

Geographies of Tourism and Global Change

Josefina Domínguez-Mujica

Jennifer McGarrigle

Juan Manuel Parreño-Castellano *Editors*

# International Residential Mobilities

From Lifestyle Migrations to Tourism  
Gentrification



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# From Lifestyle Migration to Tourism Gentrification. A Preface to International Residential Mobilities

Twenty years ago, Allan Williams and Michael Hall (2000) conceptualized the tourism-migration nexus in five categories: labour migration, return migration, entrepreneurial migration, retirement migration and second homes. They echoed numerous publications in years previous conceptualizing migration and tourism (King, 1995; O'Reilly, 1995; Williams & Montanari, 1995; Williams et al., 2000) and laid a foundation for the discussion of lifestyle-led mobilities in the context of the wider mobility turn (Cresswell, 2006; Domínguez-Mujica et al., 2011; Hall, 2005; Hannam et al., 2006; Wright & Ellis 2016, etc.). Academic literature interpreting and reinterpreting the interrelations between different forms of mobility has responded to the sedentary bias within the social sciences and paid increasing attention to the patterns, effects and motivations of diverse forms of human mobility, in parallel with the increasing intensity of flows and wider processes of social transformation. As Dieter K. Müller points out in the last chapter of this book: “the emergence of new mobilities [is] a central aspect of societal change in the 21st century”.

*International Residential Mobilities: From Lifestyle Migrations to Tourism Gentrification*<sup>1</sup> pays special attention to the underlying structural conditions and changes fuelling new forms of international residential mobilities from the perspective of inequality in mobility regimes, coloniality and wider globalizing processes. The diversity of new international lifestyle mobilities and their spatial consequences is reflected in the different types of mobility explored in the book's contributions, which include both temporary and permanent migration as well as transnational multi-residence dwelling, during both active and inactive ages as well as circular and return migration related to previous labour and leisure-led migration. This volume also brings case studies in the Global North and Global South into conversation, invoking reflection on the globality of the processes studied herein.

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While embedded within global processes of change, our understanding of these international mobilities is enriched with the particularities of the local contexts in which they unfold.

The limits between lifestyle migration, residential mobilities and tourism mobility have been well theorized. However, recent processes of social transformation demand that we rethink the analytical focus that tended to blur the lines between lifestyle migration, residential mobilities and tourism. The increase in global tourism, the diversification of motivations, the proliferation of new destinations, the consolidation of a global economic scene, the rise of the global middleclass, increases in transnational property investment, the rise of platform capitalism and the growth of telework formulas, among other factors, necessitate new analytical work and critical framing. This is even more acute considering the global crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The distinguishing features of lifestyle migrants in comparison with other forms of migration relates not only to higher relative wealth but also to the ease with which they can relocate in line with privileges associated with having citizenship from advanced economies. However, such privileges have been temporarily curbed with mobility restrictions imposed by governments in the fight to control the pandemic. While at the time of writing we are still in a period of uncertainty in terms of what the future will hold, the immediate effects of the pandemic on mobility have been dramatic. Travel and mobility services are in low demand, greatly effecting the economies of the touristic destinations studied in this edited volume.

Questions remain, however, on the long-term impact that the pandemic might have on migration desires and consumer preferences, not to mention government regulation of mobility. Destinations closer to home might be valued due to accessibility and security related with access to welfare, healthcare in particular. On the other hand, for migrants with more tightly regulated passports, holding residency in a powerful nation state within the international system may have even greater value given travel concessions granted by governments to residents during the pandemic. The clear acceleration in the remote working trend and the widespread use of technologies that make this attractive is transforming mobility. While the upsurge in digital conferencing will likely impact business travel negatively, it could have a positive impact on remote working abroad –and thus international residential mobility – as the possibilities for mixing lifestyle and work are normalized to a greater extent. Despite this, we are in a period of excess uncertainty and will only fully understand the effects of the economic and social crisis provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic with time.

The consolidation and diversification of flows of international residential migrants have economic, social, cultural and environmental consequences as they are accompanied by flows of capital, social restructuring and cultural processes of broadening, particularly for peripheral economies, where spaces of tourism development coexist with emerging new residential destinations. These spaces of international residential mobility, especially in cities and coastal areas, result in frequent tensions, due to processes of appropriation that appreciate local housing markets, dissociating them from local demand and purchasing power, as well as processes of

touristification and transnational gentrification that potentially displace local populations, to name a few. To the contrary, many such destinations are struggling to cope with the lack of tourists and international investors in light of the current pandemic. Consequently, new patterns of human mobility and tourism as well as refreshed interpretations of the nexus of these processes overlap in the various chapters, which are presented as follows.

The book begins with two conceptual chapters, which intend to open up a new space for interdisciplinary dialogue, in response to the boundary-crossing processes that underpin the mobilities and tourism geographies that are traced throughout the book. In the first chapter, “A Global Sociology on Lifestyle Migrations”, Matthew Hayes picks up strands of the transnational approach to migration studies and asks what other concepts and concerns emerge when lifestyle migration is added to the picture of global migrations with particular attention to the concept of the “colonial traces” in lifestyle migration. He argues that the differentiated regulation and experience of migration for different groups invokes a critical reflection on how global society might be organized in a manner that distributes citizenship rights and resources more equally. Thus, relating lifestyle migration to global frames of migration and capital accumulation. The latter is complemented by Geoffrey DeVerteuil’s analysis of the globalization of real estate markets, which provides an important explanation for globalized residential mobilities and enriches the traditional focus on coastal or rural destinations with an urban perspective. In “Overseas Investment and the Real Estate Market: Global and Local Frictions and the Great Acceleration”, the author discusses new conceptual perspectives on the co-occurrence of global and local factors from the experience of large, globalized cities, in the wake of the 2008 global recession, that are directly impacted by overseas investment. He traces the consolidation and eventual acceleration of these trends to other cities lower down on the urban hierarchy over the past decade. Both chapters provide an important backdrop for the mobilities studied herein through foregrounding the processes structuring international residential mobilities and their spatial impacts.

The five chapters in the second part of this volume, *Global Processes of Multi-residence and Local Impacts*, focus on the changing dynamics of lifestyle migration in Southern Europe and Latin America in urban, coastal, rural and island settings. In Chap. 3, “The Sea as a Lifestyle: (Im)mobilities, Liminality, and Life Course Transitions Among Permanently Settled Sailors in the Azores (Portugal)”, Dora Sampaio, based on qualitative work conducted in the islands of the Azores with a group of older foreign sailors, develops an analytical lens based on a life course perspective that captures the malleability and liminality of lifestyle migration projects. Meanwhile, Raquel Huete-Nieves and Alejandro Mantecón, in Chap. 4, “The Reconfiguration of International Residential Mobility Flows in Post-crisis Spain: The Case of Costa Blanca-Alicante”, contrast the effects of the 2008 economic crisis on leisure-oriented mobility flows towards Alicante (Spain), both on the tourism sector and on the real estate market. They conclude the latter suffered more than the former, and without the burden of the real estate sector, the tourism economy of Costa Blanca could transition to a more competitive but sustainable and just tourism model hinged on an innovative political and cultural context.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine locations in Latin and Central America. Susana Sassone and Myriam González in Chap. 5, “Global Mobility and Migration in the Cities of the Patagonian Andes (Argentina): Emerging Diversity”, analyse the increasing diversity in these cities, in demographic, social and cultural terms, due to the coexistence of labour migrants, investors, tourists and amenity/lifestyle migrants. As such, they highlight the need to design intervention practices based on the governance of urban diversity. In the case of Chap. 6, “International Mobility: An Approach to the Imaginaries of Residential Tourism from the Northern and South-Eastern Borders of Mexico”, Nora Bringas-Rábago, Ana P. Sosa-Ferreira and Maribel Osorio-García contrast the practices of international mobility in two different locations, drawing attention to the importance of local contexts in understanding the profile, motivations and transnational practices of residential tourists. Their findings reiterate the imaginary return to nature and rural life of these lifestyle migrants and the importance of symbolic conceptions of community through the ideal of spatial imaginaries.

The part concludes with the case study of Lisbon. Jennifer McGarrigle in Chap. 7 “The Locational Choice of Urban Lifestyle Migrants in Lisbon: Beyond Tourism Imaginaries”, brings discussions on the city as a lifestyle destination to the fore. The life history interviews with intra-EU lifestyle migrants allow her to relativize economic concerns, such as the pull of fiscal benefits and to explore the emotions and mechanics of locational choice. While reiterating the overlaps between tourism and lifestyle mobilities, her findings highlight the need for analytical distinctiveness between the two given differences in the way they are governed and embodied.

In the third part, Transnationalism, Return and Circular Migrations, five contributions are compiled, three from Europe (Budapest, Riga and Rome), one from Africa (Cape Verde) and another from the Caribbean (Cuba). In Chap. 8, “The Residential Mobility of Hungarian Nationals and Foreign Citizens: The Case Study of Budapest”, Sándor Illés analyses how short-distance residential mobility in the city of Budapest can be conceptualized as the common continuation of previous internal and international migration, where transnational and translocal movements are interconnected.

In Chap. 9, “Patterns of Transnational Urban Drift to Latvia”, Zaiga Krišjāne, Māris Bērziņš, Elina Apsīte Beriņa, Jānis Krūmiņš and Toms Skadiņš explore the attraction of cities over more remote, sparsely populated and lagging regions. By studying residential patterns and life preferences of Latvian return migrants and arriving foreigners, they explore the effects of migrants’ transnational lifestyles. By diminishing solely economic factors, they demonstrate the importance of social and cultural motives, and family-related moves as well as the role of nostalgia.

In Chap. 10, “International Mobility and Its Spatial Impacts in the Rome Metropolitan Area: An Analysis of the Last Two Decades”, Gerardo Gallo, Armando Montanari, Barbara Staniscia and Enrico Tucci move the focus to the intensification of international and internal migrations and temporary mobility in the city of Rome, due to the growth rates of the resident population in the Rome Metropolitan Area, in the inner ring, and in some coastal and lake municipalities. The findings demonstrate severe changes in the real estate market, because of

non-rigid division between housing used mainly for leisure purposes and for those whose primary need is still that of working and producing.

Chapters 11 and 12 offer a very different context, given the importance devoted to the diasporic linkages conditioning not only tourism development but current human mobility in the islands of Cape Verde and Cuba, with an important history of former and present emigration. In “Diasporic Links and Tourism Development in Cape Verde. The Case of Praia”, Juan Parreño-Castellano, Claudio Moreno-Medina and Judite Medina Do Nascimento conclude that the complex migration processes of Cape Verdeans and their related flows of investment are an asset in the development of the country, through the tourism sector, but not without generating important economic and social imbalances. A similar standpoint characterizes Chap. 12, “The Contribution of International Residential Mobility to Tourism Development: Cienfuegos City, Cuba”. Manuel González-Herrera, Mercedes Rodríguez-Rodríguez and Cecilia Santana-Rivero study international residential mobility towards family-owned houses (hostales). This mobility promoted by Cuban residents abroad and other foreigners has encouraged residential real-estate investment for tourism purposes in Cienfuegos city, enhancing the supply of an alternative type of accommodation in private rental houses.

The fourth part of the book is entitled *Migrations and Tourism in Urban Spaces: Processes of Gentrification*. In this part, consolidated urban tourism destinations as Barcelona (Spain) or Reykjavik (Iceland) are analysed in light of the social and economic transformations motivated by tourism specialization. Dolores Sánchez-Aguilera and Jesús González-Pérez in “Geographies of Gentrification in Barcelona. Tourism as a Driver of Social Change” show how tourism has become a critical element in most modes of gentrification to which the Catalan capital has been exposed. Specifically, its historic centre, subject to the strong pressures of tourism and the housing market, emerges as an inescapable point of reference in the nexus between tourism and geographical and social mobility. In the case of Chap. 14, “Tourism Development and Housing After Iceland’s 2008 Crash”, a socio-economic perspective guides the reflection of the authors Már Wolfgang Mixa and Kristín Loftsdóttir. In this study, the economic recovery due to tourism activity after the collapse of Iceland’s banking system is presented in opposition to increased housing prices, which are causing unequal effects in the local population and affecting those who lost their livelihoods and homes or who cannot afford home ownership.

In the same part, in “Gentrification, Social Activism and Contestations in Cape Town (South Africa)” (Chap. 15), Sibonakaliso Nhlabathi and Brij Maharaj address the same issue of market driven gentrification development processes as set in opposition to local interests. However, they propose that if locals mobilized their economic, social and cultural forms of capital, gentrification would not be a zero-sum game and could generate a win-win situation, ensuring local flexibility while exploiting the benefits of global integration and efficiencies.

To end this part, Chap. 16, “Local Economies and Socio-spatial Segregations in the Aegean Islands: Touristic Development Versus Refugee Arrivals and Ghettoization? The Case of Lesbos Island”, offers an original perspective on the interplay between, on one hand, refugees, humanitarian and policy personnel and

tourists and, on the other hand, the local economy. By focusing on the island of Lesbos, this chapter tries to understand the transformations in the economy of the island and its socio-spatial segregations from a critical approach.

To conclude, as mentioned previously, Dieter K. Müller summarizes the main findings of the book in “Tourism and Lifestyle-Led Mobilities” (Chap. 17). Bringing together the main theoretical contributions of the volume, such as global processes of multi-residence and local impacts, transnationalism, postcolonialism, and return and circular migrations, as well as transnational gentrification and urban tourism, the chapter proposes future direction for research on this topic. Using Müller’s own words: “it is acknowledged that residential mobilities and multiple dwelling are not only signified by stretching over temporal and geographical scales; instead, even regarding motivations and space-time use, lifestyle mobilities contest traditional ideas of migration and tourism”. It is to this endeavour that we hope this volume will contribute.

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**Part I**  
**Theoretical Approaches**

# Chapter 1

## A Global Sociology on Lifestyle Migrations



Matthew Hayes

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses lifestyle migration from the vantage point of a global sociology of migration—that is, a sociology that views migration not from the vantage point of nation-states, but of transnational ties and global networks (Castles, 2007). Lifestyle migration has long engaged with migration approaches that have sought to transcend “methodological nationalism” (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2003) in order to reflect how migrants themselves view their lives between spaces, and through the experience of migration itself (for instance O’Reilly, 2000, 2017). It is a privileged site for empirical study of global migration, perhaps in part because its research object (e.g., its ‘subjects’ or ‘participants’) so often see themselves as living outside the nation-state itself, as “global citizens,” moving easily between national units and belonging, perhaps, to nowhere in particular. This chapter reflects on the linkages between global inequalities and lifestyle migration, especially since migrants within this scholarship so often move from core regions of global capitalist accumulation towards former colonies, or more peripheral spaces, zoned for leisure. Lifestyle migrants often reflect on their lifestyles as auto-poetic products of their own daring and willingness to seize opportunities others might not. They are individualistic life projects (Korpela, 2014; Oliver, 2007). Yet, they remain embedded in social relations of inequality inherited from complex histories that shape the lived experiences of migrants, as well as longer-term residents of receiving communities (Hayes, 2018a).

In what follows, I argue that lifestyle migration is not a distinct category, separate from other forms of migration, but rather an epistemological frame for migration scholarship writ large, which has important contributions to make both to the

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expert fields migration studies and global sociology, as well as to public discussion and debate about the type of global society currently coming into being. Lifestyle migration scholarship developed in relation to ethnographic studies of relatively privileged migrations (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Croucher, 2009; Knowles & Harper, 2009; Korpela, 2009; O'Reilly, 2000). The relatively light regulation of this type of migration is reflected in its key objects and concerns—privilege, identity, lifestyle—which also speak to broader structural issues, grounded in theoretically rich traditions (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014; O'Reilly, 2014).

When lifestyle migration is added to a global frame of migration, what the experiences of relatively privileged migrants enable us to see are the historical social relations that govern transnational movement at a global scale. Contemporary transnational mobility remains deeply embedded in the “global designs” (Mignolo, 2000) of world-forming commercial networks of surplus accumulation, networks organized and protected by core nation-states, but which also escape their bounds. Just as labour migration is related to global designs and transformations of production, trade and surplus accumulation (Castles, 2010), so too are leisure migrations, including tourism, which reflect the subjective experiences of social classes who have benefited from unequal global accumulations and some of their permutations. The exclusion of relatively privileged migrants from our epistemological frames of migration scholarship distort the global picture of migration, and what it is about. This chapter is an attempt to show what becomes visible when lifestyle migration is inserted within a global sociology of migration scholarship.

The paper proceeds in three parts. The first section discusses how lifestyle migration emerged around a particular type of migration, one of relatively privileged migrants. This shaped the main objects and concepts developed within this field. Thereafter, a second section discusses how global inequalities and how they are interpreted are increasingly important for a growing number of scholars of this field, in part no doubt due to the political importance that migration has taken over the last decade or more. Lifestyle migration offers a useful empirical site for exploring global inequalities, and I attend in this section to some key structural concepts that lifestyle migration scholarship “fills out” through ethnographic research, focusing on global mobility regimes and on coloniality. Finally, a concluding section reflects on contributions lifestyle migration makes beyond the academy. Not only does this scholarship potentially correct warped views of global migration, but it also speaks to us of how global inequalities are currently understood and interpreted, and importantly, how lifestyle migrants act on them. I suggest ways in which this scholarship may continue to develop in relation to outstanding research questions in a critical, public sociology.

## 1.2 What Is the “Lifestyle” of Lifestyle Migration?

Scholarship on lifestyle migration grew up around studies of relatively affluent, privileged middle-class people, relocating across borders mostly to other countries within Europe (O'Reilly, 2000; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Benson, 2011). As Benson and O'Reilly (2016) point out, lifestyle migration was developed through interpretivist ethnographies, which attended to the self-definitions and narratives of migrants themselves—many of whom didn't consider themselves migrants at all (see also Knowles & Harper 2009). It was an approach that attempted to understand the way that cultural codes (Hayes & Carlson 2018) and “social imaginaries” (O'Reilly, 2014) shaped the desire to migrate and the practices of being a migrant, such that migration was seen less as a “one-off” event, and more as an ongoing process. Lifestyle migration, therefore, is less a category of a separate type of migration than it is a way of accounting for the subjective aspects of migration—subjective aspects that nonetheless also shape material and social relations, often in unequal and uneven ways (Benson, 2015; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014: 11–12; Spalding, 2013). As Benson and O'Reilly (2016: 25) pointed out, lifestyle migration is more of “a lens rather than a box.” It is a lens that explores how people imagine life in other places and cultures, but also how they perform or “operationalize” (Knowles & Harper, 2009: 11) the motivations for migration upon arrival.

Perhaps the experiences of relatively privileged migrants offer themselves more easily to ethnographic studies that prod the self-understanding of migrants powerful enough to define the meanings of their migrations for themselves, relatively unencumbered by nation-state regulations or by exclusionary politics of receiving communities (which is also not to say that such exclusionary politics is always absent). These are migrants who are often very willing to speak about their migration experiences, their idealizations of place, and their construction of new lives for themselves, facilitating ethnographic contact, especially with researchers who often also share many of their cultural referents. The construction of a new way of life in idealized foreign spaces appears unchecked by serious structural impediments to their integration. This is not to say that they always succeed, or that their integration projects—where these exist—are not sometimes frustrated (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016; Lawson, 2017). Yet, their ability to carry out imaginings of another way of living in more meaningful spaces or cultures often reflects relative material privilege in relation to receiving communities, where incomes are often lower (see Benson, 2013, 2015; Croucher, 2009).

These material differences are the source of distinctions between categories that concepts such as “lifestyle” migration can serve to perpetuate. Yet, rather than building discrete categories, lifestyle migration scholars have most often sought to collapse them, in the name of an egalitarian politics of transnational movement. The distinction between different types of migration, and a focus on “lifestyle migration” which has emerged at the margins of migration scholarship is to some degree a reflection of material differences between the transnationalism of relatively affluent, middle class migrants (usually from higher-income countries) and that of

migrants seeking economic, social and political security through relocation to those countries. Lifestyle migration focuses on the consumption-driven, voluntary mobilities of privileged groups, rather than on the “production and involuntary nature of many migrations” (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014: 3).

In this respect, lifestyle migration has often focused on the experiences of “white migrants” (Lundström, 2017), potentially perpetuating distinctions between categories of migration, rather than focusing on how migration is regulated and organized differently by powerful nation-states. Certainly, the modifier “lifestyle” may reproduce the political work of these states, who have shaped migration research around their interests (see also Castles, 2007; Kunz, 2016). But use of the modifier is also justified, in that there are real material and symbolic differences between different groups who meet the definition of “migrant.” Lifestyle migration research has focused on the experiences of migrants whose “global social position”<sup>1</sup> enables them to define their migration on terms of their own choosing, independently of national states and the exclusionary logics of nationalist movements who would assign other, hegemonic meanings to their settlement. The focus, therefore, on what Benson (2012) calls “cultural imaginings” –that is, the idealizations of transnational mobility to more meaningful places– appears more self-evident and is justified because it is so prominent in the way that migrants themselves talk about their migrations. Lifestyle migration can look at the cultural imaginings of any migrant group, but it has developed as an epistemological lens primarily amongst groups who experience greater agency and autonomy in relation to borders and receiving communities, in large part because their racialization as white or European signifies wealth and modernity, and because they enjoy access to greater resources.

These inequalities are also the focus of a great deal of lifestyle migration scholarship. White migrants must negotiate new meanings for their whiteness, and the apparent meanings (their own as well as those of others) attached to their origins (Fechter, 2005; Lan, 2011; Lehmann, 2014; Kordel & Pohle, 2018; Walsh, 2010). As Benson and O’Reilly (2018) point out, the stories that the field has attended to contain within them ‘colonial traces,’ which are also the object of meaning making for the people who perceive them. This is an important contribution to migration scholarship as a whole. Lifestyle migration is an empirical site for observing how “global transformations” (Castles, 2010) also influence the material practices and moral dispositions of relatively privileged migrants. These practices are in dialogue with longer histories inherited from a colonial world order—that is, an order in which claims to property were deliberately tied to race. In the colonial context, ownership regimes as well as stewardship of private property itself were placed

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<sup>1</sup>For lack of a better concept, I wish to extend the notion Bourdieu developed in terms of a social space to the global level, by bringing into the frame a global history of unequal distribution of the rewards (material, symbolic) of collectively produced surpluses. Though the working classes of postwar France occupied low status and economic positions in the French social field, this latter was configured in relation to French colonies, and the ability of French consumers to acquire objects that were produced with the labour power of low-paid, racialized workers.

under the purview of white, Europeans, while non-whites were often deliberately excluded from it (Abu-Lughod, 1980; Bhandar, 2018).

These colonial hierarchies also shape the material practices of lifestyle migrants, even as global inequalities continue to be reconfigured through the emergence of new regions of global accumulation. Material practices include the material lifestyles of relatively well-off global classes, who are able to relocate to lower cost locations, taking with them citizenship rights and accumulated capital, where it is able to purchase greater quantities of labour power than in other areas of the world system. These rights are also secured by international institutions, which powerful nation-states shaped, often in the interests of high-income networks of accumulation. The accumulation of wealth for some exists in dynamic relation to opportunities to exploit the productive labour of others—a salient theme in the history of labour migrations. Similarly, the material lifestyles of North American migrants in Costa Rica, for instance, draw attention to leisure practices, such as frequent eating out, that exist in dynamic relation to other practices, such as serving food, that imply global social relations of power and subordination.

These material practices are also the object of everyday scrutiny on the part of lifestyle migrants whose geographical mobility is paralleled by social mobility, upward in social class systems. As Benson (2013) points out with respect to North Americans in Panama, lifestyle migrants adjust to local class hierarchies, and the moral dispositions that are imposed on them if they wish to “integrate” and be accepted by local middle and upper middle classes, with whom they may share certain forms of privileged capital, including the symbolic capital of whiteness to the extent that it represents modernity, wealth, and an allegedly more efficient work ethic. These are also part of the social imaginings of lifestyle migrants, and they reference moral dispositions that lifestyle migrants from Global North to Global South develop in the process of migration. These imaginings help make sense of the global structural inequalities migrants face every day, and which they may have inherited from histories that individuals rarely see and for which they are scarcely responsible for creating.

### 1.3 Situating the Self in Global Social Space

While many scholars of lifestyle migration have focused on the self-understanding of migrants in territories of the Global North, I attend here primarily to the understandings and interpretive frames of migrants from Global North to Global South, which as noted in the last section, open interesting empirical windows for studying global inequalities and their effects. This section explores some structural concepts that draw attention to global inequalities, and that lifestyle migration scholarship can build around in a fuller engagement with a global sociology of migration.

### 1.3.1 *Transnationalism*

Interpretivist sociologies in lifestyle migration attend to structural forces that stratify global society, especially in scholarship on transnational whiteness (Lehmann, 2014; Lundström, 2014), and in work on the concept of privilege (Benson, 2013; Croucher, 2012). In this respect, lifestyle migration is drawing attention to a sociology of global inequality, which has garnered attention from scholars of world-systems theory (Boatca, 2015, 2016) as well as transnational approaches to global migrations (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Weiß, 2005). Lifestyle migration helps fill a gap in global sociology by attending to migrations from global social positions that are otherwise under-studied in other branches of transnational sociology. As transnational approaches to migration point out, social fields are not merely national, and also not static. Lifestyle migration draws attention to areas where quantitatively and qualitatively different types of social fields come into being. While the concept of transnational fields focused on connections between national fields, we may also be seeing the emergence of an increasingly global social space—that is, a qualitative transformation of transnational networks due to their quantitative multiplication and densification. A global social space is organized by nation-state jurisdiction (as noted below), but it captures the subjective experiences of living beyond the state, in which globally shared references and experiences connect people in specific local places that also organize and represent the lifestyles and tastes of “frequent flyer classes” (Calhoun, 2002).

While Bourdieusian field theory conceptualizes the field as a national space of social positions, it is often a clunky apparatus for conceptualizing global inequalities (Weiß, 2005, 2017). National social space has a history of integration that is at once economic and cultural, under the mediation of powerful institutions, most especially the nation-state. At the global scale, social space may initially appear more as an amalgam or interaction between these national social fields, yet it also contains transnational flows that change the qualities of these national fields. As the concept of “cosmopolitization” (Beck, 2011) suggests, we are living through a moment in history in which these national fields are being transformed, not only by economic globalization but also by cultural contact and increased mobility. This transformation in global culture is noted by transnational scholars of other types of migration (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015), who attend to the subjective interpretations of “cosmopolitanism from below” (Kurasawa, 2004).

Time-space compression (Harvey, 1989) increasingly inflects national fields with something qualitatively different than merely new forms of cosmopolitan cultural capital or the symbolic and economic benefits of transnational networks and connections. It brings individuals into a global space of positions in which opportunities and lifestyles vary in patterns that are both observable across national spaces, and that are attributable to shared global processes and interconnections. This global social space is, like Bourdieu’s field theory, also a field of forces, of individuals held together and related to one another by forces that differentiate and unequally distribute opportunities for movement of wealth and political rights, as well as

opportunities to acquire new experiences and dispositions that reflect contact with cultural difference.

### ***1.3.2 Regimes of Mobility***

Geographic movement is generative of capital in a global social field. But how these movements are regulated remains the purview of nation-states, which are not all equal to one another. The economic inequalities linking a global division of labour are, thus, central to global mobility rights, as well as to the different subjective understandings different types of migrants have pertaining to their mobility. One of the primary gravitational forces of a global social field is what Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) call “regimes of mobility”, that is, the pattern by which nation states regulate the movement of people across borders. The mobility of citizens of some states are facilitated by border regimes, such as the Schengen border area in Europe, designed to promote inter-EU mobility. Similarly, The US Customs and Border Protection Agency’s Trusted Traveler program facilitates rapid entry and pre-inspection for international travelers to the United States. At the same time, the Department of Homeland Security is building a wall to prevent informal workers from Latin America from reaching higher-income labour markets in the United States, where their labour is nonetheless in demand.

At this moment in history, the patterns of transnational movement are influenced by territorial demand for specific types of skilled and unskilled labour power. Aihwa Ong (2006) points out, the global division of labour is striated by ‘latitudes’ composed of skills that are in greater or lesser demand, and which therefore reward certain types of migrant with greater freedom of movement. Certainly, unskilled workers also move across borders, as in the case of participants in the Canadian Temporary Foreign Workers program (see Horgan & Liinamaa, 2017), but their ability to access rights across borders is circumscribed. Freedom to move across borders and claim citizenship rights, however, is not merely tied to demand for rare skills or educational capital. As Manuela Boatcă (2016) points out, inclusion into citizenship depends on holding the right passport, and several jurisdictions will sell rights to passports to high income foreigners, often through investment schemes that benefit the passport-emitting jurisdiction. Indeed, passports are one of the key legal objects of global regimes of mobility, regulating passage between latitudes and spaces. The accumulation of wealth in the weaker nation-states of the Global South gives access to citizenship and mobility rights commensurate with ‘higher latitudes.’

The unequal experience of mobility is one of the taken-for-granted material practices that shape the interpretations of North-South migrants. Their mobility rights are much broader owing to the higher incomes of their national economic space. Often, lifestyle migrants inherit citizenship rights, but also educational capital that is concentrated in high-income national spaces, rich in institutions that organize the transmission of educational capitals essential to entry into the higher latitudes of the global division of labour. Migrants from high-income countries are, therefore, seen

as an asset to the countries that attract them—a means of redistributing economic and cultural capital, a form of redistribution often part of the self-understanding of North-South migrants themselves. Moreover, the leisure- and consumption-oriented migrations of lifestyle migrants from the Global North to the Global South are considered as less likely to compete for local employment, or become a drain on public resources, such as health care, since their wealthier nation states can provide better for them at home. There is, within contemporary institutions governing mobility, an assumption that citizens of the Global North remain tethered to their territories of origin, despite lifestyles that are increasingly more vulnerable and precarious as a result of austerity and welfare state retrenchment (and which may in the near future change the way regimes of mobility are organized in relation to latitudes of the global division of labour).

Citizens of the core capitalist countries of the Global North experience light regulation in their transnational relocations to lower income spaces (Knowles & Harper, 2009), and often understand their movements in relation to categories other than migration, such as tourism or expatriation (Kunz, 2016). These self-understandings also mirror border controls and regulations of migration, which prevent the movement of (especially racialized) citizens of less wealthy nation states towards core countries of global accumulation. These patterns, of course, also reproduce the coloniality of rights of movement, since the citizenship rights of colonized peoples were restricted in expanding European empires from the 16th to the 20th centuries.

European colonial regimes produced racialized regimes of citizenship, providing differentiated rights to different ethnic groups in relation to their apparent assimilability to European values, and relegating others—especially ethnicities deemed non-white and un-European (Arab Muslims in the French colonies, for instance, see Katz, 2018)—to a lesser grade of humanity, with far fewer citizenship, labour, or mobility rights than white Europeans. While these colonial regimes of citizenship may seem distant to some, it is worth recalling the racial patterns of labour in contemporary “multicultural” states, like Canada, remain hierarchical along racial and citizenship lines. As Horgan and Liinamaa (2017) point out, the Canadian government organizes a labour regime permitting low-skill migrants from Jamaica and Mexico to perform essential agricultural labour on private Canadian farms, but extends no citizenship or social rights to them, such as employment insurance or public pensions, to which they nonetheless must contribute. These workers essentially lack citizenship rights in transnational contexts, while Canadian tourists in Mexico may expect to be treated better, or to have better access to social services, security, and judicial institutions than local Mexicans due to their citizenship of a ‘First World’ state.

### 1.3.3 *Coloniality of Power*

The pattern of mobility rights referred to above illustrates the coloniality of power at the heart of the modern world system. As Aníbal Quijano points out (2000a), the pattern of rights and material privileges in the global system intersects racial formations, which organize human populations and labour exploitation on the basis of racial categories. The unequal global economy we currently live in may appear quite distant from colonial times, and no doubt, there have been important modifications to it, not least as a result of the emergence of new centres of global accumulation in East Asia. The emergence of China as a global power is producing new global ethnic and racial hierarchies, built on Chinese and East Asian histories of somatic differentiation to be sure, but ones also constructed in deep dialogue with European colonial racial categories (Dikötter, 2017). The global control of labour power, therefore, can be said to reflect coloniality in the sense that supposedly biological differences are used to explain differences in economic development. While racial formations (Omi & Winant, 1994) have changed since 1945, and especially since formal political decolonization and the American civil rights movement, the pattern of racial hierarchies remains, producing spaces and material conditions of labour and leisure that are often highly segregated along racial lines.

This is most clearly visible, for instance, in the ability of American and European capitalists to command the world's labour power on terms favourable to ensuring high levels of consumption and political stability in the core capitalist countries. The availability of inexpensive textiles, consumer non-durable goods, and even plentiful and inexpensive food for the labouring classes of the core capitalist states is a reflection of an unequal global division of labour that is highly beneficial to the former imperial heartlands of global accumulation, and especially to its elite social classes. For several generations, global elites in core states have benefitted from domestic political stability maintained by an organized redistribution towards working classes of the spoils of an imperial, global economy. The highly unequal division of global surpluses distinguish working lives in core capitalist countries from those in the periphery, where labour remained outside the redistributive mechanisms of welfare states. Access to cheap credit for mortgage lending enabled many North American, North European and Japanese workers to live far beyond the lifestyles of workers in other territories, and even to acquire property wealth (acquisitions dependent, however, on maintaining an imperial economic relations with the rest of the world).<sup>2</sup> It also enabled those workers to devote themselves to "lifestyles" that privilege the accumulation of consumer items that served as outward signs of successful living and social advancement.

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<sup>2</sup>It is also important to note how racial hierarchies affected the redistribution of surpluses within core regions of the global economy. As only one example, in the United States, mortgage lending practices such as "red-lining" discriminated against African Americans and prevented the accumulation of wealth for many black workers (see Gotham, 2002).

From the vantage point of a global field theory, the unequal distribution of global surpluses produces a “vertical mosaic” of unequally integrated groups. U.S. financial hegemony over the world system of trade, and the seignorage rights of the American state are the institutional gravitational forces that held the global social field together—institutions that were the product of North European and North American colonialism, and the narrow control of these countries’ industrial elites over a large, global workforce (Arrighi, 2010).<sup>3</sup> While substantially modified from the settler colonialism of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the ability of citizens of core nation-states to command labour power constitutes a powerful extension of the late Victorian global project of European technological modernization. Eurocentric notions of modernization and modernity (for a critique see Santos, 2014; Quijano, 2000b) reorder global space as well as social space, and impose conditions (of living and working) on non-white workers in lower-income, former colonized countries across the globe. In many respects, we are not living in a postcolonial moment, but in a moment of coloniality, representative of the anti-colonial and anti-imperial countermovement, which crystalized in new global institutions (the G7, the WTO, the Washington Consensus of the IMF, World Bank and US Treasury, itself largely controlled by New York-based global investment banks) between the 1970s and the 1990s (Prashad, 2007). The social structural transformations of the global economy influence global hierarchies and are observable in the everyday lives of transnational migrants, regardless of points of origin and destination.

This is perhaps most clear in relation to the North-South migrations studied by lifestyle migration scholars. As several studies have pointed out, North European and North American migrants experience considerable structural advantages from their global social position. They have access to higher-incomes on average. Moreover, while not all North-South migrants are white, the racialized whiteness of many North Europeans and North Americans grant them access to symbolic privileges that most other migrants from the Global South do not enjoy. However, North-South migration is also tied up with global economic transformations. The globalization of real estate markets since the 1990s has facilitated North-South property investment and development of lifestyle communities in developing countries. Moreover, the economic crises of 1987, 1997–98, 2000–2001, 2008 and now 2020 has crippled the pension savings of many middle-class members of the baby boomer generation in North America, Japan and Northern Europe, and deprived younger generations of stable employment. The result has been an apparent increase in North-South migrations undertaken for economic reasons (Bender et al., 2018; Hayes, 2015; Lardiés, 2011; Toyota & Thang, 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> Whether this continues beyond 2020 is very much up in the air in light of the ongoing coronavirus emergency in much of the world at time of writing.

### 1.3.4 *Interpreting Global Dispositions*

The ‘downshifting’ (Hoey, 2009) of these migrants effectively constitutes a sudden change in class position, which is the source of reflection and interpretation. Receiving communities perceive lifestyle migrants from the Global North as relatively wealthy, which is a source of ambivalence for many, even when they identify with the economic privileges of moving to a lower-income country (see Hayes, 2018b). As Michaela Benson (2013) points out, lifestyle migrants’ experiences in former colonies are influenced by access to new class- and race-based privileges or advantages that they interpret and in some ways, must digest. “Digestion” takes various forms which also structure global social space. Benson describes how some North Americans in Panama initially try to compensate for their economic advantages by over-paying local service workers. Yet, they eventually become accustomed to local norms in regards to treatment of employees and acquiesce in order to fit in better with local upper classes.

My own work in Ecuador demonstrates a similar process, in which globally privileged social classes police one another’s interpretations of privilege, and try to enforce adherence to local price levels as a sign of cultural respect (Hayes, 2018b). In other cases, lifestyle migrants seek to volunteer and “give back,” a form of moral labour (Fechter, 2016) which is also shaped by material inequalities. In other cases, however, these inequalities are the object of active work of disregard (Stoler, 2009). Yes, as one French man told me in Morocco, he benefits from retiring to a low-income country, whose economy was structured largely to serve France. “But what am I supposed to do about that?” This question and how lifestyle migrants attempt to answer it is worthy of additional research because it helps elucidate how different dispositions and moral codes help shape global inequalities, just as they are also produced by them.

Material inequalities between lifestyle migrants and the communities they go to live in are embodied and inherited social structures. These embodied and inherited structures shape our moral and affective dispositions towards the signs of material differences at global scale. For instance, as I point out in my work on Cuenca, Ecuador (Hayes, 2018a), North American idealizations of Ecuadorian urban space, and of apparently tight Ecuadorian families are reactions to North American modernity. They are nostalgic longings for apparently more authentic bonds which modernization disrupt. These emotions are critiques of modernity, but also exist in relation to global relations of domination and subordination, since the process of modernization relies on globally accumulated surpluses that are concentrated in (often) urban spaces in core countries. The Berlin Hauptbahnhof subjectively feels like the future (at least it did to me) because it represents the historical concentration of wealth and technical knowledge that was accumulated in relation to other spaces, where the funds for modernization and material upgrading were lacking. The wealth of Berlin exists in historical relation to its East European hinterland, from whence its workforce and many of its raw materials came.

Similarly, the financialization of housing in the Global North (Aalbers, 2008), which has so reshaped peoples' lives as well as the suburban landscapes of cities in Europe, Canada and the United States since the shift to neoliberalism, are a product of the way the 1982 debt crisis forced banks in Latin America, Africa and South Asia to repay loans to the Global North, lubricating northern banks and priming them for new forms of high-leverage finance. Subjective interpretations of the material consequences of global power relations often leave out complex histories for which sociological cartographies and theoretical apparatuses are required (for a critique of such sociologies, see Boltanski, 2011: 18–23). While global justice movements have begun to shape these interpretations in relation to historical social relations of exploitation, they are also often resisted by lifestyle migrants who sometimes prefer to understand their travel and adventure in auto-poetic terms, as a libertarian creation of the self.

Lifestyle migrants often come from countries at the centre of colonial economic integration. These countries are not all equal, and contain within them the consequences of their own colonial histories. These histories are part of a shared global heritage, which contextualize individual identities, projects and ways of seeing. How lifestyle migrants and others make sense of their global political, economic, and environmental inheritance is consequential to what will be bequeathed to others. Rather than being part of a distant past, sociology can help show how the consequences of the coloniality of power remain a live and urgent political and moral problem. The everyday lives of North-South lifestyle migrants are important places to study how these problems are dealt with (or not dealt with) by members of an emerging, global civil society.

## 1.4 Conclusion: Colonial Reminders in Lifestyle Migration

Lifestyle migration scholars have highlighted the importance of individualism and projects of the self, and have attended to the ways that representations of place effect material social relations in those places. Can it also be part of a reflexive, public sociology that would shine a light on what Benson and O'Reilly (2018) call the "colonial traces" in our collective present? Its interpretivist approach to migration, and its focus on migrants from the Global North help address the cultural frames and boundary work underpinning much global inequality. These migrations become an empirical site for studying colonial dispositions, and what happens to them when relatively privileged people are confronted with new material contexts through North-South migration. Perhaps critical reflection on how migration is experienced and regulated differently for different groups might broaden public interest in how our global society can be organized differently, on the basis of greater solidarity and a desire to share resources and citizenship rights more broadly. Rigorous description, however, may not lead to normative solidarity. Lifestyle migration need not merely describe global inequalities. Its interpretivist focus can also attend to the justification's lifestyle migrants make in defence of their relative

privilege and global position. These justifications imply different forms of emotional and moral labour. As Anja Weiß (2017) points out, normative discourses of inequality often fall between kind-hearted but paternalistic charity and self-interested disregard. These dispositions reflect a specific stage of global integration, one in which bonds of solidarity remain relatively weak, and institutions appear unable to address structural imbalances.

As global inequalities change and transnational mobility shifts in relation to new economic dynamics—after the coronavirus epidemic, who knows, perhaps as part of ageing strategies that attempt to avoid precarity and lost pension savings (Bender et al., 2018)—it cannot be assumed that all lifestyle migrations are merely “neocolonial.” In many cases, new forms of North-South “precarity migration” (Bender et al., 2018, see also Botterill, 2017; Toyota & Thang, 2017) suggest new strategies for coping with the effects of a maturing neoliberal society, which privileges youthfulness, competitiveness and productivity above values that are also often important to people in core capitalist countries, such as the wisdom of life experience acquired through ageing, care for others, and solidarity. The imaginary that these values might exist in former colonial countries speaks to the colonial traces of social imaginings, but they also speak to real social structural changes that are transforming global hierarchies. North-South lifestyle migrations may occur in post-colonial settings, and as numerous scholars have pointed out, may also reproduce elements of the colonial encounter, but they are also more often different in ways that suggest how global hierarchies are shifting, and which a global sociology of migration that includes lifestyle migration might help to capture. By drawing attention to the self-understanding of migrants’ sense of global social mobility, privilege and inequality, lifestyle migration scholars can contribute to understanding how these shifts interact with the global political narratives of inclusion and exclusion. In the wake of the current Coronavirus pandemic, it is quite possible these narratives will participate in constructing new transnational and global hierarchies.

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