

Fundamentals of Digital nomadism

Re-imagine dwelling for inhabitants in constant migration

Ruojun Zhao

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*How does it feel ?
To be without a home,
Like a complete unknown,
Like a rolling stone.*

Bob Dylan, Like a Rolling Stone, 1965

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Preface

This thesis is not a manual to teach you how to become a digital nomad.

This thesis investigates the lifestyle of digital nomads.

This thesis is dedicated to discovering the current dilemmas of the digital nomad lifestyle.

The goal of the thesis is to provide digital nomads an architectural space that is appropriate to their current living and working style.

Abstract

This theoretical statement focuses on the analysis of the hyper-mobile lifestyle of digital nomads, which refers to individuals who utilise digital infrastructure and socio-technical systems to live a location-independent life. The study examines the basic lifestyle of digital nomads as an analytical perspective on what types of spaces are better suited for the lifestyle of digital nomads.

It identifies the problems posed by each of these daily activities in terms of three places of Oldenburg's¹ framework of housing(first place), working(second place), and socializing(third place). It arrives at a final assessment and evaluates the appropriateness of existing spatial forms for this lifestyle.

The study examines whether the ideal nomadic habitat already exists or whether there are problems with the current proposed solutions and, if so, to what extent.

1. Ray Oldenburg is an American urban sociologist calls one's "first place" the home and those that one lives with. The "second place" is the workplace—where people may actually spend most of their time. Third places, then, are "anchors" of community life and facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction. In other words, "your third place is where you relax in public, where you encounter familiar faces and make new acquaintances."

Introduction

Subject and Issues

Over the last two decades, our patterns of life and the ever-gradual shift in ideas of and around domesticity have changed profoundly due to the development of technology that architecture has struggled to keep apace. We live in a networked society where mobile information and digital communication connect us to anyone, from anywhere at anytime. Mankind's desire to develop more and newer technologies has transformed the way we live work and socialize tremendously. This has changed people's socio-spatial relationship. Our person to person relationships have become complex, affording a seamless transition between being physically present and digitally present at all times.

This is particularly the case of hypermobile lifestyle that digital nomads are living, which refers to individuals that leverage digital infrastructures and socio-technical systems to live location-independent lives. Their highly flexible forms of residency and work-live habits is challenging the existing paradigms of urban life and social structure.

Furthermore, a world more connected via digital merging with physical, is now the current norm. Homes are more likely to become expensive and smaller. Workplaces have slid into our lives and taken the centre stage without noticing. People spend majority of their time at their workplaces and are always connected with their work via digital means. People are choosing to blend work and life, exploring the world while continuing to work. But this, "*constantly on the move*", trend has made it difficult for both: property owners and digital nomads to acquire and rent-out residency.

Moreover the current pandemic situation has witnessed, the digital nomad lifestyle through the work-from-home scenarios, this encourages me to reexamine the relationship

between dweller and dwelling in a future where will be populated with digital nomads.²

Can we think of a better solution for people who want to stay connected and keep their hustle going on?

The general lack of scientific information surrounding digital nomads renders the lifestyle to being portrayed and understood mostly through potentially biased sources of information (through blogs, online articles, social media etc.)³. Architectural space dedicate to digital nomads had been a largely under explored domain. This prompted me to make it a priority to find out the real state of lifestyle of digital nomads.

Study Plan and Methodology

The rise of the digital labour market in recent years has stimulated the growth of the digital nomad community. This study is particularly interested in exploring the role of architectural spaces in digital nomads' overall well-being.

To do so, it is firstly important to understand who are digital nomads, what are the factors to give the rise of this group of population, and how is this lifestyle going to spread after the post-pandemic. And then, study the lifestyle of digital nomad through their housing, working and socializing methods. Finally, to find out an architectural space which is appropriate for accommodating digital nomads' transient housing, working and socializing lifestyle.

2. *The MBO Partners 2018 State of Independence in America* research finds 4.8 million independent workers currently describe themselves as digital nomads.

3. Reichenberger, Ina. "Digital nomads—a quest for holistic freedom in work and leisure." *Annals of Leisure Research* 21.3 (2018): 364-380.

In order to develop a general understanding of how DNs manage their living, working and socializing life while travelling, it is important that informations are collected relevantly and authentically while maintaining its generality. To do so, this paper goes through 3 different approaches for data collections.

Interview

In total, 5 interviews were conducted with digital nomads who currently live in 4 different places around world. The interviews were focused on three main themes:

- (1) Their previous or present normalcy of living, working and socialising.
- (2) How they perceive the role of private and public space to their well-being within their lives as digital nomads
- (3) What are the spaces they'd want to keep private, and what types of utilities they wouldn't mind sharing.

Interviews were conducted between October 2020 and December 2020 for a period of 12 weeks. All the interviews were held over Zoom and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded and interviewees had given consent to this process. They were conducted in a semi-structured manner where there were pre-set questions, as well as follow-up questions to clarify respondent statements made.

Forum

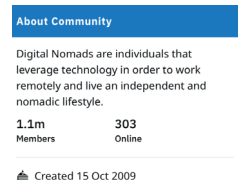
Forums and online communities are the virtual social spaces for digital nomads. DN's ask questions and share advice about the different types of places and amenities that are necessary to pursue their digital nomad lifestyle. Therefore, practical informations about living and working experiences can be found on the forums. To do so, topics relevant to this study (including living, working and socializing) are collected from 4 most populated forums.

- (1) Female Digital Nomads, with 65,700 members. ⁴
- (2) 'r/digitalnomad' sub-reddit With 612,000 members. ⁵
- (3) NomadList, with 53,000 members. ⁶
- (4) Digital Nomads Forum, with 14,000 members. ⁷

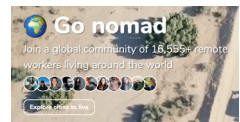
4. A facebook group started by Milou from Explorista.net, with the aim of uniting and inspiring women who are living the digital nomad lifestyle.



5. A subReddit channel for a huge range of topics and discussions from novice and experienced digital nomads.



6. NomadList is one of the biggest online communities for remote workers around the globe. Originally created by a Dutch entrepreneur looking to connect with the international nomad community.



7. A facebook group started by Robert O'Kruk



Previous interviews

The main limitation of the research is the lack of interviewees within a limited time, however, there are other interviews guided to a similar topic about digital nomad lifestyle have been accomplished by previous investigators. I reviewed the following previous interviews accomplished by John Bardos⁸, Tal Bright⁹ and Jessica Beaumont¹⁰.

8. John Bardos - Digital nomad since 1997 and creator of the website <https://jetsetcitizen.com/interviews/>

9. Tal Bright - digital nomad since 2009 and writer of Bright Nomad <https://brightnomad.net/digital-nomad-interviews-remote-work/>

10. Jessica Beaumont has interviewed 15 digital nomads living in Lisbon in 2019.

Chapter 1

Who are they

Who are digital nomads?

Nomad

Nomads are to be distinguished from settlers and migrants. Settlers live and work in fixed locations. Nomads are people who move often to different locations. Traditionally, they were motivated by the need to obtain food, find pasture for livestock or otherwise make a living.¹¹

Hunter-gatherers live in small groups that eventually gather in larger groups. They is a constant dialog between small scale to large scale. They live by game and foraging. There are no accumulation of good, they consume immediate what they gathered. Nomads have a strong sense of intimacy, and considerable sensitivity. They live a very collective way of life, it can only be sustainable by maintaining a highly sense of sensitivity.

They have a strong association of people and territorial features and landscape. The landscape is their map, it is not only a feature, but a symbol to indicate the orientation. Hunter gathers are not concerned with the surface of land, but with objects and features of landscape such as paths, tracks, sacred sites, haunts, water holes¹². They do not move in an aimless manner. The “markers” serve as signpost to indicate the relative disposition of people. They are aware of the existence of others. Location is important for them, but not possession. They claims themselves belong to a place. They don’t have fence, or enclose the space where they space. They have a strong sense of places.¹³

The nomad displays his taste for the ephemeral, brief encounters, the instant gratification of desires, the cult of speed and movement. He belongs to a temporary and hurried universe. It does not walk straight, does not turns in circa. Their movement is marked by ever-changing rhythms and places, individual, random routes. For the nomadic man,

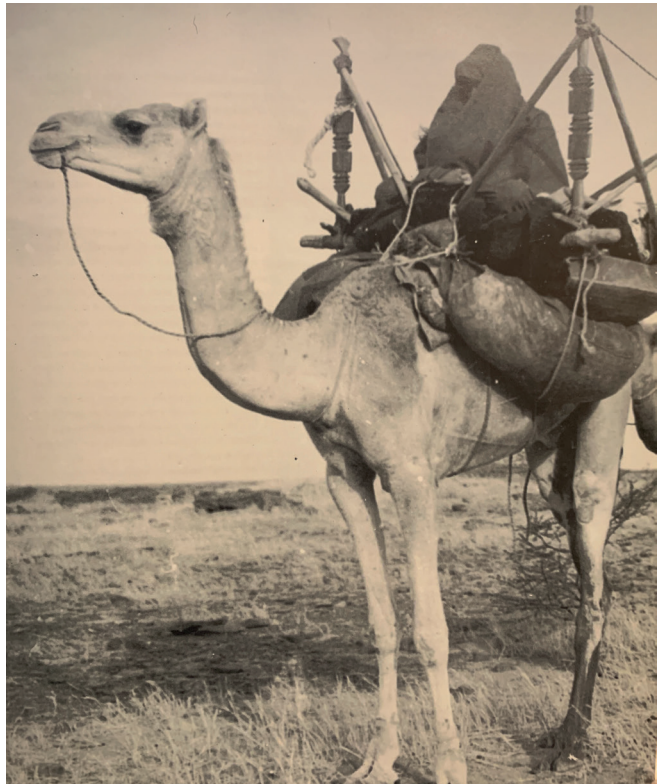
11. Schlagwein, Daniel. “The History of Digital Nomadism.” *International Workshop on the Changing Nature of Work (CNOW)*. San Francisco, USA. 2018.

12. Timothy Ingold, is a British anthropologist, Early concern was with northern circumpolar peoples, looking comparatively at hunting, pastoralism and ranching as alternative ways in which such peoples have based a livelihood on reindeer or caribou.

13. Pier Vittorio Aureli first lecture of *Familiar Horror*, a critical history of domestic space

living is to walk through a territory, to walk through places and to gather them together.

14. Image: Photograph by Anders Grum, from Prussin, Labelle. "African nomadic architecture: Space, place, and gender." (1995).



Who are digital nomads?

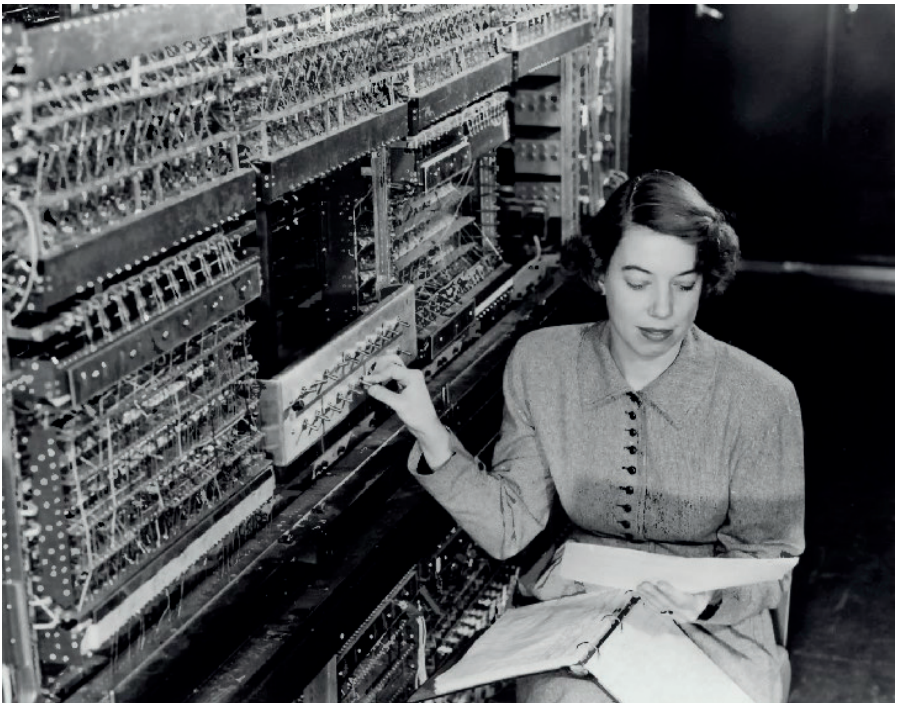
Digital

If the word nomad describe a living statu, then the word digital is telling about the mode of production. The birth of technologies such as laptops, mobile devices and the Internet have changed the way we live and work. If the industrialization has separated the place of work and the place of life from medieval way, then digital technology merges live and work into one space again.

Nowadays, there is no need to take place in a fixed location because of video chats. In the last quarter in particular, the epidemic has “forced” many people to start practicing remote work, and tools have seen an unexpected surge of users. Advances in software and hardware have made digital devices more powerful, and digital nomads are using these tools to create independent career paths in the digital realm.

15. Image: AVIDAC, Argonne's first digital computer, began operation in January 1953. It was built by the Physics Division for \$250,000.

Pictured is pioneer Argonne computer scientist Jean F. Hall.



Who are digital nomads?

Digital nomad

“When Tsugio Makimoto and David Manners published their future-looking manifesto Digital Nomads in 1997, they envisioned a globalized world in which new technologies, new kinds of work arrangements, and a growing emphasis on entrepreneurial practices would radically change our lives, blurring distinctions between work, leisure, home, and travel.”¹⁶

Today, more than 20 years later, their vision of a world in which people would be liberated from daily commuting to/ from their office cubicles has indeed become a reality for many, be it either by choice or involuntary¹⁷. Situated within a broad range of mobile lifestyles practices and lifestyle migration patterns are those of location-independent workers, often referred to as “*digital nomads*”, who can work almost anywhere, anytime, thanks to the ubiquity of digital infrastructure and technological advances¹⁸. The urge to be “*location independent*” is often associated with a search for freedom, adventure, and an escape from the traditional work environment. While nomadic workers typically travel by their work, digital nomads travel while working and, therefore, instead of moving merely between spaces and locations for work, digital nomads also have to be flexible around whatever spaces they find in the locations they choose to travel¹⁹. In doing so, movement between places is driven by a quest for the “*good life*” rather than purely employment opportunities²⁰.

Nailing down just what digital nomads are is surprisingly difficult. There are those who wear the badge proudly and those that cop to being digital nomads for convenience’s sake. Some find the term too trendy, pretentious or overused and prefer not to be labeled. Others, who have worked while traveling for years, simply aren’t aware of the digital nomad debate. They don’t realize that they fit the description. Another group that has a substantial amount of freedom in their working lives – control over their own schedule, the

16. Hermann, I., & Paris, C. M. (2020). *Digital Nomadism: the nexus of remote working and travel mobility*.

17. Thompson, Beverly Yuen. “The digital nomad lifestyle: (remote) work/leisure balance, privilege, and constructed community.” *International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure* 2.1-2 (2019): 27-42.

18. Blatt, K., and J. Gallagher. “Mobile workforce: The rise of the mobilocracy.” *Global mobile: Applications and innovations for the Worldwide mobile ecosystem*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc (2013).

19. Nash, Caleece, et al. “Digital nomads beyond the buzzword: Defining digital nomadic work and use of digital technologies.” *International Conference on Information*. Springer, Cham, 2018.

20. Müller, Annika. “The digital nomad: Buzzword or research category?.” *Transnational Social Review* 6.3 (2016): 344-348.

ability to work remotely etc. – chooses not to travel due to family obligations or personal circumstances even though they could. Still more travel so slowly or infrequently that they stretch the definition ‘nomad’ to the breaking point.

21. Image: The free wi-fi and the communal tables encourage the use of the coffee shop as a co-working space.

Photograph: Richard Levine / Alamy



The rise of digital nomad

Since late 1990s many tech workers have been bringing their work to long vacation trips in order to balance the connectivity to projects with the opportunity of travel. It is considered these early practices as “*productive vacations*” which may involve high financial costs in setting up alternative workspaces at vacation homes ²². The rise of digital nomads within a larger range of society beyond privileged people is a relatively recent phenomenon.



Google trend diagram shows the evolution of interest in research of digital nomad from the 1st of January 2014 to the 30th of November 2020

22. Wang, Haoyu. *A city of placelessness: digital nomads and Tallinn's urban future*. Diss. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2020.

Google Trend shows a skyrocketing search interest on “*digital nomad jobs*”: a jump of popularity value from 17 in 2015 to 100 in 2020.

Technological factors

Among various factors that contribute to the rise of digital nomads, the advance of digital technology in working and organizing activities is generally considered as the most significant. Although the book “*Digital Nomad*”²⁴ premised the notion upon the temporal technology of the late 1990s, it nevertheless pointed out three preconditions that could lead to a rise of digital nomads:

23. Image: Google trend diagram of digital nomad research. Google Trends is a website by Google that analyzes the popularity of top search queries in Google Search across various regions and languages. The website examining what people search for provides a unique perspective on what they are currently interested in and curious about in real time. 100 is the maximum search interest for the time and location selected.

24. Makimoto, Tsugio, and Manners, David. *Digital Nomad*. New York: Wiley, 1997. Print.

- (1) affordable and portable work devices;
- (2) pervasive internet access;
- (3) sufficient bandwidth for video sharing and other forms of real-time heavy information transmissions;

Nowadays, the ubiquity of portable computers in forms of laptops, tablets, smart phones and wearable devices along with the rapidly developing ICT infrastructures has largely fulfilled these visions and allows digital workers to work at nearly any wire- less-enabled places. This evolving digital ecosystem not only absorbs functionalities of physical workplaces into portable devices to be carried around, but also permits organizing collaborative workforces across distances by co-creating digital realities in cyberspace among participants ²⁵. Although the effectiveness of telecommunication to conduct work in comparison to face- to-face communication is still under debate ²⁶, digital technology has largely fostered a realm of placelessness for digital nomads to work individually and collectively regardless of their physical presence.

Economic factors

One of the most important concepts in digital nomad lifestyle design is called “*geoarbitrage*”, which translates as “*geographical arbitrage*”. To explain, for example, two programmers A and B, both earning US\$5,000 a month, A lives in the Silicon Valley Bay Area and B lives in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Since the cost of living in Chiang Mai, Thailand is much lower than in Silicon Valley, programmer B’s purchasing power is much higher than programmer A’s, and his stress level is lower and his quality of life is higher accordingly. The digital nomad lifestyle, on the other hand, is completely location-independent, so that people can work and earn money anywhere there is WiFi, so-called “*location independence*”, which gives them the prerequisites for geographical arbitrage.

Given the premise of technology in placeless forms of work, digital nomads can locate and relocate themselves in

25. Wang, Blair, Daniel Schlagwein, Dubravka Cezek-Kecmanovic, and Michael C Cahalane. “Digital Work and High-Tech Wanderers: Three Theoretical Framings and a Research Agenda for Digital Nomadism,” 2018, 12.

26. Fonner, Kathryn, and Michael Roloff. “Testing the Connectivity Paradox: Linking Teleworkers’ Communication Media Use to Social Presence, Stress from Interruptions, and Organizational Identification.” *Communication Monographs* 79 (June 1, 2012).

places where desirable living experiences at their temporal circumstances are accessible. In this respect, economic factors may have largely contributed to the rise of digital nomads throughout the last decade. A seemingly disruptive phenomenon in the context of regional inequity brought by remote working is geographic arbitrage: a popular term in finance that describes an economic advantage acquired by earning in a stronger economy and consuming in a weaker economy. This advantage drives many digital nomads to live in places with low costs of living while working with stakeholders from the developed world. Similar to the scenario of American retirees moving abroad for affordable health care and nursing homes ²⁷, digital nomad has become a title of an optimized working life for a younger generation to gain financial independence and a sustainable economic life. Although geographic arbitrage draws concerns related to regional inequity, it also allows digital nomads to participate in rebalancing a regional economy by bringing in the foreign buying powers to local market in service sectors ²⁸, as demonstrated in Indonesia where digital nomads of the developed world participated in transforming the impoverished village of Ubud (a town on the Indonesian island of Bali in Ubud District, it has developed a large tourism industry.) into a town of consumerism with international recognition ²⁹.

27. Blanco, Lluís Alexandre Casanovas. *After Belonging: Objects, Spaces, and Territories of the Ways We Stay in Transit*. Lars Müller Publishers, 2016.

In addition, as digital nomads move across borders, their placeless nature provides opportunities to avoid state regulations on economic activities, such as taxations and prohibitions in certain services or commodities. By moving between jurisdictions and utilizing digital platforms such as home sharing applications and cryptocurrencies for economic life, digital nomads develop trans-territorial economic attributes that is hard for nation states to trace. Furthermore, the action of travel in digital nomad activities allows emerging social media workers such as digital photographers and vloggers to incorporate consumption of their desirables into their productivity, which in turn facilitates a consumer economy both on digital publishing platforms and in places of their visits³⁰.

28. Wang, Blair, Daniel Schlagwein, Dubravka Cecez-Kecmanovic, and Michael C Cahalane. "Digital Work and High-Tech Wanderers: Three Theoretical Framings and a Research Agenda for Digital Nomadism," 2018, 12.

29. MacRae, Graeme. "Community and Cosmopolitanism in the New Ubud." *Annals of Tourism Research* 39 (July 1, 2016): 16–29.

30. Reichenberger, Ina. "Digital Nomads – a Quest for Holistic Freedom in Work and Leisure." *Annals of Leisure Research* 21, no. 3 (May 27, 2018): 364–80.

Cultural factors

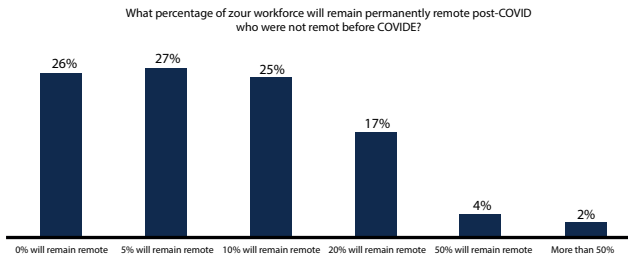
The popularity of digital nomads also brings cultural implications of associated self-actualization and autonomy embedded in lifestyles of people from a younger generation who have been exposed to and familiar with digital work when they start their careers. While the life with frequent travel offer digital nomads immersive cultural experiences across regions and can be understood as a manifesto of their exceptional freedom⁴, the ability to conduct work in desirable environments and establish flexible working schedule amplifies the perception of self-actualization and autonomy.

On the other hand, the power of these cultural incentives does not necessarily sustain the digital nomad lifestyle in long terms. Digital nomads sometimes suffer psychological frustration, social isolation, and financial crisis after conducting nomadic lifestyle for a certain period of time. When these negative concerns overwhelm the incentives of being free, some decide to temporarily quit their nomadism. Some digital nomads also maintain permanent residences in certain places which allow them to quit and restart their digital nomad lifestyle in flexible manners. The temporary nature of digital nomad lifestyle and flexibility of switching between nomad and non-nomad based on individual circumstances bring persistent obstacles for researchers to determine the total number of digital nomads in the world or in a place.

Post pandemic

As the world went into lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, people worldwide started to experience a “new normal.” This “new normal” has normalized remote-working and resulted in the mainstream adoption of technologies to support virtual collaboration, communication, and work from a distance. While the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the restriction of mobility as borders were closed, airlines grounded, and daily commutes limited, visions of a potential future of ‘remote-life’ started to take shape.

As professionals (and employers) around the world start to realize that they are no longer physically secured to their desks, offices, or work stations, they may now start to consider a future where they are remote-working from “exotic” locations, often with lower costs of living instead of working from “home.”



74% of Companies Plan to Permanently Shift to More Remote Work Post COVID-19

Companies around the world have extended their remote-working policies, implemented due to COVID, through 2021 and beyond, and are starting to consider a broader shift towards remote workforce models as a means for reducing overhead costs while supporting employee productivity and wellbeing.

31. Image source: Gartner (April 2020)

Chapter 2

Lifestyle study

The Great Good Place

Oldenburg's place division.

While collecting academic papers on the discussion of digital nomads, I found that almost all of them chose to use Oldenburg's theory of the third space to illustrate that the third space is the appropriate place to accommodate digital nomads' digitalized lifestyle. According to urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg, people need three types of places to feel fulfilled “ *Home- Private relief, Work - Economic engagement and Leisure- social integration.* ” ³³ The analysis of this paper's investigation into the lifestyles of digital nomads will also be based on Oldenburg's division of space. This is because, before DNs travel to a new location, their initial questions, as “*The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces: Home, Work, and Sociable Places for Digital Nomads*” in their findings articulated, tended to focus on where they would live, where they would produce, and where they would meet people. Although the DNs did not directly cite Oldenburg's characteristics, the DNs' primary needs could easily be mapped to the first, second, or third place, or somewhere in between.

Oldenburg characterized the home as a private space for individuals and their families, the workplace as where people spend significant time for generating economic resources or engaging with other responsibilities, and the third place as where people relax outside of their homes, interacting with old acquaintances and new as social equals. Pubs, cafés, and recreation centers are referred to as third places, which provide opportunities for people to feel a sense of belonging to a community. However, this is not meant to create a rigid categorization, as one's third place could be another's work place. This is particularly the case of digital nomad.

33. Lee, Ahreum, et al. “*The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces: Home, Work, and Sociable Places for Digital Nomads.*” *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 3.CSCW (2019): 1-23.a

*“ Before industrialization, the first and second places were one. Industrialization separated the place of work from the place of residence, removing productive work from the home and making it remote in distance, morality, and spirit from family life. What we now call the third place existed long before this separation, and so our term is a concession to the sweeping effects of the Industrial Revolution and its division of life into private and public spheres. ”*³⁴

For Oldenburg, these three places need to be distinguished in their order of precedence, as the hierarchy of the three places corresponds to the degree of personal dependence on them. We need a home even though we may not work, and most of us need to work rather than meet up with friends and neighbors. This ranking also holds true in terms of the demands on the individual's time. Typically, individuals spend more time at home than at work, and more time at work than in third place. The ranking is appropriate in terms of importance, in terms of demands on time and loyalty, in terms of space allocated and in terms of social recognition.

In this thesis, the analysis order of the research about lifestyle of digital nomads will also follow the ranking, first place - housing need, second place - working need, third place - socializing need.

34. P41, Oldenburg, Ray. *The great good place: Cafés, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get you through the day.* P 41 Paragon House Publishers, 1989.

35. Image: Digital nomad packing list.

36. Image: Remote working from coffeehouse.

37. Image: A music performance at PodShare's downtown Los Angeles location.













Chapter 2 Lifestyle study

First place: Housing

Housing

For Oldenburg, the first place is the home—the most important place of all. We need a home even though we may not work, and most of us need to work more than we need to gather with our friends and neighbors. The ranking holds, also, with respect to the demands upon the individual's time. Typically, the individual spends more time at home than at work and more at work than in a third place.

The notion of domesticity or home did not exist before humans began to live in settlement. Hunter gatherers have a strong sense of belonging to a place, but they do not limit or enclose a space for themselves. The nomadic space is a space without limits. Not because it is infinite, since each tribe has a more or less well-defined nomadic area, but because within this area there are no borders, no barriers that define separate zones.

“The first place is the home—the most important place of all. It is the first regular and predictable environment of the growing child and the one that will have greater effect upon his or her development. It will harbour individuals long before the workplace is interested in them and well after the world of work casts them aside.”³⁸

Hunter gatherers camp at where they believe they belong to. As they do not have the notion of domesticity, for them the space in the tent is their family life. Coincidentally, living in a society with hyper-mobile rhythm, has transformed the group of people who frequently work remotely from a sedentary statu to a transient one. Where is home for them?

“Is it the address on which the mortgage is paid for the time being? Or is it where our books/CDs/stamp collections are kept? Or is it simply the place where we spend more time than any where else?”³⁹

In this study, the home for digital nomad, is where they resident. Studying the housing situation of digital nomads,

38. P41. Oldenburg, Ray. *The great good place: Cafés, coffee shops, community a, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get you through the day.* P 41Paragon House Publishers, 1989.

39. P196-197, Makimoto, Tsugio, and Manners, David. *Digital Nomad.* New York: Wiley, 1997. Print.

and the other living needs associated with it, will help to understand whether the existing accommodation options is providing an effective accommodation solution to welcome the future trend of transient dwellers.

40. Image: Staying cool in the pod on this HOT pre-summer day — with Ang Elie.



↑7 FLORIN

NE

ANGELIE 8 ↓



Sleeping

Most experienced nomads avoid staying in hostels.

Where to sleep is definitely the first question digital nomads need to consider before their departure. In *“The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces: Home, Work, and Sociable Places for Digital Nomads”*, the author has reviewed 137 posts (and associated 2388 comments) about what types of location-specific information do digital nomads ask each other when searching for new destinations on the Reddit forum. And among these 137 questions about the first landing place, 47% of these questions were about how to choose or find an accommodation. The remaining 53% were about working place. The format of the question was similar to:

“Any digital nomad house shares in NY for April 2020?”⁴¹

“My biggest question for ya...for longer stays at each location (about a month) what do you do for lodging (Rent a room, hostel, sleep in your car)?”⁴²

“It seems that most experienced nomads avoid staying in hostels. Why is this?”⁴³

The format of the question always include the location, the staying time and the type of dwelling. It reveals that for digital nomads with a short travelling schedule of less than one month, home at a transient location can reduce radically to a single sleeping area - a bed. The comments suggest place like hostel, Airbnb or hotel for short-term travel. For those who's staying time is up to one year, even longer, the requirements for sleeping space are more specific. The comments suggest to rent an apartment or go to a co-living space.

Agnieszka :*“Minimum to have your own room, that’s a must. Personal space is important. But, what I want the most is to have a comfortable table to work in my room. As for sleeping, a bed is enough, I may complain about the quality of the bed, it’s just complains. I do not have much stuff with me, so I do not really need a big space,*

41. Question asked on Reddit by u/[deleted] on 2017 with 20 comments

42. Question asked on Female Digital Nomads forum (Facebook group with 66.1k members) by Krystal Glover on 29 July 2019 with 69 comments

43. Question asked on Digital Nomads Forum by Kent Westlund (Facebook group with 14.1k members) on 07 Nov 2019 with 61 comments

but definitely a personal space.”

Julien :*“I do not go to. Hostel. It is not an ideal base camp for me. I prefer to share an apartment with other digital nomad. But I need my own sleeping room, and I want to have a dark space for sleeping. As for the rest, I do have much requirements maybe good internet connection.”*

Jarod :*“When I arrived at a new place, I usually stay in a hostel for several weeks, because, hostel has good location, near to the city center. It is important that my living place has an easy walkability to the place I want to visit. Hostel is a transient place for me, once I find a good apartment, I will move out. What I like about renting an own apartment is mostly the high privacy and low rental comparing to a hotel room.”*

Lorenz :*“When I firstly started my nomadic life, I usually stay in hostel, I do not mind to share the sleeping space, it is not a problem for me. It is a good place to meet people. But now I have a family, it is complicated to find a place to stay. ”*

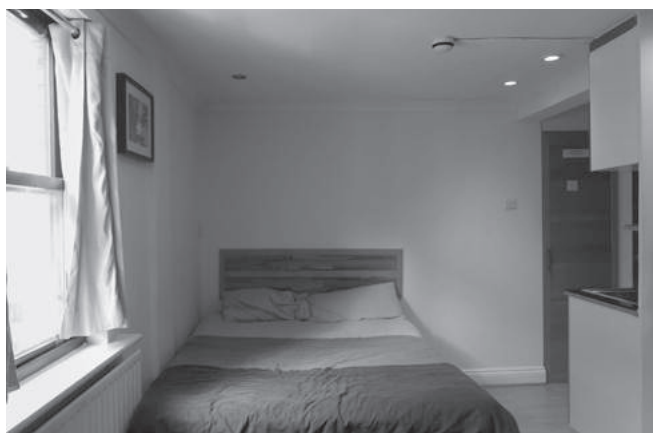
Xun :*“I usually go to a hotel, or rent an apartment. Because personal space is important for me. I’m too old to live in a dorm. Hahah”*

All of the 5 participants that I interviewed had a history of digital nomadism for more than 3 years. They all said that they had tried every sleeping option available on the market, include hostel. But in the end, they all now prefer to settle for a place with an isolated sleeping space. For digital nomads, a place to sleep is usually enough for a bed. Because beds are also media platforms, zooming, broadcasting, face timing. Therefore hostel is the usually the first option DNs attempt to stay, not just because of the price advantage, but also its fantastic location and its wide range of social opportunities. Yet, the issue of sleeping in a dorm, is mainly related to the synchronisation to the other dwellers’ living schedule and habits.

“You’re at the whim of other people, and their own ideas of when it’s a good time to turn the light on, open or close windows or just play a drunken game of bunkbed pinball after a heavy night out. “⁴⁴



45. Image: Sofar Sounds DTLA & Hollywood, at PodShare.



46. Image: Airbnb, Entire Studio with bathroom, kitchenette and washing machine, a Road, London, E1, £74 per night

*"Don't mind sharing a room in general, but I don't really like party crowd around me. Drunken, loud people either in the lobby or coming home at 4 am singing and dancing is nothing I really need. If it is about shared places, I prefer crashpads to hostels if I have the choice, because you meet more reasonable people there. It can be quite refreshing not to always live in your "Hilton hotel room bubble", but I could not always live in hostels or crashpads."*⁴⁷

The hostel, as an early place of residence to receive the influx of digital nomads, is now losing his competitiveness in the market of housing options. Increasingly, digital nomads are using hostels as a stepping stone, or transitional residence. Even though hostels have advantages over independent rentals or Airbnb in terms of location, price and flexibility, people who are uncomfortable with distractions prefer more intimate housings option as a long-term base for transient stays.

Even renting an apartment is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Firstly it is not easy to find a renting dwelling with transient contract to fit DN's flexibility of staying time. Secondly, the furnishing in the housing of temporary dwellers is whether designed for touristic use or poor equipped to fit digital nomad use.

Agnieszka said : "It is weird that the household did not pay attention on the table. It is not easy to find a good table wether for eating or working in all the Airbnb I have lived. It seems well equipped for short visit, but for long term, it does work."

Julien said : "I usually prefer to rent an apartment. But, I always need to fulfil the empty room. Once I quit the place, I will nee to sale the furniture or give them away. "

44. Neil Bennion (2017). '11 Ways the Digital Nomad Lifestyle Affects Your Sleep – And What To Do About'

47. Reply of the post "It seems that most experienced nomads avoid staying in hostels." on Digital Nomad Forum of Facebook.

Finally, a strong resistance of loneliness is need while living in an isolated apartment. Housings found on their own by digital nomad are often scattered around the city. They become islands in the city. The only way to keep them connected to the digital nomad communities is through forums on the virtual space. Those who have their own separate apartments usually get used to working directly under a uniform roof.

The only opportunity left for them to get out of the house is to do shopping, visit the surrounding attractions, practice a favorite activity such as surfing, hiking or skiing said Nash⁴⁸. However, most digital nomads report that, for the most part, they are like those who work remotely from home, often have very little time left to go out and have fun. This leads to a loss of opportunities to connect with the outside world.

Choosing the sleeping place means choosing a way of working and socializing. Sleeping styles usually fall into two main categories, individual sleeping space and shared sleeping spaces. Each has its strengths and weaknesses as state above. How to provide the most affordable and practical housing solution for the DNs is the topic that this chapter wants to explore. To combine the great collective social space that hostel holds with the maximum flexible privacy of individual apartment into a minimum space consuming architecture may be the answer to the question.

48. Caleece Nash said also : 'since digital nomads choose their lifestyle, most of them opt for tropical areas or places that are known to be ideal areas for hobbies like surfing, hiking, backpacking, or skiing. From nomads forums, we observed some digital nomads embark seasonal travel styles that more closely resemble the true traditional nomadism.'

49. Image: Working from bed at Pod-Share.

50. Image: With one large communal kitchen for the entire building, there's almost always someone else to talk to while cooking if you want to be social. source Ben Mack / Insider







Eating

The joy of hardly cooking.

Kitchen play an important role in how people define domesticity, domestic relationships, and even community at large. As said Karel Teige⁵¹:

“Past solution of the minimum dwelling always took as their point of departure the family household with a kitchen: a kitchen plus some undersized rooms, or, in other words, reunited version of the bourgeois dwelling.”

For him kitchen is nowadays becoming a superfluous, a burden, and thus a useless appendage in a worker’s appartement. This coincides with the digital nomad lifestyle.

Agnieszka: *“I do not like to cook by myself. But my husband does. The main issue is, we usually rent an apartment with kitch, however we have to buy all the kitchen utensils ourselves, including pots, pans, bowls, cutlery etc.... When we checked out, we were very frustrated with what to do with all these things. Not only the kitchen, but also other items. That’s what I like about co-working space is, they provide food service bring to the workstation.”*

Julien: *“I used to live a while in Bali, the food there are great and cheap. So I do not really use the kitchen in my apartment. I eat out or with delivery. When I use the kitchen is only for light cuisine.”*

Jarod: *“I love to cook my self, and go to local market to buy local food. I do not like the shared kitchen space, because, people do not take care of it.”*

Lorenz: *“I do not cook so much, because it is difficult to cook for one portion. When I work, I prefer to order delivery. But I tried shared kitchen, I liked it. It is an opportunity to socialize with others. I do not buy much things when travelling, because I known it will be difficult to carry them with me.”*

Xun: *“I do not cook. Kitchen for me is not necessary.”*

51. Teige, Karel. *The minimum dwelling*. MIT press, 2002.

52. Image: *The Joy of (Hardly) Cooking*, by Giang Cao

THE JOY OF (HARDLY) COOKING



CO-OP MODE!!



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"When you are staying somewhere medium term, say 1-6 months, what you do about cooking? [...]. While over 6 months you aren't going to mind stocking a kitchen so much. But, for that medium term period, it feels like a waste to spend too much on pantry supplies and equipment but too long to get by on basics."

*Kathrynmoore from nomadlist.*⁵³

For digital nomads who love to cook, it can be a chore to re-equip an entire kitchen every time when they move to a new location. For others who don't use the kitchen frequently, but have rent a flat with a kitchen, the added value of the kitchen in the rent seems to be a bad deal. How to integrate resources so that temporary dwellers who need the kitchen can enjoy cooking, while cutting down on the rent for those who do not need the kitchen function, is a question that needs to be considered when designing housing for digital nomads. Not only the cooking space can be needs to be integrated, but cooking skills, ingredients and utensils can all be integrated.

Comments of post *"What do you do about cooking whilst traveling?"* on NomadList have caught my attention

*"I'm a trained chef, so happy to cook for everybody if we're ever in the same place! In some cities, it makes sense to eat out because food is cheap, tasty and plentiful. But in other cities, you can save a lot of money if you cook for yourself."*⁵⁴

*"Then cook most of my meals by cooking big portions and reheating for a couple of days."*⁵⁵

The community of digital nomads includes people from all over the world and all professions and skills. Beside their digital working skill, other skills can also carry forward to make it a way for socializing. People with chef skills, can offer services to a wider range of people. Moreover, digital nomads' location independence obliges them to rely extensively on work-on-demand online platforms. Most participants are not necessarily able to engage in local work.⁵⁶ The integrated kitchen space can not only fusion fragmentary kitchen resources, but can also become a place offers job opportunities.

53. Post by kathrynmoore on nomadlist, 2016, with 26 comments

54. Repl by lia9255 in 2016

55. Reply by aertmann in 2016

56. Sutherland, Will, and Mohammad Hossein Jarrahi. "The gig economy and information infrastructure: The case of the digital nomad community." *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 1.CSCW (2017): 1-24.

The nomadic nature of constant move lifestyle and high dependency of remote gig economy express the living and working statu of digital nomad. Coincidentally, the rise of capital and the consequent mobility and precocity of work and life runs parallel to the development of the minimum dwelling.

Karel Teige in his book *The Minimum Dwelling*, proposed a collective dwelling in which every adult would be provided with a ‘minimal but adequate, independent, habitable room’, while all domestic services such as housekeeping, cooking and childcare would be collectivized.

*“ For Teige, the minimum dwelling is not an apartment but a room which is fully supported by shared domestic facilities. His idea of collective dwelling was thus a radical version of these precedents, which he saw as instrumental in changing the habits of dwelling towards an egalitarian society freed from the burdens of family living, domestic labour and private property. ”*⁵⁸

In response to the unequal frequency of kitchens utilisation by digital nomads in existing residential spaces, the kitchen can be extracted from the residential space and assembled into a communal space that not only improves space utilisation, but also provides a social space and even more work opportunities for the isolated digital nomads. By analogy with living spaces of the same nature, such as living and dining rooms can also extracted from the current typology to form a larger communal space.

57. Image: Helpful reminders at OpenDoor's Canopy location. Photo courtesy of Jay Standish/OpenDoor.

58. Tattara, Martino, Pier Vittorio Aureli, and Marson Korbi. "Loveless: a history of the minimum dwelling." (2018): 245-255.

59. Image: Collective laundry at the Collective Canary Wharf.







Clothing

What about sharing the wardrobe

Makimoto and Manners point out in their book “Digital nomad”, that digital nomads of millennials will inherit the life fait from their ancestor, which include declines in materialism and nationalism, diminishing power for governments, increasing power for corporations, improvements in human relations, an easing of urban pressures.

“One of the differentiating characteristics between settles and nomads is the nomad’s disdain for possessions. The nomad Bedouin see too many possessions as a curse. The more of them, the more they weigh you down.”⁶⁰

They predict in the year of 1997 that for the generation of the 21st century, borrowing or renting will become a part of our daily lifestyle. People who spend lifetime paying off mortgages to acquire property, or routinely borrow at outrageous rates of interest to buy household appliances and furnitures will get less attractive to the obsession of ownership.

This is truly happening now. The sharing economy is beginning to take on an increasingly important role in everyday life, like Uber, Airbnb and PubliBike. This type of economic system that involves individuals renting out or sharing their personal property including their homes and cars are permeating into our lives.

In the contemporary society, digital nomads are the pioneers of minimise the procession of materials due to their frequency of travel. External factors prevent them from having too many belongings with them. But, at the same time, they realize that the most basic supplies are sufficient for their travelling life. All the five interviewees expressed that, they all faced at least once, the issue of giving up processions.

60. P196, Makimoto, Tsugio, and David Manners. *Digital nomad*. Wiley, 1997.

Agnieszka: “ I prefer to go to some tropical destinations. Besides its attractive warm weather, I do not need to carry too many clothes for cold weather. Be aware that winter clothes take more spaces and are way more heavy than summer clothes.”

Julien: “I took over some of the homes left by previous digital nomads. This saved me from spending any more money on them. When I left, I passed them on to other digital nomads.”

Lorenz: “If there are some thing that I should take with me, is maybe my laptop, and my guitar. But the rest of thing, I can share with others. To share the wardrobe would be nice. So I don't need to fit the 4 seasons clothes into one luggages.”

In conversations with the interviewees, I found that the items that seemed to take up the most volume in their backpacks was usually clothing. Blogs and forums posts with titles like “*The ultimate packing list for digital nomad* ” are usually one of the most popular topics among others. People are competing with each other to put the most items in their luggage. The fear of the dilemma of being ill-prepared forces them to explore the best packing options.

Easing the burden of their backpacks and concerns about uncertainty of traveling by maximizing the sharing variety of items is just one aspect of shared life. As mentioned repeatedly in the interviews, what is most confusing for digital nomads is the need to buy a lot of basic necessities when they arrive in a new place and the need to think about how to distribute them when they about leaving. It goes on and on.

Jack Self ⁶¹ with Finn Williams and Shumi Bose have proposed a living unit for hours, where the principle is to show a lifestyle where “*Own Nothing, Share Everything*”. They imagine a new type of domesticity altogether – one not carved out from within the existing space of the home, but added to it. The focus has been on how sharing might provide a resident with amenities they could not afford by themselves.

61. Jack Self is an architect and writer. He curated the British Pavilion with Finn Williams and Shumi Bose. *Home Economics* was commissioned by the British Council.

“To own an object or a space for a few hours is to possess it when you need it and to relinquish it when you don’t.”⁶²

From an ecological dimension, Jack Self point out that if we pool our resources together we can have a better quality of life by dramatically reducing our material requirements. He argued that as individuals, we could not afford a house with a large room, but if we pooled our money with other like-minded people, we could afford to buy it collectively and then own it together. For him, the same idea applies to even the most mundane household items. He felt that if one hoover was enough to do all the work, there was no need to own one hoover for each flat. It would be cheaper, consume fewer resources and be just as efficient if we shared the cost. If we are willing to share, we can have more.

62. Jack Self, Common Stock: Sharing as Luxury.

64. Image: Digital Nomad Packing List. The ultimate packing list for traveling the world as a digital nomad with a backpack. We cover it all: men's and women's focused items from clothes to tech to toiletries and more.

63. Image: Budget: Water bottles & a stick Image







Packaging

All in 40L / 23 KG.

For nomads, the question of how to maximise luggage space is frequently raised over the forum discussions. The luggage size is often limited up to a volume of 40 liters and a weight of 23 kilograms according to the transport standards. It is as if the ancient nomads had humped their entire home on the back of a camel. The camel's carrying capacity limits the amount of goods that can be transported. How to cleverly fit all the items that need to be carried into the luggage and ensure the load is not exceeded is a must for contemporary nomads. Their ancestors, who use building structures as transport structures to load goods, is also a skill that all nomads should learn.

"The elements are assembled into a house form, struck, and reassembled into a saddle-little-palanquin in which women ride and which women unload and reassemble. The same elements are collected, processed, and manufactured by women.(...)Transport technology is a structural challenge to ingenuity and creativity as precisely as building technology is. The same problems must be addressed when transporting a load or enclosing a space: balance, the distribution of forces(i.e. wright or wind), movement, uplift, rigidity. The same limited natural resources are available to the transportation engineer and the building designer: vegetal materials, grasses, leather, and fabrics. " ⁶⁵

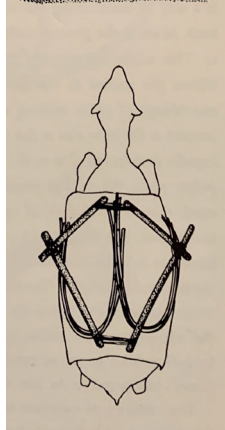
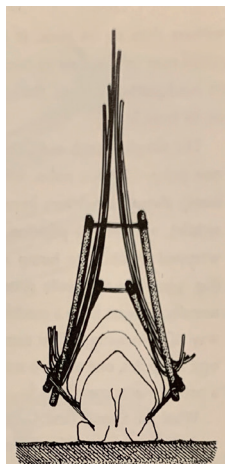
There are a variety of different kinds of tents and structures used by nomads, all very different, but most of them share very similar traits, especially among the African nomads. A key feature is the dual usage of the building components that serve not only as house but also as the interface of transportation. The mats, screens, structural poles and armature ribs that constitute the tent are reassembled and transformed into the palanquins that the women and children ride in. Their home is folded into their luggage, they carry the home with them. As for today, digital nomads' home reduce to the size of a suitcase or a backpack. They package carefully their personal stuffs in the suitcase space.

65. P46, Prussin, Labelle. "African nomadic architecture: Space, place, and gender." (1995).

66. Image left: Linear movement, gravity, and balance establish the horizontal and vertical axes on a camel.

67. Image right up: A Somali tent at Kismayo, Somalia, 1888.

68. Image right down: The transformation of a Gabra tent (in the background) into its transportable configuration.



*Julien Gueniat “ Voyager avec un sac à dos de 40 litres a plusieurs avantages:
Il vous empêche d’acheter des choses inutiles (et vous incite à acheter de la qualité)
Il vous économise les frais d’un bagage en soute.
Il vous permet de voyager en scooter ”*⁷⁰

The size of carry-on luggage on major airlines is controlled between 55x40x25 and 55x35x20, i.e. between 55L and 38.5L. According to Julien Gueniat, 40L seems to be an ideal size for carry-on luggage. It is his way to control the number of carry-on items by limited within physical space of 40L. He can then make sure that the luggage is not overloaded, moreover it also complies with transport standards and economically reduces the price of excess checked baggage. As for 23 kg is the upper limit for checked baggage in the economy cabin. It leaves travellers having to maximise the size of the rectangular case offered on the market and fit 23kg inside. Travellers have to carefully select the most important carry-on items for their trip.

*“ Further, the same gender-discrete skills involved in one design solution are applied to the other; and in deed, what initially started me on this particular journey and now impels this train of exploratory thought-in many instances, such as among the Gabra, Rendille, and the Somalis, armature tents are transformed, volumetrically and spatially, from transportation systems into building system, The dismantled, packaged-for-moving, camel-loaded housing components stand adjacent to or are set against a backdrop of reassembled houses beyond. Structural ties, behavioral and social ties, conceptual and emotional ties link the transport and the building systems. ”*⁷¹

If the domestic space and the transport space of African nomads can be subtly transposed to each other, can the transport space that digital nomad carried translate hypothetically into a reference for the construction of their living unit.

69. Julien G. (2019) *Nomade Digital* (en 2019): Douce utopie?, bilan.ch, 28 Mai.

70. P49 Prussin, Labelle. “African nomadic architecture: Space, place, and gender.” (1995).



71. Image: Easyjet Bagage Cabine Et Sac A Main.

72. Image: Carriers are constantly changing the “maximum” size values for carry-on, and while enforcement is often lax for these requirements—you definitely don’t need the hassle of being told: “Sorry, that’s not coming on the plane,” at check-in, either. by Rikke Friis Dam



A suitcase is a form of luggage. A suitcase has the form of a box. It is rectangular-shaped bag with rounded square corners.

The outer shell is made by either metal, hard plastic or made of cloth, vinyl or leather that more or less retains its shape. When it comes to a soft material to cover the box, like vinyl, leather or cloth a metal frame is needed. It has a carrying handle on the longer side for elevating it from the floor.

A stretching pull rod on the top of the box, allow user to drag and pull. It can be opened by splitting the box in to two parts, or on hinges like a door. Suitcases may lock with keys or a combination.

The interior space has no separation. It is an empty space for user to practice their own way of arrangement. It represents a form of container that puts a distance between the items about to be acquired and those on display. By seeing what he has amassed in his suitcase, digital nomad can preview what he is about to add or delete from his luggage.

Chapter 2 Lifestyle study

Second place: Working

Working

For Oldenburg, the second place is the work setting, which reduces the individual to a single, productive role. It fosters competition and motivates people to rise above their fellow creatures. But it also provides the means to a living, improves the material quality of life, and structures endless hours of time for a majority who could not structure it on their own.

Work from anywhere is the main slogan of digital nomadism. It seems to be an utopian idea before 1970s, however changes in the labour market, fuelled by socioeconomic changes, wireless communication technologies and advancement in transportation systems that made travel affordable⁷³ sparked the new forms of work and employment in the digital economy ⁷⁴. The work we used to get done in the office, extended to anywhere where life lives...in the car, on the train, on the way home, in the kitchen, in the hotel, even on the beach.

Rather than being an extremist form of teleworking, the work and production methods of digital nomads are, well, pioneers.

When the world went into lockdown due to the current epidemic situation, people around the world began to experience a “*new normal*”. This ‘new normal’ normalised remote working. We begin to realize that we are no longer anchored to a desk, office or workstation, we may begin to consider a future of working remotely while traveling. Companies around the world have extended their teleworking policies and are beginning to consider a wider shift to remote (or hybrid) workforce models as a means of reducing overhead costs while supporting employee productivity and wellbeing.

73. Müller, Annika. “The digital nomad: Buzzword or research category?” *Transnational Social Review* 6.3 (2016): 344-348.

74. Valenduc, Gerard. “New forms of work and employment in the digital economy.” *The deconstruction of employment as a political question*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019. 63-80

Several countries, including Estonia, Georgia, Bermuda, and Barbados⁷⁵, have recently introduced a new type of visa that allows longer-term visits for remote-workers. In other words, they are establishing “digital nomad” visas that provide residency (up to 1 year) to location-independent workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have accelerated the digital nomad phenomenon’s normalization first predicted by Makimoto and Manners more than 20 years ago. Therefore, understanding the working routines of remote working pioneers can, help us rethink the future viability of office spaces.

75. Hermann, Inge, and Cody Morris Paris. *“Digital Nomadism: the nexus of remote working and travel mobility.”* (2020): 329-334.

Working

No more co-working!

Since most of the works of digital nomads can be done through their digital devices. They do not need any special working equipment other than a laptop, which is what allows them to be geographically independent and work from anywhere. They have transformed the form of work from “a place to go”, to “a thing to do”.

Co-working space as a physical manifestation point for digital nomads to practice their virtual work is now becoming a place for socialising rather than a working place.

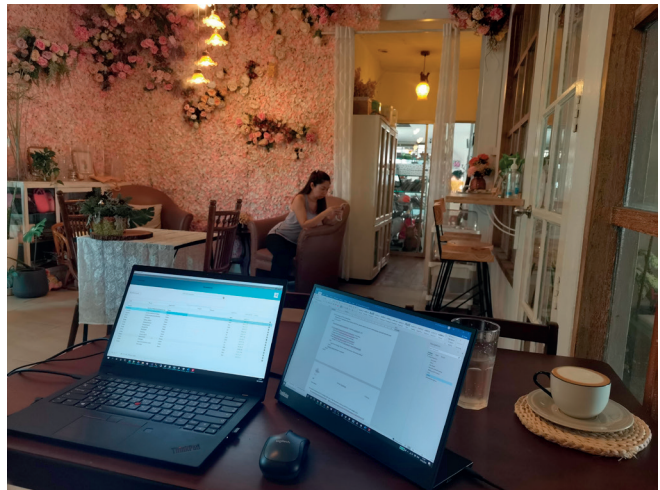
“In the case of performing work processes from home, the flexible worker has minimal possibilities in establishing casual contact with others. As a result, flexible workers often show the tendency to use work environments other than their home, such as coffeehouses or libraries for example.”⁷⁶

Theoretically, thanks to the flexibility of work and the fragmentation of its content allow digital nomads to work from all over the world and at all kinds of places. However, to insure the productivity of work, the ideal working places for digital nomad have limited to place where can provide full-time high speed internet connection and recharging service. Most digital nomads would have chosen either working from bedroom or go to a public place, as said the third place of Oldenburg, such as a coffeehouse or library in the era where the notion of co-working did not exist yet.

In the research *“The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces: Home, Work, and Sociable Places for Digital Nomads”*⁷⁷, it concludes that, 53% of the posts that the author has reviewed were from those seeking information about places to get work done and to improve their productivity, often by finding locations that would be separate from their living accommodations.

76. Orel, Marko. "Coworking environments and digital nomadism: balancing work and leisure whilst on the move." *World Leisure Journal* 61.3 (2019): 215-227.

77. Lee, Ahreum, et al. "The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces: Home, Work, and Sociable Places for Digital Nomads." *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 3.CSCW (2019): 1-23.



78. Image: "The actual daily life of most digital nomads: going to a random coffee shop and actually working (not under the sun, the laptop would not like it)" Posted by u/Ludovitch on 13.12.2020, - r/digitalnomad



79. Image: A scene at coworking and coliving space, Outpost Canggu. Photo courtesy of Outpost

Agnieszka: *"Coffee house is maybe for small tasks, or something I need to send immediately, not the place for working, more a place for socialising. It's too noisy. But I cannot work from bed neither. I usually rent an apartment with a separate room for working, but the furnitures the household provided are really not comfortable. "*

Julien: *" I always used to have my working place and sleeping place in the same building, but not the same room."*

Jarod: *" I will prepare to work at my accommodation place, but a different place from bedroom.*

Lorenz : *" I usually work in my room, I have tried to work in coffee shop and other place. But now I'm getting used to work in my room, because I have find a good routine and balance between work and life, after years of digital nomad experience."*

Xun : *" I don't like to work in my room, I would prefer to have a physical switch between the working and living ambiance. I do not mind to work in coffee shop. It's my personal choice, it is also because my working content allows me to work under a noisy background. But the only issue, will be the meeting call."*

The same question has been answered by the 5 interviewees, it seems they have different preferences, due do personal habits, and job category.

However, one thing identical is, they all prefer to separate the working space from sleeping one while it possible, whether by going to a coffeeshouse, or to rent an apartment with a working room. Marko Orel⁸⁰ explains the possible raison why DNs will trend to go to a public place for working. Their geographical work flexibility leads them to leave their organized workspace, which generates negative feelings towards mobile work, such as a blurring of the boundaries between personal leisure and work life, said Marko Orel.

Without a regular workspace, DNs are often deprived of the ability to socialize with colleagues, it leads to a lack of spontaneous socialisation and the weaving of new relationships⁸¹ highlights that despite one's constant contact with the network, flexible workers do not have real, equal

⁸⁰. Orel Marko, particularly focusing on evolution of work and related challenges of workplace transformation.

⁸¹. Orel, Marko. "Coworking environments and digital nomadism: balancing work and leisure whilst on the move." *World Leisure Journal* 61.3 (2019): 215-227.

direct communication and interactive connections. Here comes to the birth of co-working place, to allow mobile workers like digital nomad, to no longer need to rove through the coffeehouses and libraries, and to have stable social connection.

“The negative aspects of working from home include the lack of necessary infrastructure. Moreover, an individual’s home office cannot replace the organizational office environment due to the insignificant emotional support of other users, the lack of (moderated) integration processes by the site manager; limited interaction between users and non-existent organizational culture whereby users can self-identify and, consequently, form a community with established norms and mutually validated values ”⁸¹

In parallel of more and more people are embracing and practising the digital nomad way of working, the co-working space is starting to proliferate in cities where digital nomads like to set up. This new type of collaboratively oriented workplace has emerged in cities, after the financial crisis of 2007 and 2008. These new collaborative workspaces, often referred to as co-working environments, seem to have popularized and reshaped the use of shared offices as an integral part of the lives of mobile workers. But co-working spaces are not just flexible shared office spaces for creative professionals‘ “working alone together”. Co-working promotes a collective, community-based approach to the organization of cultural and creative work.

The main role is to provide a space for creating a collaborative atmosphere and social relationships. Orel considers co-working spaces as a new form of urban social infrastructure enabling contacts and collaborations between people, ideas and connecting places. The social and collective support is the missing part of working alone in the accommodation, or in a coffeehouse, however, when excess of socializing become an encumbrance of productivity, digital nomad starts to turn off the co-working option.

“ If, on the other hand, I worked from a co-working space. I’d have to get up, get ready to go out, pack a bag full of the things that are already neatly set up on my desk, walk to the co-working space, go through the inevitable

round of greeting people that polite people do when they're in a room with other people, listen to some of those people (whether I want to or not) when they decide to turn that greeting into a conversation, unpack my bag and plug everything in, wait for my computer to boot, make longer trips than turning right to grab coffee during the day, etc. ⁸²

Compared to cafés, co-working spaces made more amenable with the promise of a good work environment, a quiet atmosphere, and nice facilities such as high speed Internet, comfortable chairs, desks, phone booths, meeting rooms,

WHY I USE HEADPHONES



82. Nicholas B. ,(2017), *Why I Never Use Co-Working Spaces as a Digital Nomad & Why You Might Not Want to Either*

83. Image: *Why I use headphones*, by Giang Cao

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personal lockers, and 24/7 access. Moreover it offered a sense of security.

“Co working spaces serve a function. It’s a nice choice where you know internet will be reliable and you can sit for long hours without having to worry about purchasing food/coffee.”.

“I love working from cafés but don’t like the inconvenience of having to sort out my stuff when going to the toilet.”

As said Agnieszka, she escaped from the ordinary office ambiance to embrace a free working organization, however, at a co-working space, she needs to slip a part of her working time to practice social life with other passengers.

“ It is cool to have social support, but when it comes too spontaneously and fragmentarily, it loses its charm.”

Digital nomads object to co-working place, not for its working part, but mostly for its collecting part. They totally admire that co-working space who rescues them from changing coffee shops 3 times a day, provide a very flexible renting system to allow them to be productive and have social connection with the community. Co-working spaces offer architecturally facilitated ways for individuals to switch modes between working and socializing by using different types of spaces. Nevertheless, the main discussion about co-working spaces as the combination of second and third places converged on the question of whether people can actually achieve both goals, productivity and social engagement, at the co-working spaces.

Chapter 2 Lifestyle study

Third place: Socializing

Socializing

Oldenburg characterized the third space as a public space other than the family space and the workplace space, such as bookstores, coffee shops, libraries, parks, etc. In this space, people can leave behind the constraints of family responsibilities and the pressure of competition in the workplace, and can communicate and learn freely according to their real needs, which is the so-called “the great place”.

Julien: *“Quand j’étais salarié, je devais me pointer à une certaine heure au travail. Et même si je n’aimais pas tous mes collègues, le fait d’interagir avec des humains comblait mon besoin social. On allait parfois boire un verre après le travail, on allait manger ensemble et j’en passe. En simple, j’avais des collègues par défaut. Quand on est indépendant (et qu’on travaille en ligne) il est facile de s’isoler.”*⁸⁴

A third place is especially important for digital nomadism. While Digital Nomads look forward to new social relationships with like-minded people, they are also eager to connect with local culture and life, and they are also reluctant to give up their families and old circles of friends. However, as the temporality and constant mobility reflect the digital nomad identity, one of the consequences of frequently changing where one lives and works is a feeling of social isolation. They are usually facing to a situation, where they are just about having time to build a constant relationship, it’s time to move to next place, or the other is about to leave. Digital nomads, outsiders and invaders.

Despite the amount of researches they have done before arriving to the strange city they are about to arrive in, it is always difficult to find the entry gate to go through to the local life of the city. The sadness of being uprooted from home often rises to the surface, when there is no spiritual support to be found in all directions. When they build a family and have children of their own, should they stop their current lifestyle. These are all questions that digital nomads need to think about from time to time.

84. Julien G. (2019) *Nomade Digital* (en 2019): *Douce utopie?*, bilan.ch, 28 Mai.

Does the existing architectural typology provides enough options for digital nomads to socialise with their community? Does it creates enough opportunities for DNs to integrate quickly into the local culture? Does it provide space where DNs can maintain their nomadic ways with their family? Those questions will be studied in the following pages.

With other digital nomad

“Where is the best place to find digital nomads?”

To answer the question, “*Does the existing architectural typology provide enough options for digital nomads to socialise with their community?*”, it is important to firstly find out where do DNs meet each other.

Facebook groups, Twitter, Instagram and online forums are best places to quickly gather and find like-minded digital nomads in virtual space. Although, on the offline mode, it is difficult to track the trace of digital nomads. They are hidden in the crowds of tourists, in the stream of people at terminals and in the streets of the city. There is not a physical space like online forum for digital nomad, where they can unit together to practice a physical social meeting, while they are in the same city. However, with the rise of co-working and co-living spaces, the digital nomad community has become traceable, and it is not a coincidence, that cities with the great growth rate of co-spaces are usually the most popular cities for digital nomads, like Chiang Mai, Prague and Singapore.

Digital nomads have a great flexibility to choose their own travel destinations, but it does not mean that the destinations chosen for temporary relocation are arbitrary⁸⁵. When it comes to the reasons as to why digital nomads have congregated in such locations⁸⁶ suggest that it is likely related to a place’s potential for hobbies such as surfing, hiking and skiing, whilst⁸⁷ maintains that lower costs of living play an important role. Moreover within the study of “The Social Infrastructure of Co-spaces”, they had analysed 137 geographically-focused posts on Reddit forums, and found that DNs often tried to find warm, scenic places that are also affordable and easily accessible. NomadList⁸⁸ is a popular

85. Thompson, Beverly Yuen. “Digital nomads: Employment in the online gig economy.” *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation 1* (2018): 1-26.

86 Nash, Caleece, et al. “Digital nomads beyond the buzzword: Defining digital nomadic work and use of digital technologies.” *International Conference on Information. Springer, Cham*, 2018.

87 Reichenberger, Ina. “Digital Nomads – a Quest for Holistic Freedom in Work and Leisure.” *Annals of Leisure Research 21*, no. 3 (May 27, 2018): 364–80.

88. NomadList is one of the biggest online communities for remote workers around the globe. Originally created by a Dutch entrepreneur looking to connect with the international nomad community.

site for digital nomad to rate the most digital nomad friendly cities around world. It collects over 1,00,000 data points about more than 2,000 cities around the world, from cost of living, to temperature, to safety. The 12 top cities in order of overall ranking are Lisbon, Canggu, Berlin, Tenerife, Mexico City, Cape Town, Playa del Carmen, Chiang Mai, Seoul, Prague, Las Palmas, Singapore.

“Les déplacements chez les nomades ne s’effectuent pas au hasard. Ils répondent aux exigences du milieu(climat, végétation, giblier) et pour les sociétés pastorales, aux nécessités de l’élevage. D’une façon générale, ils prennent la forme d’un cycle annuel, mais qui n’implique pas un itinéraire rigoureux.”⁸⁹

Geographical condition is the first solid factor which had attracted the first vague of digital nomads. The digital nomad lifestyle overlaps with the traditional one in terms of the choice of settlements. Throughout their years of nomadism, they have gradually developed the same landing places, due to geographical factors, preferring to choose places that have been settled by previous nomads. This is how nomads socialize with each other, coming together little by little to form their own groups, with people leaving and joining them all the time. Small groups are eventually gather in larger group to associate a community⁹⁰. Digital nomads know where to find like-minded people in virtual space, they also have the intention to join physically the place where have the most people of the same kind.

In the interview, Jarod and Agnieszka said that they prefer popular cities where digital nomads congregate, which are usually concentrated in tropical areas. They chose these cities because, there are already a large number of digital nomads and infrastructures that suits their lifestyle settled. On arrival, they can quickly find their digital nomad communities. The DNs community in a city is usually scattered all over the city. It can be in any co-working space, or any digital nomad friendly hub. They do not have one base camp for social cohesion. The social activity is knitting with working and living in the co-working and co-living space.

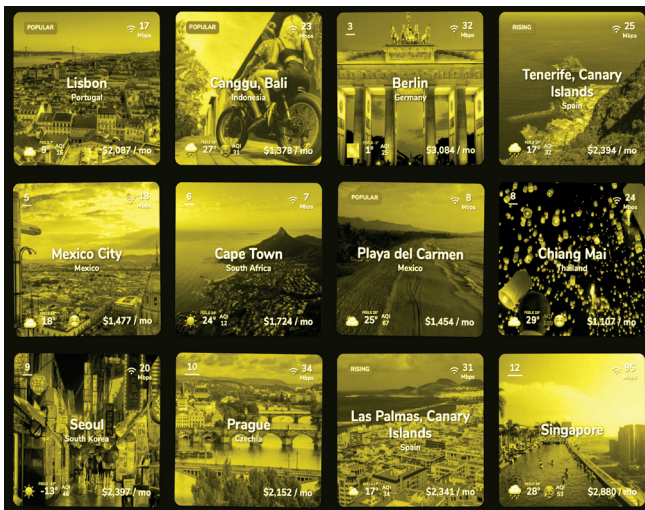
89. Couchaux, Denis. *"Habitats nomades."* (2004). P16

90. Pier Vittorio Aureli first lecture of *Familiar Horror, a critical history of domestic space*

*“ Cohésion sociale: les lieux d’échanges et de rencontres. La nomadisation s’effectue toujours en petits groupes..., Cependant, une fois l’an, les diverses fractions se regroupent pour reconstituer la tribu dans son intégralité. [...] A cette occasion, se déroulent les fêtes, qui sont l’occasion de redistribution des richesses entre les divers membres du group.”*⁸⁹

Day to day work was mostly carried out in a co-working establishment or a cafe where other digital nomads frequented. Schlagwein claims that, *“the emergence of digital-nomad-centric coworking spaces and hubs was described as instrumental for fostering the community and identity of digital nomads”*⁹¹.

In Schlagwein’s (2018) research, specific places of work in Lisbon were also seen to foster a sense of community for digital nomads. Studies of Jessica Beaumont⁹² about digital nomadism in Lisbon show that for many digital nomads co-working places as well as cafes were important to supporting a comfortable work environment as well as creating a sense of community. These certain locations in the city became very integral in their lives and routines as well as collectively important to the continued support of the digital nomad community as a whole.



91. Schlagwein, Daniel. *““Escaping the Rat Race”: Justifications in Digital Nomadism.”* (2018).

92. Beaumont, Jessica. *Digital Nomads and Sense of Place: A Case Study of Lisbon.* 2019.

107. Image: Ranking of the most popular destinations for digital nomads created by NomadList. From NomadList website

With local

It is not easy to meet local, even they are around us.

Local residents have a fixed social circle, a fixed life path and are familiar with their surroundings. Digital nomads are outsiders, intruders and passing travellers. Although they have done a lot of researches before arriving to the strange city, it is always difficult to find an entry gate to get into the local life of the city.

Taking Lisbon as an example. Surveys conducted by Jessica Beaumont(2019) showed that, in many cases respondents admitted to not having any Portuguese friends, but mostly associating with members of the digital nomad community. In the descriptions of Lisbon locals by the digital nomads interviewed, they were often described as looking out from a distance, all indicating a sense of distance from the lives of the locals. It was felt from the descriptions that Digital Nomads spent most of their time observing, from a spectator's point of view, the way locals live, staying quietly in the park, at home or on the street.

For some interviewees, their short stay made it easier for them to choose to befriend participants in the digital nomad community and provide for their social life needs in a quick and efficient way. In these cases, interviewees did mention that they were not integrated into Portuguese society, but they felt that this was the norm for digital nomads in a foreign country. However, some digital nomads openly stated that there was a certain distance between them and the locals, despite their attempts to 'immerse' themselves in the local culture. This finding coincides with the frequent topics and responses in digital forums, about socializing. There were many posts on Reddit, in which DNs shared their

loneliness as it relates to their DN experience and asked for advice about places to meet people.

“Where do you find things going on / places to meet people?”

These posts frequently included specifics about the types of people they wanted to meet, such as local people or like-minded people (e.g., other digital nomads, remote workers, foreigners, expats, entrepreneurs, or start-ups). Recommendations included physical places such as pubs, cafés, and co-working spaces, or online channels such as [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) or [couchsurfing.com](https://www.couchsurfing.com) for digital nomads that regularly update meet-up events. Rarely there are recommendations for where to meet locals. It is not that digital nomads have no intention of integrating into local life, but that they cannot find an entry gate.

Agnieszka : *“I would like to meet locals, I’m more often an observer.”*

Jarod : *“I would like to meet locals, but usually language barrier stops my steps.”*

Xun : *“I don’t know how to get into them, so I usually stay at the stage of being an observer. “*

Here are the responses of the respondents from Lisbon on how do they feel about integrating into the local culture⁹².

“I think its a cultural thing actually. I really believe that their culture is like... they’re closer in terms of families, but in terms of general human connection there’s a shyness or something. A closed-off-ness. It’s difficult.”

Polly, US

“I also have a few local friends and then they really took me to like all the local spots and showed me you know, all the spaces foreigners don’t go to, and helped me to integrate into those communities. I also have the Portuguese roommates too which also helped. It takes a lot of work to win them over as like, a friend in their community. ”.

Jack, US

“Even if I can speak good Portuguese, you always have this difference. Even if you make the efforts to be one of

92. Beaumont, Jessica. *Digital Nomads and Sense of Place: A Case Study of Lisbon*. 2019.

the girls, to be respectful, to do as best to, to get inside their daily life, you will always be the foreigner...Language has helped a lot, but its not enough here."

Zara, Belgium

It was clear from the interviews that it was not that the digital nomads had no intention of integrating into local life. Rather, it is the case that, after attempts, they often end up with no success. The short-lived integration becomes only an experience. And some digital nomads do not even find a coherent communion site.

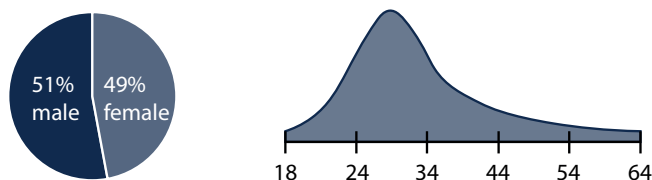
Denise Scott Brown⁹³ once said, *"Architecture can not force people to meet; it can only plan points of intersection, clear away obstacles, and make the places where they meet practical and attractive."* Although the end result can not be grasped, architecture can potentially provide a physical platform for digital nomad to live their transient life by intersecting with local sedentary.

93. Denise Scott Brown, architect, planner, writer, educator.

With my family

If my kid could play with other digital nomads' children...?

It seems digital nomad is a lifestyle for young and single people. Digital nomadism is just a period of time in life time. No one knows if it will be forever. There are no survey shown how many digital nomads will back to a sedentary life after they built a family and had a child, but posts on the digital forum are asking about tips for family nomadism. Specifically, these topics include, “*How to educate the child while travelling.*”, “*Is long-term of nomadism will have impacts on child psychological development.*” It shows people’s concerns about this nearly future.



Demographic info-graphic of digital nomad by The Digital Nomad Survival Guide

The diagram shown that most digital nomad were in the 25-34 range, although approximately 20% of those surveyed were in the 35-44 age bracket. They are all about age to build a family, and soon or later facing to chose whether stop their lifestyle or adventure with their family.

Lorenz has started his digital nomad life at the year of 2008. He claimed himself maybe one of the earliest digital nomad generation. Now he has built a family and keep travelling and working with his family including his 2-year-old child. He admits that, “ Things are different while travelling with child.” The whole schedule goes much more slower than before. They need more space for accommodation, and more luggages.

94. Image: The Digital Nomad Survival Guide conducted a survey to help quantify the demographics, spending habits, and locations of digital nomads. The survey respondents are a diverse group of people: 31 different nationalities, new and experienced nomads alike, across a wide range of professions.

Spending more time with family is one of the biggest advantage of remote work. Digital nomads, as a group of remote work practicer, also want to enjoy traveling with their families. Taking the process of childcare into account in the planning of future buildings is essential

“Children could become the forerunners of a generation which has no sense of ‘home’. Home for them could simply be Planet Earth - a platform for work and leisure whiteout boundaries.”

Makimoto and Manners believe, the children of the first generation of digital nomad, will continue to live a life they were born.



95. Four-year-old Sofia jumps about in her room while her mother works in her home office during the COVID-19 lockdown in Domodedovo, Russia.

Chapter 3

Synthesis and case study

Fusion of housing, working and socializing

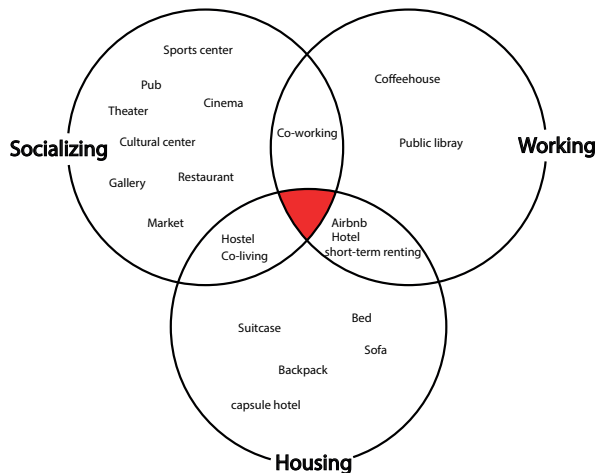
Through the previous analysis of digital nomads' living habits, working style and social scope, I found that digital nomad lifestyle is a intertwined state of living, working and socializing. It is now not surprising that, the rise of co-working and co-living spaces, as well as various types of "co-spaces"—has helped facilitate a parallel expansion of the digital nomad lifestyle.

By using Oldenburg's framework of a first (house), second (work), and third (social) place as an analytical lens to investigate how digital nomads understand the affordance of these different types of spaces. I noted that the main motivation of DNs to go to hostel is to meet people and engage in communities to run away from self-isolation. However, they do not only lean toward the social needs to utilise co-working because of their professional development needs. Most DNs do not want to pay extra money to go to co-working space, where social life and professional needs are Achieved, while they can accomplish their work at living spaces. As for the solution where working and living activities are merged in one room, it isolates them from social connections. It is important to come up with an architectural solution to hybridize the three activities for DNs.

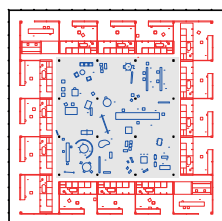
The previous studies of DNs' lifestyle told me that places are evaluated (positively or negatively) relatively to one primary characteristic: either they provide a clear separation between the social and professional space or they provide an occasion to merge these aspects together. Digital nomads that favour the first type of place tend to focus on searching for factors that they feel will promote their own work productivity, whereas DNs that favour the second type of place tend to focus on factors that they feel will allow them to balance their work and social lives. So that, an hybrid architectural

for DNs should maintain firstly, an absolute privacy for housing and working. Secondly, it should provide a sociable place for whether DNs' communities or the locals. Besides these two aspects of spaces divisions, a third factor will promote digital nomadism living condition is the shared living infrastructure.

Denise Scott Brown once said: *"Architecture can't force people to connect; it can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers, and make the meeting places useful and attractive."* Although the end result can not be grasped, architecture can potentially provide a physical platform for people to meet and socialize.

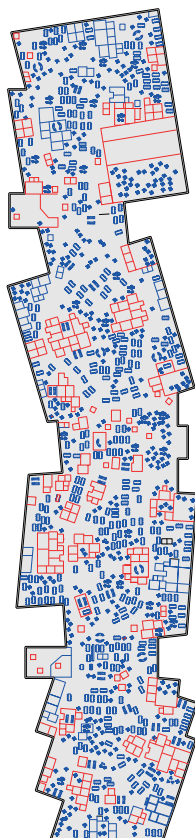


- Offline space
- Open forum
- Shared domesticity



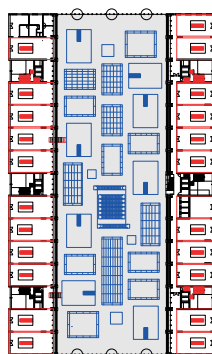
Communal Villa

Housing + Working



Facebook headquarter

Working + Socializing



Market Hall

Housing + Socializing

Lifestyle of digital nomads is closely tied to virtual connection and largely altered by the use of the Internet. For example, the immediacy, the ability to go online and offline anytime and anywhere. Secondly, the openness and interactivity, which is open to the whole society without any threshold. There is also its sharing nature, which allows information to be transmitted more equally and resources to be distributed more rationally. These three characteristics of the Internet have had a profound impact on the lifestyles of DNs. On the one hand, they desire diverse social activities, but at the same time, they want to maintain the independence of such social choices and are eager for independent sleeping and working spaces.

They have more social space and opportunities online than they actually do, and the real social channels do not seem to be so beneficial as, say, on social networks. Second, the perennial benefit of sharing information on the Internet has made them more and more accepting of sharing as a way of life.

How to take a virtual lifestyle and project it into the actual building is the next topic to be explored.

Offline space

Connect and disconnect from the virtual world is just one little click. In the physical world, it should happen as simple as in the virtual one. Absolutely independent living and working space is essential. It is a right for every transient person to enjoy the pleasure of being easily connected and disconnected.

It is a place against ownership. It is an affordable place. Infinite social outreach only leads to confusing and ineffective socializing or overwhelming social fears. This is a place to escape the false prosperity of architectural socializing. An escape from the domination of being hit on or being hit on anywhere, anytime. Such offline spaces are suitable for sleeping units and working units.

“ You feel liberated in your totem: you don’t need to buy furniture, sign up for utilities or get internet installed. It’s all as easy as booking a room. Most of all, there is no housework - cleaning, laundry and all the other domestic chores are included in your rent. This home makes perpetual labour history.”⁹⁶

Sleeping units: A house without housework

This is a type of dwelling used to receive one occupant for a limited period of time. Dogma designed this home as an alternative to the predominantly nuclear family flats in cosmopolitan cities like London. As the nuclear family flat dominates the housing market in large cities such as London, it is both unaffordable and undesirable for single and short-term tenants. For these reasons Dogma proposes a type of living space that does not require investment and maintenance. The type has a great deal of flexibility.

“It can be adapted to sites of different sizes and configurations as it is based on an adaptable modular skeleton filled with single occupancy units.”⁹⁸

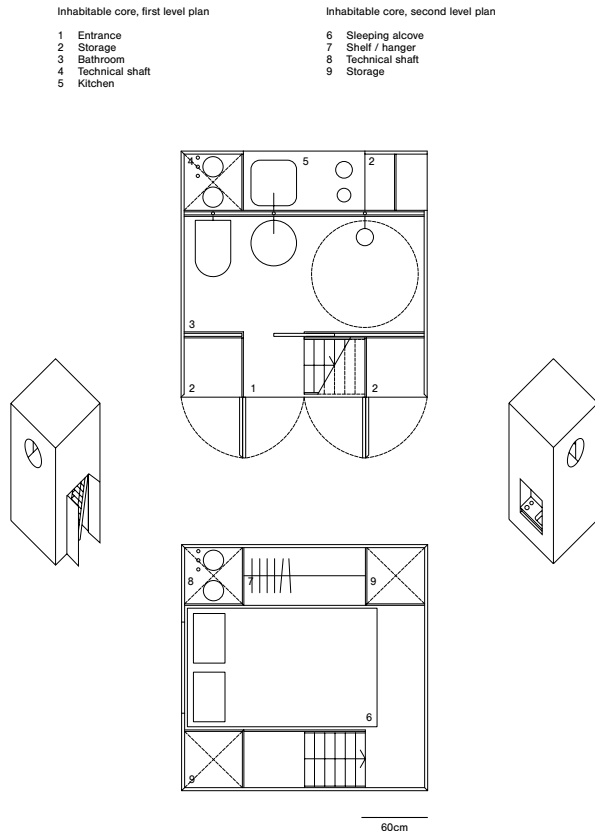
96. Bose, Shumi, Jack Self, and Finn Williams. *Home Economics. The Spaces*, 2016.

97. English pavilion Giudici, Maria Sheherazade. *LIKE A ROLLING STONE Revisiting the Architecture of the Boarding House. Black Square*, 2016.

This is a block consisting of two floors. On the first floor, a bathroom for the elderly, a storage room, and a small kitchen facing the common area are arranged. On the upper floor is a generous sleeping alcove for up to two people.

“ Although affordable for a single person, the latter can invite his/her partner into his/her personal space.”⁹⁷

The interior of this separate block is still subdivided into other attached separate internal spaces. The access to the upper floor is inside the core, behind a door that can be closed, isolating the user from the surrounding noise and activity.



98. Image: Drawings of Boarding house for London

The bathroom on the lower level is relatively blocked off from the relatively private, quiet space on the upper level. The upper level creates a soft space. A platform for sleeping, reading and watching videos. This body block is walled on all sides, but on the first floor, there are round windows bringing air, light and views to the resting space.

“The core and skeleton blocks are defined but can be multiplied in different ways in horizontal and vertical configurations to suit different sites. We believe these sites should be close to major transport infrastructure as this type of user requires a high degree of mobility; we have traced a constellation of possible sites around the Crossrail line, through a section of east-west London, and in very different urban conditions for landing.”⁹⁷

This separate, enclosed space is like a suitcase of digital nomad. The four-square wraps around the intimate space inside. Its dimension is defined, therefore it is highly reproducible and bendable. Like a suitcase with compliant dimension and correct weight, it can be boarded on any kinds of transport.

Facebook Headquarters

It is the largest open office in the world, but what we see is a park of 3.6 hectares. It does not have a regular geometry. The outer contour is irregular. The invisibility digitalised life is always everywhere and always connected with everybody, is translated here in a green blanket covering an enormous concrete slab. In this sort of working landscape a whole new city is condensed, giving no reason to leave: from more intimate working spaces to a fitness club, from cafeterias to game-rooms to a library, the worker will find anything he needs. Considering the essence of the famous social network, in continuous change, this flexible space proposes a new, dynamic approach where there is not so much difference between working and living, paving the way to unexpected experiences.

It is an ambiguous Space. A large, universal, one-room space built with flexibility in mind, it is less a building and

more a landscape. There is no subdivision, instead structure, furniture, pipelines and share the floor plan that is now akin an occupied terrain. Pod-like rooms are like islands floating in the randomly deployed furnitures. They become a coordinate in the disoriented space.



102. Image: Model of Facebook campus
en Menlo Park

Open forum

A thriving online scene can not be found while offline. Build a physical forum for the digital nomads communities scattered around the city. Reactive the social cohesion for digital nomad.

The sense of isolation while working alone in the room should be dispensed with a healthy working environment of forum. In worldwide, the rise of freelance worker and transient work force like digital nomad has ushered in a decline of the traditional corporate workplace.

"No longer defined by the 9-to-5 workday, freelance work transcends the traditional separation between living and working. This is why office space today is being increasingly "domesticized" through domestic furniture and functions, such as living rooms and large kitchens, with the goal to conceal the workaholic ethos of post-Fordist production."⁹⁹

Agora

Historically, in ancient Rome, the Latin word forum meant in a generic way the public forum of exchange forum (in the plural fora). It also designated the commercial, social, administrative, religious and political geometrical centre: in each city it was the geometrical centre. Around the forum were administrative and religious buildings surrounded by colonnades and porticoes. This place, decorated with a large number of statues of remarkable personalities, was very busy, as the inhabitants came to celebrate ceremonies, attend sacrifices, as well as to discuss, stroll and buy various things in the shops available.

Two of the most famous public spaces in the world, the Forum of Rome and the Agora of Athens, were initially food markets whose commercial use gradually became political as the city expanded.

99. Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Martino Tattara. "Production/Reproduction: Housing beyond the family." *Harvard Design Magazine: architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning* 41 (2015): 132.



100. Image: Plan of the Agora in ca. A.D. 150, the period of greatest expansion and the time of the traveler Pausanias.

The Agora of Athens, the social, political and mercantile gathering place of the city, is a vast open, unregulated, unorganized space. An accumulation of independent structures gravitating around a free space. It is bordered by the Stoa, an open structure occupied mainly by commercial activities. Etymologically, it is a portico that encloses and defines the space facing it.

The type of the Stoa is characterized by two distinct and complementary spaces: that of exchange and that of storage. It consists of a system of bays that multiply laterally: a wooden frame supported by stone columns. Thus, while its length is potentially variable, its depth is fixed, determined by the depth of the back rooms and the walking space.

The covered space protects the social and commercial interactions from the weather and acts as a threshold between the opening of the square and the more intimate spaces of the shops. Raised up, it provides a view of the scenes of social and political life taking place in the Agora.

The Forum should express a certain versatility. It shows the ability to express reality, but also to create it. Involving crowds as well as individuals, it addresses thousands of users, but without the possibility of direct appropriation, as they only have the right to use it.

Markthal

Digital nomads are no longer a group that resides outside the lives of the locals. The daily social activities of the local population will also take place here. Housing and market area are here combined for the first time under the same roof: an arch-shaped solution covers the new market hall of Rotterdam and hosts 228 privately developed apartments. It is a new icon in the city that stages the innovation and provides a 24h building for the collectivity. As a completely new hybrid, the Markethall is an unpredictable combination of living, leisure, food and parking fully integrated in order to give the visitor a new life experience. A giant glazed curtain

wall protects the market from wind and cold allowing at the same time for the maximum transparency. From the outside, one is attracted to look into the colorful ceiling while inhabitants from the square windows of their apartments can look down onto the living life of the market square.



101. Image: View from room, at Markthal

Shared domesticity

It's not just space that can be shared, it's even homes, kitchenware, clothes, books, the labour, anything you want to share.

How ever, to share the wardrobe seems to be an offensive solution to present a critique of ownership. It force users to envisage the new relationships between both the resident and their objects, as well as between the objects themselves.

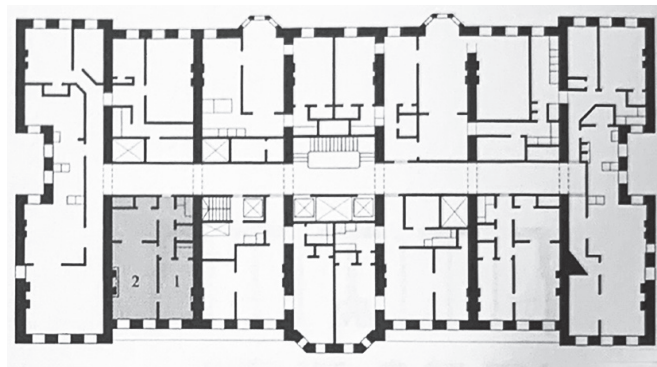
Kitchenless apartment

The Chelsea Hotel in New York, built in 1883 by Philip G. Hubert, is residential hotel. It is one of the first cooperative apartment house. In the 1880s, an overwhelming influx of people were immigrating to Manhattan, who were then faced with dramatic housing shortage and speculation. At the time, home property was mostly made of townhouses and single-family houses. This situation prevented many people from owning a permanent house, forcing them to invest all their earnings into temporary living solutions. In this context, Hubert presented Chelsea Hotel as a “home Club”: affordable accommodation that combined the domestic arrangement of the European apartment with the transiency of the American hotel. Housing unites were kitchenless and flexible. They accommodated different ways of living and were supported by centralised housekeeping and an abundance of collective facilities, such as lounges and meeting rooms. This allows residents to afford housing at a lower rent while taking advantage of shared service such as collective house keeping. Besides introducing a new spatial model for collective living, this project also introduce an economic model based on common property in a joint stock scheme.

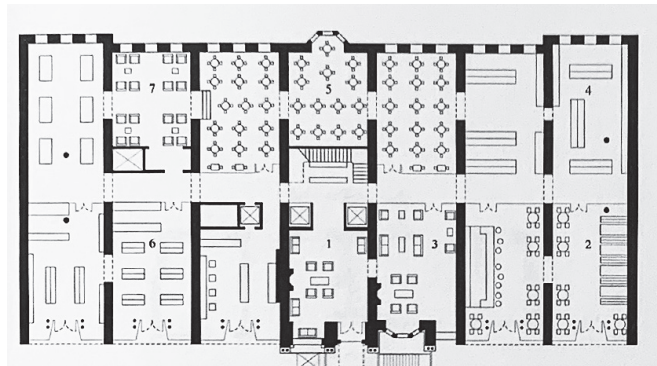
*103. Self, Jack, and Shumi Bose, eds.
Real Estates: Life Without Debt. Bedford
Press, 2014.*

The hotel included apartments of different sizes (all without kitchens), plus a large kitchen, central dining room, and a lounge on the uppermost floor.

This building can be seen as a prototype of a youth hotel. The sleeping and other living areas are separated from the original family home. What can be noticed is that although the sleeping area exists as a separate floor, each sleeping unit, however, still exists independently. While the other shared areas are on a separate floor.

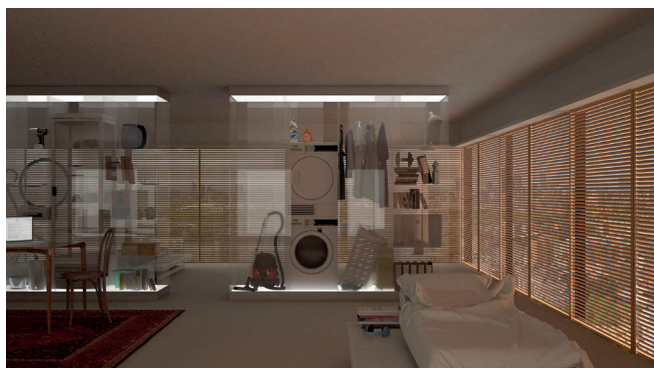


Typical floor plan:
Chamber (1) Parlor (2)



Ground floor plan:
Lobby (1), cafe (2), ladies' living room (3), kitchen (4), dining room (5), shop (6), restrooms (7)

104. Image: floor plans of *Chelsea Hotel* in New York, built in 1883 by Philip G. Hubert.



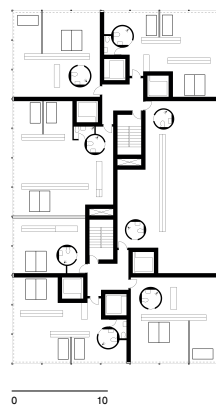
Own Nothing, Share Everything

The project is to design a space only for hourly use. The time period of hours is a tricky one. It would seem self-evident that we spend hours in our homes. So the intent was to imagine a type of domestic space offered in addition to the individual residence. The proposal is for a communal living room. Access is private, yet it is offered as a kind of extra social space adjacent to the home. It is imagined within the context of a new model of a high rise social housing tower, where the traditional relationship between core, corridor and unit has been broken down—the core has been pulled apart to create these spaces between apartments.

“In the show itself this common living room has been realised at 1:1 so that it can be directly experienced. It demonstrates how, if we are prepared to share rather than insisting on individual ownership, we can all have a better quality of life and space. In other words, it demonstrates sharing as a form of luxury, not compromise.”¹⁰⁷

The model adapts the structure and design of the high-rise to explore new forms of shared domesticity. Traditionally, the tower features a lift and stair core with a central corridor leading to apartments. Here, the core was broken down into its constituent elements to form a double pinwheel supporting a steel deck system. There are no internal supports, unless one considers the eight circular wet rooms as large inhabitable columns. As the core was pulled apart it eliminated the corridor, while creating spaces between apartments that could be collectively occupied. Each floor features a large communal living room shared between sixteen people (one

105. Image: Interior view of a typical apartment



106. Image: Floor plans

of these rooms was represented in the central space of the British Pavilion). Since the room is provided in addition to your own apartment it is a space you're not forced to use, but can choose to occupy.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have studied how digital nomads' identity sculpts their perception and needs about places to live, work, and socialize by interviewing 5 digital nomads from worldwide and investigating conversations and posts over online digital nomad community, include [/r/digitalnomad](#), NomadList, Female Digital Nomads and Digital Nomads Forum.

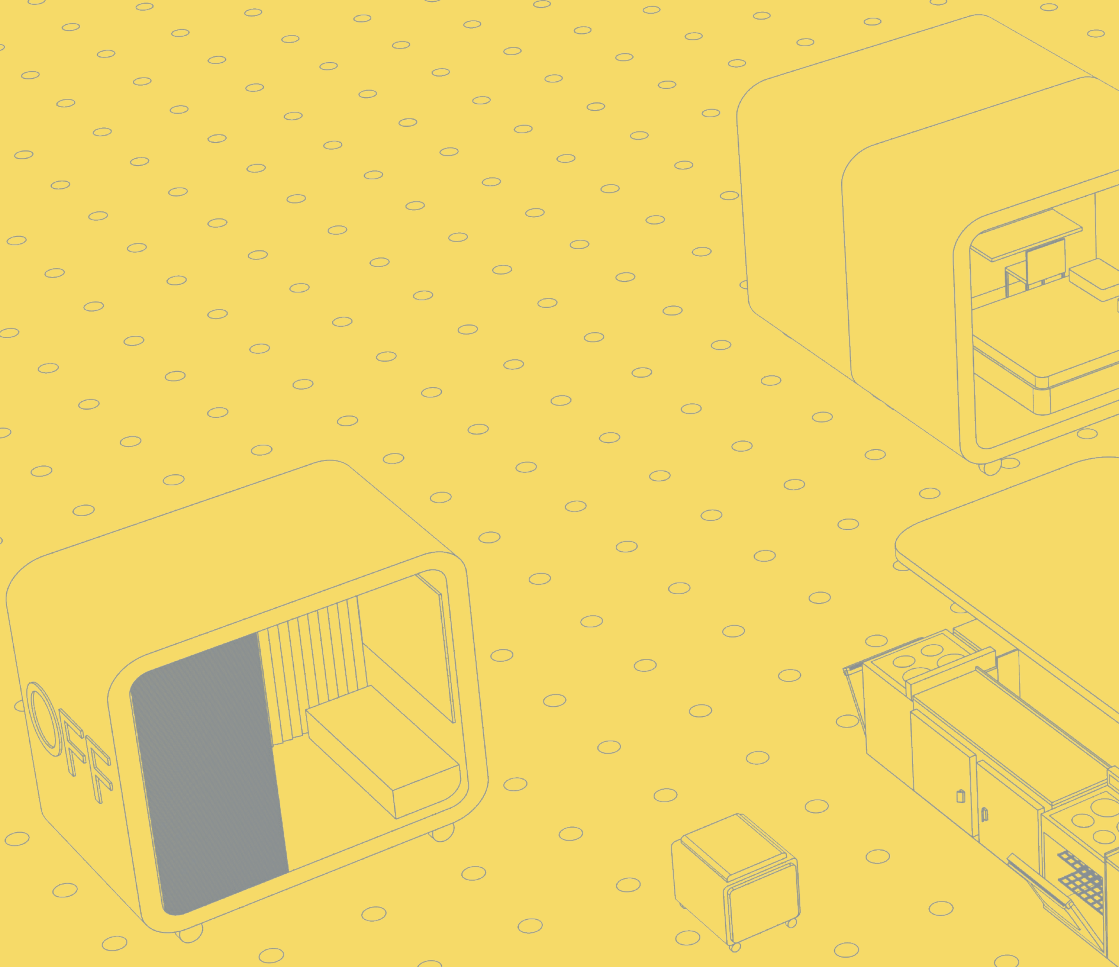
In terms of housing space, I found that, the current housing system does not provide an efficient housing solution for transient dwellers like digital nomads. Digital nomads are forced to choose between affordable but less private hostels and expensive but spacious apartment. When it comes to working space, it seems, the co-working space is the most convenient solution on the market. However, its social role has taking more weight than its working role. As for the socializing space, digital nomads claim that they are usually disconnect with the locals. The constant nomadicity of DNs' lifestyles make it hard for them to build sustainable relationships with people and engage in local communities. This often leads them to rely on co-spaces, which provide environments to work and socialize with people within a community setting. Moreover, the DNs' flexible lifestyles generate a blurred boundary between work and life, and it leads them to struggle to have a productive balance between the two.

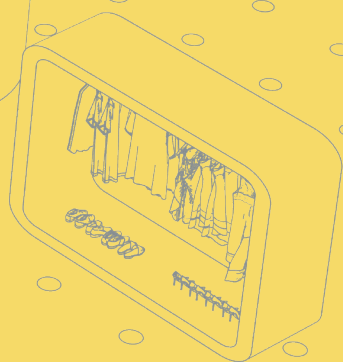
To be noticed that these three spaces are rarely found in the one single building. Usually, they are scattered in the various corners of the city. There is not one integrated space where can provide all the three functions together for digital nomad. The future project is interested in, firstly, to strengthen the connection between the small communities in the city, secondly to connect the residential spaces working spaces

and the socializing space together. The aim is to promote the great degree of togetherness of collective living with the city. At meanwhile, provide a meaningful level of intimacy and to the users.

Chapter 4

Epilogue





Sleeping

Location: Lisbon, Portugal

Local time: 3:28, 08 December of 2025

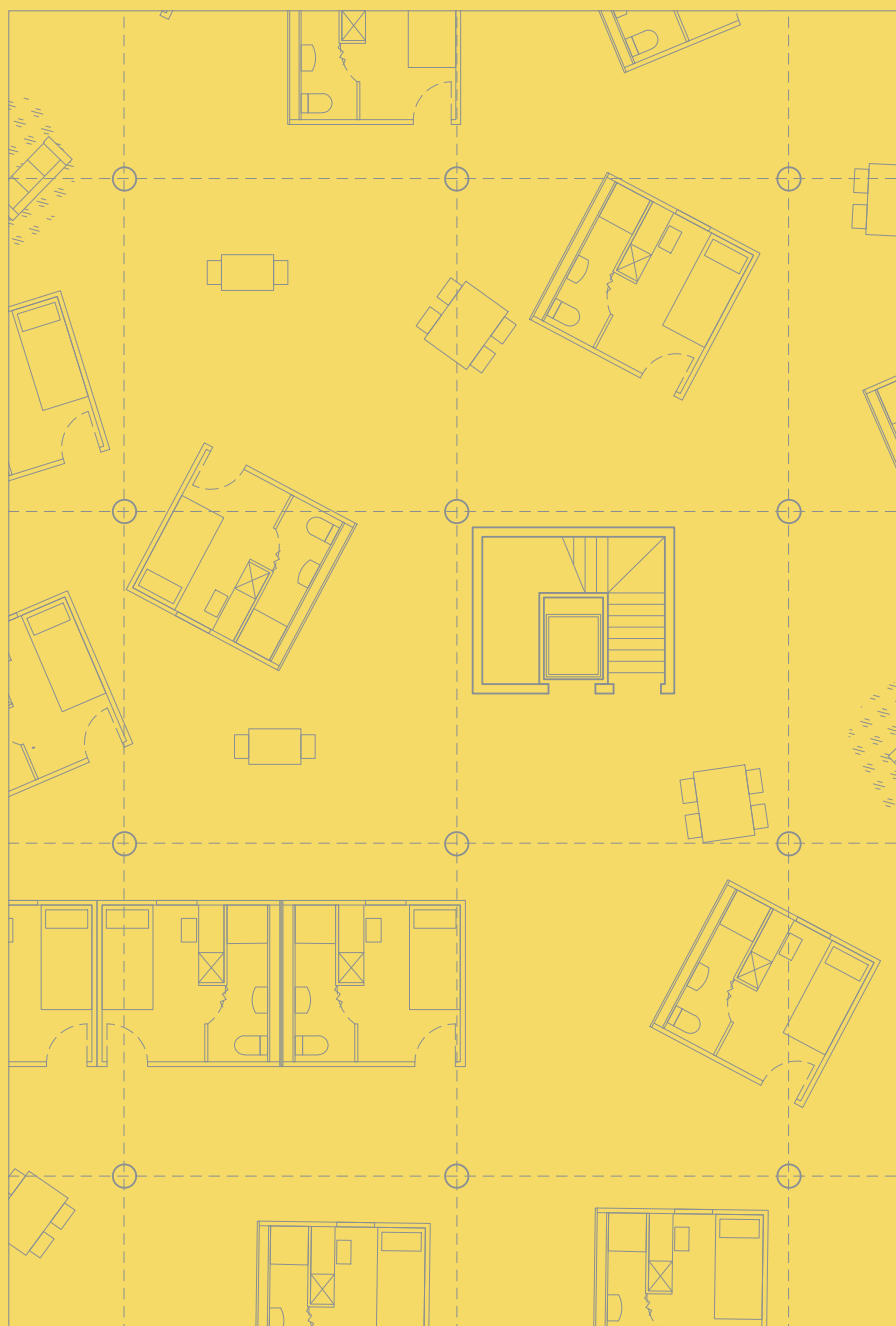
Weather: warm, 23 °C

It's after midnight. I've just landed in this strange city. I'm taking a taxi directly to the Forum. I didn't have time to book a room. I hope there are still rooms available.

The night market on the ground floor is still full of people. The 24/7 opening system makes every city's Forum not only busy during the day, but also at night. Exhausted, I took the lift straight to the residential floor.

The map on the Forum App shows that the nearest available room to me is number 56. Following the GPS, I quickly found the room, and after entering the code that the system had dropped overhead, I managed to get inside. A quick glance at the room overhead didn't differ from the one I had stayed in last night in Berlin. For a moment, I dreamed that I was still in Berlin.

I lay down on the bed, turn off the light and fall in sleep.



Eating

Location: Canggu, Indonesia

Local time: 22:38, 12 December of 2027

Weather: warm, 24 °C

Having just finished the last meeting on today, however the dinner time has already passed. It has been one week I have arrived in Canggu, but I never had to use the common kitchen. I'm flipping through all the takeaway pages, but nothing seems attractive.

A message popped up from Emery.

"I haven't eaten yet, you want to dinner with me?"

- "Sure, I'll see you on the 12th floor later then. "

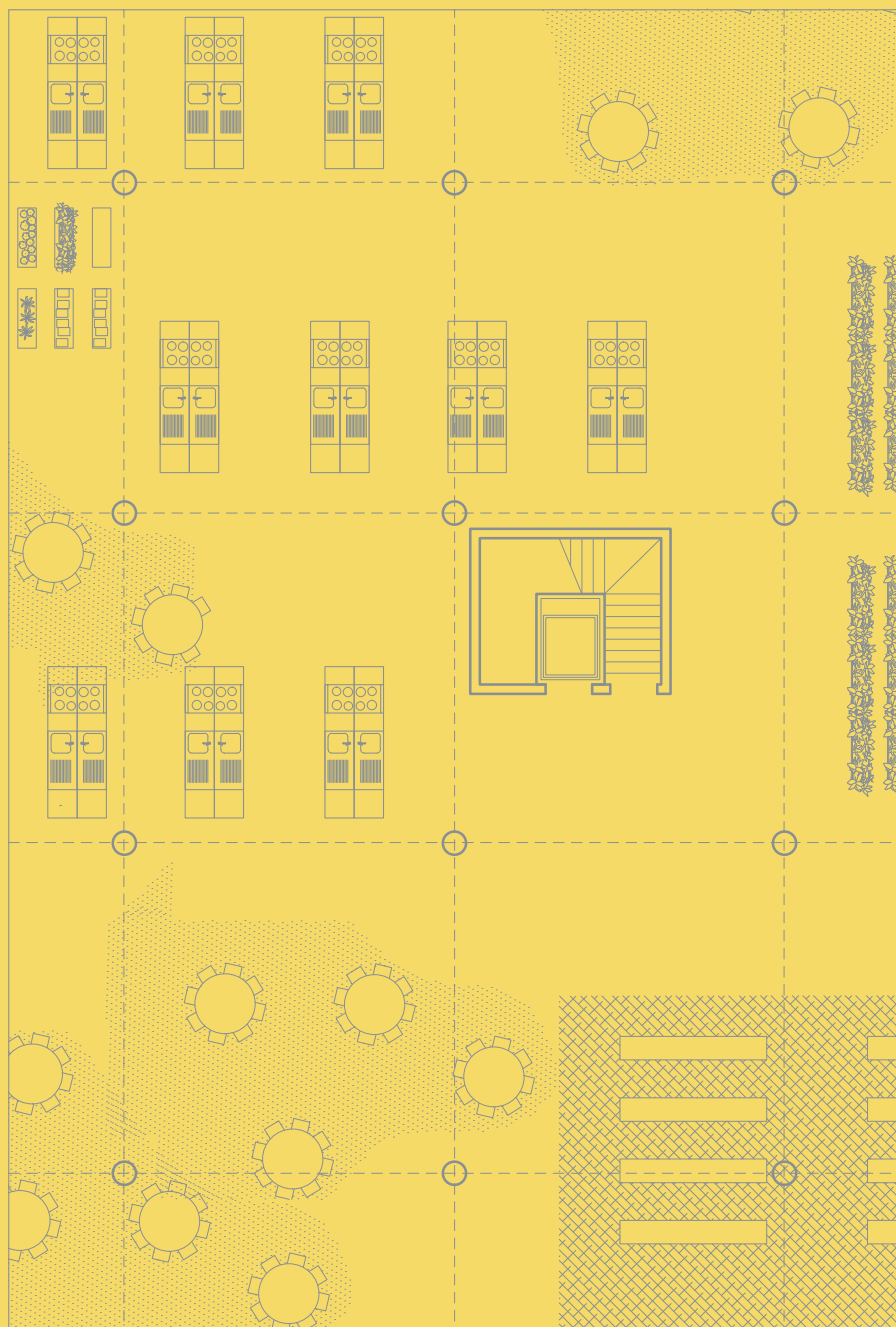
"Oh, I don't want to go to restaurant today, we'll make our own."

- "Okay then, I'll see you in five minutes at the buffet kitchen."
"

I don't want to use elevator, so I go through the outer corridor, it's just one floor under. I look through the window and see Emery has taken up a cooking station.

After some pleasantries. We walked in the food counter area. Although we could select our foods on cell phones and have them delivered directly to the cooking counter through the logistics pipeline, we decide to go shopping on our own. There were also packs of night owls at the next table, cooking dinner. A strong smell of tom yum goes up to my nose.

My stomach is growling.



Clothing

Location: Mexico city, Mexico

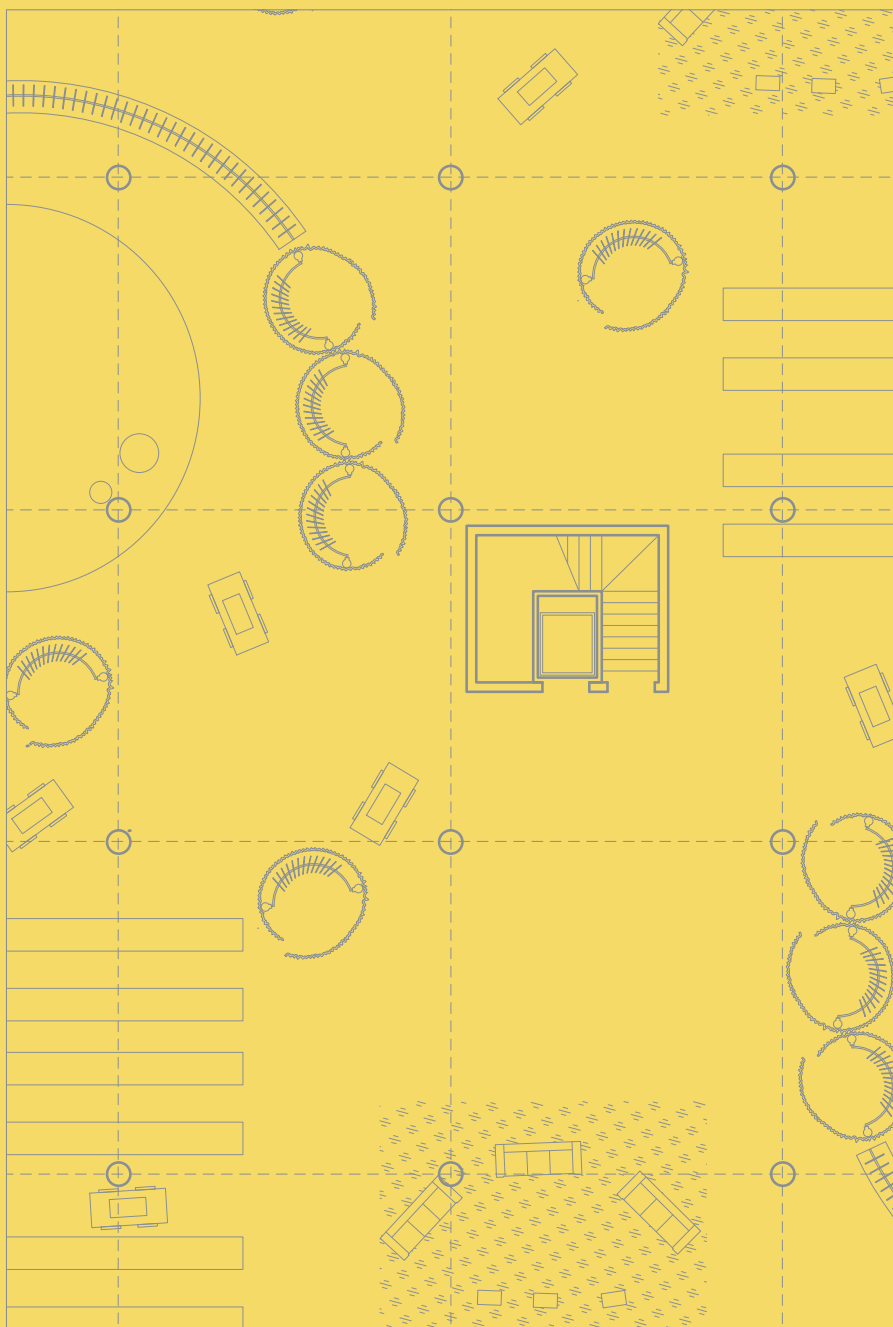
Local time: 10:15, 12 June of 2028

Weather: pleasantly cool, 18 °C

Now in Mexico City, there is still a slight temperature difference between daytime and evening. Having just arrived from Canggu, I didn't have any thicker clothes. In the morning, I met Fernando in the yoga studio on the third floor. He lives in the next block, He is a local who visits regularly the Forum.

He told me that this week was the Forum's Black renting day. For one month's rent, I could get the use of three clothes for a month. I was impressed. After yoga class, I rushed to the 4th floor wardrobe to pick out my clothes.

There was no rush to work or anything.



Working

Location: Prague, Czechia

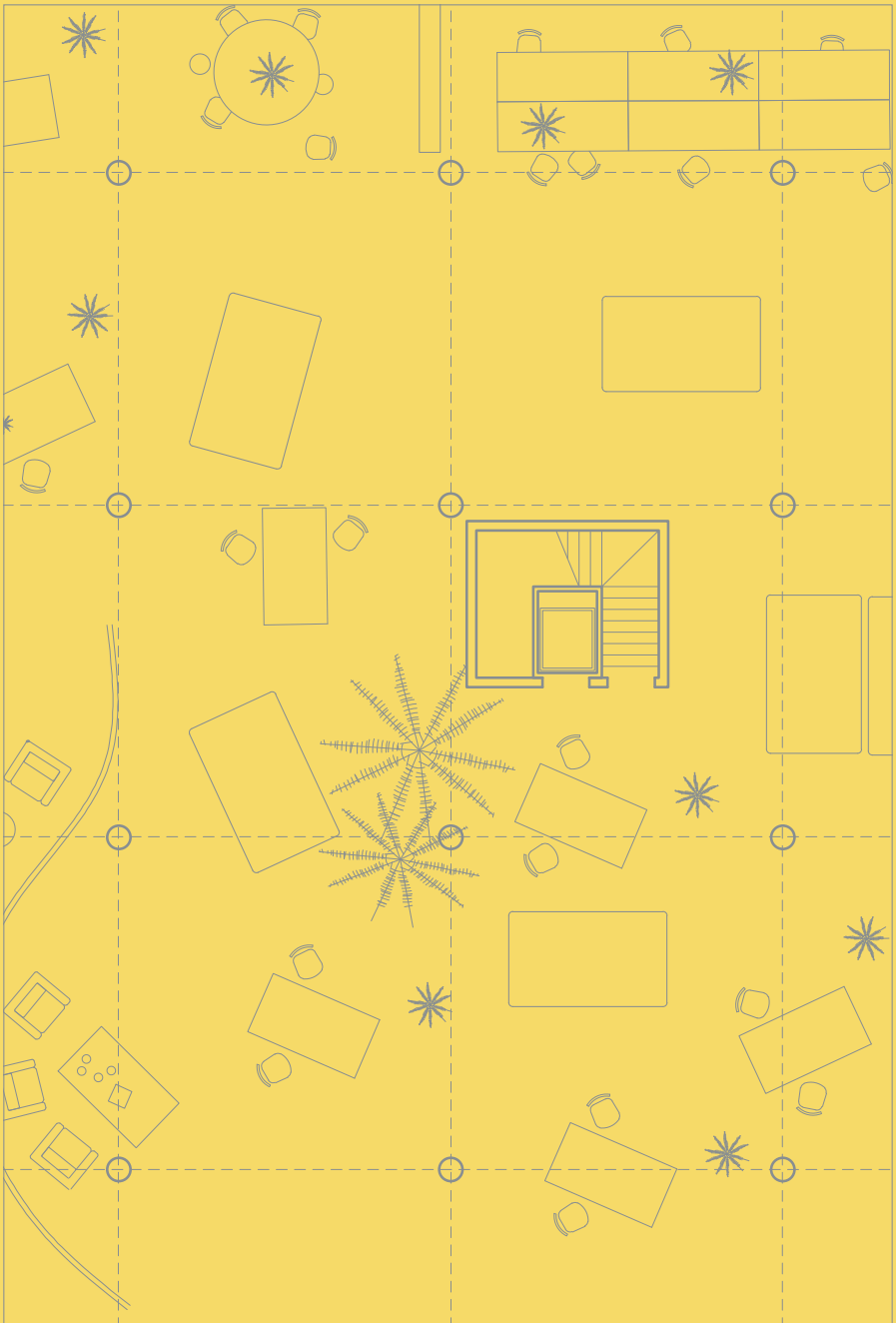
Local time: 13:15, 30 April of 2030

Weather: cold, 10°C

I came back from lunch, greeted the strange workers around me and got back to work.

This afternoon wasn't as quiet as this morning. I could hear Aleksandr, a web developer working for a Korean company at the next table talking on the phone from afar. But that didn't bother me. It's all pretty easy today.

Oh, no, no, no, no, no. I don't want to sit next to this guy again. He has to poke me every five minutes. How does he have so many problems. Before he could see me, I hurriedly packed up my things and slipped into a freshly vacated offline capsule under the cover of the lush banana leaves. Oh, it was safe at last. Pulling the door closed, the big signal light on the outer wall came on. No one can bother me anymore. I must accomplish what I set out to do today.



Socializing

Location: Shanghai, China

Local time: 16:15, 11 June of 2031

Weather: hot, 30 °C

It has been almost 12 years since my last visited in China. It's also been exactly 10 years since mankind defeated that virus.

On my way back to my desk, I passed by the central park on the first floor. It is a huge interior green park with place to sit, to gather, to dance, to run and to practice all possible outdoor activities. I noticed that, today, it was extraordinarily busy there. I got a few steps closer to where the crowds gather and received a phone alert.

It said that it was so hot outside that the aunts and uncles who had gathered in the adjacent People's Park had decided to move into the interior central park and continue their match-making mission while blowing the cold air from air conditioner.

The next few days are going to be hot as well, so it looked like we would be seeing them here for the next few days. I was about to leave when suddenly I was stopped by a strange aunt with kind smile. Auntie said that she wanted to introduce me to a friend.



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Interviews

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- [2] Jarod Zhang, digital nomad since 2016, currently in Playa dell Carmen, Mexico
- [3] Julien Gueniat, digital nomad since 2013, currently in Fribourg Switzerland
- [4] Lorenz Ramseyer, digital nomad since 2006, currently in Berlin, Germany
- [5] Xun Liao, digital nomad since 2008, currently in Shanghai, China

Interview questionnaires

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION:

1. How old are you?
2. What sex are you?
3. What is your main nationality?
4. What is your family situation?
5. How many children do you have?

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION ABOUT YOUR DIGITAL NOMAD LIFE:

1. Can you describe briefly your lifestyle as a digital nomad?
2. How long you have been living and working as a digital nomad?
3. How often do you change a place?
4. Do you travel alone?
5. How do you choose your base camp?
6. What do you usually take with you?
7. What are the main issues in general when you live as a digital nomad?

3. DAILY ACTIVITIES

A. Living

Sleeping

1. How do you choose your sleeping place?
2. Where are your first choices for sleeping?
3. What are the main issues when you sleep?
4. Do you mind to share your sleeping room with others?

Eating

1. How do you like to eat?
2. Do you eat on time everyday?
3. Where do you eat everyday?
4. Do you eat alone or with others?
5. What other activities do you do while eating?

6. What are the main issues when you eat/cook?

Clothing

1. How many clothes do you take with you?

2. What happen if you don't have enough or you have too much clothing stuff with you?

3. Do you mind to share clothes with others?

Packaging

1. What is your main way for moving?

2. Do you think the location of your base camp is important?

3. What are the main issues about transport?

B. Working

Profession

1. What is your professional status?

2. To which professional category do you belong?

Issues

1. What do you do when you work? (Meet/call/concentration/inspiration/brainstorming)

2. What are the main issues when you work?

3. Do you mind to share your working area with others, or you prefer to have your own working space?

4. Can you describe your dream working place?

C. Socializing

1. What do you do for your social life?

2. Do you wish to meet more local people or people share common values?

3. What are the main issues when you want to practice some social activities?

* Do you mind to be recorded?

* Do you wish to be anonymous?

