. Such relationships are also consuming because of the need to constantly meet unknown people.[3] While some of global nomads' encounters might lead to long-lasting relationships that are maintained on the internet, most fade away because of absence.

Under the circumstances, Cohen's assessment of the influence of drifting might hold also for global nomads: when they get accustomed to steadily move between different peoples and cultures, they might lose the faculty of making choices and become unable to commit themselves permanently to anything (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). Consequently, not only global nomads' relationship to places (see 5.2.2 Searching for Novelty) but also their relationships to other people may become transitory. The interviewees do not necessarily consider this as desirable in the long run, although liberation from such biopolitical ties has been their goal.

> *Life cannot be a one-night stand. You gotta have friends and relationships, people who care about you and you care about them. I work constantly to do this. This is probably my biggest habit, establishing friendships everywhere.*
> *ANDY, 54*

What are the interviewees' longest-standing and most meaningful relationships? The majority believe these were formed already in childhood, although this might also express a nostalgic wish as global nomads have not necessarily been in frequent contact with their old friends, as the notion of 'loneliness' in the following statement implies.

> *They [old friends] have seen you through good and bad. You do meet a lot of people on the road, but nobody knows your history. It gets lonely for me sometimes. There's not that history that you have with people who you've grown up with and had relationships with for many years.*
> *ELISA, 54*

In some cases, the interviewees feel that the nomadic lifestyle has untied former friendships.[4] The subject positions global nomads have assumed question the dominant discourses of sedentary societies, making some people to reassess their own lives. It is a negotiation of power where the shared reality is being

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1   See also Adler & Adler 1999, 47; Vogt 1976, 34–35.
2   Adler & Adler 1999, 47, 51, 53.
3   Vogt 1976, 37.
4   Cf. White & White 2007, 95–98, 100.

constructed, and it has practical consequences for global nomads' lives.

> *I lost some friendships because of my lifestyle and I also chose to disregard some of the relationships because of my lifestyle. Now I pretty much only have people in my life who support it. I forced people to look at the choices they were making. We make people uncomfortable sometimes.*
> *BARBARA, 52*

The 'we' in Barbara's statement implies that the hardships of the nomadic lifestyle may bring the members of this loose anti-community of individualists together. Although they do not necessarily socialise with each other in the sense of wanting to spend time together, they feel some kind of solidarity with each other because of the similarities in their lifestyles.[1] This group of 'us' most notably distinguishes global nomads from the sedentary for whom global nomads' lifestyles may be provocative. Leaving can be interpreted not only as a rejection of the dominant discourses but as a deliberate disinterest towards others. Derrida accurately remarks that the departed become foreigners in their countries, or, as Van Den Abbeele maintains: they die in the eyes of their communities.[2] Stefan (47) illustrates the idea by describing the cold reception he received in his former home town in Austria on his visit:

> *Old school friends didn't know how to deal with me. They didn't even want to hear my stories. They were just shutting them out like I hadn't been away at all.*
> *STEFAN, 47*

Was the cold reception due to the nomadic lifestyle, which the old school friends biopolitcally judged by refusing to talk about it? This is the most common way to practice biopower on deviancy: it is ignored, for example, by making it a taboo subject. It might also be that travel changes global nomads' subjectivities in a way that not all of their friends are willing to accept. Sociologist Mike Featherstone suggests an interesting viewpoint to the subject by saying that differences must be socially recognised and legitimated, because '[t]otal otherness like total individuality is in danger of being unrecognizable.'[3] In other words, when global nomads reject the dominant discourses and subject positions, they are no longer within their friends' and family's comfort zone. In order to smooth out this discrepancy, some global nomads seem to consciously downplay the experiences travelling has brought them by assuming some of their former subject positions. When asked if travelling has changed them, they denied by

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1 See also O'Regan 2013, 40.
2 Derrida 2000, 141; Van Den Abbeele 1992, 24.
3 Featherstone 1987, 60.

saying they have not changed at all.[1]

> *The core is still here. I am a good man because my parents made me a*
> *good man. They took us to church, they taught us right and wrong, they*
> *taught us that a good person is trustworthy, a bad person lies, all these*
> *value systems are still there. What's changed is my global point of view.*
> *ANDY, 54*

It seems that here the sedentary discourses intervene global nomads' answers, because explicitly stating the difference their journey has made would only make their detachment from the dominant discourses visible and thus separate them from other people, which might make communication difficult, as Andy suggests:

> *The better my life becomes, the more I lose friends. I don't gain more*
> *friends, I actually lose friends because they don't want me to be so different*
> *than they are. This is a horrible problem.*
> *ANDY, 54*

There are similar findings in backpacker research. Luke Desforges, for instance, has outlined how some of the travelling women he interviewed ended up hiding some aspects of their new sense of self upon return, because they did not fit with prior expectations held about them.[2] Thus, while mobility can be viewed as an opportunity to free oneself from the dominant discourses and subject positions, the other side of the coin might be alienation, if such a change is too visible.[3] Most relations, including family ties, need an investment, which requires assuming certain subject positions. They also need to be supported by particular structures, physical proximity being the most important.

> *I've lost my sedentary friends, because I don't live with them any more.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

Although absence itself does not necessarily alter global nomads' subject positions, it can make maintaining relationships difficult. However, absence is not an anomaly in sedentary connections either, particularly in the era of the network society. They too involve various combinations of proximity and distance and continual processes of shifting between being present with some and absent with others, Urry reminds us.[4] Furthermore, in case of physical absence, there might simultaneously be an imagined or virtual presence through multiple connections,[5] and thus the question of absence is not as straightforward as it

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1 Cf. Desforges 2000, 938.
2 Desforges 2000, 942.
3 Butcher 2010, 29.
4 Urry 2002, 256.
5 Büscher & Urry 2009, 101. See also Bauman 1998, 13; Frello 2008, 32–33.

looks but merits further investigation.

In research, the concept of 'network capital' has been used to refer to the capacity to engender and maintain social relations with individuals who are not proximate.[1] In these relations, it seems to be trust rather than physical distance that becomes important.[2] If there is no trust, there is no intimacy either no matter how small the physical distance. As global nomads' relationships require a high level of trust because of their altering subject positions, some of their relationships outlast these tribulations, while others fade away.

> *Contacts get lost, friendships break but our families are always there. We [Jens and his wife] learned that everybody around the world is searching for the same thing: love.*
> *JENS, 30*

Jens' statement implies that family relationships might be the most allowing and enduring in regards to varying subject positions, but this is not always the case. While some of the interviewees have their family's support, others admit that their choices have caused frictions, or at least worry.[3] Michel (47) laughs sarcastically when asked about his family's views about his lifestyle:

> *They don't think about my lifestyle, they think about my retirement. The closer they are, the more they worry. Others are jealous.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

Worry can be reciprocal, and for example ageing parents are one of the most common reasons along with intimate relationships that may make global nomads return to their country of origin, at least temporarily.

> *My parents are quite old. As I lost my brother, I'm the only one remaining. I feel I have to spend more time with my parents now. If I went to the other side of the world, maybe one of them or both would die.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

Mere or mostly virtual presence seems to be insufficient for many people, and it can lead to global nomads' estrangement. However, we have to remember that the notion of alienation and loneliness are subjective. While some interviewees feel they have few friends, particularly those who assume the subject position of the lone ranger, others feel they have plenty of people in their lives. If friendships are measured based on quantitative criteria such as the duration of the relationship or the frequency of encounters, global nomads seem to have less friends than the sedentary, but if friendships are defined in terms of shared

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1   E.g. Baerenholdt 2013, 22, 30.
2   Giddens 1990, 35.
3   See also Riley 1988, 319.

interests and values, the situation might change.

In participant observation, I often witnessed discussions that moved to deeper levels rapidly even between strangers. Global nomads might have this kind of experience in hospitality exchange,[1] while the sedentary for instance in conferences or business meetings. These experiences are a useful reminder of the fact that intimate social relationships are not only built on the long existence of a relationship. Perhaps a more important criteria is trust that seems to be based on the compatibility of subject positions ensuring that both parties are in the same familiar territory.

To summarise this section, the role of social relationships in global nomads' lifestyles is complicated because of their location-independence and strong will to freedom. In this light, commitment to significant others (partners, friends, family members), which includes being part of biopolitical networks and building a *modus vivendi* through compatible subject positions, threatens to tie them down. Partly for this reason, most global nomads are solo travellers. Another reason are the stereotypes and myths related to gender which limit global nomads' subjectivities. The price solo global nomads pay for their freedom might be loneliness and alienation, particularly if they have detached themselves from the dominant subject positions in their home countries, as this means that they are no longer in their friends' and family members' comfort zone. Social relationships are among the most critical biopolitical factors that make solo global nomads change lifestyles, for instance to become lifestyle migrants or settle down in their country of origin. Couples usually suffer less from these feelings, the partner being their home.

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1   See Casado-Diaz 2009, 99.

6.2 Meeting Locals

Encountering different cultures is one of the biggest challenges in travelling. People look for something different, but they have limited abilities to deal with the difference, argues tourism researcher Petri Hottola.[1] Although global nomads' will to engage with other cultures and at the same time distance themselves from their own cultural background facilitates encountering this cultural challenge,[2] it does not remove it.

In this section, cultural challenges are addressed through various forms of discrimination that global nomads encounter during their travels. Discrimination can be based on race (6.2.1 Racial Discrimination), wealth (6.2.2 Status and Disparities of Wealth), and nationality (6.2.3 Influence of Nationality), and it leads to practices with which global nomads cope with feelings of foreignness and culture confusion that follow (6.2.4 Culture Confusion).

All of these encounters and social relationships involve 'locals.' Global nomads use the word broadly: 'locals' are people they meet in their destinations. Locals are naturally not a homogeneous group but represent various ethnicities, races, nationalities, religions, ideologies, personal features and lifestyles, and their lives are by no means static. This section sets out to analyse in more detail what kind of people global nomads meet on their journeys thus narrowing down their concept of 'locals.' The aim is to find out what do global nomads mean when they try to 'live like locals,' and what are the challenges they encounter on their way—in other words, how are their lifestyles and subjectivities enabled and constrained by these relationships?

When investigating encounters between global nomads and locals, the concept of the 'Other,' the not-I and the not-us, is used. It is based on the view that many psychologists and psychoanalysts hold: an infant first learns to think of

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1   Hottola 2008, 35; Hottola 2004, 449. See also Cohen 1972, 166.
2   Hannerz 1992, 246–248. Cf. Skrbis, Kendall, & Woodward 2004.

itself as a separate and unique self by recognising its difference from others. Identity is thus formed by marking its opposite.[1] Such a difference is not natural but socially constructed, and thus it is an effect of power, as cultural theorist Lawrence Grossberg notes.[2]

The concept of the 'Other' has been used in tourism research for instance when analysing relationships between former colonisers and the colonised.[3] The Other, as a negation of the self, is feared and approached at a distance, as Derrida notes, and in order to meet the Other as a fellow-being, separation and prejudices have to be overcome.[4] It is precisely this mix of attraction and fear that creates the myths and fantasies of the Other that are considered fundamental to tourism and ethnography alike.[5]

The tourism industry is used to the set-up where the Other is the exotic local. This stems from the ethnocentric position of the West: it is considered to be the norm from which other nations and races deviate. This research turns the opposition upside down in order to examine what happens when global nomads are treated as the Other—how do they represent this subject position and what kind of challenges does it pose to their attempts to socialise with locals.

While maintaining the unequal power relationship,[6] the reversal of the opposition pays attention to the fact that global nomads are not only active subjects who are exerting their agency and doing things to others; when they choose to engage themselves in local life, they become subjects who are no longer in control but subject to others reminding us of the double senses of 'subjectivity' (see 3.3.2 Resistance).

6.2.1 Racial Discrimination

Discrimination based on white or fair skin colour is rarely spoken about, but for many interviewees it is part of their everyday life. They were not necessarily conscious of their skin colour before travelling, especially if they grew up in only white areas, but their travels have made them realise the affect it has. Tor (61) discovered racism for the first time when he was sailing in the British West Indies in the 1970's. The atmosphere was not favourable for whites:

Mostly it's a kind of rudeness, short answers, if they would give you an

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1   Hall 1992, 279; Hall 1996, 4.
2   Grossberg 1996, 94.
3   See e.g. Pratt 1992; Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin 2004; Chambers 1996; Spivak 1990; Wearing et al. 2010, 53–71.
4   Derrida 1997, 278.
5   Wearing et al. 2010, 62; Galani-Moutafi 2000, 220; Franklin 2003, 214.
6   See also Maoz 2006.

answer at all.
TOR, 61

Racial discrimination, especially in tourism, is tightly related to colonialism. In former conquered countries, white people represent the cultural baggage of European imperialism.[1] They are often treated as representatives of their race before they will be treated as human beings. Even though some global nomads come from former colonised countries, they carry the same burden. Sometimes this colonial-based racism represents itself as arrogance and aggressiveness as Tor's statement illustrated, at other times as submissiveness. It is a parody of human relationships, as tourism researcher Malcolm Crick describes.[2]

For global nomads, racial discrimination poses significant challenges for communicating with locals. Considering how highly they regard local contacts, it is perhaps no wonder that racism was not the kind of subject all the interviewees wanted to talk about. A couple of them thought they heard wrong when asked if they had been discriminated against. They wanted to present themselves in the subject position of an ethical traveller, and consequently, felt uneasy to criticise local cultures in any way. They rather spoke of positive discrimination reporting, for instance, that they had been pushed to the front of the line in shops, they had been better catered to than locals, or more had been allowed to them than to locals. Most often this was due to them being white or looking otherwise different from locals.

> *Being French helped me a lot. Usually the French have a good image in the*
> *world. Also the fact that I'm white and tall makes it easier for me. If I were*
> *black, sad to say, my journey would have been a lot harder.*
> *LUDOVIC, 32*

Positive discrimination—as the term explicitly states—does not mean lack of discrimination; locals just discriminate themselves in favour of foreigners as Ludovic implies when saying that French nationality helped him. However, this does not change the situation drastically, as positive discrimination too places people in different categories, favouring some people over others.

In fact, positive discrimination and the related ethical subject position seems to lead to one of the most common unequal power relationships in tourism: the relationship between hosts and guests. According to the dominant code of conduct, guests are in a destination by the grace of their hosts, and if they complain, they transgress the norms of good behaviour. In tourism studies, this discourse has been the object of criticism,[3] because it is based on a static

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1   Saldanha 2007, 169.
2   Crick 1996, 29, 35–36. See also Maoz 2006, 224.
3   See e.g. Aramberri 2001.

territorial belonging which fails to take into account people's mobilities and various identifications. However, the ethical discourse still reigns among travellers silencing critique towards local cultures and people, as I have witnessed when talking with other travellers on the road or in travel-related discussion forums. When emphasising their role as special and honoured guests, ethical travellers end up reproducing this old guest/host dichotomy.

However, not all of the interviewees were representing themselves as ethical tourists, but rather assumed the ethnocentric subject position as white Westerners. Max (39) burst out laughing when hearing the question:

> *I'm white, Anglo-Saxon, two meters tall. If I was discriminated against, I guess I just didn't notice it.*
> *MAX, 39*

Quite surprisingly, also some of the non-Western interviewees ignored and dismissed discrimination. Among others, Alberto (39) spoke about curiosity and cultural ignorance instead, and paid attention to the fact that discrimination is a subjective notion.

> *I think they [locals] don't know my culture, but I didn't feel it as discrimination.*
> *ALBERTO, 39*

Although experiences of racism were rather viewed as relative, or they were bypassed, forgotten, or ignored, it should be safe to say that they most probably existed and posed challenges to global nomads' attempt to connect with locals. It would be extraordinary if years of travelling did not include any negative or positive discrimination, just as it would be extraordinary if long-term travel did not include any negative experiences. Some global nomads discreetly hinted at this possibility by saying that the good experiences always outweigh the bad, while others spoke openly about the incidents they had experienced on their way. Jukka (27) remembers a shop in Iran where they refused to sell him anything because he was a foreigner, and in Pakistan a hotel closed their doors on him, perhaps for the same reason, or because they were not permitted to take in foreign guests due to government rules. In Ethiopia, local children had a peculiar way of welcoming the foreign guest into their country: they threw stones at Jukka when he bicycled by.

> *Obviously they [the children] were frustrated or something, had nothing else to do. When I stopped to talk with them, they were OK. Perhaps*

throwing stones was a local replacement for a Playstation.
JUKKA, 27

Certain situations seem to trigger Othering and racist reactions more easily than others. Those global nomads who are looking for company recreate the colonial scene and might cause outbursts of racial anger. A foreign man and a local girl (or vice versa) seen together are often associated with prostitution. Literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt explains: sex replaces slavery as the way Others are viewed to belong to the white race.[1] In this light, it is perhaps not in vain that tourism researchers have suggested that sex tourism offers a particularly insightful aspect of intercultural relations.[2]

Whatever the reason for racial anger, it severely constrains global nomads' chances to get to know local people and cultures. When they are put into the subject position of the Other and regarded as fundamentally different, locals might not show any interest to them, or they might be hostile or submissive towards them. All these power relationships work against global nomads' attempts to get an introduction to local life.

6.2.2 Status and Disparities of Wealth

Skin colour is not the only basis for discrimination. Power requires a manifold and refined system of differentiations which permits some people to act upon the actions of others, as Foucault maintains.[3] Status—the rank of one's subject position in relation to others'—is one of the most common forms of discrimination upon which global nomads stumble. As material possessions make comparisons between people easy, status often boils down to wealth, or more accurately to perceived or assumed disparities of wealth. In developing countries, white global nomads, regardless of their income, possessions, spending, and travel style, are believed to be rich.

[Locals] are nice to you because they think you come from a rich country.
Sometimes it is fake. Money is very important how people look at you.
JEREMY, 26

The mindset equating foreigners, travelling and riches has a long history which is bound up with the history of travel and tourism. In the old days, wayfarers were preyed upon on the roads and boats,[4] and various tourist attractions were built to plunder tourists in a legal way, already in times of antiquity.[5]

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1   Pratt 1992, 97.
2   Wearing et al. 2010, 54.
3   Foucault 2002c, 344.
4   E.g. Aneziri 2009, 230–231; Dietz 2005, 13.
5   E.g. Caner 2002, 29, 62.

Most interviewees have stumbled upon bribe requests at borders which are targeted at foreigners. Equally common is double pricing where foreigners have one price and locals another. Foreigners might also be forced to buy higher class transportation while cheaper classes are reserved for locals. They are often also cheated in commercial transactions, and beggars might harass them more relentlessly than locals. Some interviewees regard these as discrimination; for others they are part of business: 'Don't let the stupid keep their money.'

> *Overcharging happens in many countries, even in Europe, but either you learn all the tricks beforehand, or you learn as you go. Sometimes they get you, but after a while it becomes harder and harder.*
> *CIRO, 29*

Although global nomads learn the tricks, being constantly milked for money, gifts, and alms can be a frustrating experience especially because it constrains their attempts to be like locals: they are put into the subject position of a wealthy white person. Many tourist researchers are sceptical whether any other kind of social interaction can ever exist in tourism,[1] and also the interviewees expressed similar negative thoughts.

> *Sometimes they see you as a walking dollar or Euro rather than as a person that they can have interaction with.*
> *CIRO, 29*

Two opposite reactions can result from such irritation. It might lead to thinking that locals have nothing but hidden agendas on their mind, or to remaining blind to various cheating attempts and rip-offs in an anti-imperialist appreciation of the Other. Both reactions appear in the following statement. While Claude (50) admits that overpricing exists, at the same time he also expresses sympathy to locals by paying attention to the context and conditions where rip-offs happen.

> *Of course because I'm white, I'm by definition rich so sometimes you have to fight for the price. Sometimes you just get fed up, you feel discriminated against, but it's not all the time. Maybe you get cheated one time, but then you're invited to people's homes a hundred times. It's a balance to find. I would do exactly the same if I were African. [Imitating 'Africans' with his voice] "Want to buy tomatoes from me, I make you a super price!"*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

The active 'I' and the passive 'you' in the statement represent different subject positions. On the one hand, the 'I' represents the ethical traveller who understands overpricing, whereas the passive voice expresses annoyance and tiredness with such behaviour ('Sometimes you just get fed up, you feel discriminated

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1   Aramberri 2001, 746; Molz & Gibson 2007, 7.

against…'). The change of agency from active to passive in the middle of the statement detaches the speaker from criticism by making it a universal claim: everybody gets annoyed by overpricing, it is only human.

What kind of behaviours do these two subject positions incite? While the irritated ethnocentric customer might confront locals, the anti-imperialist happily pays more because from his viewpoint it is fair—after all, he comes from a rich Western country and he can afford it. Both behaviours maintain the unequal power relationship, and offer no help to create an equal encounter. Either the global nomad poses himself as a victim of a cheating attempt, or he treats locals as objects of charity who must be helped.

Most global nomads shift between these two extreme subject positions. They try to respect other cultures and they also want to be seen respecting them, but they do not shy away from criticism either. For them, respect might mean that they take off their shoes before entering a temple or somebody's house, and that they are polite, humble, and act otherwise decently. Their criticism, on the other hand, might relate to those situations where locals want respect to be shown with money rather than by behaviour. As discussed in Chapter five, global nomads tend to avoid relationships based on monetary exchange because money enables the intervention of biopower and its system of differentiations (see 5.2.3 Downshifting). Global nomads would rather cherish more direct contacts which show similarities between people instead of differences, as in the following statement where Andy (54) vents his anger at the hawkers in the Dominican Republic.

> *It's time to recognise I'm a person. Every day there's the pitch. Here they are aggressive and it's quite annoying. They don't recognise your face. People don't pay attention to people.*
> *ANDY, 54*

During their travels, global nomads have had time to experiment with various subject positions and rhetorical devices with locals. The latter include patient politeness, cold indifference, humour, and sarcasm.

> *When I was in a shantytown [in Peru], an old woman grabbed my hand and said: 'You gringita, you are rich, you have millions and millions,' and I said, 'No, I have a student loan of twenty thousand.'*
> *ANICK, 29*

Whether the measures global nomads try out are successful or not, discrimination seems hard to avoid. Whenever global nomads move, they carry with them markers of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and status which recreate larger power structures, colonialism being the most important.[1] Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu describes the effect of such power structures on individual encounters

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1   Sheller 2004, 21.

by taking the relations of France and Algeria as an example.

> *If a French person communicates with an Algerian, one does not only have two persons communicating with each other; it is moreover France communicating with Algeria. There are two histories communicating with each other; it is the whole colonisation, the whole history of a simultaneously economic and cultural.*[1]

By analogy, when global nomads meet locals, they not only represent themselves but also their country, gender, race, ethnicity, class, and social rank. Some researchers doubt if travelling people can ever get rid of this burden, although their own views are often narrowed by the same belief that equates foreigners, riches, and consumption. As researcher Arun Saldanha explicitly states: '…when you're lying on a Goan beach as a rich foreigner, you can't change structures.'[2]

Although the association of white skin, travel, and wealth indisputably applies to many tourists, it is not necessarily the case for global nomads. No doubt, they have the money to buy flight tickets and they also have the skills and abilities with which to find their way in a new country and culture which make them privileged actors. However, wealth is relative. While global nomads are wealthier than some locals, at the same time they are also poorer than some other locals.

For global nomads, the only solution to deal with the assumptions of those who ask money from them might be a constant and polite 'No thank you.' Whenever global nomads stay in one area for a longer period of time, at some point hawkers and beggars will recognise their face and change strategy: they might become curious about the Other.

6.2.3 Influence of Nationality

Travelling in places where global nomads draw attention because of their race, appearance, or assumed wealth can be tiring. In some cases, nationality can have the same effect, and this is, in fact, one of the two rare issues where nationality have an effect on global nomads' lifestyles, the other issue being citizenship (see 7.2 Political Attachments). Discrimination based on nationality was most true for Americans especially during the Bush era when the United States' international policy led foreign politicians to stir hatred against Americans. Elisa (54) describes her experience when visiting a local hospital in Egypt:

> *I had stepped on a coral and I had a really bad infection. It was a tiny little hospital with two employees and a camel tied out front. The doctor, when he was giving me all the shots, was saying all kinds of bad stuff about the*

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1   Bourdieu 1989 quoted in Coles & Scherle 2007, 223.
2   Saldanha 2007, 119.

States.
ELISA, 54

It is not always the locals who might be prejudiced against the United States. During her travels, Elisa has stumbled upon travellers who have confronted her because of her origins. She remembers one occasion when a fellow traveller, having heard she was American said, 'Oh, you're American, I'm so sorry.' 'Not everybody can separate the individual and the government,' Elisa observes, and reminds of the division often made by the Americans between the government and the people.

A few other American interviewees reported that purely upon seeing their passport, people will treat them differently. They might lie about their nationality saying that they come from Canada instead, or otherwise they might find themselves explaining and justifying their nationality, which they would not necessarily do otherwise. Thus provocation seems to push them to patriotic subject positions which they want to avoid by lying about their nationality. Sometimes the attacks against Americans are not only verbal but physical, and the mere anticipation of them might make global nomads to take precautionary measures.

In a lot of former Soviet countries they have a real grudge against Americans. They have a very suspicious mindset about us and they believe a lot of conspiracy theories. They believe we were trying to infiltrate them, caused their downfall and were stealing from them. There is a lot of random violence in those countries. Here [in the US] we have random shooting sometimes, but it's not something you walk around expecting to happen. When you live over there, you expect it. You don't speak loudly or look out of the ordinary because you are afraid that you are going to get attacked, jumped by the guys at night. It does happen.
GEORGE, 31

Other nationalities—including other world powers Britain, Germany, and France—did not mention discrimination based on nationality. Either they had none, or they ignored them. Furthermore, the effect of nationality is relative and depends on the relationships between global nomads' country of origin and the destination as the following statement describes.

As a white American coming to Africa, I'm instantly regarded a very high status person. If I'm around a British person, they consider us the peasants. The Netherlands person treat us as equals. Scandinavians treat us like we are not as educated. Spanish… they don't really know what they're

doing.
ANDY, 54

Andy's statement's many stereotypes remind us of the fact that stereotypes are very much prevailing when talking about nationalities or any other type of Othering. They are based on ignorance, fear, and reluctance to encounter the Other making people take distance and settle with their prejudices. Global nomads try to cultivate another approach. They want to form their own opinions instead of believing what they are told about other races, countries, and nations at home, school, work, and in the media.

Instead of being afraid of the other, I walk towards it.
ANTHONY, 35

How can global nomads seek to engage with locals whenever stereotypes prevail? Although they try to live like locals, they will always stand out because of their looks, different customs, and language. How relevant is it to talk about immersing into local cultures under these circumstances?

At minimum, global nomads have opportunities to encounter Otherness and they also try to flatten out unfavourable power relationships between them and locals by experimenting with the subject position of the Other. Whether these attempts can qualify as 'immersing into the local culture' is disputable, although Bauman believes that even modest encounters with Otherness can be a start for discovering new modes of coexisting, both for foreigners and locals.[1] Even the simple experience of being attracted by Otherness might be beneficial as it teaches empathy towards those who are different. Although one can doubt if such attempts to connect are sufficient for either party, we have to remember that all changes involving human behaviour are slow. Thus even the tiniest attempts represent a step towards a deeper relationship.

As actual deepening of the relationship takes time, global nomads' lifestyles seem to pose perhaps the greatest of constraints to their endeavour. Global nomads will always go away, and often before such immersing has occurred. Thus it would be appropriate to speak about 'connecting' with locals. 'Connecting' means simply establishing a rapport making no value-laden statement of the depth of the relationship.

6.2.4 Culture Confusion

As discovering new modes of coexisting is a long and arduous process, global nomads will always experience feelings of foreignness. The main question for them is not how to avoid such situations but how to deal with them and the culture confusion that follows. All the interviewees are familiar with culture

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1   Franklin 2003, 214–215.

confusion, which occurs whenever they have to adopt to norms and values that are different from their own. Global nomads might find themselves, for instance, stressed and perplexed while learning new things or facing unexpected difficulties.

> *There's a sense of unexpected. You know you're gonna do something dif-*
> *ferent. You push yourself, you meet new people. You learn a lot. You don't*
> *have a routine, it can be good but it can also be bad. You have to make*
> *your body adjust to different reality every day, different food, different cli-*
> *mate, keep yourself fit. It can be demanding. You have to communicate in*
> *a foreign language. It can be mentally exhausting.*
> *CIRO, 29*

Global nomads also come to realise, time after time, that parts of their former knowledge are no longer correct nor useful, and they need to adjust their views and subject positions.[1] Culture confusion can occur even after repeated visits to the same destination, or when facing the same cultural situations in different countries over and over again. Although queue-jumping might sound a banal and insignificant issue, it nonetheless produces continuous culture confusion for many interviewees.[2] When people cut in line, global nomads' rules regarding how they treat other people and how other people should treat them back do not apply. They have to make a mental adjustment which makes them confused, and if the same scene repeats itself in various parts of the world, the need to constantly make the adjustment makes them tired.

> *Standing in a queue with a large group of Chinese was a bit trying; orderly*
> *and patient they were not. We were constantly shoved and pushed by large*
> *groups of Chinese while they made their way to the front of the line.[3]*
> *CINDIE, 51*

Many of the examples that create culture confusion for global nomads are similar small everyday occurrences which—when accumulating—cause stress. The stress stems from the unfavourable power relationship where global nomads are being positioned as the Other.

How can culture confusion be tackled? As discussed in Chapter two, lifestyle migrants find a relief from their new home country and community (see 2.2.2 Aesthetic Communities of Like-Minded Souls), and backpackers spend time in enclaves which combine familiarity and new thus increasing their feeling of being in control (see 2.1.2 Backpackers).[4] The downside of such refuges is that

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1 Hottola 2004, 453.
2 Levine 2006, 115.
3 Cohagan 2012.
4 Hottola 2005, 2–3.

while providing shelter, they subject locals and prevent their residents from experiencing local cultures as many-sidedly and intensively as they might like to.

The reasons for seeking refuge can be many: it saves the residents from uncomfortable situations where they would have to deal with their inferior power position. It might also be that they are unable to establish rapport with locals for example because not speaking the language,[1] or perhaps they are simply more oriented to the possibilities that the enclaves and the residents provide them with than towards local life.

For global nomads, the idea of retreating into enclaves is foreign. They want to challenge themselves by seeking action and expanding their comfort zone in the spirit of the discourse of adventuring (see 5.3.1 Adventurers). Some of them feel that even taking photos alienates them from the immediacy of experience.

> *It seems kind of silly to me that you go somewhere and you're in the midst of an experience, and the first thing you do is take yourself out of the experience to remember to take pictures so that you can tell someone else about the experience.*
> *MAX, 39*

The person behind the camera becomes the surveillant in the same way that the person who withdraws to an enclave.[2] At the same time, those who are gazed at are subjected, which turns the power relationship in the observer's favour. Global nomads' approach is different: rather than retiring to a place to gaze at others, they let themselves be gazed at by assuming the subject position of the Other. They might sleep on the floor in their host's living room, or in the backyard of a petrol station in the open air. Even when they pitch up their tent, they are subject to approaches where things are done to them rather than the other way around.

> *One Ethiopian guy came to my tent to wake me up at six o'clock in the morning and told me: [after seeing Jukka's bicycle] 'Don't you know man, it's much more comfortable to travel by plane.'*
> *JUKKA, 26*

Being objects who are gazed at is part of global nomads' strategy of letting go and surrendering to unfavourable power relationships.[3]

> *One of the things you learn when you're a true traveller is that you have to extend yourself and your boundaries if you want to have the full experience. You could always choose to be an observer, and only look outside without exposing yourself who you truly are instead of being open and*

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1   E.g. Casado-Diaz 2009, 96; O'Reilly 2002, 186–187.
2   See Giddens 1991, 27.
3   See also Molz 2007, 70.

vulnerable to the people you come in contact with.
BARBARA, 52

How do global nomads withstand the experience of being the Other in the long run? Naturally, global nomads are privileged actors in the sense that whenever the experience is too much, they always have the option to go.[1] They have 'no firm commitment, no fixed date of staying; it's all "until further notice,"' as Bauman remarks.[2] Instead of going home to rest and digest their experiences, global nomads might choose a less challenging destination and later continue their encounters with the Other. Such places of rest are needed also for physical recuperation as it is not only mind but body that gets exhausted of constant mobility, Vogt already observed.[3]

Although global nomads' option may be a hurried escape by flashing the credit card in the manner of backpackers, this is not always the case. Sometimes the mere possibility of withdrawing at any point of time is enough for relieving confusion.

I can live in shitty conditions as long as I know that I can leave whenever I
want to.
CLAUDE, 50

If global nomads choose to stay, they have a few approaches available for tackling culture confusion. Whenever they have no place of their own where to retreat, they might produce a similar effect by searching for like-minded company among locals, for example with the help of hospitality exchange organisations. This is part of a more general globalisation development: it is class and education rather than nationality and culture that unite people worldwide across borders.[4] Talking and staying with locals who share similar interests or a similar educational background gives perspective and brings a reminder of the fact that cultures are not one and shared. Culture confusion is, to be precise, not so much produced by the country and culture itself but by interacting with such groups of people one would not necessarily socialise with in Western countries. Being with Indian hospitality exchange hosts, for instance, is a very different experience than socialising with Indian hawkers, rickshaw drivers, and beggars.

Recognising differences inside countries and between people means that global nomads can always choose with whom they want to socialise. Naturally, this leads to a certain elitism where global nomads are in a position to pick and choose, and it is true that 'locals' for them are a fairly selected group of people

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1   See also Butcher 2010, 31.
2   Franklin 2003, 207.
3   Vogt 1976, 37.
4   E.g. Bergesen 1990, 73; Urry 2003, 4, 61.

who are often equally or more privileged actors as they are. For instance, being a member in a hospitality exchange organisation requires that hosts have a house or an apartment where to receive guests, they usually need to speak at least English, and they also need to have an internet access. Thus they are not any men or women of the street.

Another approach to culture confusion is seeing the Other in oneself, to which global nomads' experiences in the subject position of the Other prepare them. The task is to see that the Other is, fundamentally, within oneself and not outside, which neutralises power positions.

> *I look at everyone as brothers and sisters. Regardless of religion or country,*
> *we are all one.*
> *LUDOVIC, 32*

It is not in vain that Derrida considers encountering the Other as the truest test for human respect. Similarly, by letting themselves be treated as the Other, the interviewees might experience a hardy test for dealing with culture confusion.

To summarise this section, instead of encountering locals as the Other, global nomad's themselves assume the subject position of the Other. This practice helps them to flatten out some of the power asymmetries that discrimination based on race, wealth, and nationality pose for their attempts to live like locals. It makes visible the larger power structures such as colonialism that are present in their encounters by turning the power positions upside down. However, surrendering to be the Other does not provide an ultimate solution to the challenge. Global nomads will always carry with themselves markers of their gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, wealth, and status, and thus their agency is both enabled by their will to engage with local life but also constrained through various forms of discrimination. Under the circumstances, it was suggested that it might be better to speak about 'connecting' with locals.

6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps

This section analyses the interviewees' relationships with other travelling people. The aim is to examine what kind of power relationships tourist encounters include (6.3.1 Intratourist Gaze), and to what extent these affect global nomads' lifestyles (6.3.2 Post-Tourists and the End of the Game).

6.3.1 Intratourist Gaze

Tourist talk has been deemed as one of the most interesting frames of discourse through which to analyse contemporary social mores and moral concerns,[1] in other words the hidden forms of power discussed in Chapter three (see 3 Power and Subjectivities). Part of the tourist talk is how travelling people define themselves, and in this research, these self-definitions lead us—not surprisingly—to the much disputed opposition between 'tourist' and 'traveller'.[2]

Among many other interviewees, Ajay (24) and Maria (32) were seemingly horrified when asked if they consider themselves tourists: 'No, never! We are travellers.' Like English, Russian language makes a difference between 'tourist' and 'traveller.' Ajay illustrates the mentality of Russian tourists by saying:

> *Most of them are rich and rude. They think local people are stupid and they treat them like slaves. If locals don't understand Russian, they just shout louder. We try not to be in contact with this kind of tourists. We are different. We come to a place and stay one month, two months resting and trying to live like local people. We are not in a rush. We think the best*

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1 McCabe 2005, 102.
2 E.g. MacCannell 1999, 9–10, 104; McCabe 2005, 92, 96–98; Rojek & Urry 1997b, 1; Riley 1988, 322; Dann 1999, 159–160; Sørensen 2003, 858; Cohen 2010b, 64–69; Munt 1994; Fussell 1980, 39–40; Lisle 2006, 77–83, Hulme & Youngs 2002, 7; Huggan 2001, 193–208 (anti-tourist tourists).

name for this is traveliving.
AJAY, 24

As the statement implies, presenting oneself as an anti-tourist[1]—be it under the label of traveller, backpacker, anti-tourist, global nomad, hobo, gypsy, or the practice of traveliving—is a question of status and thus of power relationships where an element of competition is included.[2] Backpackers, for instance, can position themselves above mass tourists because they seem to embody the label's positive connotations such as freedom, independence, fun, and self-development, although both tourists and backpackers are essentially part of the same tourism industry as discussed in Chapter two (see 2.1.2 Backpackers).[3] All of these binary oppositions function in the same way as the other oppositions previously presented in this research. The Other, in this case the tourist, is needed because an identity can only be created in opposition to it. Then a hierarchy between the two poles is established to mark the status of the desired one. The only question remaining is: why is the Other a tourist?[4]

The tourist is an easy target for Othering as the presence of other tourists is an integral part of any travel experience. Wherever two or more tourists gather, there will also be at work an 'intratourist gaze' with which tourists rank and use biopower to each other. The concept, introduced by Holloway et al., re-articulates Urry's notion of the 'tourist gaze,' and it owes to Foucault's theories of the Panopticon (see 3.1 Why a Foucauldian Approach?).[5]

The intratourist gaze constructs everyday knowledge and discourses regarding other tourists. As biopower in general, it is disciplinary, and it forms tourists' understanding about appropriate and inappropriate touring behaviours. Nature tourists, for instance, might gaze unfavourably at other tourists whose behaviours seem to impact negatively on the natural environment.[6] Similarly, Ajay and Maria pay attention to the rude manners of Russian tourists, and Phoenix (49) to those of American tourists:

> *American tourists are loud, demanding, entitled, and they just look so*
> *incredibly stupid to me that I stay away from them. I'm different. I learn*
> *the language, culture, love their [locals'] country and live with them.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

It is noteworthy that both quotations cited above include a statement 'I am/We are different,' which explicitly shows how self-representations and related

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1   See Jacobsen 2000, 285–289.
2   E.g. McCabe 2005, 100; O'Reilly 2006, 999, 1006; Elsrud 2001, 608.
3   See e.g. Cohen 1972 and 1973; Riley 1988, 322; Speed 2008, 63.
4   See also McCabe 2005, 85.
5   See also Hannam & Knox 2010, 22–23.
6   Holloway et al. 2011, 237–238, 241.

power relationships are based on differentiations.[1] They allow global nomads to identify with certain groups of people and at the same time separate themselves from other groups of people.[2] Those who are Othered are then assessed and disciplined by the intratourist gaze.

For global nomads, inappropriate touring behaviour seems to be sticking to one's own culture and assessing local cultures from the reference point of home.[3]

> *Tourist is an attitude. Often they try to take as much of their own country with them as they can. They'll be in a foreign country but try to be living in their own country in the foreign country.*
> *PHOENIX, 49*

As the quotation implies, definitions of what being a 'tourist' means are related to the concept of 'authenticity.' According to Phoenix, tourists represent inauthenticity, which evokes the question what is authentic for global nomads? Most global nomads relate authenticity to socialising with locals.

> *I have to be dragged kicking and screaming to see this building and that cathedral. That's not what I'm there for. I'm there for people.*
> *RITA, 72*

While tourists try to find new and pristine destinations and lifestyle migrants backward areas where they can experience authenticity by a return to the past, global nomads seek authenticity by sharing dwellings with locals (see 6.2.4 Culture Confusion). In this context, 'authenticity' means participating in their hosts' or housemates' lives whether it is grocery shopping, cooking, cleaning, watching films, going to a bar or a party, or walking the dog.

This notion of authenticity, which MacCannell would define with the concept of 'tourist backstages,'[4] seems to be gaining currency also among more conventional tourists. Recent research on creative tourism—an extension of cultural tourism where creativity is viewed to provide activity, content, and atmosphere for tourism[5]—has shown that tourists cherish experiences grounded in everyday life. This trend challenges the view that tourism would be an activity removed from the everyday life; rather, it is its extension.[6]

There is a difference, however, in how global nomads and more conventional tourists seek these experiences. While the latter might be interested in the everyday life of their destinations as a part of more generalised motivations, global

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1   Foucault 2002c, 344.
2   See also Benson 2009, 121.
3   See also McCabe 2005, 98; Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2181.
4   MacCannell 1999, 92–96.
5   Richards 2011, 1225, 1245.
6   Richards 2011, 1233.

nomads actively seek these moments, and they have developed various practices to come into contact with locals as Rita's (72) following travel tips show:

> *Smile a lot, talk to strangers, accept all invitations, and eat everything you are offered.*
> RITA, 72

Global nomads try to make themselves as approachable as possible by assuming the subject position of the Other so that locals can do things to them, for example, offer a ride or a cup of coffee, and invite them to their home. However, their experiences are hardly any more authentic than tourists' simply because there is not absolute pole of authenticity; both exist in the same continuum where all is artificial and authentic alike (see 2.2.1 In Search of Authenticity). For global nomads, authenticity is, to put it bluntly, a means to practise biopower, the disciplinary nature of the intratourist gaze, and stand out from the mass.

The intratourist gaze is usually reactionary and it seems to be triggered in situations where global nomads are feeling threatened or under stress, when they for instance suffer from culture confusion, or when they witness disadvantages of tourism such as congestion, pollution, and overpricing as the previously cited examples of Ajay, Maria, and Phoenix showed.[1]

In principle, global nomads' stress could also find an outlet in local people and culture, but in practice many of them assume the subject position of an ethical traveller as discussed in the previous subsection, and in this position, they rather criticise other tourists than locals. What is naturally (and consciously) forgotten in this process is that you are also a tourist, as MacCannell points out.[2] For MacCannell, tourist is a prototype of modern man, and by examining it, we can better understand ourselves.

MacCannell's manoeuvre, the reversal of the antagonism tourist/anti-tourist which makes the subject position of tourist appealing (or at least less repulsive), shows the artificial nature of the power hierarchy. This does not stop people from creating rank, however. As the concept of the 'intratourist gaze' shows, the search for the Other will only be directed elsewhere, inside the group. The root cause for this behaviour lies in language which is built on opposites: it is only through the relationship to the Other that the meaning of any term can be constructed. This leads to a view of identities as integral and unified: I am something completely different from the Other. The concept suggested by Foucauldian approaches, 'subject position' (see 3.3.1 Subject Positions) is a useful reminder of the plurality of identifications available, also in touring cultures.

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1   See also McCabe 2005, 100.
2   MacCannell 1999, 1, 9.

6.3.2 Post-Tourists and the End of the Game

Academia has defined a special tourist category for the kind of subject who takes pleasure in recognising the variety of subject positions available: a self-conscious, cool, and detached post-tourist. For post-tourists, being a tourist is not necessarily a degrading attribute but a fun thing to play with. They consider tourism as a game, and they are not searching for authenticity; rather, they are aware of the constructed, artificial nature of the toured cultures, and they celebrate it.[1]

Are global nomads post-tourists? Although most of them avoid labelling, they answered dutifully the question 'Do you consider yourself a tourist?' anyway, sometimes making fun of the labels in the spirit of post-tourism:

> *I don't know what I am. I'm an alien.*
> *SCOTT, 33*

Although the statement can, because of its sarcastic undertone, be interpreted as a weariness to answer meticulous research questions, from the point of view of post-tourism, different subject positions are a play. All definitions are shifting, and they depend on various factors such as who formulates them, why, when, where, and for whom as discussed in Chapter four in relation to the constraints of production and reception of discourses (see 4.1.6 Contextual Analysis). There is not, nor there cannot be, any consensus about what a tourist is.

When choosing to play with concepts, global nomads detach themselves from the normative and disciplinary intratourist gaze in order to identify themselves with other tourists. This is the same kind of Othering as discussed in the previous subsection. Global nomads surrender to be the Other, this time a tourist, in order not to create power hierarchies that lead to competition and complicate social relationships. This post-tourist play makes their relationships more equal, although global nomads' privileged position is prevailing in one respect: they can probably play more with different touring subjectivities than those tourists who are caught up with the repetitive products of the travel industry.

Although such hybridity is highly appreciated as opposed to being condemned to one or only few invariable sets of values and behavioural patterns as discussed in Chapter three (see 3.3.1 Subject Positions),[2] global nomads are not free to decide about their subject positions; they always have to negotiate their positions with locals.

> *[I see myself as] someone who lives abroad. I like to think about losing this*
> *'this is your country, this is not your country' mentality. Many people see*

1   E.g. Cohen 2004, 50; Urry 2002b, 12, 90–91; McCabe 2005, 91, 99; Edensor 2001.
2   Bauman 2008, 187.

me as an expatriate but I don't.
  NOAM, 32

When global nomads are considered tourists, they are expected to behave accordingly: appreciate architectural monuments, ride taxis, eat in restaurants, and buy souvenirs. When global nomads fail to fulfil these expectations, they puzzle locals and might even invite trouble. This is, in fact, the point where post-tourist play can get tiring for global nomads. They might find themselves in situations where they need to justify themselves to other people over and over again by answering such questions as: If you are in Cairo, why don't you go to see the pyramids? What is the point of travelling if you don't want to see any sights? Why not stay at home instead?[1] These expectations constrain global nomads' search for authenticity. If their hosts, for example, want to drive them to see sights and visit museums, global nomads are not getting the kind of experience they would like to have. For them, going to the local market and cooking food together with their hosts, or meeting and talking with them and their friends, would be authentic.

As a general rule, the more touristy the destination, the harder it is for global nomads to approach. When locals view them as yet another tourist, their chances to familiarise themselves with local life become poor. Thus not being considered a tourist can be an important strategy and a success factor in global nomads' search for authenticity. However, this might be easier said than done as the following reference Michel (47) received from another member of hospitality exchange demonstrates:[2]

> *If you host Michel be aware that as he says in his profile, he is NOT a typical tourist. He may not have plans to explore your town. He has a fair amount of work to do online.*
> *A HOSPITALITY EXCHANGE ORGANISATION MEMBER*

The reference was to warn other hosts of an atypical member. These kind of misunderstandings arise from a simple fact: 'tourist' is a sedentary concept which relates travel to temporary escapes that are packed with meaningful activities such as sightseeing. To overcome locals' assumptions, global nomads might provoke or confront stereotypes with humour. When Guillermo (42) became frustrated with Africans who failed to see the point of his bicycling—they thought government was paying him for cycling—Guillermo said: 'On the contrary, I'm paying for the government. Taxes.' Sometimes, however, the emotional baggage entailed in these discussions is simply too much, even for those who play with

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1   See also Cohen 1973, 102.
2   References in hospitality exchange tell what kind of experience being a host/guest was, and what was the other person like. The references are posted in the profile and they tell about the person's reputation in the community.

labels. Claude (50) got irritated by the question:

> *What's a tourist? What's a traveller? We are all tourists and travellers, I*
> *don't give a shit about definitions. It's snobbish that the traveller wants to*
> *be different. We are all tourists. The world was invented by the British in*
> *the eighteenth century. We are not inventing anything, we are just buying*
> *tickets.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

In some cases, frustration implies that travelling for global nomads is a serious business. It is a dear lifestyle and a strong point of identification. They want to be unique.[1] When hearing in the interview that this research also included over a dozen other global nomads, some where convinced that the others had to be imposters. They were unaware of their colleagues, nor did they want to hear about them because that would have broken the illusion.

> *My first thought is: I'm the only nomad I know. Nomad means you go*
> *wherever you want to without any itinerary or plan. I don't know very*
> *many people that have the money, the ability, and the curiosity to do it. I*
> *know some people that have the money and that could wander wherever*
> *they want, but they're not wandering around, they plan everything.*
> *ANDY, 54*

Defining others as imposters is a form of Othering. Global nomads might disqualify or belittle their competitors with an 'intranomadic' gaze using, for instance, the number of years travelled or the maximum duration of stay in one place as criteria. In participant observation, such Othering was sometimes done through jokes in which the interviewees' either regarded me as a 'little sister' or a mentor-like figure, depending on the interviewee's own travel experience. This naturally could have an effect on the interview answers as those considering me a senior might have tried to mirror the expectations they expected me to have of the nomadic lifestyle. In some cases this seemed to lead to sugarcoating at the cost of telling about the downsides of the lifestyle. This could be witnessed in the fact that those who were most critical of the lifestyle were usually older and more experienced.

Some interviewees would rather stop playing these kinds of games altogether. They avoid labelling themselves and others because labelling always requires defining both the object and its opposite. However, people global nomads meet might not be satisfied with what they get, if global nomads make no effort to put themselves in a box. Once again, they need to negotiate their subject position with other people, which clearly shows that they cannot escape biopolitical networks.

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1   See also Benson 2009, 121.

It makes some people uncomfortable that you don't have a fixed identity.
Sometimes I'm a translator, sometimes a traveller, a crewman of a boat,
or a financial manager, but they try to put me in a box. It was the same in
the university. You have to choose your major. I was interested in every-
thing: mathematics, philosophy, economics.
GUSTAVO, 51

To summarise this section, labelling and categorisation are deeply rooted in human interaction as global nomads' tourist encounters show. This is also true in science, for how would the interviewees of this research be defined and called if not with a concept? This is an inherent weakness in both language and science. For some global nomads, such awareness leads to the post-tourist play with various subject positions that touring can offer them, while others would rather end the game by refusing all labelling and stepping aside from related power networks. However, this is also a biopolitical measure, for by refusing labelling, global nomads intend to take the lead and rewrite the rules of the game.

6.4. Conclusion

Let us consider the preliminary conclusions to the research subquestion, TO WHAT EXTENT ARE GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN THEIR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS? As discussed in Chapter three, power cannot be escaped as it is an integral part of any social relationships. For global nomads, these social relations that include biopower, seem to be among the most critical in regards to their lifestyles. If they do not find a partner to share their journey with, solo global nomads are likely to reject their subject position of the lone ranger and settle down at some point.

The relationships in which global nomads are most willing to surrender to biopolitical constraints are their contacts with locals, as was assumed in the beginning of the research. However, these do not seem to satisfy their need for intimate relationships in the long run. This is partly due to various forms of discrimination as well as locals' assumptions that position global nomads as Others or as tourists making equal encounters challenging. Consequently, it was suggested that it is better to speak about their attempts as 'connecting' with locals.

In order to overcome various power asymmetries in their relationships, global nomads were shown to play with subjectivities. This play frees them from the constraints of being condemned to only one identity, and it includes the option to alter their status in order to flatten out power asymmetries that might make communication with others difficult. Still, it should be remembered that global nomads are not free to experiment with subject positions. They too are tied to other people's expectations, and they carry with themselves markers of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and status which recreate larger power structures and freeze their attempted play. Social relationships for them are, therefore, both a necessary and unavoidable constraint.

7 In and Outside of Societies

While the theme of the previous chapter was subjectivity, this chapter focuses on power in its diverse forms ranging from sovereign power practised by states through different rules and regulations to more subtle measures of biopower, that are visible in everyday norms and behaviours and produced by all. With this topic, the research moves further in contextual analysis, to examine global nomads' societal relationships, particularly through the subject positions that global nomads assume and the reasons why they do so.

Societies and power are tightly knit. 'To live in society is… to live in such a way that some can act on the actions of others. A society without power relations can only be an abstraction,' Foucault maintained.[1] By identifying and analysing such power relationships and their repercussions in global nomads' lives, this chapter answers seeks answer to research subquestion three: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES (BIO)POWER ENABLE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES?

To start with, we need to define what are the sedentary societies in question. Are they networks of social relationships? Social orders? Systems? Clusters of institutions?[2] When defining sociology beyond societies, Urry suggested that if the concept of 'society' makes sense at all, it has to be embedded within the analysis of nation-states. British historian Eric Hobsbawm drew the same conclusion by quoting political theorist Miroslav Hroch. For Hroch, nationality is a substitute for factors of integration in a disintegrating society: 'When society

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1 Foucault 2002c, 343.
2 See Urry 2001, 7; Elias 2001, 3.

fails, the nation appears as the ultimate guarantee.'[1]

Today the nation-state—a state whose boundaries are congruent with the limits of nations, in other words a state of and for a particular nation—is the norm of political organisation.[2] It consists of a set of institutional forms of governance, and it maintains an administrative monopoly over a territory with demarcated boundaries.[3] The nation-state is 'basic to the rule of law,' sociologist Craig Calhoun argues, not only because most law are a domestic matter of nation-states but because most international law is structured by agreements among nation-states,[4] States are, in other words, networks of power. Foucault elaborates by saying,

> …the state is not simply one of the forms of specific situations of the exercise of power—even if it is the most important—but that, in a certain way, all other forms of power relation must refer to it… power relations have come more and more under state control… Using here the restricted meaning of the word 'government,' one could say that power relations have been progressively governmentalized, that is to say, elaborated, rationalized, and centralized in the form of, or under the auspices of, state institutions.[5]

The role of the nation-states and their power is crucial also for global nomads, because it is the state which is the guarantor of mobility to other states. As global nomads' lifestyles include frequent border crossings and extended stays in various countries, they unconsciously test the limits of sedentary societies by presenting them with a set of problems. They call into question, for instance, important legal bases of nation-states such as citizenship, human rights, and freedom.

All of these challenges imply power relationships that are not commonly addressed in tourism studies because of the underlying assumption that tourists are on a temporary escape which does not alter their basic coordinates such as nationality and citizenship.[6] Tourism has traditionally been viewed as reinforcing these coordinates as well as societies' norms and values rather than confronting them, although new trends have also been emerging, as discussions on the intersections between tourism studies, lifestyle migration, and mobilities show (see 2 Mobile Lifestyles).

The following analysis examines global nomads' attachments to sedentary societies in regard to nationality (7.1 Nationalistic Attachments) and citizenship (7.2 Political Attachments), and by investigating how their lifestyles and

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1 Hroch 1991 quoted in Hobsbawm 2000, 173. See also Sassen 2008, 281.
2 Brubaker 1996, 63. See also Foucault 2002c, 344–345.
3 Giddens 1985, 121.
4 Calhoun 2007, 4.
5 Foucault 2002c, 345.
6 See also Franklin 2007, 139.

subjectivities are enabled and constrained by these two concepts that compress (bio)power (7.3 Travel-Related Attachments). The aim is to find out whether global nomads can dodge societies' power networks as Caren Kaplan's definition in the introductory chapter stated (see 1.2 Research Set-Up)—do they live in or outside of societies?

7.1 Nationalistic Attachments

This first section analyses interviewees' nationalistic attachments. We start with the effects of nationality to global nomads' location-independent lifestyles (7.1.1 Global Citizens and the Stateless) and then move on to examine whether their lives are constrained by more implicit measures of biopower that might attach them to their country of origin even when overtly rejecting nationalistic discourses (7.1.2 Cultural Baggage and Biopower).

7.1.1 Global Citizens and the Stateless

What are global nomads' nationalistic affiliations? The interviewees do not seem to nurture strong feelings of homesickness, nor do they assume nationalistic subject positions.[1]

> *I'm not in the least interested in being an American in the world, I'm much more interested in being wherever I am.*
> *RITA, 72*

For the great majority, their home countries' cities, sceneries, nature, and culture failed to evoke enthusiasm and nostalgia. Only few mentioned mountains, lakes and national parks, or a specific regional culture to which they feel attached, whereas in the nineteenth century when nationalism was born, it was most often such cultural bonds and natural sights that provided narrative possibilities for imagining one's home country and home community, the nation.[2] Even rebellious hobo culture was nationalistic. Author Jack London, who was otherwise a fierce critic of middle-class values, proudly stated, 'I was the American hobo.'[3]

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1   Cf. Butcher 2010, 27–28.
2   Anderson 1991.
3   London 2006, 59.

For global nomads, home country is not a piece of land, nor is it an imaginary community of anonymous compatriots. It consists of their friends and family wherever their loved ones happen to be.

> *England is our home country because of friends and relatives, but the*
> *country we [Glen and her husband] feel like home is Australia.*
> GLEN, 53

As the statement suggests, as long as global nomads have significant others in their country of origin, a special connection to the 'roots' remains, otherwise the connection is bound to weaken. This seems to be an indication of the intimacy trend that Giddens spoke about: only things that matter personally have a meaning (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers),[1] while home country as such is merely an empty concept.

Towards nationalistic discourses in general global nomads are critical, and they would like to liberate themselves from related power relations. From their point of view, nations and borders are means to control.

> *The powers that are really in control, they don't recognise boundaries.*
> *They want to convince us that we should be patriotic towards our coun-*
> *tries because it keeps us separate.*
> BARBARA, 52

It appears that nationalistic feelings are perhaps not the glue that attaches global nomads to their countries of origin. However, one's nationality cannot be ignored in the contemporary world based on nation-states. Borders and national regulatory regimes 'refuse to allow foreigners to forget who they are' and where they come from, as researcher Melissa Butcher observes.[2]

Thanks to their mostly Western passports, global nomads can travel almost anywhere in the world, and thus nationality for them is one of the keys for location-independent lifestyles. At the same time, nationality also restricts their freedom of choice by restricting their play with subjectivities. Although global nomads develop new attachments on the way which can be just as important for subjectivity forming as the ones tied in childhood, their nationality remains unchanged.[3] Global nomads are thus fixed to one coherent, immutable identity, although they themselves would like to have more freedom in terms of deciding where they want to belong, and also freedom to change their mind at will.

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1 Giddens 1991, 81, 171, 181.
2 Butcher 2010, 33. See also Conradson & McKay 2007, 169.
3 Cf. The Latin 'patria' was a multi-layered concept which allowed more allegiances from family to city-state implying that patriotism originally allowed multiple attachments. It was only in the nineteenth century when it was related exclusively to one's home country. See Sarsila 1994, 21; Held 2005, 10.

We're a bit like chameleons: we change. Maybe when I'm in Japan, I'm a
little bit like Japanese.
GUSTAVO, 51

From global nomads' point of view, it is precisely the lack of alternatives which
is one of the greatest problems of nationality. Nationality cannot be chosen,
neither can it be renounced unless a tedious process of legally exchanging it to
another is undertaken.

When someone becomes a traveller they slowly come to realise that nation-
ality no longer matters, as blood type or other trivial things we are born
with, yet have no control over. My home country has never been defined,
except by passport. Norway, Canada, America? For me, I would be unable
to give a home country if someone were to ask for it. Those terms simply
don't register as comfortable for me.
JEFF, 25

Nations are mandatory communities entered by birth and exited by death only
which is in an interesting contradiction to any human rights: governments have
unilaterally imposed citizenship and assumed arbitrary jurisdiction over their
citizens. After all, no-one was born as a citizen of any state.[1] Citizenship, and the
related set of responsibilities, were simply designated to them.[2] This is a strong
measure of sovereign power in which citizens have little to say.

Although citizens are states' property, this is naturally a bargain: the citizens
gain rights in return for obligations as the next subsection shows. At a global
scale, however, there are no opportunities to opt out of the bargain. Officially
assuming a stateless status would mean that legal travel would become impossible.
For global nomads, whose lifestyles are dependent on freedom of movement,
this is not an option.

What are then global nomads' alternatives—statelessness, rootlessness, global
citizenship, cosmopolitanism?[3] From the point of view of states, these are all
negative concepts because they renounce its power. It is no wonder then that
for example the word 'stateless' has similar unfavourable connotations in the
dominant discourses as 'unemployed' and 'homeless': they all imply a lack. Most
global nomads like to challenge such notions by consciously making allowance
for multiple attachments.

I see the world as a house. My kitchen is France, my recreation centre is

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1   See e.g. Wolff 1996, 45.
2   Naturally, this mainly applies to Western citizens as there are also many stateless
    people in the world, and some nationalities that might not be useful for the indi-
    vidual at all.
3   On cosmopolitanism and world citizenship e.g. Held 2005; Calhoun 2002; Han-
    nerz 1992, 246–248.

maybe South America, and my den or sort of is Poland. They are just
neighbourhoods in my little village.
MAX, 39

In Max's statement, the attention is drawn to the fact that he does not mention his country of origin, the USA, at all. For global nomads, their detachment from nationalistic subject positions is a conscious move in favour of statelessness or world citizenship, or, they refuse any of these labels in a post-nationalistic game. To borrow the words of Scottish nomadic author Alastair Reid, they seem to have elected 'a deliberate, chosen strangeness' of their respective countries of origin and become 'enmeshed' with the people, places, and cultures they visit.[1]

7.1.2 Cultural Baggage and Biopower

When rejecting nationalism and criticising the current system based on nation-states, do the interviewees also reject the dominant discourses of their country of origin? Analysing the question shows the ultimate level to which global nomads are either detached from their origins or still tied to them.

To start with, we need to know what exactly makes up a society. These constitutive factors are hard to pin down when nationalism is put aside just as Hobsbawm and Hroch suggested in the introduction to this chapter. This is because the aim of nationalism is precisely to bind disparate spheres, such as culture and politics together in order to form a whole. Thus the concepts of 'society' and 'nation-state' seem to be entwined, perhaps in an inexorable manner.

Naturally, there is also the possibility of integration through values, which was the driving force of classical sociology, but it is now viewed sceptically among sociologists. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that as people make varying connections (of which Max's statement about the world being his house is an example) the very foundations on which value communities could be based are eaten away.[2]

If the question what makes up a society is approached from the point of view of Foucauldian theories, 'society' can be tentatively defined as something that is kept together by dominant discourses and biopower that guide the way people organise their lives together.[3] They produce collective practices that people follow trying to ensure desirable behaviours,[4] and they define how people view themselves, other people, and the society.

The questions that follow, and to which this subsection seeks answers are: what are these dominant discourses and what kind of practices do they involve?

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1   Reid 1990, 31, 36. See also Hannerz 1990.
2   Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 17–18.
3   Foucault 2002b, 404.
4   Foucault 1991, 183, 199, 304.

How are they maintained and reproduced?[1] These questions lead us to examine the subtle measures of power that manifest themselves in people's everyday behaviours and codes of conduct (see 3 Power and Subjectivities).

The dominant discourses under scrutiny are part of the tacit knowledge people carry within themselves all the time, wherever they go.[2] They free people from having to consciously and constantly consider behavioural choices and alternatives, as Giddens says, and they are thus viewed as functional.[3] The problem with the dominant discourses is that they are so commonplace and natural to us that we rarely notice their existence and thus, in order to understand their workings, we need to alienate ourselves from them.

Travelling is one of the most efficient ways to become aware of the role of the dominant discourses in one's life (and it is also the reason why travelling can be restricted in some societies). Ajay (24) and Maria (32) describe the effect travelling has had on their world view:

> *We have seen different ways of living, different religions, different people. Earlier we thought that some things are good for us and some things are bad. Now everything is normal for us. We will never judge anybody for their way of life. We try to live the same way and find the best parts of this lifestyle. It makes us more universal and adaptable.*
> *AJAY, 24 and MARIA, 32*

To use the terms of discourse analysis, travelling has led Ajay and Maria to the limits of one regime of truth and to the beginnings of another which has produced an alienating effect.[4] They have come to notice that the same discourses which facilitated their everyday life in their country of origin make them feel confused elsewhere. The unfamiliar contexts thus challenge their earlier truths and practices,[5] and thus they paradoxically show what their society of origin and culture are made of. As Foucault notes, such frictions, challenges, and provocations are the only way for any domain of action or behaviour to enter the field of thought.[6] The subject has to be questioned and stripped of its familiarity before it can be reassessed, as many of the interviewees have noticed in practice.

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1 Innes 2003, 2.

2 The dominant discourses in question are never dominant in the sense that they would be shared by each and everybody within a particular state; on the contrary, there are always opposing discourses as discussed in Chapters four and five (see 4.1.5 Maintaining Plurality and 5.3 Two Discourses). The dominant discourses are dominant merely because sufficiently many people, or sufficiently powerful people believe in them.

3 Giddens 1994, 22–23; Verbeek 2009, 75.

4 Foucault 2005, xxii; Foucault 1998, 178–179. See also Simons 1995, 90.

5 See also Geoffroy 2007, 281.

6 Foucault 1997d, 117.

You can't really know your culture before you have been in other cultures.
GEORGE, 31

From the point of view of tourism research, dominant discourses are the key for understanding the tourist experience, but studies tell us surprisingly little about them.[1] The questions Cohen asked about drifters in 1970s—Has the drifter's attitude toward his own society and his own lifestyle changed? In what ways?—remain unanswered.[2] Instead, tourism studies have focused on the other culture and its impact on travellers.

To demonstrate the strength and extent of the home context, let us take an example. Although global nomads do not consider themselves patriots, they are not immune to nationalistic subject positions as the following quotation, where Jukka ponders what he is missing from his country of origin on the road, shows.

Especially in Asia and Africa when I was buying groceries, I would have liked to be able to get all the stuff from the same place, also milk. Everything just works so much better in Finland. But I didn't really miss anything.
JUKKA, 26

The statement evokes the question, why travel if everything is so much better at home? However, the statement also shows that Jukka is rather content with his present stateless life as well ('I didn't really miss anything.'). Where does this contradiction come from and how can it be explained? It appears that it is the dominant discourses that intervene in Jukka's story as residual discourses living side by side with his present discourses of statelessness. Similar contradictions were present in all interview answers, which shows the strong position of the dominant discourses: they are hard to forget, and it might be that they speak us rather than the other way around as is typical for discourses. We cannot master them completely.

Dominant discourses are a result of a long process. Global nomads have been exposed to them since childhood through their parents, teachers, colleagues, friends, and the media, and they themselves facilitate and strengthen them. Nationalism is just one example of these vehicles of biopower. It covers all areas of life from working to consuming, and the more closely it is related to values, the more serious are its effects. Patriotism, for instance, may lead to fear and prejudices against the Other (see 6.2 Meeting Locals).

Biopower's teachings leave permanent marks. Even after being exposed to different norms for years, the interviewees still travel with their home society. It is like the superego which reminds them of its existence from time to time. When

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1   See also Wilson et al. 2009, 17.
2   Cohen 1972, 179.

encountering new norms, it develops culture confusion reminding travellers of the 'right' norms as discussed in Chapter six (see 6.2.4 Culture Confusion).

It is typical for the dominant discourses that they cannot be forgotten at will.[1] They have to be consciously questioned, criticised, and replaced with other teachings. Some global nomads consciously aim at unlearning them.[2]

> *I'm trying to strip away everything that is not necessary. Probably ninety per cent of what we do is scripted.*
> *GEORGE, 31*

The scripted, in the language of this research, consists of the dominant discourses. By getting rid of them, George wants to see the core reality of everything:

> *What I want to achieve myself is I want to be able to consider myself completely human instead of some other label, to be without prejudices, like national. I try to look at things as if I were coming from another world and to be able to judge things that way.*
> *GEORGE, 31*

What such an endeavour requires is a view of subjectivity as constant evolvement, a work in progress, which either allows the play with different subjectivities or ends the game altogether by refusing labelling as discussed in the previous chapter (see 6.3.2 Post-Tourists and the End of the Game). Some interviewees, on the other hand, hold on to their cultural baggage such as the value systems taught at home considering them to be the core of their personality that were moulded in childhood years.

> *I don't think it's [travel]changed me at all, but peeled away the shells of my cocoon. Surely the butterfly is the same creature as the caterpillar; surely I am the same person as I was as a small child, though further along the path to progression that was set out when I entered this life.*
> *SCOTT, 33*

The latter approach explains why biopower has such a strong influence on people's lives: the discourses they have been taught, feel natural to them as if they originated in themselves and in their own desires. However, they are not original ways of thinking and feeling; people have been hailed to these subject positions at some point in their lives, and they have accepted them as the 'truth' or the 'norm' (see 3.3.1 Subject Positions).

When comparing these two different conceptions of 'subjectivity' as evolving or as constant (or as adhering to the dominant discourses or opposing them),

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1   Habermas 1987, 84.
2   Foucault 1997e, 97.

it should be remembered that there is no moralistic statement involved.[1] The point is not to show that it would be ethically superior to detach oneself from the dominant discourses. Everyone's cultural baggage contains both positive and negative lessons, and it is merely the individuals' task to distinguish which lessons they want to retain and which they want to discard. This is a lifestyle choice in the sense that Giddens formulated it: it is one's own making. Cindie (51), who at the time of the interview had settled down, described the discarding process she was going through saying,

> *I have a lot of things to digest, a lot of things I learned on the road… I*
> *don't fit back into society. I just have to assess what I'm happy with.*
> *CINDIE, 51*

Trying to get rid of the dominant discourses is a struggle against particular forms of subjectivity, in other words that which ties the individual to herself and submits her to others as discussed in Chapter three (see 3.3.2 Resistance).[2] But how successful global nomads feel their endeavours are? Some believe that they will always be tied to their country of origin, as it still represents that what they know best, while others fiercely want to distinguish themselves from their heritage.

> *Wherever I go, I'm Portuguese whether I want or not. Whenever I go*
> *abroad, I don't ignore it. I was living 24 years of my life in Portugal.*
> *CIRO, 29*

> *I not only have nothing to do with the American people, I have taken a set*
> *against them. I truly and ardently do not like them, and thus would never*
> *associate myself with this nationality.*
> *JEFF, 25*

In both cases, global nomads remain within the dominant discourses: either they recognise the dominant discourses in themselves or they oppose or deny them. Like any other form of power, biopower in the form of dominant discourses cannot be escaped. As Foucault researcher Sergei Prozorov maintains, indifference is one of the best approaches when opposing biopower, because if power is hated and confronted or loved and followed, these passionate attachments turn resistance into new, possibly even more intense forms of subjection. When not giving biopower the attention it wants, on the other hand, it is reduced to a pure form.[3] Although indifference might sound like a mild form of resistance, if it is resistance at all, it promises global nomads relative freedom from the dominant subject positions, because biopower needs citizens to cooperate in order to exist

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1 Cf. Bauman 2008, 24.
2 Foucault 2002c, 331.
3 Prozorov 2007, 20, 145.

and function. This is its inherent weakness.

To summarise this section, while some global nomads try to detach themselves from biopower by renouncing dominant discourses and related subject positions, others consider these as a part of their core personality. The underlying difference between the two views is related to subjectivity: it is considered either stable or changing. In the former case, it attaches global nomads into one, given identity and cultural baggage, and in the latter, it provides them with several subject positions and the possibility to experiment. In practice, both views usually coexist meaning that the dominant discourses and their alternatives live in global nomads' discourses side by side.

7.2 Political Attachments

In this section, global nomads' political attachments are examined through the concept of citizenship. First, we define the concept in relation to global nomads (7.2.1 Citizenship), and then look at the benefits (7.2.2 Health Care, Social Security, Insurance) and responsibilities that citizenship brings along (7.2.3 Life without Signs of Respectability).

7.2.1 Citizenship

As is the case with many other fundamental and frequently used concepts, also 'citizenship' lacks explicit meanings.[1] It has been understood from varying and often confusing perspectives making it difficult to discuss and compare different views with each other, sociologist Saskia Sassen maintains.[2]

In the most general sense, citizenship has come to mean the right to receive the protection of the state, for instance police protection and welfare, and the possibility to exercise political rights such as voting.[3] In practice, however, citizenship has been configured under the rubrics of national identity and economic independence. To be a citizen, one has to acknowledge territorial belonging, that is a nationalistic subject position, and to be economically independent by making a contribution to the market.[4] As political researcher Kathleen Arnold argues, although political equality in the liberal capitalist state has in principle been guaranteed regardless of economic status, this has not been achieved. Bauman confirms: in the society of consumers, 'the invalids earmarked for exclusion…

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1 E.g. Walters 2004, 238.
2 Sassen 2008, 287.
3 E.g. Arnold 2004, 20; Rosanvallon 2008, 20; Beck, Cohn-Bendit, Delors, & Solana, 2012.
4 Arnold 2004, 166; Malkki 1992, 27; Frello 2008, 38.

are flawed consumers.'[1]

As consumption, income, and taxes paid are measurable, they seem suitable criteria for citizenship,[2] but another question is, how do economical and territorial criteria fit with the global nomads interviewed? As the previous section showed, national identity is a rather irrelevant marker for them as they do not, for the most part, adhere to nationalistic discourses but rather view them critically. As the interviewees do not necessarily contribute to their home market either, nor are they avid consumers of things (see 5.2.3 Downshifting), they are not making the necessary economic contribution either. It is worthwhile to ask whether the interviewees are fit for citizenship at all. Are they freeloaders?

For a national economy that seeks continuous growth, those leaving the system are freeloaders if they get more from the society for example in the form of education and health care than they have given back. However, how to calculate who has got more than their fair share is a question that has puzzled many influential writers and statesmen already since the early modern times as discussed in Chapter five (see 5.3.2 Vagrants). While it is not the purpose of this study to participate in this discussion, it is worthwhile to reflect some of the main arguments that have been used in relation to global nomads.

The most important of these arguments is the notion of productiveness, which has been used to distinguish citizens from non-citizens.[3] Being homeless and jobless, or working in the informal economy without paying taxes or avoiding taxes, the interviewees do not seem to be productive in the required sense.

> *I keep my income low so that I don't have to pay taxes.*
> *MICHEL, 47*

> *I stop in Orland [Andy's former home town in Indiana, US] about twice a year. But I can only stay thirty days. United States has a special rule that says you can earn 88,000 dollars and not pay taxes if you are outside the country 335 days a year so I can stay in the United States 30 days. I spend about 10 days at a time.*
> *ANDY, 54*

Also global nomads' financial practices, downshifting and engaging in the exchange economy, are controversial from the point of view of sedentary societies. While on a personal level these practices have effects on global nomads and those close to them only, on a nation-wide and global scale downshifting would mean rethinking the way economies work. This is because the growth of an economy requires debt, as it is debt that fuels the creation of new money.

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1   Bauman 2007, 28, 56.
2   Byrne 2005, 86–87. Cf. Sassen 2008, 285.
3   Byrne 2005, 24–25.

Most of the money in national economies is created when banks give loans to their customers, by quantitative easing, or by printing more money.[1] Thus to fuel debt, people have to be encouraged to consume more than they earn so that they will borrow money. Mostly debt-free and low-consuming global nomads do not participate in these activities boosting national economies.

Because of their alternative practices, global nomads raise strong controversy in the manner of vagrants and drifters of old despite their small number and influence (see also 2.1.1 Drifters and Wanderers and 5.3.2 Vagrants).[2] When the nation-wide Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* published a three-spread feature story about my husband and I in their monthly supplement, we received an outpouring of negative feedback from other Finns who were afraid that we might one day return back to Finland and exploit the social security without having contributed to it for years. For them, we were irresponsible deserters and parasites described with the discourse of vagrancy.[3]

The interviewees reported slightly milder reactions. Anick (29) told having stumbled upon elderly men who had been worried about the example she sets. Their reactions had been aggressive, and Anick speculates where they stem from:

> They are worried that their grandchildren would do the same.
> ANICK, 29

Many global nomads have been asked what would happen if everyone worked and consumed less, or just travelled around without contributing and being productive. The question reflects the old fear related to vagrancy: the example of idling is believed to have an infectious, negative effect poisoning the minds of other people. On a societal level, this discourse implies a fear of disintegration, which threatens states and their legitimacy.

While global nomads seem to be rather indifferent towards states, the question of citizenship for them is not a mere formality; rather, it is a question of physical existence.[4] Without the state issued documents that are needed to establish identity and citizenship, global nomads would not be able to travel, nor would they have any recognised status at all. The states are thus able to practise sovereign power over global nomads by restricting the kind of identity they are allowed to choose (see 7.1.1 Global Citizens and the Stateless), and global nomads are not free to reject these identities either. Political philosopher Giorgio Agamben explains, 'a being that were radically devoid of any representable identity, would be totally irrelevant to the state.'[5]

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1   Schlichter 2011, 26–27, 129–130, 477.
2   Victor 2008, 5.
3   Malmberg 2011. See also Rickly-Boyd 2013, 56.
4   Arnold 2004, 131.
5   Agamben 1993, 85.

The concept of citizenship clearly seems to pose constraints both to global nomads' location-independence and their subjectivities. The same is true for the stateless, the homeless, and the poor who all challenge the existing notion of citizenship, which Sassen calls 'an incompletely specified contract between the state and the citizen.'[1] It leaves both citizens' rights and duties open, which offers 'the possibility of accommodating new conditions and incorporating new formal and informal instrumentalities,' Sassen concludes.[2] It is a form of sovereign power that leaves no space for negotiations.

7.2.2 Health Care, Social Security, Insurance

What is global nomads' citizenship status and what kind of benefits and responsibilities it includes? Upon leaving, all global nomads retain their formal citizenship, but they also renounce most of the benefits that citizenship can offer them. For example in European welfare states this means public health care and social security, the contents of which naturally vary according to country. For global nomads, keeping official residence in one's country of origin may maintain the right to public services, but every country has its own policies as to what kind of absences are accepted. The threshold might be half a year or one year, and in case of long absences, some rights might be removed. For instance in the UK, citizens lose their voting rights after fifteen years of absence.

Some interviewees have purposely detached themselves from the welfare system and related biopolitical networks, while a few have tried to keep themselves within by visiting their country of origin regularly and stating that it is their permanent country of residence. Although the latter option aims at cherry-picking, it usually brings along some duties as well:

> *In Switzerland, you either have to declare you leave your country for an indeterminate time, or you keep your official address and then you have to be insured.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

As the question of interviewees' right to welfare was in some cases answered evasively, and not all of them were sure about their status because the rules are not clear, it is impossible to give an exact number of interviewees who still enjoy benefits. It seems, however, that in the case of one to four interviewees (excluding those on a temporary nomadic journey who will eventually have most of their benefits back), regular visits to the country of origin and/or having a house or an apartment for rent and as a postal address there, did seem to ensure at least some of the benefits. However, to be able to use public services, the interviewees

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1   Sassen 2008, 277.
2   Sassen 2008, 321.

would have to stay in their country of origin, which then constrains their travels and poses practical problems for using the services.

Most probably, it is not possible for global nomads to exploit their home countries' social security at least in the long run, as countries are not too keen on offering such benefits to people spending their time and money abroad. The benefits are bound to the national territory. Using loopholes in the system might not be worth the trouble, and it might lead to sanctions. For one of the cyclists, however, travelling was considered his profession, and thus his benefits remained also abroad.

Those interviewees who have deliberately detached themselves from the welfare system seem to have little trust in societal structures. They represent an extreme example of the individualisation trend that has grown popularity in European societies. The subject has been studied in regard to lifestyle migration, which offers an interesting comparative material for global nomads.

Many British lifestyle migrants, for example, have made the decision to move to Spain because they had doubts about the real value of UK pensions or the ability to rely on sickness or unemployment benefits in times of difficulty. By moving, they expected to gain a better quality of life for less money. At the same time, however, they lost the right to use the national health service in the UK, and they also severely reduced their entitlements to pensions and other social service benefits. According to Karen O'Reilly, many of them are socially excluded. They work in the informal economy paying no income tax or national insurance contributions, and they rely on emergency state health provision or inadequate private insurance.[1]

Although most interviewed global nomads are in a similar situation, none of them considers themselves as socially excluded. On the contrary, for the majority of them, exclusion from society is actively and voluntarily sought for, which turns the discourse of vagrancy to that of adventuring. The underlying idea is that Western societies' welfare is 'illfare' and that social adaptation to a dysfunctional society makes no sense.[2] Global nomads believe that the choices they have made have contributed to their self-ownership.

> *A traveller has a life purpose, and has chosen travelling as a lifestyle*
> *choice. We're not victims, we travel by choice.*
> BARBARA, 52

So far scholarship on social exclusion has not considered the possibility of exclusion being self-inflicted, which would have implications for agency. For sure, 'social exclusion' also implies agency, as sociologist David Byrne remarks, but

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1   O'Reilly 2007 (no page numbers). See also Hoey 2009, 31–32.
2   Laing 1967, 120.

it is something that is done by some people to other people.[1] The individual is bypassed and placed into a power grid as an interchangeable part that serves the whole. The emphasis is on the society and its best interests.

Global nomads, on the other hand, pay attention to their agency, which naturally includes risk-taking. The question of risks seemed to be very different for European and American interviewees, and this, in fact, was the other significant point where the interviewees' nationality had an influence on the answers in addition to nationality based discrimination (see 6.2.3 Influence of Nationality).

American interviewees consider the risk of leaving their country smaller than Europeans because of lack of health care and social security in their country.[2] In the United States, lack of services is used as a mechanism to maintain flexibility in the labour market. It makes it relatively easy for Americans to move if they lose their job whereas in Europe, movement is limited by administrative barriers and language. This gives the United States a competitive edge provided people remain within its borders, because it reduces the cost of labour, but as soon as educated people start moving abroad, it becomes a debt: they take their talent elsewhere.

Many of the American interviewees found the question about health care merely hilarious: they pray Obama will fix the system. For them, moving out of the country was rather a solution than a problem.

> *Ha, ha, ha. That was another reason why I left. When I lost my job, I lost my health insurance. I was uninsured for six years and in my country, I don't have a pension. I don't have social security, I don't receive any money. I got unemployment benefits for six months and that was it.*
> *ELISA, 54*

How do the interviewees get by without society's care? Prozorov maintains that although the biopolitical government of the last two centuries has limited citizens' freedom of choice, it has also made significant advances. These advances can be seen in medical and social care, education, and the establishment of certain guarantees of positive equality. To seek liberation from biopower is to seek liberation from all this as well.[3]

The benefits citizenship can offer represent the alluring side of biopower (see 3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?). They keep some travellers from moving away from their countries of origin and limiting their journey's length so that the benefits are maintained. But as drastic as the question might seem from the point of view of the sedentary, most interviewees do not believe that societies can offer them any security. From their point of view, welfare is just another

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1 Byrne 2005, 1–2, 52.
2 See Sassen 2008, 285; Walters 2004, 243.
3 Prozorov 2007, 143. See also Giddens 1991, 115.

way of disempowering them.

> *It creates a victim cycle where people become reliant on insurance and*
> *retirement and all other stuff that are being sold as a security. You can lose*
> *that in an instant. I know there is no such thing as security in this world.*
> BARBARA, 52

The structures which seem important for the sedentary sit on thin ice if we look
at them for instance from the point of view financial crises. In a moment a job
can be lost and the dearly-paid insurance and life savings can vanish when insur-
ance companies and banks go bankrupt. The interviewees do not believe in these
soothing structures but rather stand on their own. The same was true already
for global nomads' namesakes, pastoral nomads, who aimed at self-sufficiency.
In fact, one of the central features of nomadism seems to have always been the
maximisation of unit autonomy, where each household is responsible for its own
resources. Once a household establishes its autonomy, its success or failure is
also individual.[1] For global nomads, the same promise of individual success and
threat of individual failure of not being able to support themselves persist. The
latter represents itself in the discourse of vagrancy where the protagonist ends
up in the gutter (see 5.3.2 Vagrants).

For global nomads, freedom means assuming the responsibility for their own
lives instead of relying on societal structures:[2]

> *Things like social security and health care do not even exist in my mind.*
> *Purely out of convenience, I do not even use a bank. I have not used insur-*
> *ance since I was a teen for the same reasons. I think these dependencies tie*
> *us down.*
> JEFF, 25

As Jeff points out, not all the interviewees have insurance either. They form half
(14) of the interviewees.[3] One of them joked saying, 'I enjoy mental security and
good health, does that count?' Many view insurance companies as mere rip-offs.

> *They [insurance companies]don't want to pay out and they charge too*
> *much money for what they do. They make a lot of money. I don't want*
> *them making mine.*
> TOR, 61

While some of the interviewees rely on emergency health care in case of need,
others have bought insurance when they have aged, worried that they might fall ill.

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1   Barfield 1993, 104.
2   See also Adler & Adler 1999, 53.
3   See also Riley 1988, 319.

Two years ago I got a bit nervous that god forbid, should anything really
bad happen, as I get older, and I got a health insurance and I pay for it
every month.
ELISA, 54

For global nomads, travel insurance is more expensive than for holidaymakers.
This is due to the fact that most insurances are tied to the social programs of the
traveller's country of origin. Upon leaving, global nomads lose access to public
services and hence to travel insurance in most countries. There are some private
insurances but the interviewees consider them costly. With the same amount of
money, they can visit a doctor dozens or even hundreds of times on the road.

I had a treatment in the Philippines where it cost me 150 USD [100 Euro].
The same would have been around 2200 USD [1600 Euro] in the United
States. As long as it's not a major thing, like a cancer when you need a mil-
lion dollars, I can afford to do my own health assurance.
ANDY, 54

Even if there is public health care available in their country of origin, some
interviewees consider it cheaper to find their own solutions:

In Portugal it's [health care]very expensive even if it's public. I rather go to
see a dentist in India.
CIRO, 29

Another downside of health insurance for global nomads is that it limits travel-
ling because it is not valid in countries where travelling is not recommended.
For Americans, about a half of the world's countries are not covered. However,
two thirds (19) of the interviewees are not worried about their safety in the
sense that they would want to avoid some countries. Only seven out of thirty
interviewees somewhat worry about their safety avoiding war zones and areas
that are infested with crime and disease.

[I avoid countries] with political issues, unstable countries, Afghanistan.
It's probably one of my regrets that we didn't go to the Middle-East when it
was more stable. Africa—I used to be poverty frightened, although not any
more.
CINDIE, 51

Sometimes external pressures make global nomads buy insurance in order to calm
down their loved ones or to fulfil visa requirements or regulations of transporta-
tion company. As these examples show, insurance represents biopower which is
practised by subtle threats. 'What if' raises the horror scenario from which the
individual hopes to be rescued with biopolitical measures.

As present as dangers are in the dominant discourses about travel, it might seem surprising that none of the interviewees paid attention to them in the interviews.[1] A few mentioned thefts, muggings, robberies, and traffic accidents,[2] but found it unnecessary to make a fuss about them, and no one talked about terrorism. It may be that most of the risks global nomads take are mental rather than physical. Leaving the biopolitical networks of society in order to live homeless on the road is, at least from the sedentary point of view that aims to create relative security for the continuance of day-to-day life,[3] one of the most risky steps one can take.[4]

7.2.3 Life without Signs of Respectability

In this subsection, various signs of respectability in sedentary societies including home, credit card, and mobile phone are examined as challenges of mobile lifestyle. As it is homelessness that most visibly detaches global nomads from the sedentary and also from other kind of travellers, it might be pertinent to start by pondering why is home considered such an important founding pillar in societies, and how global nomads cope without having one.

From the point of view of sedentary societies, having a home is tightly knit with the concept and criteria of citizenship. Home signifies citizens' ability to contribute to the market, pursue long-term goals, and maintain a social network. Home also means being rooted, which is necessary for having a nationality and a citizenship, as both are based on the idea that everyone naturally belongs to one place. In this context, home is the precondition for any degree of citizenship, and vice versa, homelessness connotes rootlessness and unfitness for citizenship.[5]

Home being of such great importance in the dominant discourses, homelessness has become a predicament to be concealed, a failure in life.[6] Knowing these current connotations the word has, global nomads sometimes provoke the sedentary by celebrating homelessness as a cherished choice in the same way as they celebrate statelessness and rootlessness (see 7.1 Nationalistic Attachments).

'I don't live anywhere,' that's a sentence where people have to change their mindsets to understand what is going on.
ANICK, 29

Although it is controversial to juxtapose oneself with the homeless because it means ignoring the power asymmetry at play, it is also illuminating and not

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1   See also Jarvis & Peel 2010, 25 about backpackers.
2   See also Riley 1988, 320.
3   Giddens 1991, 133.
4   See also Nudrali & O'Reilly 2009, 149. Cf. Elsrud 2001.
5   Arnold 2004, 3–4, 17, 27.
6   See Dordick 1997, 182.

as far-fetched as one could think.[1] Both the interviewees and the homeless are without permanent domicile and thus non-citizens according to the prevailing formulation of 'citizenship.' The main difference between the two is that living poorly or modestly is a choice for global nomads (see 6.2.4 Culture Confusion). They can determine the duration of their slumming experience unlike those reluctantly poor who anguish over getting money and food and protecting themselves.[2]

For global nomads, slumming is a game in the same manner as post-tourism (see 6.3.2 Post-Tourists and the End of the Game). This game can be interpreted in different ways according to the discourse employed. In the discourse of vagrancy, global nomads' homelessness is criticism of the concept of citizenship: instead of economic contribution, they show that sheer humanity should be enough. In the discourse of adventuring, on the other hand, their homelessness seems an arrogant negligence of their privileges that makes power relationships between different social classes visible.

The latter interpretation generates a lot of criticism, and also some of the interviewees resent this kind of play as superficial and elitist, particularly as homelessness touches ever more people today.[3] Criticisers assume the ethical subject position discussed in Chapter six (see 6.2 Meeting Locals) sympathising with the homeless in the streets or with global nomads' poorer namesakes, pastoral nomads. They either frown upon such a play, or they willingly admit their privileged position.

> *Traditional nomads had a hard life. They had family and animals, and they died young. It was not a choice for them. They were just following their parents. I chose this; I'm a luxury nomad.*
> *CLAUDE, 50*

Criticism is due to the fact that global nomads' play of subjectivities makes people, particularly the sedentary, uncomfortable, because it reminds them that anyone can move both upwards and downwards in the social hierarchy, and this might not always be a cherished choice. The fact that global nomads' sunken status is chosen, does not make this realisation any easier but rather reminds us of those unfortunate people who did not have any influence on the matter.

For societies, all homeless citizens alike, regardless of the reasons why they find themselves in that situation, pose a challenge. Footloose, they are not easily controlled by authorities. They cannot be reached when necessary, which is an unwritten duty of citizens. Having a permanent address is often a prerequisite,

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1   See Arnold 2004, 157–158; Ahmed 1999, 335.
2   Dordick 1997, 6, 192, 200.
3   Bell & Ward 2000, 91.

for instance, for social security.[1] Another challenge is that the homeless are perceived as having nothing to lose. Householders or renters, on the other hand, have always something at stake—if nothing else, their house, or their dignity in the eyes of other people. It should be remembered, however, that the reputational stakes of the homeless are even higher because, having no material possessions, their status lies completely on themselves.[2] The same is true for the interviewees.

Although the interviewees do not consider lack of address, stable living conditions and possessions as a distress, it nevertheless causes occasional inconvenience for them as the following statement, where Scott describes his attempts to find a work, illustrates.

> *I spent three months hitching around my favourite country in the world, mostly the North Island, knocking from door to door at Montessori schools, asking for a job. I was barefoot, sleeping in the woods every night, smelt of the road's asphalt, with a knife on my hip, no qualifications and no palpable experience. I never got a job.*
> *SCOTT, 32*

The self-irony in the statement—Scott knows how absurd and desperate his job-seeking looks like and he accentuates these features in the story—shows that for Scott, slumming really is a play. He is not a victim in the way the homeless in the streets are perceived to be, because he could have chosen differently.

Still, lack of home, address and job make many everyday things difficult, and all of these tend to be related. When global nomads have no home, searching for a job is challenging; on the other hand, they might not be able to rent a place without first getting the job because a pay slip can be required in order to guarantee that the renter has a steady income. The same applies to credit cards: the card holder needs to prove that he has a steady inflow of cash for paying the bills.

Travelling without a mobile phone can be as odd as being homeless, because a telephone number is required in many places, sometimes even in immigration. A mobile phone can also be a prerequisite for purchasing airline tickets online in addition to a debit or a credit card. The buyer receives a PIN code via SMS to the mobile phone, which then has to be typed into the online payment system. Without these necessary signs of respectability—home, job, credit card, and mobile phone—global nomads are outlaws, but with experience, they learn to play the game without anchoring themselves in things.

> *People ask for your permanent address, it's difficult sometimes. Sometimes you have to create an appearance of stability in order to make people comfortable. It's for other people. Then you have a common language with*

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1   See also Dordick 1997, 58.
2   Dordick 1997, 30.

them and you don't have to explain your whole lifestyle to them. I can play
the game, I clean up nice.
BARBARA, 52

The game of 'cleaning up' is, again, about subject positions. Global nomads assume a sedentary position when speaking and doing business with the sedentary in order not to raise suspicion, fear, or questions. When they learn the game, they no longer need to employ things as 'the materialisation of identity,' nor for making 'a continuity between past and present,' to borrow the words of political researcher Iris Marion Young.[1] Global nomads rely on themselves only, and their ability to switch subject positions in a way that they mirror the other party smoothing out possible frictions.

We also need to remember that although home is conceptualised as the opposite of what homelessness represents, home is more than simply a structure; it is marked by heterogeneity, flux, and uncertainty rather than sameness and permanence, as Arnold maintains.[2] Thus it is most unclear what the security and abilities related to home actually mean, as was also implicated in Chapter two in the discussion on financial crises (see also 2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?). In this context, DePastino's reminder that the ideal of home and particularly home ownership as a basis for citizenship, security, and identity are only recent inventions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries just like nationality, is more than appropriate.[3]

An interesting question is, how could citizenship welcome difference and allow a higher degree of mobility—both physical and social mobility—in the future? Arnold calls for a citizenship that would confer political equality regardless of economic status, race, gender, or other difference under which lifestyle could be added. Thus, the importance of home would not be to essentialise identity or function as a marker for respectability; rather, a multiplicity of subjectivities in one's life would be allowed.[4] This suggestion would also serve global nomads and other highly mobile people who search for alternatives for the dominant discourses, often stumbling upon similar challenges.

To summarise this section, global nomads oppose biopower by not acknowledging territorial belonging[5] and the requirement to contribute to the market, and thus they challenge the existing notions of citizenship. The majority of global nomads detach themselves from the biopolitical networks of sedentary societies by not relying on welfare benefits, and they do not have the usual signs of respectability such as home, address, steady job, credit card, or mobile

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1   Young 1997 quoted in Arnold 2004, 58.
2   Arnold 2004, 60.
3   DePastino 2003, xxi.
4   Arnold 2004, 160.
5   See also Ong 2006; Butcher 2010, 23; Conradson & McKay 2007, 168.

phone either. For global nomads, these represent a metonymy for the dominant discourses in their home countries, and thus not having them is an important means with which they take both physical and mental distance to the commitments and attachments that citizenship entails.[1] Through their unusual practices, which borrow from the forced practices of the homeless, global nomads expose themselves to criticism as privileged actors. At the same time, they also make visible the current restrictions in the notion of 'citizenship.' Rather than allowing and enabling location-independence, sedentary societies constrain it by treasuring territorial belonging and contribution to the home country.

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1   See Euben 2006, 24–25.

7.3 Travel-Related Attachments

Having loosened their ties and obligations to their country of origin, are global nomads able to avoid networks of power in other societies? This section discusses the constraints they have to negotiate during their travels: both sovereign and biopolitical measures of states of which borders, surveillance (7.3.1 Borders), and travel documents such as visas are concrete examples (7.3.2 Visas).

7.3.1 Borders

Borders are central to tourism studies as they limit, channel, and regulate movement or anticipated movement as Hannam et al. note.[1] This is all the more true for global nomads who are often required to obtain visas, work permits, and residence permits to legitimise their stay in their destinations. As such requirements pose many restrictions on global nomads, it is perhaps no wonder that many of them would rather opt out of the current system.

> *I would love a world without cultural, mental and physical borders where there it would be an understanding in every way.*
> *CIRO, 29*

While getting the necessary travel documents is rarely a problem for Western holidaymakers and business travellers, longer stays are anomalies in the eyes of the international passport and visa system. States have difficulties in handling location-independent people who are not on a tourist trip, travelling for work, or accompanying an expatriate spouse. Sometimes global nomads have to find their way through legal loopholes or corrupted systems.

> *It's [acquiring visas] a pain in the ass. Sometimes I try to scam it by paying*

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1   Hannam et al. 2006, 11.

bribes, but it costs a lot of money.
ELISA, 54

Anthony (35), who has visited 192 countries, considers crossing borders 'a mess.' Having a European Union passport, fifty countries let him in easily, but there are still one hundred and fifty countries left where Anthony is in the same situation as everybody else. Some countries also ask travellers to obtain a visa in their country of residence. These travels have to be planned well in advance, and they are expensive because an extra trip to the country of residence has to be included. For Anthony, the worst yet are corrupted countries, where officials make borders their own private businesses. He tells about an incident in Central Africa:

> *We [Anthony and his partner] had three big bags. At the border the guy told us: 'I'm in a good mood today. You can choose which one of your three bags is going to be mine.' They [the border guards] are stoned or drunk and they are heavily armed, machine guns sometimes. You have to be very patient and start negotiating so that he doesn't get one of the bags. I usu-ally have a packet of cigarettes although I don't smoke so that I can offer one.*
> *ANTHONY, 36*

Other similar annoyances, where border guards use arbitrary power over citizens, include, according to the interviewees, prohibitions that make crossing the border on foot or by bicycle impossible so that local authorities get their share of the profits from taxi drivers. Sometimes imaginary health check or health certificate costs are collected, and getting the actual stamp in one's passport might require paying a stamp fee or a tax for the maintenance of the border building.

Despite the reported difficulties, global nomads are in many ways privileged in the view that there are many people who do not have a possibility to travel at all. Global nomads are aware of their freedoms and they are not willing to compromise them. At borders, they consciously change their usual practices. While they are otherwise critical of societies and nations, when dealing with border guards and officials they are cautious and assume the subject positions that the dominant discourses offer. Their will to see the world exceeds their will to criticise and resist biopower.

> *When I'm dealing with officials—customs and immigration—I'm careful about my behaviour. I'm consciously humble and respectful and quiet and patient, because they have the power to make my life miserable.*
> *TOR, 61*

Passport controls for global nomads represent a classic Althusserian subjectifica-tion discussed in Chapter three (see 3.3.1 Subject Positions). They give authorities

permission to ask in the name of law: 'Who are you?' which positions global nomads as subjects of law.[1] The police can also stop them in the street and ask to see their papers. Travelling, and simply the need to have a passport, can be associated with bad intentions. The whole idea of passport is based on a suspicion that passport bearers might lie when their identity is being checked, and thus official documents are needed.[2]

While some of these problems merely add exotic flavour to tourists' trips, for global nomads they are part of their everyday life, and can thus become tiring. Another problem is that border controls are guided by various prejudices such as the passport bearers' physical appearance or race. They are measures of power which are based on random and arbitrary regulations, sometimes favouring Western nationals, at other times local citizens.

> *In South-African Republic the other passengers in the bus didn't have any papers but they passed because they were locals. We [Anthony and his partner] had papers, but we were stopped. Of course then other people on the bus were very angry at us, because the bus had to stop because of us sometimes for ten minutes, sometimes for five hours.*
> *ANTHONY, 35*

However, global nomads are hardly under particular scrutiny, as most often regulatory bodies are not even aware of such a lifestyle. On the contrary, the elaborate bureaucracies and technologies, that have been created for the establishment of border controls in the West, entwine all citizens in the same faceless network where power is used for collecting variegated data. The data includes fingerprints, DNA, blood samples, medical records, location information, and bank account information.[3] In the streets and public places, cameras follow people; passport RFIDs (a microchip that broadcasts information for remotely identifying a person), mobile phone SIM cards, and bank transactions provide authorities with location information; banks also have to release financial information about their accounts and transactions; internet users are spied through email and online transactions; shopping malls and stations have surveillance which Urry compares to the Panopticon.[4] All of these controls represent anonymous biopolitical networks that lack any single source of responsibility, as Arnold maintains, and which subject all citizens alike to surveillance.[5]

The gathering of the data has been legitimised by biopolitical care: the state has an opportunity to help its citizens if necessary. The passport, for instance,

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1 Torpey 2000, 33–37.
2 Torpey 2000, 166. See also Foucault 1978, 59–60.
3 Torpey 2000, 16.
4 Urry 2002b, 134.
5 Arnold 2004, 41.

should vouchsafe the issuing state's guarantee of aid to its bearer while in the jurisdiction of other states,[1] but there is also another reason for obtaining the information: state control over individual movement. In order to maintain and strengthen its power, the state needs to govern mobilities. Habermas elaborates the theme by stating that in the welfare-state democracies of the West, the spread of legal regulation has the structure of a dilemma: 'It is the legal means for securing freedom that themselves endanger the freedom of their presumptive beneficiaries.'[2] This is also the case for global nomads. Without any legal alternatives to passports, they have to accept that the same documents which are issued in the name of freedom are also used for restricting that freedom and for miring them into an anonymous biopolitical network.

Paradoxically, this leads to a situation where global nomads, despite their criticism of states and borders, also vigorously support these structures through their travel practices. Every time they cross borders, they encourage their making and maintenance and the related power structures. Borders also attract and organise global nomads' mobilities in many ways and add to their travel experience. The more borders global nomads cross, the more the number of countries visited grows, which is something the sedentary always ask from global nomads as a proof of their travel experience. Even though global nomads do not believe in state structures or societies' care as the previous sections showed, many of them keep country lists and they gather knowledge of border crossings to show their travel expertise. Thus, as mobilities researcher Baerenholdt suggests, borders should be studied not only from the point of view of resistance, but in the view of 'people's tactics and strategies in coping with, transcending, ignoring, overcoming, using and not least building borders.'[3]

7.3.2 Visas

In addition to passports, global travel requires visas. Despite the inconveniences these travel documents pose to their lifestyle, most of the interviewees have a down-to-earth attitude about rules and regulations constraining their travels. If a visa is needed, they will get one however stupid and unnecessary that might feel, and they try to make the process as easy as possible for themselves.

My work is my writing and I don't need any permit for that. I get visas when I need them. Sometimes I have to convince people that I don't have to go back to the United States to get them. A nice smile, a connection, and

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1   Torpey 2000, 160.
2   Habermas 1987, 291. See also Sassen 2008, 284; Bauman 2008, 14.
3   Baerenholdt 2013, 31.

you can pretty much get what you want.
RITA, 72

Whenever global nomads criticise visas, the criticism is usually not targeted at the visa system itself, but at the process of applying and the short length of visas.

I'm not against visas but for cyclists they are always too short.
CLAUDE, 50

Visas can also be costly, especially for those travelling on a shoestring budget. Sometimes asking for example one hundred Euro for a one-month-visa to a poor country, where that money probably equals to six month's average wages (and one third or quarter of global nomads' monthly budget), can make one wonder where that money ends up. This might incite more severe criticism.

You can see very clearly that it's just for making money from tourists. It is a rip-off, especially because it doesn't go towards anything except govern-ment officials' pockets.
GUSTAVO, 51

For global nomads, visa costs not only include the visa itself and administrative fees, but a journey into a city where the embassy can be found, and the accom-modation for the waiting period which may vary from one day to several weeks. The visa also takes a whole page of passport and on nomadic travels, passports tend to fill up quickly, which costs money as well. Furthermore, visas are some-times issued selectively. Applicants might have to show bank statements to prove they have sufficient funds for staying in the country.

The process of applying visas positions global nomads as subjects. Visa rules can be arbitrary favouring some individuals over others, and if the visa is not admitted, no explanations are given, nor is there any instance where to com-plain. For global nomads, being in a position where local authorities can make decisions over them is frustrating. Some of the interviewees suggest that they should be exempted from the rules.

Visas, work permits, and living permits are all designed for a reason. I believe these things should not apply to travellers like myself. Neverthe-less we are constrained by these modern rules. Long-term travellers are not here to stay, in fact, in my opinion, you will never find a more sincere group of people who desire to learn a people's culture or language. To me, those are the people you want to have in your country.
JEFF, 25

Jeff's statement implies that visas are a biopolitical sanction for those people countries do not want to let in. Most of the interviewees see themselves in

opposite terms, as net benefits.

> *I'm a net benefit to a country. I don't use their social service, I don't take anything away from them, I generally spend money there and I'm a good citizen who doesn't create any sort of problem for the organisation. I don't really see any objective reason why anybody would complain about my presence in any particular area.*
> *MAX, 39*

That global nomads really were a net benefit to their destinations, is not a straightforward conclusion and merits a short discussion both for and against, because it represents an important power struggle with which global nomads negotiate their lifestyles with sedentary societies.

As most global nomads travel on a low budget and favour moneyless transactions (see 5.2.3 Downshifting), the money they leave in their destinations is not necessarily plenty. However, this does not automatically speak against them although many destinations do consider good tourists to be those who spend the most.[1] Backpacker research has shown that budget travellers who spend only a little amount of money daily, bring altogether more money in than those who are on a week or two package tour. Budget travellers might stay for months smoothing out the effect of seasonal fluctuations for local entrepreneurs, and they also provide a more direct income into the community and spread their spending over a wider geographic area by travelling to marginal and economically depressed regions in less developed parts of the world.[2]

Naturally, there are also those global nomads who spend more, and thus also leave more money behind, and what we have to consider yet is that global nomads utilise economic inequalities when they go to countries with cheaper living costs while having earned at least part of their money in the West. Yet another point of view is that many global nomads work in the informal economy, or they avoid taxes (see 7.2.1 Citizenship). Thus, although they do not see themselves as taking advantage of the local welfare system, they are not contributing to it either. On the contrary, all global nomads use some collective resources without necessarily contributing towards such as roads and airports which facilitate travel, although most of these infrastructures have to be paid for as well in the form of airport taxes, departure fees, fuel taxes, and road tolls. As these examples show, being a net benefit or a net loss has to be considered from various viewpoints and in the context in question.

For global nomads, the idea of being a net benefit and harmless, as Max's statement suggested, seems to be a claim with which they not only justify their stay in particular destinations but with which they also try to take power from

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1   Crick 1996, 24; Speed 2008, 54.
2   Speed 2008, 65-67; Scheyvens 2002, 157.

local officials back to themselves. It is a negotiation which can lead to various practices. Whenever the interviewees consider themselves as useful and wanted, they might take liberties where they can. Usually this happens in relation to work visas which are easier to dodge than entry permits or visas.

> *I've never had a work permit. Everything I do is street vending and free-*
> *lance writing. I never try to make it the legal way.*
> *ELISA, 54*

One of the interviewees mentioned having and using the right to multiple passports. With his two travel documents, he can avoid excessive bureaucracy and payments by choosing the passport with which he can most easily enter a country, although keeping several passports costs time and money as well.

> *I hate visas. That's one reason I have many passports. If I for example*
> *want to go to Indonesia, I would have to get a visa with my [other] pass*
> *port but with the Argentinian one I don't.[1]*
> *GUSTAVO, 51*

According to some legal scholars, such dual or even multiple nationalities might become the norm in the future.[2] From global nomads' point of view, however, there are still many countries that are difficult to visit no matter what kind of passport one has. Saudi Arabia, for instance, does not currently allow people to go there unless they are Muslims or on business, and North Korea only allows tourists in groups. Furthermore, visas are not the only constraint for travel. Immigration officials and airline companies can require two-way flight tickets or onward tickets from their passengers.

> *It's odd that the whole world wants return tickets. They always want to me*
> *to have a return ticket to Austria, but for me it's a one-way travel.*
> *STEFAN, 47*

Although these requirements are not always checked by immigration, airline companies might refuse to sell one-way tickets for fear of immigration rules, or, they use the rules as an excuse to make more money, thus practising sovereign power. Another challenge are visa-runs which in some countries have to be done every three months, monthly, or even every two weeks. Foreigners are made to exit the country in order to get a new entry stamp on their passports.

Despite the obvious downsides of visa regulations, many of the global nomads interviewed are masters at turning negatives into positives, thus consciously ignoring the constraints of their travels:

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1   The other nationality has been omitted in order to protect the respondent's privacy.
2   See Sassen 2008, 283.

Do I approve [visas]? Yes. It's hard but it's almost like work which feels
good to me, I mean, the more difficult it is, the better experience it makes
because it's more real.
GEORGE, 31

Who had believed that so many countries, like Soviet Union, opened for
travellers. You can get a visa, it's like a respiration. It's relative on historical
scale.
CLAUDE, 50

Research has shown that lifestyle migrants might give, in a similar manner, other
kinds of explanations for their departures than visas, although leaving or stay-
ing in a country might not always be a matter of choice.[1] This implies that both
lifestyle migrants and global nomads emphasise their agency even in those situ-
ations where it is constrained. Freedom for them is the ultimate value and goal
for which they are paradoxically ready to give up some of their other freedoms.

To summarise this section, one of the few dominant discourses and forms of
sovereign power that global nomads do not oppose but vigorously and paradoxi-
cally support are borders. Their will to travel exceeding their will to criticise,
they accept the downsides that borders and travel documents might bring along:
biases, injustices, limitations of freedom of movement, and abuses of power
such as corruption.

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1   Korpela 2009, 19, 188.

7.4. Conclusion

Before moving on to the final conclusions, let us reflect on the research sub-question, TO WHAT EXTENT DOES (BIO)POWER ENABLE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES? This chapter concentrated on various forms of power from sovereign to biopolitical by examining global nomads' nationalistic, political, and travel-related attachments. The chapter showed that although most global nomads have rejected biopower of their country of origin for example in the form of social security, health care, insurance, permanent address, and the security of a steady job, they are still tied to their respective countries through various dominant discourses, and not least by their citizenship which alone allows them to travel and hold an official identity. During their travels, global nomads also need to collaborate with other sedentary societies by, for instance, going through the process of applying for visas or trying to circumvent it. Thus, it was shown that despite their criticism and relative freedom, they cannot escape sedentary societies' power networks but, in some cases, rather enforce them.

Most global nomads are practical even though they might dream of more freedom: they abide by the rules. Thus their criticism towards societies is at best selective and self-centred. They are opportunists taking the benefit of their nationality, often paradoxically strengthening the current dominant discourses and practices rather than opposing them. In this sense, global nomads are not counter-cultural reformers like the original drifter was said to be. Rather, they practise indifference towards those societal structures and power relationships they are able to dodge, just as the definition of global nomads in the introduction assumed (see 1.2 Research Set-Up). They have no agenda, nor do they imagine that society's values ought to reflect or absorb their own,[1] and thus they merely represent a weakening of the bonds of social attachment rather than active

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1   Gelder 2006, 22; Hall & Jefferson 2006. Cf. MacBeth 2000, 29.

resistance.[1] However, they tend to represent their lifestyles with the discourse of adventuring emphasising their agency even in those situations where it is clearly constrained, hence justifying their lifestyles both to themselves and to outsiders.

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1   Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, & Roberts 2006, 48.

8 Conclusions

This research came about from the realisation that there are no studies available on such location-independent lifestyles as global nomads'. Both tourism studies and anthropology have focused on more purposeful and place-dependent travel whereas the new mobilities paradigm has examined general issues of movement. The aim of this research, on the other hand, was to produce, through empirical cases, knowledge on the phenomenon that is starting to attract attention in the media[1] and among people looking for alternative lifestyles.

The research set out to examine what happens when home is no longer the immediate point of return of the journey. The main research question was, what are the factors that facilitate and constrain location-independence within contemporary sedentary societies. This question was approached by generating knowledge about the practices and discourses that formulate and support global nomads' lifestyles, as well as their social and societal relationships.

Although this research could lean on studies on long-term travel, the project also included questioning some of the basic assumptions in tourism studies including the very concept of 'travel' (see 2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel'), which appeared to encapsulate an important power negotiation between acceptable and rejected forms of travel. While tourism studies had approached issues of power passingly, it seemed that power played a more central role in global nomads' lives because of their lifestyles' alternative status. Thus this research set out to broaden the scope by taking into account the economic, social, political, and cultural contexts where location-independent travels take place.

When choosing theories and methods for the research, it became clear that new approaches were needed in order to answer the proposed research questions (see 3.4 Research Questions). This last chapter concludes the results, starting

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1   See e.g. Baker 2010; Manson 2012.

from the findings of the analysis and developing answers to the research questions and the problem definition in order to assess global nomads' freedoms and constraints (8.1. How Free Are Global Nomads?). The latter part of the chapter is dedicated to the discussion of social and academic relevance of the research results (8.2 Current Status and Prospects of Mobilities) through a discussion on the main theoretical concepts used in the research—lifestyle, practice, discourse, subjectivity, and (bio)power—and their further applicability in tourism studies.

8.1. How Free Are Global Nomads?

Let us first develop the preliminary conclusions made in the analysis in Chapters 5–7 in order to assess how the research findings comply to the literature and theories represented in the beginning of the research, and how they can be used to understand such alternative lifestyles as global nomads'. The discussion will start from practices, lifestyles, and discourses (8.1.1 Individualised Lifestyles) and moves on to subjectivities (8.1.2 Frozen Plays) and power (8.1.3 Love, Hate, or Indifference?) answering first the research subquestions and then considering what is the balance of global nomads' freedoms and constraints through the main research question (8.1.4 Controlled Freedom).

8.1.1 Individualised Lifestyles

Chapter five (5 Global Nomads) set out to characterise global nomads' lifestyles by examining their practices and discourses, and showed that the phenomenon of global nomads is best viewed in the plural. Like backpackers and lifestyle migrants, global nomads emphasise their individuality instead of aspiring to particular lifestyles. Thus fitting global nomads (or other travellers) into one category without taking into account their individual differences, could only do a disservice to its subjects.

Naturally, there are also similarities to be found among global nomads just like there are similarities between and among backpackers and lifestyle migrants, but in all these cases, individuality seems to be the key to the analysis as is also the case of lifestyles in general. After all, 'lifestyle,' as defined in the beginning of this research, is a vehicle for forming a meaningful sense of the self (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). Lifestyles can thus be seen as individualist projects rather than collective activities shared by a group of people,[1] although the regimes

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1   Giddens 1991, 5, 9, 81. See also Bauman 2008, 24–25.

of truth in societies limit existing possibilities for individualism by restricting what it is possible to think and do, and as a result, many people end up realising their individuality through collective projects. As such, individualism and collectivism—just like any other opposites—are merely two extremes of the same continuum and thus relative, merely a question of emphasis. Individuals typically fluctuate between the two during their life course as the global nomads of this research show.

In their nomadic phase of life, global nomads cultivate and cherish the conception of their individuality. It is important for them to the extent that it could be called a prerequisite for their lifestyles. It is, at the same time, a strength and a weakness. While individualism allows global nomads to search for alternatives outside the dominant sedentary regimes, after years of lone travel they might be tempted to answer the call of biopower's hailings because of the need for intimate social relationships. Individualism can thus transform itself from the lifestyle's prerequisite into a critical success factor which influences global nomads' ability to sustain their lifestyles in the long run.

Along with individuality, another conspicuous feature of global nomads is their lifestyles' extreme nature, as pointed out in the introduction. While global nomads are not unique in the sense that they would create completely new practices, they carry some of the practices that they share with the drifter and backpackers to extremes due to their homelessness and long length of their journey. This state of being without a fixed abode means that global nomads are no longer within the realm of respectable homebound travel or migration that could be defined by clear points of reference. Rather, they question territorial belonging as well as subjectivities tied to it.

Global nomads also question the assumption that lifestyles would be essentially about consumption.[1] As Chapter five showed, global nomads detach themselves from material and monetary ties by practising downshifting and the exchange economy (see 5.2.3 Downshifting). While some backpackers, for instance, buy tours and entertainment in their destinations in order to experience more thus being consumers of goods and services, global nomads aim at achieving the same goal by immaterial means: by slowing down, living in the moment, and searching for novelty and authenticity through the everyday life of their destinations.

These findings show that lifestyles have been understood in a rather narrow sense when relating them to brands, marketing, and consumption. If the number of downshifters can be regarded as an indicator, it seems that similar anti-materialistic trends are also gaining popularity among the sedentary. This, once more, indicates that it is not global nomads' practices that are unique as also the sedentary and other travellers might share similar practices. Thus we come up with an interesting question: if it is not simply practices that make global

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1   See Cohen 2011, 1538.

nomads, what other elements are their lifestyles made of?

In order to answer the question, let us remind ourselves of the concepts 'discourse' and 'practice' defined in Chapter four (see 4.1.2 Discourse). While discourses are practices that formulate their objects, as Foucault argued, discourses also form the larger context from which everyday practices emanate and which encapsulate power negotiations where different world views size each other up. When, for example, global nomads practise downshifting, they not only try to save money in order to support their travelling lifestyle but they also attempt to detach themselves, consciously or unconsciously, from biopolitical networks of states and corporations by questioning the monetary economy. Thus, if isolating travel practices from the related discourses and power struggles, we lose sight of the bigger picture and, in the worst case, incorrectly assess the significance of practices. While practices are undoubtedly important, they are always a part of larger power negotiations, and thus the broader economic, social, political and cultural contexts involved need to be considered.

What are the discourses and power struggles that define and shape global nomads' lifestyles? As Chapter five showed, global nomads and outsiders alike represent the nomadic lifestyle with two dominant discourses, adventuring and vagrancy, which subject global nomads differently in regard to sedentary societies. Both discourses employ biopower, either in the form of ideals or warning examples, having an important influence on global nomads' lives. The discourse of vagrancy, for example, might serve as a biopolitical warning with which the sedentary try to guide global nomads to the 'right' path, and depending on the strength of the arguments employed, related sanctions, the global nomads' situation and their will power, they might either succeed or fail in their attempt. The discourse of adventuring, on the other hand, might serve global nomads as a counter-argument with which they convince both themselves and others of the beneficial nature of perpetual travel.

Neither of the two discourses is more correct than the other. They simply represent an ongoing power struggle in which mobilities are assessed in order to encourage beneficial and prevent harmful travel. As assumed in Chapter two, mobilities are encouraged only as long as they strengthen the dominant discourses and practices of sedentary societies (see 2.3.2 Mobilities or Immobilities?). To make sure that mobilities are contributing towards society, for example by bringing more resources in in the form of money or talent or by re-enforcing societies' norms, mobilities need to be constantly monitored and controlled. As alternative lifestyles such as global nomads' are not within the realm of the dominant discourses, they are viewed as deviant and a threat.

Although global nomads' lifestyles can indeed be described as non-institutional as was already assumed in the beginning of the research (see 2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel'), they do not just oppose dominant practices and

lifestyles. In the light of the research findings, their alternative status remains relative because they are also tied to sedentary societies in many ways, already by the mere fact that they are critical of or opposed to them. This means that in the end, conventional and alternative lifestyles have more in common with each other than their representatives would perhaps like to admit. Without norms, there would be no margins or alternatives.

Where does this discussion leave global nomads vis a vis the backpacker and the lifestyle migrant? While global nomads try to detach themselves from the dominant discourses of sedentary societies, backpackers vigorously support them by viewing travel as an opportunity to gather skills and experiences that might be profitable later. Thus it is their rite of passage and expectations to get return on their investment that keep them attached to the dominant discourses of their respective home countries.

Lifestyle migrants, on the other hand, have similar aims to global nomads in terms of leaving the biopolitical relationships of their countries of origin behind. They do not necessarily plan to return but instead try to find themselves a new home. Thus, mobility for them is rather a means to an end which keeps them within the boundaries of acceptable travel with clearly defined coordinates (home-away-new home), while global nomads regard travel as an end in itself thus detaching themselves from fixed reference points. However, the difference is not clear-cut as lifestyle migrants' mobilities also include disputed elements. From the point of view of sedentary societies, most migrants, particularly those working and paying taxes, represent a net loss and thus governments want to control their movements.

What we also need to remember when comparing global nomads to other travellers is that boundaries between various mobilities are artificial, fluid, and changing. Such extreme mobilities as global nomads' are tiring both physically and psychologically, and at some point in their lives, they are likely to search themselves a face-to-face community and settle down like lifestyle migrants or return to their home country like backpackers and reintegrate into society. Thus the nomadic lifestyle remains, in most cases, a temporary phase in life from which new (or old forms) of travel, dwelling, and socialising can (re-)emerge.

To summarise the contents of this subsection, and to answer the first research subquestion: HOW CAN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES BE CHARACTERISED, AND WHICH PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN THEM? Global nomads' lifestyles can be characterised by individuality, the extreme nature of their travel practices due to their homelessness and indefinite length of their journey, and their participation in larger power struggles where the shared reality is being negotiated. On a microlevel of the everyday, global nomads practise non-institutionalised travel just like the drifter travelling without schedules, plans, and particular destinations. They also want to detach themselves from

sedentary societies' constraints by favouring the exchange economy and down-shifting thus reducing their participation in the monetary economy, living in the moment instead of planning ahead, and searching for novelty instead of looking for familiarity and security. These research findings show that besides practices, we also need to consider the larger context which includes power struggles, as it is from these power struggles that global nomads' practices emanate. The power struggles in question can be encapsulated in two discourses, in the discourse of adventuring and vagrancy that mark the fine line between acceptable and rejected forms of travel thus positioning global nomads vis a vis the backpacker and the lifestyle migrant who travel between fixed points of reference.

8.1.2 Frozen Plays

As the previous subsection showed, global nomads' lifestyles, practices and discourses are greatly affected by sedentary societies. This finding was further evidenced in Chapter six (6 Social Relationships), which examined global nomads' social relationships showing that they form the critical success factor for their lifestyles.

The majority of global nomads were shown to assume the subject position of the lone ranger seeking to detach themselves from significant others who might tie them down with biopower, for example by making them feel guilty about their carefree lifestyle and thus limiting their options. Global nomads thus differ significantly from backpackers and lifestyle migrants who tend to gravitate towards the like-minded and those with a similar lifestyle but, as already mentioned in the previous subsection, after years of lone travel, many global nomads are also prone to welcome such relationships and accept the biopolitical restrictions that follow.

While still on the road, global nomads' most important relationships—their possible travel partner excluded—are their contacts with locals, as it is these relationships that show how well they have succeeded in getting to know local life. In order to establish rapport with locals, global nomads try to flatten out unfavourable power asymmetries between themselves and locals by assuming the subject position of the Other. This subject position allows locals to do things to them, for instance to invite them over, be curious about their lifestyles, or discriminate against them.

Despite global nomads' attempts to lower the threshold, many of their contacts with locals seem to remain on a superficial level, or they fade away when global nomads continue their travels—after all, non-attachment is one of the central characteristics of their lifestyles as the subject position of the lone ranger implies. As a result, many of global nomads' relationships tied on the road fail to satisfy their need for intimate relationships in the long run, and the same is

most probably true for both parties. For locals, these brief encounters lack commitment and continuity, and thus they are not necessarily fruitful.

Compared to the backpacker and the lifestyle migrant, however, global nomads were shown to have a less notable gap between their travel ideals and practices as was assumed in Chapter two (see 2.1.4 Challenging the Concept of 'Travel' and 2.2.3 Agency). This is due to their will and efforts to mingle with locals and play with various subject positions, regardless the success of these attempts and thus also the depth of the tied relationships.

Because of global nomads' play with identifications, the concept of 'subjectivity' proved to be more apt than 'identity,' which has been more commonly used in tourism research. As discussed in Chapter three (see 3.3 Subjectivities), the weakness of 'identity' is that it still seems to imply an existence of a relatively stable self. This belief in a singular and immutable 'identity' is simply a measure of biopower which categorises subjects, marks them by their own individuality, and attaches them to their identity thus limiting their options.[1] By enforcing such conceptions, research also remains within biopolitical networks reproducing dominant discourses.

The concept of 'subject position,' on the other hand, recognises the power struggles related to identifications without privileging one form of homogeneous self. This leads to such hybrids that were discussed in Chapter two in regard to lifestyle migrants (2.2.2 Aesthetic Communities of Like-Minded Souls). However, in the light of the findings of this research, the quoted example of lifestyle migrants ('Yesterday I was into rave, today I am into Wicca, tomorrow I may try Zen.'[2]) is misleading as hybrid identities are not linear but exist simultaneously. This is why not all qualitative methods can get a grip of hybrids. When, for instance, analysing interviews as coherent narratives, such contradictions are either ignored or explained away (see 4.1 Analysis), while discourse analysis focuses precisely on these contradictions that are indicative of power negotiations.

For most global nomads, who welcome change and transience, the idea of occupying contradicting subject positions poses no problems. This could be seen, for example, in relation to their touring subjectivities (see 6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps), although there are naturally limits to global nomads' play. Carrying with themselves markers of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and status, which recreate larger power structures, global nomads are tied to other people's expectations which often freezes their attempted play. For example, assuming the subject position of a location-independent traveller who wants to immerse into the everyday life of his or her destination might be hindered by locals' expectations that all white people are rich tourists who want to see sights and consume (see 6.2.2 Status and Disparities of Wealth). These discursive

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1   Foucault 2002c, 331. See also Hirsch 2005, 141.
2   See also Bousiou 2008, 101, 130.

constraints put all mobile subjects—conventional tourists, backpackers, lifestyle migrants, and global nomads—in the same ballpark reminding us of the fact that the freedom promised by varying subject positions is relative. People are always already tied into biopolitical networks that limit their options, even when they are trying to detach themselves from such constraints.

To summarise this subsection on subjectivities, and to answer research subquestion two, TO WHAT EXTENT ARE GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN THEIR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS: Global nomads' lifestyles and subjectivities are enabled by the subject position of the lone ranger, which most of them assume. However, this subject position is at the same time a constraint, as lone travel might fail to satisfy them in the long run. Although global nomads cherish their contacts with locals, these seem at best experiments with Otherness rather than deep meaningful relationships due to locals' expectations which limit global nomads' play with subjectivities and the lack of commitment. Despite these obvious difficulties, global nomads' play with varying identifications can be an advantage at least in one sense: it can smooth out some discrepancies and power asymmetries between them and locals leaving them with a less notable gap between their ideals and practices than backpackers or lifestyle migrants who stay sheltered in their enclaves.

8.1.3 Love, Hate, or Indifference?

Chapter seven (7 In and Outside of Societies) examined various forms of power in global nomads' societal relationships ranging from sovereign power to more implicit measures of biopower. Most of these power relationships were shown to be biopolitical. In their individuality and agency, global nomads need to feel they are in control of their lives instead of being moulded by force, which is increasingly also the case for the sedentary (see 3.2.2 Repressive or Productive?). Contemporary societies are less and less governed by law and prohibitions, and thus global nomads merely represent more poignantly this general trend as is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Biopower in global nomads' lives seems to represent an integrating force that binds them to sedentary societies even when they are trying to detach themselves from them. Although most of them have, for instance, rejected nationalistic subject positions as well as social security, health care, insurance, permanent address, and the security of a steady job in their countries of origin, they are still their products. This could be witnessed in the analysis in the form of the dominant discourses that intervened in global nomads' interviews, their state-issued identities, or by the simple fact that global nomads are opposed to sedentary societies which paradoxically ties them to the dominant discourses

and related subject positions.

Even though most global nomads are aware of the constraints of their life-styles, their approach to biopower is practical. This could be witnessed in regard to such travel-related attachments as borders. Although borders indisputably restrict mobilities, for global nomads they are markers of their travel, badges of honour. Their will to see the world exceeding their will to resist the system, they abide by the rules.

As a result, global nomads' criticism towards both forms of power, sovereign and biopolitical, is at best selective and self-centred, and it often leads to unin-tended results paradoxically re-enforcing the current dominant discourses and practices rather than opposing them. In fact, the same may also have been true for the original drifter. Although the drifter has been identified as counter-cultural, Cohen described him as 'anarchistic' and 'disdainful of ideologies' thus referring to the drifter's individualistic rather than to his counter-cultural and collectivist characteristics. This observation further emphasises the fact that alternative travelling lifestyles, as with lifestyles in general, have strong indi-vidualistic tendencies. They are not aiming to change other people, societies, or the world. They are about changing one's own life, in ways that suit one best.

Because of global nomads' individualism, the power that can reach them and keep them in its grip is subtle seduction. This positive power is important because it makes global nomads subject themselves to it voluntarily. Global nomads might yearn, for instance, for intimate relationships that bind them to biopolitical networks, or they might feel attracted by sedentary societies' biopolitical care such as social security, and enjoy the benefits that result from their submission.

As the discussion shows, global nomads' resistance does not necessarily lead to liberation. On the contrary, it can also lead to even stronger power relationships that enforce current power networks, or to completely new power relationships. Thus the only way to resist power would be by being indifferent to it, as Fou-cault researcher Prozorov suggests.[1] As long as global nomads nurture love and hate relationships to sedentary societies as, for example, the binary opposition between the sedentary and global nomads implies, they remain within sedentary power networks.

Is indifference a realistic option for global nomads? In the light of the inter-views, it seems that some global nomads, particularly those who travel for a long time detaching themselves little by little from their home country and experimenting further with the subject position of the Other gaining some level of cultural adjustment, may at some point reach a sufficient level of indiffer-ence that could be called a partial liberation. However, as examples also showed, biopower's hailings can reach global nomads at various stages in their life for various reasons, whether it is by falling in love, having a child, or assuming the

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1   Prozorov 2007, 20, 145. See also Foucault 2002, 109.

duty to take care of one's ageing parents. Biopower is stronger than individuals.

To summarise this subsection, and to answer research subquestion three, TO WHAT EXTENT DOES (BIO)POWER ENABLE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES? Although global nomads seek detachment from sedentary societies, the identity allowing them to travel is already attached to their country of origin, and they also carry within themselves teachings of biopower that bind them, even when trying to unlearn them. Thus global nomads' experiences show that biopower cannot be completely escaped. It both enables and constrains global nomads' lifestyles and their very subjectivities making them who they are.

8.1.4 Controlled Freedom

The three research subquestions answered, it is time to move on to the main research question, WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT FACILITATE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LOCATION-INDEPENDENT LIFESTYLES WITHIN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES?

Global nomads' lifestyles are facilitated by numerous factors: their travel practices that free themselves from the dominant sedentary practices of planning, scheduling, itinerary-making, working, and ownership; their detachment of the homebound concept of 'travel' which leaves them free to travel for an indefinite period of time without ties to particular places; the discourse of adventuring which represents their lifestyles as free and admirable enhancing their status among the sedentary; their willingness to play with subjectivities which facilitates their contacts with other people; their indifference towards some of the biopolitical networks that could tie them down such as social security and intimate relationships.

When assessing these facilitating factors we have to keep in mind that the same facilitating factors would not apply to everyone. Thus we have to add one more important factor: most global nomads are Westerners coming from powerful states in the global order.[1] They are privileged by belonging to the very states from which they seek to escape by their location-independence.

The list of the constraints that limit, or at least have the potential to threaten global nomads' location-independence, is long reminding us of the fact that despite the relative freedom of their lifestyles, global nomads still remain within biopolitical networks. Global nomads are tied to sedentary societies by the very practices they oppose; by their social relationships that include biopower; by dominant discourses that encapsulate and reproduce biopower's teachings; by their nationality, citizenship, passport, and money, and in the case of those global nomads working full-time, by their work and related routines; by the discourse

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1   See also Burns & O'Regan 2008, 149.

of vagrancy which makes their location-independence look undesirable; by new power relationships that are formed on the road; by biopolitical pressure of other people and the allure of sedentary subject positions which might make them reconsider their lifestyles.

Global nomads do not always pay attention to these constraints but rather emphasise their agency and those factors that facilitate their lifestyles. This was shown, for instance, in the ways they represent their solo travel, or how they explain away their difficulties in obtaining and renewing visas (see 6.1 Sex and Companionship and 7.3.2 Visas). For global nomads, agency is one of the most important features of their lifestyles to the extent that it is emphasised even in those situations where it is severely constrained.

What is the overall balance of global nomads' freedoms and constraints—how free are they? It seems that freedom and constraints are inseparable allies. '[P]eople are enabled through being constrained,' as Fairclough argues.[1] The question of freedom, for global nomads, appears to be about choosing the constraints they are ready to accept, in other words those constraints which seem to produce added value when the costs of constraints are taken into account. This process is naturally not as rational as it appears, as global nomads' decisions (nor anybody else's) are not well planned as discussed in Chapter five (see 5.2.2 Searching for Novelty). All decisions include a fair amount of contingency in the form of unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences.[2]

By attempting to detach themselves from some of the major constraints of sedentary societies, global nomads appear to gain mastery of their own lives on some level by refusing to be determined by outside forces and those predetermined forms of life which have shaped them as discussed in Chapter two in relation to lifestyles (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). Their individuality is therefore an important prerequisite and a critical success factor to their lifestyles, the notion of freedom being unthinkable as an attribute of any collective unity, be it state, society, or a smaller community. This is because individuals can always be sacrificed in the name of freedom to protect the community from alien elements, as Prozorov points out.[3] Thus, seeking detachment from any collective unities might be the only way to gain any level of freedom, although this too can only be a partial solution. For the backpacker and the lifestyle migrant this means that their lifestyles form perhaps the greatest of constraints for their freedom, instead of being a guarantee of it.

As long as global nomads remain in the subject position of the lone ranger, they are relatively free from biopolitical constraints that other people impose on them, although even then other people's expectations limit their play with

1   Fairclough 1989, 28.
2   Giddens 1984, 282.
3   Prozorov 2007, 12.

subjectivities as discussed in Chapter six (see 6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps). Global nomads are also dependent on the order kept by the state in their chosen destinations, and on their ability to cross crucial boundaries, and in this sense their freedom is largely imaginary. They are subject to similar controls and limitations as other tourists.

The freedom that global nomads are able to attain means merely taking a critical distance to the type of subjectification that is linked to the state, that is to the dominant subject positions.[1] It is the 'art of not being governed quite so much,'[2] to borrow Foucault's formulation, and it is perhaps the best anyone can do. As Rojek ironically reminds us, 'Freedom is for the birds.'[3] Although this view might seem sombre and haunting as if power really was 'always already there... a network, a rhizome, a contiguity diffracted ad infinitum,'[4] as Baudrillard argued (see 3.1 Why a Foucauldian Approach?), we have to remember that—viewed from a Foucauldian perspective—power is not negative. Being constrained can be a pleasurable and productive experience to look forward to. Without it, global nomads would not be able to travel, which would deny them one of the greatest pleasures in their lives.

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1   Foucault 2002c, 336.
2   Foucault in Chambers 2001, 116.
3   Rojek 2010, 189.
4   Baudrillard 2007, 35.

8.2 Current Status and Prospects of Mobilities

This section approaches the research findings from the point of view of their social (8.2.1 Social Relevance) and academic implications (8.2.2 Academic Relevance and Contribution) by discussing the goal of the research, the method, and the theoretical framework used, as well as the thesis' added value to tourism studies. At the end of the section, new potential research subjects are considered in order to give initial guidelines for further research on location-independence (8.2.3 Recommendations for Future Research).

8.2.1 Social Relevance

The nomadic lifestyle is indicative of both present and future trends, particularly changes in general value systems. These are already visible at some levels in sedentary societies, for instance in changing work ethics and consumption habits, and in people's growing interest in alternative social practices, lifestyles, and the search for the meaning of life.[1] Global nomads, as well as labour and lifestyle migrants, are just some examples of this wider development. Along with their exit option, people are also searching for solutions in their home countries, for example by trying to subsist outside the traditional job market and the monetary economy.[2] Instead of becoming avid consumers, they might opt for voluntary simplicity. This chapter addresses the possible consequences of these value changes from the point of view of the individuals themselves and sedentary societies through three interlinking phenomena that global nomads represent in an extreme form: the individualisation of cultures, the rise of diverse lifestyles, and increasing mobilities.

　　As individualisation is one of the main characteristics of global nomads'

1　Haavisto 2010; Richards & Wilson 2004b, Bauman 2005; Rosanvallon 2008.
2　See e.g. Boyle 2009; Greenfield 2013; Pullman & Boyle 2012; Woodruff 2012.

lifestyles, it offers an appropriate starting point for the discussion. Global nomadism may be regarded as a symptom of growing individualisation in society as a whole, and the search for new forms of sociability and community in a changing world. The emergence and nature of these communities is an issue that has not only social and emotional significance for individuals but also economic, social, political, and cultural importance for fragmented societies that seek cohesion.

Global nomads' examples show that extreme individualisation is, at some point, likely to lead to an adverse reaction and to gradual formation of alternative communities because of people's need for meaningful social contacts. These emerging communities will probably be small and temporary in nature allowing people more, or at least different kind of freedom than sedentary societies, for instance in the form of play with subjectivities. These communities might be somewhere between short-term and low-commitment 'cloakroom communities,' to borrow Bauman's term,[1] that come together for a particular period of time and place for a specific reason, thus offering only superficial bonding, and more comprehensive and lasting communities.

Lifestyle migration already offers examples of this potential development.[2] For example in India and Ibiza, lifestyle migrants create communities based on members' similar interests. They stay in their chosen destination for some months, after which they go back to their home countries, usually to work, in order to return again to their community abroad. Sometimes they zigzag between the two communities for several years, which enables them to develop mutual relationships in both places and, at the same time, maintain a relative distance to them due to their regular exits.

The assumed shift from individualism to collectivism that global nomads seem to represent is not surprising. If we look at the history of nomadism, individualisation is a fairly recent trend as pastoral and warrior nomads travelled with their families and tribes (see 6.1.2 The Myth of the Lone Ranger). The closest example of such extreme solo travel as global nomads' can be found in Buddhist and Hindu monks' wanderings for whom solitude was a spiritual challenge. In a similar manner, many solo global nomads regard their lone travels as a cultural challenge (see 6.1.1 Travelling Solo). Monks' wanderings were usually periodic,[3] and it seems that also global nomadism remains a temporary lifestyle for many— after all, the participants of this research have grown and lived most of their lives in sedentary societies, and started to live on the road only later on, and they are prone to answer to biopower's hailings at some point in their nomadic existence.

Global nomads' experiences show that extreme individualism will probably remain a phase which is suited to particular circumstances in life, for example to

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1 Bauman 2003; Bauman 2007, 111–112; Bauman 2000, 200–201.
2 E.g. Korpela 2009; D'Andrea 2007.
3 See e.g. Hausner 2007, 101, 109.

those fateful moments in which individuals depart from the dominant collectiv-ist discourses in order to build their own lifestyles (see 2.1.3 Lifestyle Travellers). They go through a period of relative detachment and isolation, after which they are likely to search for new forms of bonding. While Giddens maintains that these fateful moments have the potential to mark either person's empow-erment or disempowerment,[1] the findings of this research indicate that they involve both. Although seeking to escape control and binding social relation-ships, global nomads also long for intimacy and being part of a community elsewhere, although they know this will constrain their individualism and bind them down with biopower.

As both global nomads and lifestyle migrants show, people search for emotional and empathetic face-to-face contacts rather than merely virtual relationships, also in the era of the network society. Neither do they seem satisfied with just belonging to large and impersonal imagined communities of states, nations, and societies where citizens are viewed as identical with each other, according to the ideal of democratic equality.[2]

This fragmentation and breaking down of old structures and communities does not necessarily lead to uprooting that sedentary societies often fear. Although global nomads, for instance, search for individuality through alternative life-styles, they also look for re-rooting themselves in temporary communities that supersede the meaning of shared history and traditions linked to the old struc-tures. Thus it is not communities and collectivities as such that are rejected but rather such presupposed identities as citizenship, nationality, and class that are linked to specific institutional communities that leave individuals little choice and opportunities to practise their own agency.

In order for the emerging interest-based communities to work, the idea of freedom seems to be the only foundation that they can be laid on. In an individu-alised society, people take the decision to join and leave communities freely, and these communities need to be devoid of identitarian predicates that would limit individual aspirations. Thus, although 'our being is always being-with-others,' as Prozorov maintains, the decision to be with others and the modes of being together need to be governed by the individual.[3]

When societies fragment into diverse communities as described, lifestyles have an increasing role in people's trajectories. Global nomads show that there is a demand for alternative lifestyles that go against the dominant discourses challenging the current regimes of truth. What they also show is that lifestyle choices are an evolving process. Particular lifestyles might be suited to particular phases in life being then replaced with other lifestyles.

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1 Giddens 1991, 142.
2 See Prozorov 2007, 105.
3 See Prozorov 2007, 13.

The advantage of lifestyles is that they enable drastic changes through the reassessment of one's priorities in life, thus allowing a particular kind of freedom which could be called the ability to 'be otherwise.'[1] Lifestyles imply that there is the possibility of choosing, and particularly choosing differently, which enables people to move between different spheres of life, communities, and subjectivities. Being otherwise does not necessarily mean doing something differently. Rather, it is the capacity to act, which also contains the choice of not to act as Giddens remarks:

> To be able to 'act otherwise' means being able to intervene in the world, or to refrain from such intervention, with the effect of influencing a specific process or state of affairs.[2]

Both acting and refraining from acting have consequences. Although global nomads, for instance, do not actively resist societies' rules and regulations, they might resist them by being indifferent to them. What seems particularly interesting at the specific historical context where this research was made is global nomads' opposition of the monetary economy, which indicates a broadening of the concept of 'lifestyle' (see 5.2.3 Downshifting). As discussed, lifestyles are not just about brands, products, and marketing but they include immaterial aspects.

If this development gains further popularity, it can radically affect the image of travel and tourism as consumption, which is naturally both an interesting and worrying trend for the industry. Some destinations have already expressed their wish to limit the number of budget tourists and favour high spending visitors instead.[3] The phenomenon is not new, however, as Cohen already argued that the low-consuming drifter was not welcome everywhere.[4] Fundamentally, these discussions where the hoped-for visitors, travel styles and lifestyles are being characterised winds back to the accepted and rejected forms of behaviour and the fine line between them which, in turn, often seems to boil down to monetary contribution as the discussion of the model citizen already illustrated (see 7.2.1 Citizenship).

Global nomads' resistance to the commercial conception of 'lifestyle,' as well as the current sedentary trends of downshifting and the preference for the exchange economy show that the tourism industry might need to take increasingly into account those forms of tourism that are not based on monetary exchange, thus broadening the concept of 'lifestyle' from a marketing label into a set of practices that guide people's everyday travels. For tourism industry, this is, naturally, a

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1 Foucault 2002c, 335; Deleuze 2006, 119; Prozorov 2007, 34, 67. See also Foucault 1990, 9.
2 Giddens 1984, 14. See also Prozorov 2007, 8, 42.
3 Scheyvens 2002, 145.
4 Cohen 1973, 102–103.

paradoxical situation as profit-seeking is one of the main aims of any business. In practice, this might mean that not-for-profit organisations offering opportunities for working holidays and work exchange might gain further importance in the market.

What are the implications of these current developments for mobilities? Any changes in society tend to increase mobility, particularly because in individualised cultures, people are no longer waiting for the stiff and sluggish societal structures to respond to changes. If circumstances are not pleasing, they will move on, either literally or metaphorically, and start searching for new alternatives. This has already happened in Schengen area in Europe where people can live and move around relatively freely, and the same applies to many of Europe's former colonies where the unemployed, particularly the young, migrate in order to find work.[1]

The more the media present examples of various kinds of mobilities, the more people are likely to reconsider their options.[2] This has already been the case of lifestyle migration in Britain where the growth of the phenomenon has been explained by the strong media presence of the pioneering lifestyle migrants.[3] As the media are now becoming aware of the existence of location-independence and creating an aura of a trendy lifestyle around it, it is probably only a question of time when it starts attracting more people.

This development involves frictions as sedentary societies, that typically lag behind new trends, are not ready for such large-scale mobilities that take place today. When, for instance, young and educated people leave their home countries, societies are seen as being drained of talent and left as debtors because the prevailing discourses focus on nation states, their benefits and losses, instead of looking at the results on a global level.[4] Nor are societies ready for increasing individualisation either. They fear of its disintegrating effect, although social cohesion is already threatened. When citizens are only attached to states by their share in prosperity instead of shared values and imagined belonging, any financial crisis is bound to speed up disintegration as sociologists Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue:

> *To hope that only material interests and institutional dependence*

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1 E.g. Callegari & Cintra 2012; Sarcina 2012.
2 See Papastergiadis 2000, 47.
3 O'Reilly 2000, 1–2.
4 Beck 2012; Callegari & Cintra 2012; Sarcina 2012.

*(consumption, job market, welfare state, pensions) create cohesion, is to
confure the problem with the solution.[1]*

Were societies to answer to the increasing individualisation, fragmentation, and
mobilities, a structural transformation of social institutions would be needed.[2]
The problem is, however, that societies are built with the intent of making things
permanent, continuous, and predictable. As Deleuze and Guattari state, 'The
concern of the State is to conserve.'[3] They have a heavy investment in the past,
and they are too rigid and bureaucratic to respond to such changes and fluc-
tuations that mobilities and the subsequent changes in general mentality cause.
If the global nomads' experiences in this research can offer us any guidance, it
seems that one of the main problems with sedentary societies is that any system,
be it a society or a smaller level of organisation, will eventually become self-
enforcing. They start to exist for themselves rather than for facilitating citizens
in their life projects.

From the point of view of the individual citizen, the exit option and oppor-
tunism that global nomads as well as labour and lifestyle migrants represent
are a quick and dirt solution which partly liberates them from biopower and
related subjectivities. This liberation is naturally a gamble as the interviewees'
experiences show, especially when including a detachment from biopower in
the form of protection provided by the welfare state.[4]

Were these developments to gain further popularity, the role of society would
need to be reconsidered. This is already happening at some level in European
welfare societies because of drastic need for cuts in the public sector. An impor-
tant issue to be addressed in such a change is, do people still want interventions
from political systems, or would they rather be left alone. This is the kind of
question that, for instance, cosmopolitanism, liberalism, and anarchism ask
when questioning the rule of the majority and paying attention to individualist
aspirations instead.[5]

Although it is not within the scope of this research to suggest political
implications, it seems that minimalist concepts of state, for example state as
a night-watchman protecting individuals from assault, theft, breach of con-
tract, and fraud only,[6] imply the kind of freedom which could allow citizens
to gain more self-ownership. If such attitudes were to become more common,
the repercussions could be unpredictable as there are no institutions that could
take the place of nation-states. At best, however, the question 'what if' is merely

1   Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 17–18.
2   Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 18–19, 202.
3   Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 357. See also Hannam & Knox 2010, 20.
4   Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 32.
5   E.g. Calhoun 2002; Hayek 1948; Nozick 1974.
6   E.g. Nozick 1974.

rhetorical because not everyone is the same. There will always be people who want more protection from the state. Biopower is attractive, and it will always enforce some kind of societal structures.

8.2.2 Academic Relevance and Contribution

This subsection reflects the academic relevance and contribution of the thesis to studies on tourism, lifestyle migration, and new mobilities that had an important role in building the theoretical framework of the thesis. The discussion starts from the limitations of these research areas in regard to the problem definition, and then moves on to discuss the benefits and constraints of Foucauldian approaches.

As discussed in Chapter two, the adopted combination of research fields reflects processes where travel, tourism, migration, and mobilities have moved to the centre of contemporary societies (see 1.2 Research Set-Up). From an academic point of view, this shift from the margins to the centre requires a change in theoretical perspectives in which the wider societal factors and power negotiations involved are taken into account. As the research findings showed, even highly individualised subjects such as global nomads are social and societal beings. By ignoring this broader context, where mobilities take place and where they are discussed and assessed, would be to cut the most telling part of the analysis away.

Although the societal aspect has figured in tourism studies since early research on long-term travel, it has remained, for the most part, implicit and unanalysed. For example, the heated discussions about the nature of drifting are fundamentally about power as discussed in Chapter three (see 3 Power and Subjectivities). The analysis on global nomads further evidenced that these discussions are part of social construction where societies' norms and values are being negotiated and defined. As it is only through such power negotiations that discourses representing both conventional and alternative lifestyles emerge, it is these power negotiations that need to be the primary object of analysis.

The main challenge in approaching questions of context and power within tourism studies is the lack of a strong theoretical and methodological tradition. Another challenge is transgressing the split between managerial and ethnographic studies, which has limited research and directed it away from societal questions including power. Although ethnographic research has touched issues of power on a microlevel of people's and communities' practices, the problem is that investigations have mostly remained on an implicit and descriptive level. The actual, systematic analysis of how power figures and works is missing, nor are links necessarily made to wider macro level contexts where it would be possible to examine what are the social and academic implications of the research results.

This thesis has sought to challenge tourism research in two major ways. Instead of individual experiences and human psychology, it has concentrated on social

construction and the power relations involved, and instead of typologies, it has maintained the plurality of the research subject. The chosen perspectives include not only a change of emphasis from micro to macrolevel but also from permanence to flux, from being to doing, and from structure to agency.[1]

In this change of perspective, the new mobilities paradigm, which pays attention to how mobilities shape societies and citizenships, proved to be useful. It shows the constructed nature of our shared realities and the power struggles involved turning the assumptions of the pre-eminence of societies and structures upside down. It reminds us of the fact that meaningful subjectivities and lifestyles are indeed produced through networks of people, ideas, and things moving as Urry pointed out (see 2.3.1 Societies or Mobilities?).

Although in many ways useful, the new mobilities paradigm is new and and not very strong in empirical methods and evidence yet, which makes applying it in actual analysis demanding. Because of this, Foucauldian theories, that are known for their emphasis on power analysis, were used to broaden the perspective.

The main insights of Foucauldian theories, according to which power is a network present in all social and societal relationships and even in our very own subjectivities, helped to identify the challenges global nomads face when trying to detach themselves from sedentary societies. They provided the research with two major means of examining power relationships:

- discourses (global nomads' practices and their self-representations, Chapter 5)
- subjectivities (global nomads' identifications in their social and societal relationships, Chapters 7 and 8)

Through these two vehicles of power, the research was able to identify and analyse implicit measures of power that are present in global nomads' everyday life. The analysis took into account the biopolitical instruments such as norms, values and ideals, and systems of differentiations.[2] Of these, values and ideals were examined through the dominant sedentary practices such as efficiency and productivity from which global nomads try to detach themselves (see 5.2 Practices: Time, Place, Money). Norms were examined through binary oppositions such as global nomads/the sedentary, work/leisure and sedentary/mobile which separate normal and deviant behaviours from each other (see e.g. 5.3.1 Adventurers and 6.3 Avoiding Tourists and Tourist Traps). Systems of differentiations, on the other hand, were examined through economic, racial, and national disparities which make power asymmetries visible (see 6.2 Meeting Locals).

Power was examined as an alluring network that invites global nomads to

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1   See also Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2180.
2   Foucault 2002c, 344.

cooperate with it.[1] This view challenges the more traditional approaches of critical research that associate power with abuse, dominance, and inequality. When power is viewed as omnipresent and seductive, the subject's own participation and agency are acknowledged. From this perspective, very different research questions and themes arise that are perhaps more in line with the recent developments that emphasise the significance of individual's own will to power as discussed in the previous section.

Although this research was able to broaden the concept of power within tourism studies, the analysis also showed that power is far from an easy topic to investigate, even when approached with qualitative methods that ensure rich data, or with such methods as discourse analysis that accept contradictory research results. As already discussed in relation to the theoretical framework, there are still many things that we do not know about power (see 3.3.2 Resistance). It forms a complex, layered, and elusive network that is both enabling and constraining as discussed in the previous section. Foucault describes the challenge:

> *It [the exercise of power] operates on the field of possibilities in which the behavior of active subjects is able to inscribe itself. It is a set of actions on possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less; in the extreme, it constrains or forbids absolutely, but it is always a way of acting upon one or more acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action. A set of actions upon other actions.[2]*

Power not only works in a field of possibility, but also 'endows itself with processes that are more or less adjusted to the situation'[3] and, consequently, research cannot result in any set and universal description of power (see 3.2.1 Power as Relationships and Network). It is contextual and subject to change, and thus also power studies, regardless of the discipline and research area, need to include empirical research results that anchor the statements in a singular research material.

The complex and ever shifting nature of power, however, is not a reason to stop addressing it. Rather, it is an invitation to pay more attention to those societal contexts where power relationships can be located, as it is only through relentless critical research that we can come to understand its workings. Giddens argues for the importance of this venture:

> *The study of power cannot be regarded as a second-order consideration in the social sciences. Power cannot be tacked on, as it were, after the more*

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1   Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2180. See also Cohen et al. 2013.
2   Foucault 2002c, 341.
3   Foucault 2002c, 345.

basic concepts of social science have been formulated. There is no more elemental concept than that of power.[1]

The point of view of power introduced here, together with location-independence, which makes power issues regarding mobilities visible, offers fresh horizons for the three study areas covered in this research. For tourism studies, location-independence means reconsidering some of the basic assumptions made in the field such as the concept of 'travel.' This will further blur the boundaries between different kinds of movements and show that there are more similarities than differences between them. As this research has shown, it might be that some types of mobilities are suited for particular stages in life rather than being mutually exclusive. Thus the aspect of lifestyle mobilities as well as the notion of subjectivity as a play that enable such shifts become central in getting a grasp of the current developments that can be characterised by change and flux.

The same applies to lifestyle migration studies which might benefit from a more thorough analysis of how migrants undergo their conscious self-transformations, for instance examining what exactly is the process by which they change their ideals and subjectivities. Through the analysis of subject positions, this research offers one theoretically informed approach for addressing these issues of identification that have been viewed as fundamental for contemporary societies.[2]

In regard to new mobilities, the research findings provide evidence for many of the theoretical assumptions made within the paradigm. Because of their location-independence and attempts to detach themselves from sedentary societies, global nomads challenge, for instance, the concepts of social location such as home, class, occupational group, citizenship, and nationality for which the new mobilities paradigm has searched for new, viable options.

This research also suggested one direction that could be taken in mobilities studies, inspired by Baerenholdt's notion of 'governmobility,' namely to examine power as adjusted to the situation. From this perspective, research cannot result in any abstract description. Because of the contextual nature of power, the ontological questions of what mobilities are, what are their functions, and how they should be conceived remain ambiguous and under constant negotiation, and thus they need to be tackled in context. This means that further studies on the area of location-independence are urgently needed. What are the directions that research could take in the future is the subject of the last subsection.

8.2.3 Recommendations for Future Research

While this research has been able to draw a picture of global nomads' practises,

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1   Giddens 1984, 283.
2   Bauman 2006.

discourses, lifestyles, subjectivities, and (bio)power in their social and societal relationships, as well as to analyse their freedoms and constraints in the context of sedentary societies, further research is needed to better understand the implications of location-independence both for the individuals themselves and for the wider societies. As this research is at liberty to present guidelines for further research, the opportunity is taken to point out possible topics that could further the study of power in regard to location-independence and, whenever applicable, also in regard to lifestyle migration and long-term travel. Let us look at the following five propositions which illuminate the interface of sedentary societies and individual mobilities.

First, research could further elaborate questions on legal bases of nation-states, citizenship, subjectivities, and human rights by studying subversive mobilities that seek to undermine constraints of mobilities imposed by sedentary societies, thus questioning the current contents of these concepts and existing state structures. Subversive mobilities could be analysed, for instance, in relation to immigration policies and violations of law whether by individuals or groups and including human, animal, body part and drug trafficking. All subversive mobilities carve out their own routes and invent ways to avoid the constraints posed by sedentary states.[1] As the topic is sensitive, the challenge is how to reach the subjects and collect a sufficient body of research material for making substantive claims about the phenomenon.

Another way to approach subversive mobilities would be to look at the ways in which global nomads deal with growing securitisation in subversive ways. This kind of research could, for instance, further elaborate the ways in which global nomads (and also lifestyle migrants) build their subjectivities resisting biopower—what alternative subject positions do they assume, why, how, and what are their implications. If this research was repeated today, this aspect would have been emphasised more in the interviews in order to further question the legality of nation-states and citizenship. Global nomads' agency and resistance could be analysed, for instance, in relation to particular acts such as tax-evasion or political activism (or apathism), immigration policies, or violations of law such as crossing borders in illegal places or under assumed identities which question state-issued subjectivities and further test the limits of mobilities in contemporary societies.

Third, if subsequent research included a longer time span for a follow-up, it could be used to evaluate this research and to develop it further. By studying flows and fluctuations with which the nomadic lifestyle (un)develops, the research could reveal, with individual cases, the changing nature and dynamics of nomadic trajectories and issues of power involved. This could further evidence whether the nomadic lifestyle remains a temporary phase in people's lives, or whether

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1   E. Cohen (personal communication September 28, 2013).

some global nomads are able to resist biopower in the long run.

Fourth, although the number of global nomads is inadequate for large-scale surveys and quantitative analyses, they could offer fruitful perspectives for the environmental and economical effects of the nomadic lifestyle because of their practices in slow travel, downshifting, alternative forms of exchange, and minimalist lifestyles that are not necessarily as widespread among other kind of travellers. The studies that are currently available are about backpackers and mass tourists only, and they are not applicable to more marginal groups such as global nomads.

Fifth, comparative research has the option to focus on certain subgroups of global nomads, such as cyclists, hitch-hikers, ocean cruisers or motor homers, representatives of a single nation, or an ethnic, age or occupational group.[1] This approach was not chosen in this research because typologies were viewed as freezing the research object, but, depending on the chosen theoretical point of view, the examination of subgroups could also further emphasise the plurality of the group and give an opportunity to examine specific subcultural features which might also have implications for the sedentary subcultures.[2]

As this preliminary draft shows, the perspectives for research on location-independence are vast, and although the number of global nomads is yet small, the phenomenon is growing and it has been deemed a significant research area for tourism studies because of its extreme and pioneering nature.[3] It is hoped that this study will inspire future research in elaborating the analysis beyond the well-trodden paths.

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1   See also Sørensen 2003.
2   See e.g. MacBeth 2000; Thorpe 2012; Paris 2012.
3   Cohen & Cohen 2012, 2181.

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Summary

This thesis examines the under-researched phenomenon of location-independence which blurs the boundaries between travel, migration, and dwelling. The research analyses a group of location-independent people, the so called global nomads, who illustrate the complex subjectivities and power relations associated with sustained mobility.

Problem Definition

The thesis makes use of three research areas—studies on tourism, lifestyle migration, and new mobilities—reflecting the processes by which mobilities have moved from the margins to the centre of contemporary societies. Mobilities are no longer considered separate activities which occur in specific locations at particular times, but are seen as constitutive of societies and individual subjectivities. As location-independence remains unusual life choice which poses challenges not only for the individuals themselves but also for sedentary societies, it offers an opportunity to examine power negotiations where mobilities, related subjectivities, and the social organisation are being discussed.

In order to approach questions of power, the research uses Michel Foucault's theories on discourses, power, and subjectivities. Foucault's theories start with the idea that the world around us is socially constructed, and it is constructed through discourses that are indicative of power struggles. Foucault's formulation of 'power' challenges the dominant conceptions within tourism studies that view power as repressive and owned by particular groups of people. According to Foucault, power is a productive network that pervades the whole of society, and it is at the heart of subjectivity forming making people who they are. Power is thus something that all individuals employ, both to themselves and to others.

Foucault particularly theorised biopower, which allows access to individuals, their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behaviour. Although biopower is disciplinary by nature, it seduces rather than coerces. Thus biopower is not something that people usually seek to escape; instead, they are attracted by it.

The research sets out to examine the role of power in global nomads' lifestyles and subjectivities by finding out how other people and societies use power over them, and how they themselves facilitate power. Global nomads' lifestyles and subjectivities are viewed as processual and evolving rather than as constant, and thus the power issues involved are about constant negotiation and renegotiation, sometimes enabling, at other times constraining them.

The research question that guides the thesis is: WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT FACILITATE AND CONSTRAIN GLOBAL NOMADS' LOCATION-INDEPENDENT LIFESTYLES WITHIN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES?

The questions of power implicit in the research question are approached with auxiliary questions from a bottom-up perspective. The auxiliary questions probe global nomads' lifestyles, practices, and discourses as well as the economic, social, political and cultural contexts where mobilities happen. The auxiliary questions are:

- HOW CAN GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES BE CHARACTERISED, AND WHICH PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN THEM?
- TO WHAT EXTENT ARE GLOBAL NOMADS' LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN THEIR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS?
- TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THEIR LIFESTYLES AND SUBJECTIVITIES ENABLED AND CONSTRAINED BY (BIO)POWER IN SEDENTARY SOCIETIES?

Methodology

The research is qualitative aiming to produce rich data and gain deep insights into personal lived experience. Further, the general lack of knowledge regarding location-independence and the small number of global nomads makes quantitative methods difficult to apply.

The research material consists of in-depth interviews with thirty participants who have travelled for at least three years without a home and a permanent job. The first interviews were conducted in 2010, and follow-up interviews were made two years later. Whenever applicable, the research material was enriched with instant ethnography. This was done in case of fourteen participants.

For analysing the data, the thesis uses a mixed-method discourse analysis combining Michel Foucault's, Norman Fairclough's, and Teun A. van Dijk's theories. Foucault developed discourse analysis early on in his career in *The*

Archaeology of Knowledge (1969), in the first wave of the so called discursive turn in the social sciences, while Fairclough and van Dijk represent a newer version of the methodology, the so called critical discourse analysis.

'Discourse,' in this study, is defined as a practice that systematically forms the objects of which it speaks. In regard to global nomads this means that a discourse is a vehicle of thought with which they, and outsiders alike, represent the nomadic lifestyle. Discourse analysis aims to systematically explore discourses and practices as well as the wider contexts entailed. It investigates how discourses and practices are shaped by power relations, and how the naturalness of these relationships is itself a factor that is securing power.

The analysis proceeds in three phases: 1) description, 2) processing analysis, and 3) contextual analysis. While description prepares the research material for examination, the processing analysis focuses on the relationships the corpus has, and the contextual analysis delves into the constraints of production and reception of discourses thus taking into account the broader social and societal context.

Research Findings

Starting from the microlevel of individual global nomads and their everyday practices, the research findings show that global nomads' lifestyles can be characterised by the extreme nature of their travel practices. They travel without plans, schedules and particular destinations living in the moment and searching for novelty; they practice voluntary simplicity and the exchange economy; they consciously try to detach themselves from sedentary societies and biopower's teachings. Global nomads are not a homogeneous group that adheres to a particular lifestyle. They rather aspire to a range of lifestyles emphasising their individuality. Thus the term 'global nomad' is introduced as a heuristic tool with which to analyse location-independence, rather than as a definitive category.

Many of the global nomads' practices oppose the dominant discourses in sedentary societies. These power negotiations can be encapsulated in two discourses—the discourse of adventuring and that of vagrancy—with which global nomads and outsiders alike make sense of the nomadic lifestyle, negotiating the fine line between acceptable and rejected forms of travel. Underlying this negotiation is the concept of 'travel' which binds acceptable mobilities to home and to a financial contribution to the home country which leaves global nomads outcasts.

When proceeding to social level, intimate relationships are shown to be the most critical factors for global nomads' lifestyles. The majority of them travel alone assuming the subject position of the lone ranger, which is at the same time a constraint because lone travel usually fails to satisfy them in the long run. Although global nomads cherish their contacts with locals, which differentiates them from other long-term travellers such as backpackers or lifestyle migrants

who tend to stay sheltered in their enclaves, the research findings show that global nomads' attempts to establish rapport with locals are at best experiments with Otherness rather than deep meaningful relationships. This makes most of them, at some point in their nomadic existence, search for new communities and also subject themselves to the biopower that collectivities inevitably involve.

Global nomads' societal relationships are equally complex. Despite their attempts to detach themselves from sedentary societies, they are in many ways tied to them. For instance, it is only their country of residence that can grant them the identity needed for travel, and when crossing borders, global nomads reinforce dominant sedentary structures and discourses. Global nomads also carry within themselves teachings of biopower that are not easily unlearned. Thus, although location-independence seems to free global nomads from some of the constraints of sedentary societies, their freedom remains relative. They are bound to the same societies and biopolitical relationships that they seek to escape, which means that (bio)power is both an enabling and constraining element of their lifestyles.

Academic Relevance

This research adds to tourism research 1) by examining the under-researched phenomenon of location-independence, 2) by developing approaches that focus on issues of power and subjectivity, and 3) by broadening the scope of tourism studies to contextual analysis.

To date, location-independence has not been widely addressed in tourism studies. Previous studies of long-term travellers have dealt mainly with groups such as backpackers, who are on a temporary journey lasting from one to several months after which they return home to study or work. This literature ignores many issues that become crucial from the point of view of location-independence, for instance in the case of global nomads, their conscious detachment from their country of origin and the implications of this for their subjectivities.

Tourism studies have also largely bypassed questions of power, although power plays an important role, for instance, in state regulations concerning tourism, in the effects of tourism, and in tourists' social and societal relationships both at home and abroad. In order to approach such questions of power, this thesis develops a theoretical and methodological approach based on Foucault's theories.

By taking into account wider economic, social, political, and cultural environments where power is at work, this thesis deviates from the mainstream of tourism studies that focuses on travellers' individual psychology favouring such topics as identity, motivations, and tourist behaviours. The contextual approach is particularly vital when examining alternative lifestyles such as global nomads', because they question some of the basic values and institutions in sedentary

societies. These alternative choices cannot be examined in a vacuum as a series of individual choices only.

Social Implications

The social implications of the research findings are related to three interlinking phenomena that global nomads represent: the individualisation of cultures, the rise of diverse lifestyles, and increasing mobilities.

Research findings show that the extreme individualism of global nomads does not lead to the breaking down of communality that sedentary societies often fear; rather, it gives way to a search for new kinds of communities and forms of sociability. The communities that emerge from this process are likely to be interest-based, often small and temporary in nature, and marked by freedom liberating individuals from identitarian predicates, the need to be present, and binding memberships.

When societies fragment into new communities, lifestyles will have an increasing role in people's trajectories. Lifestyles enable the reassessment of one's priorities in life thus introducing a particular kind of freedom which could be called the ability to be otherwise. What global nomads illustrate is that life-styles are more about people's everyday practices than about marketing and consumption. This development, which in sedentary societies is paralleled by recent trends of downshifting and the search for alternative social practices, means that both societies and corporations need to consider also other forms of contribution and exchange than the monetary.

All these changes, whether on personal, social or societal level, will increase mobility and its importance in sedentary societies. If current circumstances are not pleasing, a growing number of people will move on, either literally or metaphorically, and start searching for new alternatives.

At the moment there seems to be an irreconcilable discrepancy between individual aspirations and sedentary societies' practices and aims. Societies are not ready for any of the developments described, even though these are already visible at some levels. Societies tend to be controlling and self-enforcing instead of assisting citizens in their life projects, often restricting movement rather than encouraging and enabling it.

Recommendations for Future Research

Because of the growing securitisation in sedentary societies, various forms of subversive mobilities, that seek to undermine sedentary constraints, offer an interesting point of view for future research. New studies, for instance, on violations of the law, such as tax-evasion, illegal border crossing, and various forms of trafficking that might be related to some forms of location-independence could

further elaborate questions on legal bases of nation-states, citizenship, subjectivities, and human rights. As mobilities are now at the centre of contemporary societies, they are one of the items of contention around which major power negotiations will revolve, both now and in the future.

Appendix I: Interviewees

Guillermo, January 11, 2010 in Italy. (A pseudonym.)
Jukka, February 10, 2010 in Finland.
Andy, February 21, 2010 in Dominican Republic.
Rita, February 21, 2010 in the United States.
George, February 23, 2010 the United States. (A pseudonym.)
Tor, March 3, 2010 in Grenada.
Elisa, March 14, 2010 in Costa Rica. (A pseudonym.)
Claude, March 18, 2010 in Switzerland.
Jens, March 22, 2010 in Ireland.
Phoenix, March 24, 2010 in the United States.
Stefan, March 26, 2010 in Costa Rica.
Jeff, March 30, 2010 in Vietnam.
Glen, April 5, 2010 in Great-Britain.
Max, April 7, 2010 in Brazil.
Jérémy, April 12, 2010 in Belize.
Ludovic, April 15, 2010 in France.
Michel, April 21, 2010 in France.
Ingo, April 21, 2010 in Germany.
Noam, April 25, 2010 in Peru. (A pseudonym.)
Ciro, April 26, 2010 in Japan.
Barbara, May 14, 2010 in Canada.
Anthony, May 19, 2010 in Italy.
Anick, June 5, 2010 in France.
Taro, June 13, 2010 in Japan.
Ajay, July 1, 2010 in Indonesia.
Maria, 1.7.2010 in Indonesia.

Alberto, July 3, 2010 in New Zealand.
Scott, August 28, 2010 in Australia.
Gustavo, November 9, 2010 in Italy. (Name, nationality and the location have been changed.)
Cindie, November 29, 2012 in India.

Appendix II: Interview Questions

The following set of questions was used in the first round of interviews:

Background
1. How old are you?
2. What is your nationality?
3. When did your travels start and when will they end/did they end?
4. What do you plan to do when you return/how was your return to society?
5. Tell me your life story. What have you done after school?
6. Why did you start travelling?
7. What do you plan to do in the future?
8. Where is your home?

Destinations
9. Which countries have you visited? How do you select countries?
10. Why did you come to your current country?
11. Which countries do you not want to visit? Why?
12. Which forms of transportation you prefer?
13. What do you think about visas, and lodging or work permits?
14. Have you visited/did you visit your country of origin after you left?
15. What do you miss from your country of origin?

Livelihood
16. How do you make money? Is it easy to find a job when you need one?/ If you

live on your savings how long do you expect them to last?
17. How much are your travelling costs?
18. What was your job before you left?
19. Do you enjoy social security and health care?
20. What kinds of insurance do you have, if any? Why?

Comparison
21. What are your typical daily activities?
22. What are the pros and cons of your travelling life?
23. Has travelling changed you? How?
24. Do you feel yourself different from the people of your country of origin? How?
25. What is your home country? What does home country mean for you?
26. What are your usual accommodations when travelling?
27. Has your social status changed after you started travelling? How?

Social relations
28. Where are most of your friends and what is their nationality?
29. Are you in a relationship? Do you travel alone? Have you tried to find a partner during your travels? How did it work out?
30. Do you consider yourself a tourist?
31. In which situations have you experienced discrimination?
32. What do locals think of you and others like you?
33. Have you been misunderstood? In which situations?

Languages and culture
34. What languages do you speak?
35. What motivated you to learn these languages?
36. What customs of your country of origin do you follow?
37. What do you think about your behaviour? How? Why?

Miscellaneous
38. What do your family and friends think about your lifestyle?
39. What do you tell strangers about yourself?
40. What kind of reaction does your story get?
41. What is a Nomad?
42. What is the meaning of life?

Would you like your name to be published?
Is there an e-mail or web address you would like to be published?
Do you know other travelling people for the survey?

The following set of questions was used in the follow-up interviews:

1. Can you tell me about your current situation?
2. What has changed since spring 2010?
3. What have you learned while travelling?
4. How has this changed your approach to life?
5. How has this changed your future travel plans?
6. How has this changed your current work/study/leisure situation?
7. Why have you continued/stopped travelling?
8. What are your future plans?

Appendix III: Information Sheet for Participants and Consent Form

Information sheet

Global Nomads: Challenges of Mobility in the Sedentary World

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before signing the consent form. If you decide to participate, I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and I thank you for considering our request.

This project is part of a PhD in Tourism being undertaken at the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands. The aim of the project is to gain a better understanding of the challenges of mobility in the sedentary world. I am seeking individuals that travel as a lifestyle. For the purpose of this study, global nomads include individuals that self-define travel as their lifestyle and who have been on the road for at least four years.

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in a semi-structured, open-ended interview that is done in two parts taking approximately two hours to complete. This project involves an open-questioning technique where the precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview

develops. In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Please note that all material provided to the researcher for this project will be treated according to your wishes either displaying your name or anonymously under a pseudonym. The data will be collected using a digital recording device and will be securely stored in such a way that only the researcher and her supervisor will be able to gain access to it.

At the end of the project the material will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Thank you in advance for your help in supporting this project. If you have any future questions about our project, please feel free to contact either:

Päivi Kannisto
Email: paivi.kannisto@gmail.com

Prof Greg Richards
Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Department of Leisure Studies
University telephone number: +31 13 466 4069
Email: g.w.richards@uvt.nl

Consent Form

Global Nomads: Challenges of Mobility in the Sedentary World

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

- My participation in the project is entirely voluntary.
- I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage.
- The digital recordings of the interviews will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

• This project involves an open-questioning technique where the precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
• I have a right to a pseudonym to protect my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

....
(Signature of participant)   (Date)   (Place)

Global Nomads examines the under-explored phenomenon of location-independence which blurs the boundaries between travel, migration, and dwelling. The topic is approached through a group of location-independent travellers, the so called global nomads who illustrate the complex subjectivities and power relations associated with sustained mobility.

The research makes use of three research areas—studies on tourism, lifestyle migration, and new mobilities—as well as Foucauldian theories on power and subjectivity.