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GLOBAL NOMADISM:

A DISCURSIVE AND NARRATOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
OF IDENTITY CONCEPTS IN THE 'MOBILE PROFESSIONAL'

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examined to what extent a particular class of highly mobile professionals has internalized the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism, proposed by the researcher as an example of the kind of corporate discourses that are emerging to encompass the ideology of neoliberalism and which are inscribed in a particular genre of popular managerial and globalization literature through prescription of ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour.

The researcher selected a representative sample of corporate texts that comprises books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization and corporate websites by consultancy firms, and collected personal narratives or life stories from a sample of professionals who in the pursuit of work have relocated internationally more than once. These texts were cross-analysed to identify how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is manifested, whether in similar or contradictory ways. This analysis combined the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis with narrative analysis, with a particular emphasis on deconstruction and intertextuality. A characteristic feature of this study is the use of online communication technologies to encompass research participants who are geographically dispersed.

The principal original contribution to knowledge of this dissertation is the relationship made between the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism and the ideology of neoliberalism. The methodologies and methods used in the elaboration of this research are also important contributions. The most prominent finding of this study is that the attitudes of the research participants towards their own mobility are contradictory as their self-representation from the standpoints of the context of work and the private sphere are discursively confronted. This dissonance in the narratives represents struggles in the life of the research participants as they attempt to meet corporate demands for continuous global mobility. The findings of this study show that despite the persuasive power of certain corporate discourses they are not passively assumed by individuals, meaning that the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism as a dominant ideology underlying modern organizations is not absolute, because individuals consciously or subconsciously resist and challenge the messages it conveys.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the research problem

This thesis explores the extent to which a particular class of 'transnational professionals' has internalized the contemporary discourse of corporate 'global nomadism'. The theoretical point of departure for the core argument put forward in this dissertation is that global nomadism is a discourse of neoliberal capitalism that infiltrates the domain of work, through demands for continuous individual global mobility in accordance with the fluctuations of economic markets; however, from the standpoint of the individual such demands may represent a requirement to always be available to relocate internationally in the pursuit of work opportunities.

The term transnational professional as used in this research refers to those individuals who for work purposes have relocated internationally more than once, and who intended to continue to move internationally at the time the narrative interviews were carried out. This approach to the geographical displacement of people in contemporary society differentiates from traditional forms of labour migration, in that individuals primarily perceive their relationship with the host locality as temporary (Colic-Peisker, 2010; Costas, 2013; D'Andrea, 2006; Fechter, 2007; Meerwarth, 2008; Nowicka, 2007; Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009; Ossman, 2004; Polson, 2011). Host locality refers to the country in which the individuals live at work at a given time, so it is considered as a stable place of residency during a defined period of time; therefore, the life of the transnational professional necessarily involves a series of host localities.

The principal original contribution to knowledge of the thesis is to support the understanding of how certain discourses related to organizational life ('corporate context' hereafter) can potentially contribute to the dissemination and perpetuation of the ideology of neoliberal capitalism as a dominant system in contemporary society (Fairclough, 2006). The researcher argues that transnational professionals seek to justify and to validate their own mobility by drawing on discourses that are particularly salient in the corporate context, and which may convey dominant ideologies and hegemonic assumptions associated with neoliberal ideology. Moreover, the researcher argues that the discourses associated with the contemporary mobility of professionals draw upon romanticized representations of traditional nomadism as

a way to support the organizations' interests. On this basis, this research proposes the discourse of corporate global nomadism as an example of the kind of managerial and popular globalization discourses that are emerging as part of the 'new management ideology', which embody prescriptions of identity, flexibility and mobility associated with the ideology of 'the new spirit of capitalism' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Fairclough, 2004; 2006; Harvey, 1990; 2005).

In brief terms, 'the new spirit of capitalism' as described by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) refers to the ideas, beliefs and values that seek to justify and to legitimize the transformations that have occurred in the capitalist system throughout time. Each of the three 'spirits' of capitalism identified by the authors draws upon ideological assumptions and discourses that are dominant at a given era in order to address the dimensions of stimulation, security and fairness intended to support and to perpetuate the interests of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) today's spirit of capitalism is inscribed in the kind of corporate literature examined as part of this research, through the articulation of core discourses and associations that determine particular forms of status against which people's actions and attitudes are measured. The ideology of neoliberal capitalism is thus here considered as part of the wider context in which the discourse of corporate global nomadism is being produced, distributed and consumed. This critical approach to the relationship between late managerial and popular globalization discourses of individual mobility, and the ideology of neoliberalism was the foundation for the definition of the criteria for the selection of corporate texts for the analysis.

In order to address these arguments, the research explores to what degree a representative sample of transnational professionals assume their own international mobility in ways in which are consonant with the ideology of neoliberalism. The attitudes of the research participants towards their highly mobile lifestyle constitute the focus of the research, because such attitudes are here considered as a manifestation of the extent to which the discourse of global nomadism permeates the domain of work potentially shaping the life of individuals. To understand how the discourse of global nomadism is represented in the corporate context, the research critically analyses a representative sample of texts from a genre of popular literature in which the ideology of capitalism is inscribed (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002). The argument here is not that the research participants have necessarily read this kind of texts; rather, through the relationship between the corpus of

texts of the sample and the participants' attitudes towards their own mobility, the researcher examines the potential of dominant discourses and hegemonic assumptions to transcend different domains and scales of social life through intertextual and interdiscursive connections (Foucault, 2010a; Kristeva, 1980). In other words, by analysing the discourse of corporate global nomadism from the standpoint of individuals and from the perspective of popular publications, the researcher hopes to contribute to the understanding of how certain dominant discourses can bring into action and ways of thinking the statements and claims they advocate about reality (Bordieu and Wacquant, 2001; Fairclough, 2004).

The geographical displacement of the research participants is a spontaneous course of action, in the sense that it is the result of a conscious decision rather than imposed by external agency; therefore, the unifying feature of the transnational professionals who constitute the research sample is that they all chose to go from being spatially sedentary to lead a 'nomadic lifestyle' by repetitively relocating internationally in the pursuit of work. The notion of a nomadic lifestyle as argued in this research refers to the participants' adoption of continuous transnational mobility as a form of life that simultaneously involves a variety of aspects related to the corporate domain as well as to the private sphere. In these terms, the research is concerned with the participants' attitudes towards their own transnational mobility, and the extent to which such attitudes are framed by managerial and popular globalization discourses of individual global mobility.

As part of the theoretical framework of the research's aim, the researcher reviewed the pertinent literature concerning the relationship between contemporary representations of the discourse of nomadism and the corporeal mobility of individuals in modern society, with a particular emphasis on the body of literature concerning the international mobility of professionals. The intention was to problematize the assumptions made in the existing literature, rather than as a technique for 'gap spotting' (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2013); therefore, the function of the research questions is not to 'fill a gap' in the literature concerned with the contemporary mobility of professionals, but to critically examine the representations of the discourses of nomadism and individual mobility in the work domain.

The researcher considered contemporary representations of individual mobility that draw on particular aspects associated with traditional forms of nomadism, but which discursively shift from the negative and marginal connotations historically attributed to the latter to positive

and even glorified metaphors of flux, freedom and boundary crossing (Augé, 2012; Bauman, 2000; Belton, 2005; Clébert, 1970; Cresswell, 1997; Legrand, 2008; Mayall, 1988; Noyes, 2004; Pels, 1999; Stengers, 1997). This approach to the discourse of nomadism is found, for instance, in the works by critical philosophers and sociologists such as Braidotti (1994), Deleuze and Guattari (2004), Maffesoli (1997) and Sloterdijk (2013). Additionally, in the literature of mobility studies traditional forms of nomadism are used as a discursive frame of reference to describe the highly mobile lifestyle of some contemporaries (see for example the works by Colic-Peisker, 2010; D'Andrea, 2006; Fechter, 2007; Meerwarth, 2008; Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001; Nowicka, 2007; Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009; Ossman, 2004; Polson, 2011). The review of these approaches to the discourse of nomadism provided the researcher with a valuable insight of characteristic features and personal competencies attributed to individuals who are highly mobile, which was critical for the definition of the criteria of selection of research participants.

1.2 Statement of research questions

As mentioned above, the research questions were constructed following the approach of 'problematization', in the sense of challenging the assumptions underlying existing literature, rather than the traditional 'gap spotting' technique which generally serves to reinforce established theory (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2013). Following this critical approach, the research questions were intended to compare the representations of the discourse of global nomadism as used in managerial and popular globalization texts, against the personal standpoint of individuals who repeatedly relocate from one country to another in the pursuit of work.

1) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the corpus of managerial and popular globalization texts, and to what extent does it convey the interests of late capitalism?

This research question focuses on how language is mobilized in the sample of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization to represent the international mobility of individuals within the context of work, and the ways in which such representations

encompass dominant discourses and hegemonic assumptions associated with the ideology of neoliberalism.

2) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the corpus of corporate websites by consultancy firms, and to what extent they draw upon the core ideas and metaphors identified in the corpus of managerial and popular globalization texts?

This research question intends to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections between the sample of corporate websites by consultancy firms and the sample of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, on the basis that the ideas and claims popularized by the latter have the potential to infiltrate other texts produced in different situational and temporal contexts.

3) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the research sample of personal narratives?

This research question is concerned with the attitudes of the research participants towards their own international mobility in the pursuit of work, represented through the narrative of their own life story.

4) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism represented, whether in similar or contradictory ways, across the different set of texts that constitute the research's corpuses?

This research question intends to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections among all the texts that constitute the research's samples in order to analyse to what extent the discourse of corporate global nomadism is represented, whether to support or challenge underlying hegemonic assumptions and dominant ideologies associated with neoliberal capitalism.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the research

The aim and objectives of the study were set out to encompass the research questions; the approach assumed for their definition follows the critical analysis of texts in the sense of

exposing the hidden relationship between language, power and ideology (Fairclough, 2006). By including the subjectivity of individuals as part the research objectives, the researcher hopes to support the argument that despite the 'persuasive power' of certain corporate discourses they are open to resistance in the everyday life of people (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004; Harvey, 2006).

Aim

The overall aim of the research is to examine the ways in which the discourse of corporate global nomadism is inscribed in a particular genre of popular managerial and globalization literature through the prescription of ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour, and to understand to what extent the research participants have internalized such prescriptions.

Objectives

1) To select a representative sample of books that are part of the genre of popular managerial and globalization literature, and to examine the texts following the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis, while identifying intertextual and interdiscursive connections with the ideology of neoliberalism as part of the wider context in which the texts are produced, distributed and consumed.

2) To select a representative sample of corporate websites by consultancy firms primarily concerned with the international mobility of professionals within the organizational context, and to examine the texts following the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis, while identifying intertextual and interdiscursive connections with the sample of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization.

3) To collect a representative sample of personal narratives from research participants through one-to-one interviews and online discussion forums, and to critically examine such texts, drawing on narrative theory, in particular the approaches of deconstruction and intertextual analysis.

4) To cross-analyse the sample of managerial and popular globalization books and corporate websites by consultancy firms, and the sample of personal narratives, in order to identify

similarities and contradictions among the texts from the perspective of the discourse of corporate global nomadism and associated concepts identified in the literature review. This objective combines the methodological approach of critical discourse analysis with narrative analysis, tracing interdiscursive and intertextual connections amongst the texts.

1.4 Overview of the research methods and methodologies

The researcher selected a representative sample of 'corporate texts' in which the discourse of global nomadism is present through idealised assumptions of individual global mobility within the modern context of organizations; to critically examine these assumptions, the researcher collected 'personal narratives' from a sample of professionals who repetitively relocate internationally in the pursuit of work. The corpus of corporate texts used for the analysis comprises the sample of books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, and the sample of corporate websites by consultancy firms. The research sample of personal narratives comprises the narratives collected through one-to-one interviews and the narratives collected through online discussion forums. The intention was to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections across a variety of texts, on the basis that the discourse of corporate global nomadism has the potential to infiltrate texts produced in different conditions and domains of social life through the articulation of similar concepts and representations in which meanings are taken for granted.

The discourse of global nomadism as considered in this research is associated with the corporate environment regarding the underlying relationship between the world of work and the transnational mobility of the research participants; however, the research does not assume that this mobility is passively internalized by the research participants as a requirement of their professional careers. The level of resistance or discursive opposition is identified through the critical analysis of similarities and discrepancies between the personal attitudes manifested in the research narratives, and popular representations of the discourse of corporate global nomadism in the sample of corporate texts.

The framework used to examine the different corpuses of texts combines critical discourse analysis with narrative analysis, the latter particularly following a critical approach to deconstruction and intertextuality. The combined use of these two methodologies are a

contribution of this research to discourse and narrative theory as it serves to demonstrate that they can complement each other in analysis. The combination of these critical approaches to the study of language was used to examine to what extent the research participants have internalized the discourse of corporate global nomadism as represented in the sample of corporate texts. In providing a retrospective account of their life story, the research participants mobilized certain narrative elements to describe past events in ways in which are consonant with their intentions; at the same time, they sought to render past actions and experiences consonant with assumptions of what they perceive as a desirable or positive way of being and which draw on the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism. However, in constructing their narratives the research participants consciously or subconsciously incorporated comments or opinions that contradicted the overall sense of their narratives, creating dissonance in relation to their intended meaning; this is what Cohn (1978) refers to as 'consonant' and 'dissonant' self-narration. In these terms, dissonance in the narratives is here considered as a representation of the level of subjective resistance or struggle from the part of the research participants to internalize the discourse of corporate global nomadism.

The researcher argues that personal narratives or life stories offer a valuable insight of the extent to which the discourse of corporate global nomadism determines how individuals understand and act upon certain discourses and assumptions that are part of their everyday life. On the basis that the power of discourse partly rests on the potential to transcend different domains and scales of social life (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001; Fairclough, 2004; Harvey, 2005), the researcher argues that the discourse of corporate global nomadism is manifested in similar ways across the sample of personal narratives independently of differences in the socio-cultural background and international experience of the research participants. The research methods for the gathering of personal narratives involved semi-structured interviews and discussion forums through online communication technologies. The fundamental feature that characterizes this research is that at any time the researcher and the research participants shared the same situational context; more specifically, the entire process of collection of personal narratives was carried out using communication tools that are independent of physical distances. This approach enabled the researcher to achieve a varied sample of participants in terms of national origin, age group, family situation, profession and number of transnational relocations, but which is at the same time

homogenous in the sense that their nomadic lifestyle results from the pursuit of work opportunities across countries.

English was used as the 'lingua franca' in this study (Tietze and Dick, 2009), meaning that it was the common language between the researcher, who is a Spanish native speaker, and the potential and actual research participants who are of different national origin, including English speaking countries. With the exception of five narrative interviews that were carried out in Spanish and translated into English during the transcription process, the researcher used English for all communications to search for potential participants and during the process of data collection. The English language is here considered as one of the unifying variables of the sample of research participants because it is the common language in the corporate context in which they move. Although the use of English may contribute to the dissemination and perpetuation of the discourse of corporate global nomadism across different socio-cultural domains, it falls beyond the scope of this research to analyse to what degree the English language in the life of the transnational professionals is a 'hegemonic force' in itself (Fairclough, 2002; 2006; Tietze, 2004; Tietze and Dick, 2013). More specifically, this study examines how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is represented , whether in similar or contradictory ways, among a sample of participants that includes native speakers of English and non-native English speakers, but it does not focus on the extent to which such representations are a consequence of the participants' ability to speak English.

1.5 Structure of the remainder of the thesis

The thesis is divided into six broad chapters, the first of which is this introduction dedicated to the discussion of the background of the research questions and the statement of the aim and objectives, followed by an overview of the research methods and methodologies.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review which is organized into three parts. Part I explains the ideology of neoliberal capitalism and the associated dominant discourses. This section includes an overview of popular managerial discourses, and the context of globalization and individual global mobility from the perspective of neoliberal interests. Part II offers a brief description of traditional forms of nomadism and the ways in which they serve as a source of discursive representations for the mobility of individuals in contemporary society. Part III

presents a review of mobility studies that focus on highly mobile individuals, including studies that draw on the contemporary discourse of nomadism. This section includes an outline of career theory that is particularly concerned with the international mobility of professionals.

Chapter 3 is divided into two sections that respectively present the methods used for the gathering of research data, and the methodological approaches followed for the analysis and discussion. Part I offers a review of online research theory to introduce semi-structured interviews and online discussion forms as the methods selected for the collection of personal narratives. This section also presents the criteria set out for the selection of the sample research participants and the sample of corporate texts, as well as a detailed description of the processes of data collection. Part II reviews the theory on critical discourse analysis and narrative analysis as the selected methodologies of the research.

Chapter 4, which is divided into three parts, presents the analysis of the sample of texts collected for the research. Part I is dedicated to the analysis of the sample of books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization. Part II is dedicated to the analysis of the sample of corporate websites by consultancy firms primarily concerned with the international mobility of professionals in the organizational setting. Part III is dedicated to the analysis of the sample of personal narratives constructed by the research participants.

Chapter 5 presents the discussion of the analysis of the research data. This chapter merges the analysis of the sample of managerial and popular globalization books and corporate websites by consultancy firms with the analysis of the sample of personal narratives, in order to discuss the implications of the ways in which the texts incorporate and represent the discourse of corporate global nomadism. This chapter includes the outline of the linkage between the research's key theoretical concepts used for the analysis, the discursive constructs identified in the sample of corporate texts and the narrative concepts represented in the participants' narratives.

Chapter 6 offers the conclusions drawn from the analysis and discussion chapters by addressing the research questions presented in this introduction. This section includes a review of the original contribution to knowledge this study makes, and the limitations of the research as well as suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

PART I – THE IDEOLOGY OF NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

2.1 The 'spirit of capitalism'

Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) refer to 'the spirit of capitalism', a concept that originally comes from Weberian sociology, as the ideology that justifies people's engagement in capitalism, while presenting such engagement as desirable. The term ideology in this context refers to the set of arguments that are embedded in institutions and in actions, potentially infiltrating all mental representations specific to a given period; these arguments, that constitute the resources of the spirit of capitalism, are called upon to motivate commitment to the capitalist order, and to legitimize this commitment by providing justifications that are strong enough to stand up to anti-capitalist critique (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The spirit of capitalism draws from pre-established associations and shared beliefs that are dominant at a particular era in order to find grounds to justify and legitimize the individuals' contribution to the system, meaning that capitalism must seek new associations to adjust its 'spirit' when important changes occur in the social context to preserve its power of persuasion throughout time and to be able to respond to critique (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The spirit of capitalism is thus transformed following significant alterations of the modes of production and consumption and the subsequent modification of the organization of work; the intention is to render the new forms of accumulation exciting and stimulating for individuals, inspiring security to those who are involved with capitalism while providing justifications for their involvement by addressing the common good (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the spirit of capitalism incorporates the dimensions of stimulation, security and justice; however, the set of arguments that support these dimensions vary according to the capitalist order characteristic of a particular period. Following the ideological changes that have accompanied the historical evolution of the capitalist system, the authors identify three states of the spirit of capitalism. The first spirit of capitalism, manifested at the end of the nineteenth century, was focused on the figure of the bourgeois entrepreneur who represented the liberation from traditional forms of domestic production primarily dependent on land, to the emerging forms of wage-labour that

supported the creation of small family firms outside their local communities (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). During bourgeois capitalism stimulation was provided by the geographical freedom for capitalist production and the excitement it involved, while security was offered by the prospects of personal property, familial working relationships and the role of charity; the arguments of contributing to the common good during this era were generally based on the pursuit of progress as the justification for economic market demands (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

The second spirit of capitalism, which occurred between the 1930s and the 1960s, shifted the focus from individual entrepreneurship to the growth of large organizations; this spirit was centred in the 'heroic' figure of the manager, involving a sense of stimulation for individuals by providing opportunities for career advancement and to achieve positions of power within the corporation (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The possibility of long-term planning and the constitution of a protective environment for the individual regarding their career and personal development were other forms of security offered during the second spirit of capitalism; references to the common good were primarily based on institutional solidarity seeking social justice between corporations and between corporations and the state (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The third spirit of capitalism, which corresponds to today's 'new' spirit, is framed by contemporary processes of globalization in regards to developments in technologies of communication and travel and increased growth in market competition, and the subsequent transformations in the employment relationships and the representations people have of work (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

2.1.1 The justificatory regime model or 'city'

Following the argument advocated by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the dimension of justice in the spirit of capitalism necessarily incorporates reference to pre-established conventions to respond to critique concerned with the collective benefit or common good; these conventions claim universal validity as they transcend the actors involved in particular social relations and are agreed prior to such relations. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991) use the theoretical construct 'city' ('Cité 'in French) to refer to the 'justificatory regime' that serves as reference for individuals to evaluate and to validate the fairness of social systems and actions. In the terminology used by Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), a city advocates a 'common superior

principle' that claims universal validity by reference to its capacity of legitimacy in previous situations concerned with the common good. The common superior principle is associated with a particular 'grammar' or set of discourses that are mobilized as a hierarchy of values on which individuals rely "to discriminate between behaviour that is satisfactory and behaviour that leads to exclusion" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 105). From this perspective, embodiment of the values of the city represents the 'condition of great man' whereas the absence of these values represents the 'condition of little person' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 108-9).

Boltanski and Thévenot (1991) originally identified the following six cities or justificatory regimes in modern society: the inspirational city, the domestic city, the city of fame, the civic city, the market city and the industrial city. Each justificatory regime is associated with a specific vocabulary or set of discourses that describe the categories of objects, subjects and modes of relation in accordance with their particular criteria of status; although several justificatory regimes can exist at a given point in time, they encompass the dimension of stimulation, justice and security particular to the spirit of capitalism of the era (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). For instance, the first spirit of capitalism was mainly associated with the domestic and market regimes, using words such as 'generation', 'tradition' and 'hierarchy' in reference to the former, and 'rivalry' and 'competitors' for the latter; whereas the second spirit mostly made references to the discourses of the industrial and civic regimes, in which, accordingly, 'performance' and 'future', and 'collective' and 'general will' were predominantly used (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002). With regard to the recent changes in capitalism, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) argue that the discourses associated with the previous six regimes do not fully describe the representations of 'the new sprit' they identify in their study; therefore, the authors propose the construct 'projective city' to refer to the apparatus of justification that is in the process of being formed as part of the set of arguments primarily concerned with 'networks'and 'projects'.

2.1.2 The new spirit of capitalism and the projective city

To study the ideological transformations that led to the formation of the projective city, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) analyse a corpus of 120 texts from contemporary 'management literature' on the basis that this genre of literature is "one of the main sites in

which the spirit of capitalism is inscribed" (p. 57). According to the authors, management literature is primarily concerned with informing managers on the matter of running firms and the management of employees, providing 'the most direct access' to the representations of ideology that constitutes the spirit of capitalism in a given era. Following the argument that changes in the ideology of capitalism are 'registered' in management texts, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) use texts published in the 1960s and in the 1990s to analyse the ideological changes that accompanied the recent transformations in capitalism.

Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) particularly refer to 'non-technical' management literature as a sort of writing that deal with 'management in general' and is addressed to individuals whose contribution in organizations is critical for the expansion of capitalism. This type of literature, characterized by a high moral tone and a prescriptive orientation, largely intends to prompt support and generate engagement by stating 'what should be done' in accordance to the image of the word envisaged by the authors, offering selected 'examples' taken from reality to support their claims (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Management texts are thus constructed as 'manuals of moral instruction' that provide the reasons that justify the 'prescribed' way of making profit, while rendering such prescriptions as desirable and exciting not only for individual gain but also in terms of personal security and contribution to the common good (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). However, for these justifications to be of interest to managers and other professionals they must relate to localized issues regarding the organizational context, such as the corporations' employees and the social and physical community in which they are based (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

The main feature found by the authors in the corpus of 1990s, is the emphasis of international competition provoked by the fluctuations occurred in economic markets since the 1970s, that results in the 'obsessive attention' on adaptability, change and flexibility to constitute the image of the world portrayed in the management texts of this period (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). In order to address these transformations, the authors of such texts prescribe mechanisms and modes of action constructed around the metaphor of the 'network' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the notion of network is an example of how capitalism mobilizes existing concepts and tools to construct representations that are particular to a given epoch. The contemporary discourse of network is associated with a specific vocabulary or grammar that describes today's forms of capitalist production and so it 'naturally' infiltrates the language of the new spirit of capitalism

(Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Central to the notion of network is the concept of 'project', understood as a temporary connection of objects and subjects that creates value, and that allows the establishment of more lasting links that aid the expansion of the network as they can potentially lead to the creation of new projects (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Life in the projective-city is conceived as a 'succession of projects' as individuals are encouraged to constantly engage in ventures that are meant to last a determinate period of time so new projects can be prepared and followed (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 110). Conceiving life as a succession of projects means that the 'development of oneself' is dependent upon the individuals' ability to go from one project to another, whereas those who cannot engage in projects, and thus contribute with the network's expansion, are in risk of exclusion (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 111).

Following the terminology used to designate the principles that define the hierarchy within the previous cities, the authors identify 'activity', in the sense of generating and pursuing projects, as the common superior principle on which the projective city is based. Enthusiasm in the seventh city is generated by the hope that engagement in a project is going to be followed by another project in a way that activity is secured; these projects can be of any kind and belong to different spheres of life because the focus is placed on the set of discourses provided to describe the 'heroism' in their accomplishment (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The discourses that encompass the 'state of greatness' in the projective city includes concepts such as 'flexibility', 'mobility', 'adaptability' and 'availability'; these notions oppose 'stability' and 'rootedness' and encourage the detachment from the local and the renouncement of longstanding links (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 123). In this environment, value is measured by the individuals' ability to be 'a nomad', that is to say, their readiness to engage in a new project by being physically and intellectually 'mobile'; the sacrifice of single projects that last a lifetime, such as a profession or a marriage, is thus considered as the 'formula of investment' or contribution towards the next project (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 122).

'Great men' in the projective city are 'streamlined' in the sense that individuals renounce anything that may hinder their 'availability' or readiness to move; individuals are liberated from property ownership by favouring the possibility of 'renting' or 'borrowing', and from the 'burden' of their own passions and values by being tolerant and open to differences in order to adjust to others and to fluctuating circumstances (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 124). In modern society, the individuals' need for autonomy replaces the need for security

characteristic of the previous form of capitalism; the desire for ownership in the projective city is satisfied by the ownership of the self: "the sole instance endowed with a certain permanency in a complex, uncertain and changing world" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 125). Individuals, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007, p. 154) argue, are 'owners of themselves' in that they are the product of their work of 'self-fashioning' rather than by natural right, and their mobility is the means to 'aggrandize' the self as it enables them to expand and diversify their networks in search of new projects. Mobility in the projective city refers to the individuals' ability to move in geographical and intellectual space, between people and between ideas; as a discourse, mobility is used to emphasise the unequal relations between the mobile and the immobile (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Those who are mobile are able to respond to the flexibility demanded by the labour market, whereas those who are rooted are in a "state of permanent anxiety about being disconnected, rejected, abandoned on the spot by those who move around" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 364).

2.2 New management ideology

Fairclough (2002; 2004) argues that the role of language is particularly salient in the ideology of new capitalism because the latter is generally viewed as being 'knowledge-driven', meaning that changes in contemporary society are brought about through the production, circulation and consumption of knowledge, which in turn is generated, circulated and consumed as discourses. As mentioned above, the ideology that accompanies and supports the historical changes in the capitalist system is associated with a particular vocabulary that has the potential to justify and to promote such changes; therefore, transformations in capitalism are also transformations in the language that describes it (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Fairclough, 2002; 2004). Following this, contemporary capitalism can be partly understood by analysing the language used to represent it; from the perspective of the organizational context, Chiapello and Fairclough (2002) refer to 'new management ideology' to encompass the dominant discourses and hegemonic assumptions that are part of the broader ideological system of late capitalism and which are addressed to managers and others individuals who occupy critical roles for the running of corporations.

David Harvey (1990; 2005), in an analysis of the rise and development of the 'neoliberal turn', describes how the new practice and theory of political economy sought to generate enough

popular consent to legitimize the transition from 'Fordism' to 'flexible accumulation' during the 1970's. In general terms, Fordism, a symbolic name that comes from the car manufacturer Henry Ford, refers to the capitalist system based on rigid and fixed systems intended to achieve mass production; whereas flexible accumulation, on which neoliberalism is built, relies on the flexibility of labour relations and processes of production in order to follow changes in the market (Harvey, 1990; 2005). Harvey (2005) argues that neoliberalism transcended different domains and scales of social life by mobilizing powerful ideologies and hegemonic assumptions through the media, private corporations and important institutions that form part of the social world (e.g. educational, religious and professional institutions), in ways in which they became embedded in 'common sense'. Ideas, Harvey (2005) explains, can become dominant by appealing to universal values, beliefs and desires that facilitate their integration to the common sense of individuals. For instance, Harvey (2005, p. 39) mentions the word 'freedom' as one of the 'rhetorical devices' widely used to mask the interests of neoliberal capitalism, because it involves a series of associations that are compelling for both capitalists and wage-earners. Similarly, 'flexibility' is a dominant discourse of neoliberal ideology used to encompass the economic practices of flexible accumulation and flexible forms of labour, and mobilize the assumption that free market and free trade can guarantee individual freedom (Harvey, 2005). Considered from the perspective of individuals, the discourse of flexibility involves ideas such as 'liberty', 'autonomy' and 'entrepreneurial virtues', which emphasise the individuals' responsibility for their social success or failure, rather than being the result of the system's properties (Harvey, 2006).

Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001) refer to the vocabulary of contemporary capitalism as the 'new planetary vulgate', which includes a list of words such as 'globalization', 'flexibility' and 'employability', and omits terms such as 'capitalism', 'class' and 'domination' as they are portrayed as obsolete in the new order. This vocabulary is circulated internationally or 'planetarized' by constant flows of diffusion through powerful channels of the economic and social domain, transforming the 'newspeak' into universal common sense that is "endowed with the performative power to bring into being the very realities it claims to describe" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001, p. 4). The politico-economic discourses of the ideology of neoliberalism have the potential to infiltrate the managerial field, and across different scales of social organization as they are embraced by global and national institutions (Fairclough, 2002). On this view, the analysis of popular managerial and globalization literature can serve

to examine how particular representations of dominant discourses can potentially contribute to the perpetuation of hegemonic ideologies (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002).

2.2.1 Management gurus and guru texts

The spreading of new management ideology to a worldwide audience through modern processes of globalization has contributed to the growing interest in management knowledge, which has been most salient since the 'management guru phenomenon' started in North America in the early 1980s (Huczynski, 1993; Jackson, 2001). Jackson (2001, p. 9-10) describes the passage of the word 'guru' from its origins in ancient Hindu texts to refer to a teacher or spiritual guide, to its contemporary connotation within the media context in which the title guru commonly applies to any individual who is believed to be an 'expert' in a particular area of social life; because the term guru is broadly associated with a mystical and even religious dimension, being a guru implies that the knowledge or expertise has been acquired through non-conventional ways.

In modern literature, the term guru is used to refer to the authors of a genre of popular texts concerned with the functioning of organizations, particularly in relation to demands from international economic markets (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Hannerz, 1996). Chiapello and Fairclough (2002, p. 200) argue that claims of extensive expertise accredited to gurus generally serve to portray them as having the authority to predict and interpret the future in relation to the image of the world they depict as the undisputable reality; moreover, guru texts can be considered as 'inspirational' because they offer reassurance for individuals in their dealing with the uncertainties of such a reality. This type of literature is thus generally promoted as 'guides' for readers which validity is sustained by the 'guru status' attributed to the authors of such texts; however, guru status is a social creation gained and sustained by the authors themselves as well as by the followers of their ideas (Huczynski, 1993; Jackson, 2001).

According to Fairclough (2013, p. 551-2), popular managerial texts are 'carefully designed to sell' as they work up the language and other semiotic devices into commodities destined to maintain the sales rate, which is usually portrayed on their covers as 'impressive'. The wide availability of guru texts means that potentially a vast number of individuals have access to

the ideas developed by a few writers (Furusten, 1999); although this phenomenon does not equate a common interpretation or an influence on the individuals' behaviour, it nevertheless contributes to the popularity of the writers and the ideas they advocate (Huczynski, 1993). The series of 'prescriptions' embedded in guru texts are presented in accordance with the position of the author that creates and popularizes them; guru texts are not limited to the area of corporate management as authors in other fields can also achieve guru status, although some more than others may reach a commercial prominence powered by the media that simultaneously develops and supports such a status (Huczynski, 1993).

The portrayal of guru authors as experts serves to position the reader as a learner, stressing in turn the normative character of guru books (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Furusten, 1999). As mentioned above, the prescriptive orientation of this kind of texts relies on the 'guidance' offered to individuals in their dealings with the idealised view of the world depicted by the authors; the texts make normative claims regarding what should be done according to the authors' categorical descriptions of reality (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Furusten, 1999; Huczynski, 1993). The writing technique used in the production of guru texts is one of the aspects that characterize this sort of literature; for instance, Furusten (1999) argues that rhetorical language and metaphors are articulated in similar ways in this genre of literature independently of the field in which the texts are produced. Another common feature is the incorporation of examples or 'case studies' which are said to be taken from real situations to support the authors' claims and to provide validity to their ideas; these examples are mostly used as metaphorical comparisons and their meanings are treated as universal since there is no clear explanation or references concerning the origin of such information (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Furusten, 1999). The mentioning of academic research and established organization theory is also pervasive in guru texts; this information is mostly intended as 'evidence' for the stability and credibility of the authors' ideas, rather than a source for academic discussion on the basis of their findings or theoretical approach, for example (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Furusten, 1999).

2.3 The context of neoliberal globalization

Management gurus and poplar globalization writers are of particular interest because of their potential contribution in supporting the dissemination of dominant discourses and hegemonic

assumptions associated with the ideology of neoliberalism as part of the wider ideological system of late capitalism (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough, 2013). Fairclough and Thomas (2004) observe that it is a common feature in popular guru literature to portray a view of reality on the basis of descriptions of contemporary globalization as an unquestionable and unprecedented process; although these assertions usually lack compelling empirical evidence, the interest in this genre of texts from the perspective of critical discourse analysis is not the actual extent of recent transformations in capitalism in relation to prior stages, but rather how language is used to construct similar representations of such transformations.

The discourse of neoliberalism articulates together new relations of existing discourses and hegemonic assumptions that are sometimes subversive of previous equivalences; for example, the discursive representation of globalization mobilizes the changes in the construction and legitimation of global space-time in relationship with national or local space-time, pervasively favouring the former over the latter (Fairclough, 2004, p. 118). Although the notion of globalization per se is not unique to new capitalism, the term is generally used as part of the ideology of neoliberalism as a rhetoric aid to encompass recent transformations in the world economy (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001). In this context, Harvey (1990), refers to the 'time-space compression' as a representation of the transformations occurred in the individuals' experience of spatial and temporal qualities provoked by developments in communication and travel technologies; such 'intense' compression has changed the ways in which individuals perceive and interpret the world, resulting in a 'disorienting and disruptive impact' on all aspects of social life (p. 284).

A similar view of 'a world without distances' is provided by Peter Sloterdijk (2013) in his representation of today's capitalist society, corresponding to what he refers to as the third and most recent 'stage' of globalization. Sloterdijk (2013) describes globalization as consisting of three phases that symbolise the different forms in which individuals have conquered the world they inhabit, and subsequently shaped their representation of it. The first phase of globalization was the 'cosmic' globalization, referring to the metaphysical understanding of the world as an idealised sphere or 'globe' suspended in space; this philosophical conquest of the image of the globe gave way to the physical conquest of lands and seas by the West, marking the beginning of the 'terrestrial' globalization (Sloterdijk, 2013). The third phase of globalization is the era of 'electronic' globalization, when the conquest of time and space

through technologies of telecommunication and increased travel has created the social vision of a 'compressed world' (Sloterdijk, 2013). Sloterdijk (2013) draws on Fyodor Dostoevsky's metaphor of the 'crystal palace' as the representation of this compressed world inhabited by the 'players' of the 'global age'.

The Crystal Palace, originally a building of glass and metal in which the Great Exhibition of 1851 was accommodated, was seen as a kind of utopia showing all the wonders of the newly industrialized world, but Dostoevsky, in *Notes from Underground* (1864), uses the metaphor in a dystopian sense; for him it stands for mankind's desire to control, calculate and measure the world (Sloterdijk, 2013). Walter Benjamin, in *The Arcades Project* (1999) also refers to the world exhibition (and thus the Crystal Palace) together with other spaces such as the Paris Arcades, as part of the emergence of 'the interior' where the outside world is 'domesticated' for the bourgeois which is associated with commodity fetish and luxury. Sloterdijk (2013) picks up on both of these earlier notions of the Crystal Palace to describe his view of the 'world interior of capital' as a sort of "hothouse that has drawn inwards everything that was once on the outside" (p. 12); an enclosed habitat which regulated environment provides protection and comfort to individuals as the risks of the outside world are brought under control and domesticated. Entrance to the metaphorical space of capitalism is negotiated by the power of consumption as the outside world is attracted inwards by the luxury and cosmopolitanism of its interior (Sloterdijk, 2013).

Some of the changes occurred in the individuals' relationship with place brought about by contemporary globalization are described by Marc Augé (1992) through his theoretical construct of 'non-places'. The term refers to an emerging kind of places 'without past' that opposes existential places; existential places, which Augé calls 'anthropological places', are traditionally viewed as dwelling spaces endowed with meaning by those who live and interact in them, whereas non-places lack the kind of social relations embedded in time that ties them to the individuals' identity (Conley, 2012). For Augé (1992) non-places are ephemeral and mobile spaces of passage for the solitary individual (e.g. airports, trains and shopping centres); they are spaces in which people achieve individuality as there are no shared identity, relations or history with what is in them. However, this individuality is contractual as it is limited to be experienced in the 'perpetual present' of spaces that seem to have no past (Augé, 1992; Conley, 2012). Although Augé (1992) describes a distinction between non-places and existential places, he recognizes that in reality they are both intertwined; following this, non-

places can be understood as abstract spaces defined by how individuals perceive them in terms of the function such places represent as part of their lived experience and understanding of their own reality.

The contemporary reshaping of the social vision of the world consequence of new technologies and coordinated with the interests of capitalism can also be found at the centre of the argument put forward by Paul Virilio (1998). Virilio (1998) argues that the 'interchangeability of places' possible in modern society, by transport or by online communication technologies, for instance, results in the 'destruction' of physical distances characteristic of globalization as sought by dominant elites, in which the global has become the 'interior' and the local 'the outside', leaving nation-states in 'the great suburb of the world' (p. 20). Most concerned with the influence of recent developments in communication technologies in constituting today's vision of physical distances, Virilio (1998; 2008) describes how a new kind of city is emerging, the 'world city', formed by the capacity to exchange information among all corners of the world.

According to Virilio (2008), the 'world city' of tomorrow will not be a defined by the traditional metropolitan concentration of activity and population; rather, it will be "a sort of 'omnipolitan' periphery whose centre will be nowhere and circumference everywhere'" (p.74). This elimination of distances, he argues, will result in the progressive decline of localities; dividing society between the 'haves', those who can access the new virtual community, and the 'have-nots', those who are 'abandoned' in the margins of the local (Virilio, 2008, p. 74). As an example of the power of 'instantaneous command' in modern times, Virilio (2008) mentions how organizations and their activities are becoming increasingly 'fragmented' and 'geographically scattered', eliminating the need for a defined centre as workers can carry out their jobs from anywhere through modern technologies such as the Internet. This tendency has given way to mobile employees and flexible forms of working relationships which alternative is unemployment; or as Virilio (2008) puts it, the 'metropolitan sedentariness' of labour is giving way to an 'omnipolitan nomadism' where employees seem not be 'particular individuals' but rather 'virtual particles' in corporations that are structured independently of productive clusters and physical locations (Virilio, 2008, p.85). The ubiquity of communication technologies thus emphasises the split between the dominancy of virtual proximity over real distances; in this context, individuals face the loss of the freedom

traditionally associated with movement as it is replaced by the need to eliminate the distances between places in order to live by the virtual time of the global city (Virilio, 2008).

According to Augé (2010; 2012), the pervasive vision of a world 'without borders' represented by the media and perceived by individuals as they travel physically or virtually through space and time, is part of the 'ideology of the system of globalization' that denies the traditional spatial-temporal markers that are at the centre of such system. He argues that contemporary mobility is metaphorically referred to as 'nomadism' because of the associated values of 'deterritorialization' and individualism promoted by the human desire of conquering frontiers; however, they oppose the realities of forced 'sedentarism' of today's world (Augé, 2012). Moreover, Augé (2012) advocates that rather than a world without borders there is a new division that separates those who are 'inside' from those who are 'outside'. Being in the 'periphery' has retained its conventional connotations of poverty, degradation and violence; the difference now is that the idea of a periphery no longer refers to the suburbs of geographical areas, but to the social and political outskirts of a centre delineated by the globalization of financial markets, transport and information (Augé, 2012).

2.3.1 Individual global mobility in contemporary society

As it has been mentioned above, one of the characteristics of the projective city noted by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) refers to changes in the conceptions of ownership, as individuals favour the value of availability over the ownership of objects or the pursuit of long-lasing projects as characteristic principles of previous stages of capitalism. Another important change in the conceptions of ownership noted by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) is the 'ownership of the self', in the sense that individuals are rendered the sole responsible for themselves, including their image, their success and even their destiny (p. 154). The contemporary emphasis on individuals as producers of themselves, the authors say, has resulted in the creation and growth of industries and professions concerned with self-image and personal development, among which are for example the fashion industry and coach respectively (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). This idea can be related to Michel Foucault's (2008) argument that the neoliberal doctrine treats the worker as an 'entrepreneur of himself' based on how individuals use the resources available to them: "being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his earnings"

(p. 226). This view is generalized by neoliberalism beyond the economic domain, permeating social relations and shaping the individuals' life, as for example their behaviour and relationships regarding property, family and household (Foucault, 2008).

From the perspective of labour, work is the means to earn an income or a wage in exchange of 'capital', but understanding capital as an ability or 'skill' that cannot be separated from the individual who possesses it, means that it is part of a sort of 'enterprise-unit' that is the worker him/herself; in other words, 'human capital' is not 'sold' in an exchange for wages during the period of time in which it is used, rather, the conception of capital-ability as united with the worker renders the latter more like a 'machine' that produces earnings (Foucault, 2008). Human capital in the theory of neoliberalism comprises elements that can be acquired or formed; these include the making of investments that with time will produce economic and subjective profits, such as schooling and professional training as well as cultural and social stimuli (Foucault, 2008). Another element that Foucault (2008) mentions as part of human capital under neoliberalism is 'mobility'; placing a particular emphasis on migration, he notes that the material and psychological 'costs' involved in the ability to move around are perceived as investments because through them individuals obtain something in return, such as 'improvement of status' and 'remuneration'. According to Foucault (2008), if 'migration is an investment' it follows that 'the migrant is an investor': "[h]e is an entrepreneur of himself who incurs expenses by investing to obtain some kind of improvement" (p. 230). This notion shifts the traditional view of migration in which geographical mobility is caused and defined by external economic forces, towards a view of migration as a 'behaviour' in the sense that the migrant is as an 'enterprise' of him/herself with investments and incomes (Foucault, 2008, p. 230).

Zygmunt Bauman (2000) argues that the 'freedom to move' constitutes the new stratifying factor in contemporary society; specifically, the ability to conquest real and virtual space-time puts the 'globally mobile' at the top of the hierarchy of mobility, whereas the 'locally fixed' are at the bottom. Those who oscillate between such extremes are individuals "bearing the brunt of that opposition and suffering acute existential uncertainty, anxiety and fear as a result" (Bauman, 2000, p. 4). The perceived social deprivation equated with the immobility of the spatially settled is reinforced by the pervasive gloss today's globalization puts on the mobility of the 'nomadic elite', by associating the latter with 'social promotion, advancement and success', subsequently directing the individuals' desire towards a life 'on the move'

(Bauman, 2000). Being on the move involves the 'fragmentation' of human relations and the quest for short-lived experiences that provide 'instant gratification'; this 'consumerist culture' characteristic of contemporary society together with the blurring of geopolitical borders has generated an aspiration for individuals to seek global mobility as the ultimately representation of the freedom to move (Bauman, 2008). Freedom in this context refers to the 'freedom to choose where to be' considered as the ability to transcend the need for local commitments and attachments; however, in the contemporary world of work the individuals' freedom to move conveys the interests of neoliberal capitalism that direct and shape the global flows of labour and capital (Bauman 2008; Harvey, 2006).

According to Bauman (2000; 2007), under the 'slogan of flexibility' contemporary society has become a 'society of consumers', promoting 'temporality' in place of the stability and long-term planning characteristic of the previous industrial era and its 'society of producers'. In a consumerist society all human relations are based on ephemeral exchanges and individuals are themselves 'sellable commodities'; subjectivity is the 'self-fabrication' of identity constructed of 'shopping choices' that are "made by the subject and the subject's prospective purchasers; it description takes the form of the shopping list" (Bauman, 2007, p .15). In the organizational context, these choices are the 'skills' sought by employees to satisfy the changing needs of their employers; meaning that the perceived 'freedom to choose' is more an 'obligation to choose' what corporations demand if individuals are to remain 'a sellable commodity' (Bauman, 2007, p. 12). This 'shopping around' is an endless pursuit for individuals in times of changes and transitions that lack the security of long-term planning; as a result, their life stories are fragmented into short 'episodes' that provide the flexibility to follow uncertain ends as they can be consumed and disposed along the way (Bauman, 2008). As in the projective city described by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), in which success is measured by the variety of projects in one's life, Bauman (2008) argues that progress is no longer a cumulative process part of a future-controlled setting, but rather a succession of separate episodes which demands can be 'dealt with one at a time'. Fragmenting life into manageable episodes simultaneously allows individuals to remain available for future short-term projects and to consume the gratification of each episode before the next episode starts (Bauman, 2008).

Leslie Sklair (2003) speaks of the 'transnational capitalist class' as one of the leading forces in the creation of a global capitalist system. According to the author, the main members of this

class are the executives that own and run transnational corporations whereas the other members, referred to as 'supportive members', are 'globalizing bureaucrats and politicians', 'globalizing professionals' and 'consumerist elites'. The power of the transnational capitalist class derives from the control of various forms of capital, such as economic, organizational, political, and knowledge, which are mobilized following the interests of the global capitalist system, as opposed to having local and national orientations (Sklair, 2003).The transnational capitalist class, Sklair (2003) argues, functions as a supportive platform through which the interests of the elites of the diverse social domains that make up the class, are united and divulgated across the wider system of society by fomenting particular activities and setting corporate practices as models of 'best practice'.

Saskia Sassen (2007) puts forward the notion of 'transnational professional class' to refer to the mobile workforce that forms part of the spatial expansion of corporate activities and networks across nation-states; the participation of this specific group of employees is twofold because while they navigate the networked organizational forms for the geographical transfer of businesses, they are contributing to the construction and maintenance of the 'infrastructure' on which their mobility depends. Sassen (2007) sees this as the new 'corporate economic space' formed by the interconnection of global cities; a 'state-of-the art' platform for the 'hypermobile' class of professionals and executives. However, this cross-border structure built under the label of international trade does not free individuals from nation-states as it may be popularly perceived, rather, it provokes a new kind of dependence on the interconnectivity of economic localities; in other words, transnational professionals are only 'partly denationalized' as their global circulation remains embedded in localized environments (Sassen, 2007). From the standpoint of individuals, Sassen (2007) criticises the tendency to overlook the extent to which this elite of professionals is engaged in the "localized microstructures of daily civic life and struggles" (p. 169). The international mobility of the emerging class is directed and shaped by the organizations' need for activities tied to geopolitical territories, and because these activities are networked across-borders, global mobility not only relies on the network itself to support and to promote such mobility, but also on the local laws and corporate policies put in place to facilitate the flexibility of this so-called 'global class' (Sassen, 2007).

PART II – TRADITIONAL NOMADISM

2.4 Pastoral nomadism

The term 'nomad' is commonly attached to the concept of pastoralism; however, nomadism fundamentally refers to a lifestyle based on movement for the pursuit of economic opportunities whereas pastoralism is a type of subsistence (Barfield, 1993; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998). Nomadic mobility is considered as a strategy to remain on a given territory, representing an alternative to sedentary settlement and radically opposing migratory movement (Legrand, 2008). Ancient forms of pastoral nomadism, therefore, are an economic strategy for survival; a lifestyle that allows the flexibility required to cope with changes in the immediate context without having to migrate from a given area or region (Baker, 1978; Johnson, 1969; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998). Although contemporary nomads have adapted their economic strategy to technological changes and political circumstances (Baker, 1978; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998), popular conceptions of nomadism remain embedded in idealised views regarding free movement and 'primitive simplicity' (Baker, 1978; Peutz, 2008). Furthermore, the widespread idea that pastoral life corresponds to isolated communities whose movement is one of 'random' and 'aimless' wandering is a myth that has given way to both romanticised representations and criticism by sedentary societies (Baker, 1978; Barfield, 1993; Johnson, 1969).

For example, Arnold J. Toynbee (1954) draws upon the traditional view of nomadism as he says that the nomad's life displays 'superiority' in comparison to sedentary civilizations; the author refers to nomadism as a 'triumph of human skill' in the sense that it is a lifestyle that "demands a rigorously high standard of character and behaviour" (p. 169). Rather than leaving a territory under unfavourable conditions for agricultural life, such as through migratory movement, nomads adapt their life and movements to the challenges and changes of the physical environment; however, nomads are 'enslaved' by the environment they conquer, they become 'prisoners' of climate and vegetational cycles, such is the 'penalty' they pay, says Toynbee (1954, p. 169). Accounts of the nomad in the literature are also inspired on associations with the lifestyle of sedentary people; as it is the case for example of Ibn Khaldûn (1989), who in 1377 described the Bedouins as "the most savage human beings that exist […] they are on a level with wild, untamable animals and dumb beasts of prey" (p. 93). For Khaldûn (1989), the simplicity of the Bedouins' way of life, in the sense of restricting

themselves to the 'bare necessities', places them 'closer to being good' than sedentary people who are "accustomed to luxury and success in worldly occupations […] their souls are coloured with all kinds of blameworthy and evil qualities" (p. 94).

Nomadic pastoral communities travel with all the essentials for the maintenance of their mobile life (e.g. tents, tools and herds); these are carried from one location to another to support the members' subsistence and the fabrication of basic everyday items, hunting and trade (Barth, 1986; Johnson, 1969). Traditional pastoral nomads are characterized by not having a permanent home, which is popularly the main aspect used to differentiate nomadic tribes from sedentary communities (Cressey, 1960; Johnson, 1969); however, this is not to say that nomads are 'homeless' since their home is their tent or hut, or that they 'wander' because nomads move to meet specific purposes (Barfield, 1993, p. 12). Moreover, the members of nomadic communities or tribes share a political and social organization in which the household is the basic unit (Johnson, 1969). The household's capital is the most important determinant in the organization of nomadic tribes; therefore, serious loss of wealth can result in the marginalization of some members from the community, potentially resulting in the 'threatened' condition of 'sedentarization by impoverishment' (Barth, 1986, p. 108).

For pastoral nomadic communities identity relates more to their social relationships than to their economic strategy; specifically, the frame of reference for the nomads' sense of identity as part of a cultural group is based on shared moral codes and principles of organization as well as lineage (Abu-Lughod, 1988; Barth, 1986; Keohane, 1994; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998). Representations of nomad identity, however, may refer to particular associations that can result in different discourses; for instance, Peutz (2008) finds that Bedouin identity or 'Bedouinness' within the Arab world is both a form of 'national heritage' that is 'celebrated' and 'marketed' as a cultural product, and a form of 'categorical abjection' from the perspective of certain forms of pastoralism. The stereotype of 'real Bedouin' as 'autonomous', 'nomadic' and 'tent-dwelling' is thus romanticised for its commodification, at the same time it is negatively reproduced by the nomads themselves through feelings of self-disdain, represented in expressions such as "we are ignorant; we are Bedouin" and "we are goats; we are beasts" (Peutz, 2008, p. 339).

2.5 Non-pastoral nomadism

Non-pastoral nomads are differentiated in the literature according to the degree of integration of mobility as part of the individuals' lifestyle and forms of employment; among the categories are 'gypsies', 'travellers', 'itinerants', 'specialised nomads' and 'peripatetic communities' (Berland and Salo, 1986; Simhandl, 2006). For instance, Mayall (1988) distinguishes between those who move in order to obtain employment but subsequently adopt a sedentary way of life, such as 'tramping', 'artisans', 'navvies' and 'agricultural workers', and those who assume travelling as 'a way of life in itself' such as 'gypsy-travellers', 'showmen', 'hawkers' and 'horse-dealers'.

The identity and social organization of non-pastoral nomads is usually constructed around tradition, values and culture, and in some cases, as happens with the 'gypsy population', ethnicity and race (Belton, 2005; Berland and Salo, 1986). The term 'gypsy', however, is largely applied to individuals who share a way of life and have similar occupations with no cultural distinction; living in camps and adopting various forms of employment are for instance common characteristics attached to the notion of gypsy, provoking erroneous assumptions, criticism and romanticised representations (Belton, 2005; Clébert, 1970; Mayall, 1988). From the standpoint of sedentary communities, non-pastoral nomads generally 'rank low' on the social scale (Berland and Salo, 1986); in the particular case of 'gypsy-travellers' they are perceived as a peripheral group because of their physical and ideological distance (Mayall, 1988, p. 1). Nevertheless, it has been noted in the literature that gypsies, taken as a cultural group, view any 'non-gypsy' as inferior to them (Clébert, 1970; Simhandl, 2006).

In a description of 'peripatetic communities', Berland and Salo (1986) refer to the flexibility and sensitivity of the individuals in this category towards the context in which they maintain themselves; they are 'attuned' to changes in social, political and economic circumstances as well as other factors that influence their patterns of mobility and "activate the choice of particular skills, goods and/or services that are incorporated into their peripatetic repertoires" (p. 3). Associations of these communities with spatial mobility are identified as the basis of the construction of stereotypes that become established facts; for instance, Clébert (1970) argues that representations of the 'gypsy' are partly due to their way of life, living on the margins of civilizations and concealing themselves as a separate group (p. 16). Perceived as 'vagabonds', 'beggars', 'thieves' and 'weavers of spells', gypsies are popularly feared, held in

contempt and regarded as dishonest citizens by the authorities; nevertheless, Clébert (1970) says that beyond such popular perceptions, 'real gypsies' are "united in the same love of freedom, in their eternal flight from the bonds of civilizations […] in the desire to be their own masters, and in contempt for what we pompously call the 'consequences'" (p. 20).

2.6 The contemporary discourse of nomadism

The term nomad has become 'fashionable' in today's society (Bauman, 2000) as it is used to encapsulate all forms of contemporary mobility (Augé, 2012). Nomadism is popularly employed as a metaphor for ideas of flux, mobility and boundary crossing which overgeneralise and simplify the realities of individual detachment from geographical, emotional or intellectual fixity (Bauman, 2000; Cresswell, 1997; Legrand, 2008; Noyes, 2004; Pels, 1999). According to Isabelle Stengers (1997), the traditional negative view of nomadism from the standpoint of sedentary societies is shifting sides as associations with sedentariness or attachment to 'existential territories', professional or cultural, are becoming the object of contempt under the nomadic values of modernity. As a result, nomadic mobility is disassociated from old prejudices that describe it as a 'barbaric' and 'primitive' lifestyle, and tied to the regular patterns of movement of professionals and middle classes; among the consequences of these conceptual transformations is the adoption of the figure of the nomad as a critique in response to a world filled with uncertainty and instability that leaves no place for the rooted and bounded (Cresswell, 1997; Noyes, 2004).

Tim Cresswell (1997) argues that in recent social and cultural theory imaginations of the nomad are used as romanticized representations of the individuals' detachment from place characteristic of 'postmodernity'. According to the author, the figure of the nomad in postmodern theory draws upon references to freedom and opportunities, representing the 'undisciplined' that stands against the fixity of spatial order; whereas the nomad of modernity is commonly pejorative, portrayed as a figure of 'threat and chaos' and embodying the modernists' fears of 'disrupting boundaries' (Cresswell, 1997). Cresswell (1997) makes emphasis on how the contemporary metaphor of the nomad differs from other types of representations of individual mobility such as that of the 'migrant'; the figure of the migrant, he explains, is based on the dialectic of 'home and away', between the place where they are from and the place where they are, whereas the figure of the nomad is built around home as

a concept that is not tied to place. In the discourse of the nomad 'home' is describes as 'being on the move', therefore place as a dwelling space in which meaning and identity rest is found in movement itself (Cresswell, 1997).

This perspective refers to the writings of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2004); the authors refer to the condition of mobility and relationship with space characteristic of traditional nomadism as a central metaphor to represent the distinction between the nomad and the migrant and the sedentary. For Deleuze and Guattari (2004), contemporary nomadism is an individual act in response to the changes in the social world, just as traditional nomadism is a group activity in face of the fluctuations of the climate. In the authors' terms, nomads "reterritorializes on deterritorialization itself" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 421); dwelling in the trajectory that takes them from point to point, rather than moving with the intention to re-territorialize as migrants do. Here Deleuze and Guattari (2004) refer to Arnold J. Toynbee who speaks of the nomad as "he who does not move" (p. 420); treating the idea of the nomad that moves while seated, like 'the Bedouin galloping', as the metaphorical representation of movement of the intellect rather than physical.

The figure of the ideal nomad is also mobilized by Sloterdijk (2013) to compare the mobility of the 'postmodern' individual against that of the nomad on the basis of both being 'at home in their travels'. Sloterdijk (2013) argues that the spatial and temporal compression of the global age is dissolving the illusory relationship between identity and nation-sate, between self and place; this 'self without place' of modern times, according to the author, resembles the model found in traditional nomadism. Sloterdijk (2013) describes how the symbolic immunity and the ethnic cohesion of nomadic or 'deterritorialized' groups is not constituted by the land that 'contains them' but rather by the communications among themselves, acting as "an autogenous vessel in which the participants are enclosed and stay in shape, while the group moves through external landscapes" (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 150). For Sloterdijk (2013) life in modern times takes place in a 'mobile cocooning', what he calls 'the world interior of capital', where individuals, like nomads, inhabit a territory while moving (p. 257); on this view, the representation of contemporary nomadism opposes the territorialized illusion of the sedentary whose identity is defined by their sense of belonging to a given nation.

The use of the metaphor of nomadism is not necessarily defined by corporeal mobility because the freedom of movement may also be achieved by finding new ways of thinking that

challenge spatially bounded systems; this is illustrated by Deleuze and Guattari (2004) through their use of the figure of the nomad against the restrictive powers of the nation-state. The state represents the control over flows of mobility directed through the fixed systems or paths that it creates, whereas the idea of the nomad is mobilized to embody the forces that resist such control (Cresswell, 1997). In this context, the analogy between the mobility of traditional nomads and the postmodern individual is not so much about the ability to move across physical areas as it is inspired by a critical disengagement from fixity (Noyes, 2004), or as Rosi Braidotti (1994) puts it, "it is the subversion of set conventions that define the nomadic state, not the literal act of travelling" (p. 5). Braidotti (1994) notes that nomadism as an 'intellectual style' stands for the 'chosen' condition of 'homelessness', understood as the freedom to move outside established thinking; inspired by traditionally nomadic people and their culture, she proposes the notion of 'nomadic subject' to refer to "the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour" (p. 5).

Similarly, Michel Maffesoli (1997) draws on the discourse of nomadism as a romanticized opposition to modern fixity; he describes nomadism as 'an ancient dream' that reminds individuals of the 'adventure' of moving beyond the confinement of settled existence and its intellectual conformism. For Maffesoli (1997), representations of nomadism and associated notions found in poetry, stories and legends show that 'mobility' considered as the surpassing of metaphorical or physical limits is present in the collective imagination; the dialectic between the desire to travel towards the unknown and the desire to stay within what is familiar and secure, serves both to confront and to consolidate stable structures and systems, because it is only through the recognition of 'boundaries' that the perception of an 'outside' is constructed. The metaphor of a nomadic lifestyle or a nomadic way of thinking is thus found in the literature as an alternative to sedentariness; the idea that individuals are in a privileged position to choose between the two forms of life echoes Bauman's (2000) critique of the misleading use of the term nomad to describe all mobile contemporaries, as it 'glosses over' the differences that set apart those individual who have the autonomy to choose to be mobile, from those whose mobility or sedentariness is rather imposed by external circumstances.

In an analysis of nomad aesthetics carried out by Martin Wood (2005), the metaphors of the nomad and of nomadism are criticized for being applied to corporate executives whose mobility aids the territorial expansion of the knowledge economy. The argument put forward

by Wood (2005) differentiates between 'true nomadism' and the alleged 'heroic agency' of knowledge workers; similar to the views discussed above, the author refers to 'true nomadism' as a kind of mobility driven by an active resistance against settled conventions, contrasting the "extensive movement and consequent reterritorialization of new spaces and markets by self-styled corporate nomads" (p. 61). Wood (2005) makes reference to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the traditional nomad as one who moves within a territory from which he does not wish to depart, to oppose it against the 'new breed of nomad executive' which he sees more as a 'global tourist' who wanders from place to place. Nomadism, Wood (2005) explains, symbolises the 'autonomous movement' of some individuals and groups described by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri; a kind of movement that creates its own spaces and forms of circulation as it "runs free of, and possibly counter to, the productive flows and redistribution of capital" (Wood, 2005, p. 59). Nomadism, as the perceived capacity to 'deterritorialize and reterritorialize' at will, is thus a possible alternative to the formal hierarchies and ordered spatial fragmentation of 'Empire' (Wood, 2005).

The concept of 'Empire' proposed by Hardt and Negri (2000) describes a new structure of control that extends beyond the territorialized authority of nation-sates characteristic of imperialism; emerging with the globalization of capitalist forms of production and consumption, Empire has become "the sovereign power that governs the world" (p. xi). In the new order the 'production of oppression' does not rely on the establishment of a territorial centre, as Empire "progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. xii). This 'decentred' and 'deterritorializing' apparatus of rule constitutes a non-place of exploitation and domination where there is no longer an 'outside'; therefore, resistance and the desire for liberation must come from within, creating a new shared form of 'being-against' that changes the way individuals live in the world (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Mobility and 'mass worker nomadism' are described by Hardt and Negri (2000) as historical expressions of the individuals' struggle and their search for freedom in the capitalist world; however, while desertion and exodus can potentially play a central role in undermining dominant regimes, the authors believe that what is needed to confront the deterritorializing power of Empire is "a force capable of not only organizing the destructive capacities of the multitude, but also constituting through the desires of the multitude an alternative" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 214).

PART III – THE CONTEXT OF WORK

2.7 Mobility studies

2.7.1 The privileged mobility of individuals

In the academic literature, the notion of 'mobile individuals' includes a wide variety of associated ideas based on the type and the degree of mobility involved; however, this section reviews previous studies that are primarily concerned with the mobility of individuals across countries which differentiate from traditional conceptions of migration, exile and diaspora. The kind of individual mobility here explored is embedded with a sense of 'willingness' in that they are initiated by personal agency rather than a response to external circumstances.

The minimum number of moves across geopolitical borders is often a common point of departure for the study of mobile individuals; for instance, Ossman (2004) analyses individuals who have migrated to a new country in more than one occasion, involving a series of social, ethnic and professional backgrounds. Ossman's (2004) preliminary study of 'serial migration' is based on the assumption that a third international move involves a new form of subjectivity that challenges the classic binary opposition between the 'homeland' and the 'host country' in terms of the individuals' perception of their source of direction and stability. Ossman (2004) argues that individuals who move several times rarely have a social or professional frame of reference from which they can 'design their lives', and so "[t]hey must repeatedly learn to find a place for themselves not only as cultural chameleons, but as social actors" (p. 112). Ossman (2004) notes that the participants in her research claim to 'feel very different' from those individuals who have never relocated abroad; in this environment, "mobility itself becomes a valued measure of individual achievement" (p. 117). In particular, the author refers to the 'obstacles' the participants in her research claim to overcome as they move from one country to another; these involve aspects such as the need to arrange work permits or to seek employment and in some instances the development of "a kind of performance of cosmopolitanism in social situations, intended to portray something of their trajectory to various audiences" (Ossman, 2004, p. 117).

In a different study, Colic-Peisker (2010) proposes the term 'transnational knowledge workers' to identify a group of 'serially migrating professionals' who have lived for extended periods of

time in a minimum of three countries; this approach seeks to go beyond traditional conceptions of migration by focusing on the privileged mobility of certain individuals, considering in particular the motives for displacement as well as the professional and social status. Colic-Peisker (2010, p. 483) identifies 'profession' as the central axis for identity formation for highly mobile individuals on the basis that it provides them with a sense of permanence to their lives despite temporariness and change. For mobile workers in the modern context of work, the author argues, career is a long-life project to develop 'cosmopolitan credentials' because it facilitates cross-cultural connectivity and international mobility; in other words, profession is perceived as a 'cosmopolitan passport' that makes possible a transnational life and the establishment of international networks that in turn can facilitate career-building, which, as a long-term project, provides a sense of continuity and structure that may serve as substitute for the traditional view that identity construction and sense of belonging are fixed to defined geopolitical territories (Colic-Peisker, 2010).

From a different perspective, Nowicka (2007) studies the mobility of 'highly skilled mobile professionals' to understand the way they construct their notion of 'home'. These individuals, Nowicka (2007) explains, perceive home as a network of social relations, objects and familiar environments that can be spatially and temporally dispersed; in other words, rather than being related to a fixed location, the sense of home is sustained by a series of connected relationships that bind "many locations, the past, the future and the present in its geographical (proximity) and temporal (presence) sense" (p. 83). The private space called home is constantly reconfigured under conditions of extensive mobility as new locations and social relations become part of the 'transnational connections' that make up such space; following this, Nowicka (2007) argues that home is a 'flexible space in-becoming' that, in an abstract sense, can move with the individual since it is located 'anywhere and everywhere' (p. 83). However, Butcher (2010) argues that despite the ideas of 'belonging everywhere' and being a 'global citizen' associated with the highly mobile lifestyle, individuals still feel the need to "ensure that home is firmly embedded in place as a means to manage the unsettle feelings generated by displacement" (p. 25). Butcher (2010) suggests that fixing home to the imagined or real characteristics of an unfamiliar location provides individuals with feelings of security and familiarity; the process of 're-placing' home with each move represents for individuals a 'stabilising weight' amid changing frames of reference, in a way confronting the notions of fluidity and cosmopolitanism attributed to transnational movement.

Nowicka and Kaweh (2009) analyse the extent to which 'cosmopolitan ideas' or discourses ingrained in certain international institutions influence the way individuals make sense of their reality and relate to 'culturally different others'. Based on narratives collected from employees within the United Nations who had lived in various countries during their lifetime, the authors' study the 'practice of cosmopolitanism' in the individuals' everyday life and the tensions such practice provokes; they note how the desire to 'embrace the other' is in reality shaped by different kind of constraints and barriers that can come from both individuals and the context in which they relate. Being part of international organizations is generally perceived by individuals as an 'important step' in their professional careers as it may appear as the means to move across cultural borders; international mobility is in this context viewed as an opportunity to learn about the other through meaningful experiences that can contribute to personal growth, somewhat reflecting the level of institutionalization of cosmopolitan ideals (Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009). Nowicka and Kaweh (2009) conclude that cosmopolitanism is not only an 'aspiration' embedded in the social positions and the institutional context of the international professional, but also "a way of giving sense to some daily struggles in an unfamiliar environment" (Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009, p. 68).

As with the discourse of cosmopolitanism, the term 'expatriate' is also commonly associated with internationally mobile individuals; for instance, Fechter (2007) examines the extent to which the notion of expatriate shapes the individuals' understanding of their reality and how they position themselves in relation to the host society. Fechter (2007) argues that mobile individuals create and inhabit particular spaces which he describes through the metaphor of 'bubbles'. The bubble metaphor is used to represent the 'sheltered' existence of highly mobile professionals from which they control and regulate the kind of relations and level of integration with the social context of the host locality in which they temporarily live and work (Fechter, 2007). The sample of participants in Fechter's (2007) study refers to a specific segment of temporary residents in Indonesia comprising individuals of different group ages, nationalities and employment status, aspects that according to the author generate different experiences of their live as expatriates. The fieldwork carried out by Fechter (2007) includes direct contact with participants such as interviews and informal face-to-face conversations, and the observation of an online discussion forum for the local community of mobile professionals.

Through the notion of 'class' formation, Polson (2011) argues that the high degree of transnational mobility of some individuals sets them apart from other mobile individuals. Polson (2011) analyses how the perception of certain personal competencies and social practices associated with the discourse of the 'authentically global' are acquired and enacted by certain individuals in ways in which they stimulate their sense of being part of a group. The study, based on worldwide networks of online communities that organize local events in Paris, proposes that new Internet-based social media may be contributing to the discursive formation of a 'global middle class' (Polson, 2011). This emergent class does not have a 'territory' in the sense that it is not defined by geopolitical limits; rather, it is discursively created through idealised associations that reflect what it means 'to be international' (Polson, 2011). Among the competencies found by Polson (2011) that make up the 'authentically global' are 'multilingualism' and 'international experience', as well as a positive orientation towards ideas such as 'global', 'international' and 'diversity'; these discursive elements are continuously reinforced and reproduced by the individuals who participate in both online forums and 'offline' meetings, subsequently shaping and reinforcing the sense of being part of a group or class.

2.7.2 The discourse of nomadism in the context of work

In the literature concerned with the study of mobile professionals the discourse of nomadism is sometimes is used a source for metaphorical descriptions of displacement; for example, Meyer, Kaplan and Charum (2001) speak of the 'nomadism' of the scientists and engineers they examine in their analysis, arguing that the analogy is meaningful because it exemplifies a kind of mobility that includes "acculturation, learning, iterative process and collective bonds" (p. 310). The image of 'nomadic behaviours' refers to the authors' interpretation of the works by Gilles Deleuze; making reference to his writings, Meyer, Kaplan and Charum (2001) describe nomads as entities that construct complex societies, move through paths they 'learn to know', interact with the challenging context they encounter and often return to previous locations. This view of mobility is used by Meyer, Kaplan and Charum (2001) to oppose the view of "weightless, atomistic, post-social individual components of mankind responding to global market forces" (p. 310). In their analysis of the changes occurred in the 'traditional nomadism' of the highly skilled, the authors argue that the international circulation of this population continues to respond to demands from particular socio-political centres, although

the location and number of these centres has changed since the 1980's (Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001).

The study carry out by Meyer, Kaplan and Charum (2001) involves expatriate professionals who are 'tied up' to their host country by their position in the organizational context while remaining linked to their country of origin; this 'dual life setting' is sustained by physically returning to their homeland for short-term periods (the 'return option'), or by being part of socio-professional networks that 'connect' them to their country of origin (the 'diaspora option'). Following this, the authors argue that the nomadism of the highly skilled is based more on the ability "to move and operate within two distinct life contexts, than to the image of a permanently footloose wandering intellectual" (Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001, p. 319). According to Meyer, Kaplan and Charum (2001), the rise of 'intellectual diaspora networks' promoted by developments in communication technologies such as the Internet, and the enhanced role of knowledge following the new forms of production, contributes to the maintenance of the 'double allegiance and identification' of expatriates and their home country. The authors conclude that the directed mobilisation and use of these networks could correspond to 'a new trend' towards the dispersion of flows of individuals beyond borders, while constructing social bonds and associations that perpetuate the establishment of "durable settlements rather than endless searching and oscillating nomadism" (Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001, p. 320).

Meerwarth (2008) uses the term 'nomadic worker' to refer to those individuals, such as herself, who in order to accomplish work are constantly "traveling down similar paths and grounding themselves in familiar places for periods of time" (p. 113). The notion 'nomadic' as used by Meerwarth (2008) refers to a kind of mobility that follows repetitive and structured patterns through spaces that are geographically distributed; the author differentiates 'nomadic workers' from other mobile workers whose travels do not involve the same degree of mobility and 'integration'. 'Being nomadic', Meerwarth (2008) argues, demands regular reintegration as the worker is constantly traveling back to familiar places that are geographically distant; on the basis of her personal experiences as a nomadic worker, the author describes the tensions and conflicts involved in a nomadic lifestyle but which nonetheless can also bring opportunities for 'personal growth'. Some of the 'challenges' of becoming nomadic include changes in the traditional perceptions of place, and how such changes result in different behaviours or 'adjustments' in the relationships with the social and

physical environment in order to retain a sense of participating in a community while being mobile; for instance, the meanings of 'home' and 'away' are no longer limited to specific locations but extended to places in which particular people, objects and activities are situated (Meerwarth, 2008). From this perspective, Meerwarth (2008) explores the transformations in the 'local' and 'distributed' relationships provoked by the temporary and circular movement characteristic of nomadic work; the outcome is the establishment of a sort of 'pseudo locality' as individuals continuously negotiate relationships and roles locally and at a distance as they move across spaces: "In a sense, the mobile worker is neither here nor there and this sense of being 'in-between' often results in a sense of being dislocated from a group" (p. 113).

D'Andrea (2006) proposes the theory of 'neo-nomadism' as the basis to address the rise of new models of subjectivity formation under the 'predicament' of contemporary processes of globalization; reference to the discourse of nomadism is presented by the author as the means to address today's 'hypermobility' of individuals which, he argues, cannot be understood through the traditional notions of migration, diaspora and cosmopolitanism. According to D'Andrea (2006), the emerging form of identity, referred to as 'expressive expatriation', differs from other types of individual geographical displacement in that mobility represents a convergence of economic strategies and lifestyles "that structures the social life of peoples claiming to embrace the global as a new home and reference" (p. 97). For expressive expatriates or 'global nomads' there are no feelings of nostalgia for their homeland, rather, they reject the rigidity of their ethnic or national origins in the physical and emotional sense: "they are displaced peoples with 'displaced' minds" (D'Andrea, 2006, p. 99). In his study, the view of the individuals' mobility across physical spaces and within selves draws from anthropological and philosophical accounts of pastoral nomadism; an essential comparison established by D'Andrea (2006) refers to the 'deterritorialized nature' of traditional and modern nomadism which results in a 'self-marginalization' that challenges hegemonic conventions and practices. Neo-nomadism is for D'Andrea (2006) the 'ideal-type of postidentitarian mobility'; a 'fluidic and metamorphic' subjectivity that emerges under conditions of globalization.

The metaphor of 'knowledge nomads' is proposed by Pittinsky and Shih (2004) to challenge the common relationship between employee mobility and lack of organizational commitment; specifically, the construct intends to replace the vision of mobile workers as 'itinerant wanderers' who move across organizations with no commitment towards them (Pittinsky and

Shih, 2004). Drawing from traditional nomadism, the authors consider how nomads are able to "build homes, attachment, and commitment to places when they stop" (Pittinsky and Shih, 2004, p. 793). They argue that 'knowledge workers', a particular sector of mobile professionals who undertake 'knowledge work', can build a psychological home in the organization in which they 'sojourn' committing themselves to it and to their work; such a commitment, represented through the individuals' active participation towards the organization's goals, does not restrain the individuals' mobility across organizations (Pittinsky and Shih, 2004). In this approach, the discourse of nomadism represents the individuals' ability to create psychological attachments in the world of work as they move between organizations; however, this mobility may not necessarily involve international displacement as it happens with the other studies reviewed in this section.

In a more recent study, Costas (2013) explores the high levels of mobility of a particular group of skilled professionals through the Sartrean metaphor of 'stickiness' and the aforementioned concept of non-places put forward by Augé (1992). Costas (2013) draws on these ideas to propose an alternative perspective to the representations of sedentarism and nomadism found in certain contemporary mobility studies, on the basis that such conceptual approaches to the geographical displacement of individuals within the context of work do not fully address the 'ambiguities and frictions' involved in the way mobility is experienced by the mobile elite. The metaphor of 'stickiness' that Costas (2013) uses develops from the ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre; it refers to the ambiguity of 'sticky' in that it simultaneously involves ideas of stability and freedom (p. 1474); from this perspective, Costas (2013) refers to the tensions continuous mobility generates for individuals as the sense of 'exclusiveness' and 'glamour' associated with international travel is confronted by feelings of 'being stuck' in the 'never-ending' mobility cycle from one location to another. Costas (2013) uses the concept of non-places to represent how certain spaces that are part of the life of the mobile professional, such as hotels and airport terminals, are experienced as homogenous and interchangeable; in other words, "not only is the mobile working life as such experienced as sticky (i.e. being entrapped in seemingly endless cycles) but so also are the non-places involved" (p. 1479). Moreover, the idealised and elitist view of mobility as the liberation from 'tedious' and 'boring' places is challenged by feelings of 'entrapment' in the changing and temporary nature of the life of the mobile professional (Costas, 2013, p. 1478).

2.8 Career theory

2.8.1 Contemporary careers

Career studies are mostly concerned with the extent to which professional work shapes the way people perceive and understand their reality, and how such understanding influences their behaviours and attitudes towards others inside the organizational context and society in general; career, from this perspective, is the central axis in the individual's life story, the 'link' between the individual and the organizational setting as well as other domains of social life (Cappellen and Janssens, 2010; Gunz and Peiperl, 2007). The notion of career is commonly described as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experience over time" (Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1996, p. 8); this idea supports the popular career metaphor of 'path' or 'journey' (Inkson, 2006), and it represents the individuals' standpoint as well as organizational interpretations (Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1996). The sequence of work experiences in the individual's life that follow a linear path under the direction of one or two organizations is generally considered as a 'traditional career'; careers that differ from this traditional pattern are sometimes referred to as 'contemporary careers' (Arthur, 2008).

One of the ideas found in the literature regarding the study of non-traditional or contemporary careers is the concept of the 'boundaryless career' (Defillippi and Arthur, 1994, p. 307). Although the notion of boundaryless career is commonly associated with inter-organizational mobility, it fundamentally refers to the individual's ability to transcend traditional organizational arrangements or boundaries; considered within dimensions of physical mobility as well as of psychological mobility, these 'boundaries' may be objective, for instance, among fields of work, organizations and countries, or subjective, such as those perceived between work and the individual's private domain (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001; Briscoe and Hall, 2005; Inkson, 2006; Sullivan, 1999). Boundaryless career 'principles' are oriented towards self-directed career paths as opposed to organization-managed careers; individuals are encouraged to seek 'psychological success' in their changing work settings, to rely more on their personal 'talents' and 'potentials' in their search for employment, and to 'cultivate' personal networks outside the corporate context (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994).

Another influential idea that emerged from the changing nature of career in the context of modern organizations is the concept of 'protean career' which involves key 'meta-competences' such as 'self-exploration' and 'personal adaptability' (Hall, 2002). The term protean draws from certain characteristics and actions attributed to the character 'Proteus' in Homer's (1980) poem *The Odyssey;* more specifically, the protean metaphor is used to represent the individual's ability to be flexible and able to adapt to demands from different situations just as god Proteus in Greek mythology is able to change shape at will in order to survive (Hall, 2002; Thomas and Inkson, 2004). For instance, having the skill to 'reshape' thinking and behaviour in order to be 'more sympathetic' and act appropriately in respect to the culture of others is considered as a valuable competence of the 'global manager' in contemporary organizations (Thomas and Inkson, 2004). According to the notion of the protean career, individuals 'reinvent themselves' frequently, shaping their 'self-identity' and personal skills in order to remain marketable as the work environment changes (Hall, 2002; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009). Somewhat similar to the notion of boundaryless career, the protean career refers to the individuals' ability to manage their professional path as well as on the development of personal skills; however, the emphasis of the protean career remains on the individuals' subjectivity so that 'psychological success' can be measured by personal goals and values, rather than by 'vertical' advancement or 'moving up' through hierarchies during long-term employment relationships (Briscoe and Hall, 2005; Hall, 2002).

2.8.2 International experience

'International experience' as part of the individuals' professional path is sometimes described as a type of boundaryless career, although the motives for living and working in a foreign country tend to be used as a marker for classification in the literature; for example, concepts such as 'expatriate assignment' and 'overseas experience' are used to differentiate the ways in which individuals can pursue an 'international career' (Inkson *et al.*, 1997). In the model of expatriate assignment the initiative usually comes from the organization, whereas in overseas experience the initiative comes from the individual; however, the distinction is based more on the level of organizational support and involvement than on who initiates the process, since the motivation to undertake international assignments may actually come from the employees and not from their employers (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011; Inkson *et al.*, 1997).

International experience is commonly associated with the notion of traditional career because the individual moves to a foreign country within the context of a single organization, primarily seeking career progression, financial benefits and the achievement of organizational goals; in contrast, overseas experience or 'self-initiated expatriation' is considered as a non-traditional career because the individual moves between countries and organizations driven by personal motives that do not necessarily follow a linear career path (Inkson *et al.*, 1997; Suutari and Brewster, 2000). Moreover, self-initiated expatriation is sometimes associated in the literature with the notion of 'cosmopolitanism' because the individuals' motives for mobility are sustained by an idealised view of travel represented through a desire to seek adventure, to live new experiences or to 'see the world' rather than on the pursuit of career competences and resources (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2013). Nevertheless, from a more general perspective of boundaryless career, both models of international experience can serve for the development of personal competences as individuals transcend different kinds of boundaries (Inkson *et al.*, 1997).

International experience is often represented in the literature of careers as the means to develop 'career capital', defined as knowledge and skills that are believed to be highly valued by individuals as they represent objective and/or subjective rewards concerning their professional career (Doherty and Dickmann, 2009; Inkson *et al.*, 1997; Richardson and Mallon, 2005; Thomas, Lazarova and Inkson, 2005; Tung, 1998). The increasing permeability of boundaries within and between organizations as a result of contemporary processes of globalization, is commonly reflected in the literature of careers through the view that individuals can 'become boundaryless' by self-managing the acquisition of 'portable' competences, such as technical skills, knowledge and professional networks, that may be valuable in different areas of the corporate environment in which they move (Cappellen and Janssens, 2010; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994; Inkson *et al.*, 1997; Sullivan, 1999; Thomas, Lazarova and Inkson, 2005). International experience gained from overseas assignments sponsored by an organization or through self-initiated expatriation is also identified as the source for the development of 'global career actors'; at the same time, it is argued that the international context surrounding career actors, such as the global reach of the media and the growth in international tourism, supports the global dimension of the individual's career on a more long-term basis (Gunz and Peiperl, 2007; Thomas, Lazarova and Inkson, 2005).

Geographical mobility as part of the individual's working life is considered as an essential element in the concept of 'global career', described as a career path that takes place in more than one country (Gunz and Peiperl, 2007). In the literature of careers, different terms are used within the context of global careers; for instance, the terms 'permanent expatriate' and 'professional expatriate' are used to designate those individuals who work and live in various countries during their entire career, and those who remain in a foreign country changing employers, respectively (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011). Additionally, the term migration is considered as inappropriate to describe global career mobility even in cases of 'long-term' arrangements (more than two to three years, which is considered as 'typical') because from the standpoint of the individual working and living in the host country is perceived as a temporary experience rather than an 'indefinite stay' in the new host-locality (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011).

CHAPTER 3 – METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

PART I – RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Online research

Online research refers to the use of online communication technologies as research methods to encompass research participants who are dispersed across spatial distances, but who have similar interests or shared characteristics in accordance with the objectives of a given study (Angrosino, 2007; Hine, 2001; Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012; Kivits, 2005; Kozinets, 2010; Madden, 2010; Mann and Stewart, 2000; O'Connor *et al.*, 2008). Online research comprises a variety of computer-mediated techniques and tools that can be used for the gathering of qualitative and quantitative data; online tools include synchronous and asynchronous methods to collect text-based information or that data that incorporate multi-media communication (Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012; Mann and Stewart, 2000; Poynter, 2010). Online research is also used to carry out ethnographic studies, sometimes referred to as 'virtual ethnography' (Hine, 2001) or 'netnography' (Kozinets, 2010); online ethnography considers the virtual spaces of the Internet as analytical sites defined by social interactions among users of the technology and the manifestation of particular cultures (Angrosino, 2007; Hine, 2001; Kozinets, 2010; Madden, 2010).

This research employs online communication technologies to gather textual data rather than to experience social life in a given virtual site; although the researcher considered the context in which research data was generated, the analysis focuses on how language is used in the constructions of texts. It may be argued that to a certain extent the virtual spaces of the online discussion forums used in this research are 'online communities' through which particular cultures are manifested (Angrosino, 2007; Hine, 2001; Kozinets, 2010); however, this analysis considers the Internet primarily as the means through which texts are produced, consumed and distributed by individuals who share a lifestyle, but does not include sustained ethnographic observation of how these processes take place (Hine, 2001). The online methods selected for the gathering of the research data are online interviews, online discussion forums and corporate websites; a detailed discussion of these methods is offered in the sections below.

It may be argued that the use of online research methods marginalizes non-users of the technology (Hewson *et al.* 2003); however, the use of online communication technologies constitutes a critical aspect in the life of the highly mobile individual for the establishment of social interactions and the maintenance of personal relationships with family and friends (Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001; Polson, 2011). Online research involves ethical considerations regarding the rights to privacy of the users of the technology, on the basis that the information provided by individuals in the different spaces of the Internet is private, even though theoretically it is publicly available to a worldwide audience due to the nature of the medium (Fielding, 2003; Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012; Whiteman, 2012). Ethical issues were considered during the process of data collection according to the characteristics of the method used; moreover, as a general rule the researcher only used the data collected from research participants who directly gave her their informed consent via written or spoken communication. Informed consent specifically refers to the agreement between the researcher and the research participants on the nature of the study, the intended use of the data collected and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time (Fielding, 2003; O'Connor *et al.*, 2008).

3.2 Transnational professionals

The present research uses the term 'transnational professional' to define the unit of study on the basis of the participants' highly mobile lifestyle. Transnational professional in the sense used here refers to a particular class of skilled professionals who in the pursuit of work have relocated internationally more than once, and who during the period of data collection expressed a desire to continue to relocate transnationally, instead, for instance, of returning to their country of origin or stablishing permanent residency in the host locality. The period of time the participants spent in each country is not used as a feature to define the transnational professional; the focus of this study is on the participants' attitudes towards their own mobility and their intentions to continue to relocate internationally independently of the temporal length of each of the transnational relocations. The term 'nomadic lifestyle' is used in this study to refer to the participants' adoption of 'nomadism' as a form of life; meaning that the individuals' transnational relocations simultaneously involve aspects concerning the context of work and everyday life within the private domain.

The mobility of the research participants is here assumed as 'voluntary' in the sense that it is a matter of personal choice rather than imposed by external agency; in other words, mobility in the life of the transnational professional is a personal and rational decision. Therefore, the unifying feature that defines the sample of study is the participants' nomadic lifestyle which was originally driven by their willingness to change from spatial sedentarism to mobility across geopolitical borders.

3.2.1 Criteria for the selection of the sample of research participants

At the initial stage of the research process a number of criteria were defined to encompass the dimensions of transnational mobility from the perspective of nomadism in the proposed sample; however, following a preliminary analysis of the data collected, the researcher found that an extra variable (number 3 below) had to be added to the original criteria for the selection of the final sample.

Original criteria:

1) Individuals had relocated internationally more than once in the pursuit of work. Specifically, individuals had lived and worked in at least two different countries outside their country of origin. This condition follows the researcher's argument that relocating two or more times corresponds to a sort of 'nomadic mobility' in comparison to the traditional path of migration of changing country of residency only once. The notion to 'live and work' in a locality as used here means that individuals must reside in the country where their professional activity is situated, rather than, for instance, commuting between countries during the duration of a particular work assignment or employment contract.

2) Individuals had the intention to relocate internationally from their current locality. This means that at the time of the data collection process the participants expressed an active desire to continue to be internationally mobile, independently of the time lived in the current location. This variable was incorporated on the basis that the participants had assumed mobility as part of their lives, thus influencing their representations of past events and actions as well as their view of the future.

Additional criterion:

3) Individuals had secured employment in the country of destination prior to arrival. This means that to some extent the host country was defined by the context of work, thus limiting the choices available to the participants in terms of potential destinations. The intention of this variable was to further situate the study within the setting of modern organizations in the sense that the mobility of the research participants was primarily a response to demands generated by the former.

3.2.2 Compilation of the sample of research participants

The compilation of the sample of participants started in November 2010 and culminated in August 2011. The research was initially advertised through online discussion forums in a variety of online social networks; to find these online social networks the researcher used online search engines using key terms such as 'serial expatriates', 'global nomads' and 'international assignments'. Several online social networks were selected on the basis of their accessibility to the general public, such as free basic membership and the possibility to input posts in online discussion forums; additionally, the researcher sought online social networks destined for a worldwide audience, rather than to the members of local communities or groups supporting private interests. Following standard norms of etiquette in the Internet, or 'netiquette' (O'Connor *et al.*, 2008), the researcher contacted the administrator or moderator of each group, and requested permission to use the discussion forums to recruit potential participants and to collect research data. After two months of advertising the study the researcher concentrated on two online social networks (namely *LinkedIn* and *InterNations*) that proved to be more effective for the search of potential participants in accordance with the objectives of the study.

With the exception of five narrative interviews that were carried out in Spanish and translated into English during the transcription process, English was used as the 'lingua franca' (Tietze and Dick, 2009) in this study in the sense that it was the common language used in all communication between the researcher, who is a Spanish speaker of the language, and the potential and actual research participants who are of different national origin, including English speaking countries. The English language is here considered as one of the unifying

variables of the sample of research participants because it is the common language in the corporate context in which they move (Colic-Peisker, 2010; Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009; Polson, 2011). The research was advertised in English as the common language used in all the online social networks considered at this stage; however, this is not to say that the intended sample of research participants was limited to English native speakers or that it focused on Anglo-American cultural contexts (O'Connor *et al.*, 2008).

In most cases the notion of nomadism was included as part of the posts published through online social media; expressions such as 'professional nomads', 'nomadism in the world of work' and 'nomadic lifestyle' were used to attract the interest of potential participants. The overall response from these posts was ample and positive; almost 100 individuals from different localities around the world manifested a desire to contribute to the research. The majority of the potential and actual research participants noted that their interest in taking part in the research was the mention of nomadism to advertise the study, even in the cases in which the participants expressed negative associations to the idea of nomadism. Nonetheless, not all of the participants from the final sample were aware of the relationship the researcher established between the mobile lifestyle of transnational professionals and the notion of contemporary global nomadism in the corporate context.

To meet ethical considerations, the information posted for the purposes of the study clearly stated the researcher's full name, the academic intention of the data collected and the criteria of selection for potential participants, as well as guarantees of anonymity of all potential and actual participants (Hewson *et al.* 2003; O'Connor *et al.*, 2008; Rutter and Smith, 2005; Whiteman, 2012). In addition, a dedicated electronic mail address ('e-mail' hereafter) and a dedicated online blog were created for the purposes of the research; these were mentioned in the posts advertising the study as the means for those who were interested in the research to obtain further information. Approximately 80% of the potential participants publicly manifested their interest through the online discussion forums, and the other 20% approached the researcher via private e-mail.

As part of the conditions of use defined by the two online social networks, the full name and photograph of the members are publicly displayed in their 'profile', meaning that the anonymity of the research participants could only be guaranteed outside the online medium (i.e. for the purposes of this thesis), as their contribution to the research through the online

discussion forums was visible to the other members of the social networks. The personal information published by the participants in the online social networks as part of their profile served the researcher to somewhat validate their identity, hence guaranteeing the authenticity of the data collected (Hewson *et al*. 2003; Mann and Stewart, 2000). As well as the full name and photograph, the members' personal profile often included their professional career path, private e-mail address and membership to interest groups or communities; this information, however, was not considered as part of the data for the analysis. As a member of the online social networks used to recruit potential participants, the researcher also published this sort of personal information about herself, meaning that to some extent her own identity could be 'validated' by others. Further ethical considerations are included in the sections bellow where the research methods are described in detail.

The researcher relied on the use of online discussion forums and e-mails to reiterate and to clarify the criteria for the selection of potential participants; e-mails were particularly used to ensure that the potential participants met the criteria for the selection of the sample and to arrange the interviews. An approximately 85% of the potential participants approached the researcher in response to the posts to advertise the study, 10% of the potential participants were approached by the researcher via e-mail following their participation in the research's online forums, and 5% were reached using snowball or chain sampling via some of the participants interviewed who suggested and contacted other potential participants (Wengraf, 2001).

3.2.3 Breakdown of the final sample of research participants

The sample of research participants selected during the interview process and the sample of participants selected from the online discussion forums share the same sort of nomadic lifestyle, manifested through references to similar social practices and personal competencies that the research participants broadly attribute to internationally mobile individuals. These participants are a representative sample of the class of the transnational professional; they comprise female and male professionals from various backgrounds and of different national origins including non-native speakers of English. The heterogeneity of the samples in terms of these demographic characteristics is of critical importance for the achievement of the

objectives of the study, because it aids to understand to what extent locally produced discourses transcend different domains and scales of social organization (Fairclough, 2004).

The final sample of research participants presented in the following section only refers to the participants in the interview process; it does not include the sample of participants from the online discussion forums because in this case the researcher was unable to gather demographic data from all the contributors in the forums or confirm the third criterion for the selection of research participants (i.e. whether the participant had secured employment in the host country prior to arrival). The final sample of research participants defined upon completion of the first stage of the interview process was organized according to six variables, namely country of origin, native language, transnational relocations, profession, age and gender and family situation. These variables are explained in the sections below, followed by the demographic characteristics of the final sample offered in Table 1 (see section 3.2.3.1).

3.2.3.1 Variables used to structure the final sample of research participants

Country of origin: This variable refers to the country in which the participants were born. This is an objective approach to a rather subjective concept as many of the participants feel that the country in which they were born does not define their national identity. For instance, some participants spent most of their developing years in a country different to the country in which they were born, and some participants have more than one nationality. The researcher sought to balance the sample with participants from the so-called 'developed' and 'developing' countries. The specific number of participants from each country is as follows:

Australia	1	Mexico	1
Argentina	1	Taiwan	1
Canada	1	Trinidad and Tobago	1
Denmark	1	United Kingdom	2
France	1	USA	2
Malaysia	1	Venezuela	3

Native Language: This variable refers to the language the participants identify as their 'mother tongue', although it is not always related to the participants' country of birth. In general terms the participants' understand the concept of mother tongue as the language spoken in the private domain, which may or may not be the language spoken socially and/or in the workplace. The researcher sought to include both native and non-native English speakers. The heterogeneity in term of the participants' native language was intended to ensure a balance in the sample between English native speakers, whose native language corresponds with the language that dominates the world of business and management (Fairclough, 2002; Tietze, 2004), and non-native English speakers who had to learn English in order to operate at a 'global' level and progress their career. The native languages included in the sample are:

Cantonese	1
Danish	1
English	7
French	1
Mandarin Chinese	1
Spanish	5

Transnational relocations: This variable is concerned with the number of transnational relocations carried out by the research participants in the pursuit of work; specifically, this variable considers the countries in which the research participants had secured employment prior to arrival. International moves that are not corporate-related are not included in this variable; such as moves during the individuals' childhood or to pursue studies abroad (6 out of the 16 research participants made reference to international experience before starting their professional career). The countries mentioned in Table 1 include the participants' transnational relocations up to the time the second interview took place. The number of transnational relocations among the research participants varies between 2 and 9, with an average of 5 moves. The time the participants' spent in each country varies between 4 months and 8 years with an average of 2-3 years; this data is offered only as information as it was not taken into account in the analysis. The number of transnational relocations and/or the time lived in each country do not follow a particular pattern in relation to the other variables in the research.

Profession: This variable refers to the participants' field of work. The sample encompasses a variety of professional careers within different Industries; for the majority of the participants their position within the organization for which they work corresponds to a management role. In order to ensure the participants' anonymity their profession is presented using general terms that describe the area of work; for the same reason, the analysis omits company names and any sensitive information regarding the organizations. The final sample of research participants comprises seven categories of professions, which are listed below:

Education	1
Research and Development (non-academic)	1
Engineering	2
Information Technology	2
Banking and Finance	3
Marketing and Sales	7

Age and gender: This variable considers the participants' age at the time of the first interview. The participants' age ranged between 23 and 61 years old, with the majority of the participants being between 35 and 45 years old. The researcher sought to balance the sample with an equal number of female and male participants; the researcher notes that the female participants as a group are younger in comparison to the male participants. The age of the female participants ranged between 23 and 44 years old, and the age of the male participants ranged between 34 and 61 years old. The researcher was unable to find a representative sample of female participants older than 44 years old and who met the criteria for the selection of the sample. A possible explanation for this is that on certain occasions women may relocate internationally for reasons other than to personally pursue work opportunities, such as to study overseas or for family reasons; this feature falls beyond the scope of the criteria of selection of participants in this research.

Family situation: This variable refers to the participants' marital situation and/or number of children at the time of the first interview. 11 of the participants are single and five are married, of which three have one or two children. All the four participants that are married

are male; two of these participants mentioned a previous marriage which ended after the participant's initiated a nomadic lifestyle in the pursuit of work, although the former was not presented as a direct consequence of the latter.

Table 1 - Demographic characteristics of the final sample of research participants

Code	Country of origin	Native language	Profession	Transnational relocations	Age	Family situation
P1	Malaysia	Cantonese	Banking and Finance	Australia, Germany, Australia	32	Single
P2	USA	English	Marketing and Sales	USA , Switzerland, Canada, Switzerland, Australia, Switzerland	44	Single
P3	Denmark	Danish	Marketing and Sales	China, USA, France, Denmark	37	Single
P4	UK	English	Marketing and Sales	Switzerland, Sweden	23	Single
P5	France	French	Research and Development (non-academic)	UK, Japan, Taiwan, Germany	23	Single
P6	Trinidad and Tobago	English	Education	El Salvador, Taiwan, Germany	39	Single
P7	Mexico	Spanish	Marketing and Sales	Switzerland, USA, Finland, China, Switzerland	27	Single
P8	Australian	English	Information Technology	The Netherlands, Australia, Sweden, UK, Sweden, USA	34	Single
P9	USA	English	Marketing and Sales	Japan, UK, The Netherlands, USA	61	Married, 2 children
P10	Taiwan	Mandarin Chinese	Banking and Finance	USA, China, Australia, Canada	36	Married, 2 children
P11	Canada	English	Engineering	France, Germany, The Netherlands, Singapore, USA, France, The Netherlands	37	Single
P12	UK	English	Banking and Finance	China, Singapore, Taiwan, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia, Austria, UK, Qatar	54	Married, 1 child
P13	Venezuela	Spanish	Information Technology	USA, Norway, Oman, Italy	35	Married
P14	Argentina	Spanish	Marketing and Sales	Chile, Ivory Coast, Senegal	36	Married
P15	Venezuela	Spanish	Marketing and Sales	USA, Peru, Venezuela, Belgium, Egypt, Morocco	43	Single
P16	Venezuela	Spanish	Engineering	Spain, Paris, Venezuela, Spain, UK, Italy, United Arab Emirates	34	Single

3.2.3.2 Representativeness of the sample

Table 2 outlines several sources and their respective measurements of individual international mobility from different perspectives that to some degree involve the context of work. It is not possible to know the total number of transnational professionals worldwide as considered in this research due to the nature of their nomadic lifestyle; therefore, the information offered here is only intended as a frame of reference to provide some representativeness of the research's sample in relation to the wider context of global labour mobility during the recent years.

The sources consulted are grouped into three categories. The first category comprises the online social networks used for the purposes of this research, the second category refers to international organisations associated with global migration, and the last category comprises companies whose commercial interests relate to some extent to the mobility of individuals within the context of work.

Table 2 - Representativeness of the research sample in the context of global labour mobility

	Category	Source	Representativeness of the Sample
1.-	Online social network	**InterNations**: Social network associated with the global mobility of individuals.	Approximately 1.5 million registered users (Internations, 2015)
		LinkedIn: Social network associated with the professional context.	Approximately 300 million registered users (Linkedin, 2015)
2.-	International organisation	**The International Labour Office (ILO)**: International agency in the United Nations who deals with labour-related issues.	Approximately 105.4 million of economically active international migrants worldwide in 2010 (ILO, 2010, p. 2)
		The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): International economic organization of 34 member countries worldwide.	Approximately 130 thousands of intra-company transfers in OECD countries in 2011; in 2010 the approximate of intra-company transfers was 124 thousands (OECD, 2014, p. 25)
3.-	Private company	**HSBC Expat**: Company in the industry of banking and finances services.	In a sample of 9,288 individuals who have relocated internationally on a temporary basis, approximately 38% of respondents reported to have moved abroad by the prospect of a better career, and 20% to improve their income (HSBC Expat, 2014, n.p.).
		Interdean: Company in the industry of relocation services.	In a sample of 1,037 professionals in the areas of Human Resources and Employee Mobility, approximately 83% of respondents authorised between 1 and 100 temporary international assignments in 2010, 12% between 101 and 250 international assignments, and the remaining more than 500 international assignments (Interdean, 2011, p.6).
		KMPG: Company in the industry of corporate audit, tax and advisory services.	In a sample of 600 companies, approximately 50% of the corporations had between 1 and 50 temporary international assignees in 2012, 37% between 51 and 500 assignees and the remaining more than 501 assignees (KMPG, 2013, p.11).
		PwC: Professional network of corporations in the industry of assurance, tax and advisory services.	In a sample of 900 companies, temporary international assignments increased approximately by 25% between 1998 and 2009 (PwC, 2012, p.1). In a sample of 4,364 graduates in 75 countries, approximately 71% of respondents said to want to work in a different country as part of their careers (PwC, 2011, p.5).

3.3 Interview process

The interview, and more precisely the 'narrative interview', is the primary method selected for the gathering of data from the sample of research participants, because it provides the context for the researcher to gather the individuals' life stories (Cortazzi, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Riessman, 1993; 2008; Wengraf, 2001). The narrative interview allows the participant to construct a unique composition of events, actions and characters situated within the context of his or her own life history (Czarniawska, 1998; 2004). Interviews that aim at life stories generally focus on how individuals impose order on the flow of experience, the linguistic and cultural resources they draw upon and how these are put together to communicate meaning (Riessman, 1993). The narratives analysed in this research constitute the participants' representation of the series of events, actions and characters that are framed within the context of their own international mobility in the pursuit of work.

Certain types of qualitative interviews can be considered as 'narrative occasions' (Riessman, 2008), regarding the sort of information they can generate in comparison to other research methods such as surveys or interviews that follow a fixed set of questions. Non-structured interviews and semi-structured interviews that resemble a conversation, rather than a set pattern of question and answer, allow the participant's spontaneous self-expression of personal accounts in which past events and experiences are rendered meaningful for the interviewee and for the researcher; in this style of interview the focus is more on the interviewee's engagement with the conversation than on the specific construction of questions (Cortazzi, 2007; Gabriel, 2004; Madden, 2010; O'Connor *et al.* 2008; Riessman, 1993; 2008; Wengraf, 2001). To create the possibility for storytelling or personal narratives, the researcher actively participates in the flow of the conversation, establishing rapport with the interviewee and encouraging the latter to talk about personal experiences, thoughts and feelings with regard to a particular topic of discussion; this approach requires open questions that can prompt expanded and detailed responses, and that can be adapted during the interview process according to the requirements of the conversation (Fielding, 2003; O'Connor *et al.* 2008; Riessman, 2008).

During the interview process the researcher and the interviewees did not share the situational context or interview venue, as it is the case of face-to-face interviews, for example. Interviews that do not involve face to face interactions between the researcher and the interviewee,

such as telephone interviews and e-mail interviews, are considered as appropriate to gather qualitative data that requires the interviewees' expression of meanings and opinions concerning their own experiences (Fielding, 2003). This is because rapport between the researcher and the interviewee may be more easily achieved due to the lack of personal and visual contact that can potentially have an impact on the participant's responses; aspects such as the researcher's physical appearance, ethnicity and class as well as the situational context in which the interview takes place may influence how the interviewee feels and thus shape the interview process (Fielding, 2003).

The Internet was considered as the most appropriate medium for the interview process due to the mobile nature of the participants' lifestyle; the use of online communication technologies allowed the researcher to reach potential and actual participants regardless of their physical location at the time of the interview. The researcher carried out one-to-one, semi-structured interviews using a mixture of three tools according to the participants' preferences: an online application for verbal communication, traditional telephone and e-mail communication. The online application used for the narrative interviews was 'Skype', a communication program freely available in the Internet intended for textual and/or voice conversation between users of the technology independently of their geographical location. One of the main features of Skype is the opportunity for users to enable a video facility for conference calling, meaning that individuals are able to see each other as they talk; when this feature is not activated the communication resembles a traditional telephone conversation in the sense of lacking visual cues. Online interviews and telephone interviews are synchronous methods as the researcher and the interviewee engage in the conversation at the same time; whereas e-mail interviews are asynchronous as the conversation is temporarily fragmented (Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012; Poynter, 2010).

All the interviews were recorded under informed consent given by the research participants prior to the interview; the transcripts were made within a week following the interview. The interviews were carried out in English and in Spanish, which is the native language of the researcher; the interviews carried out in Spanish were translated into English during the transcription process. Transcripts of verbal interviews are considered as partial and selective representations in that they omit certain aspects from the actual interaction between the researcher and the interviewees (Rapley, 2008; Riessman, 2008). On this view, the transcripts in this study may be seen as partial representations of the interviews because the researcher

corrected the grammar in the extracts included in this thesis, and omitted certain features from the original conversation such as pauses and sounds or utterances; however, this is not to say that the quality of the research data required for the analysis was compromised (Rapley, 2008; Riessman, 2008). Moreover, the translation of transcripts may be influenced to some extent by the researcher's own socio-cultural background (Chidlow, Plakoyiannaki and Welch, 2014); nonetheless, the researcher is confident that her translations are accurate, because the semi-structured style of the interviews provided the interviewees with an opportunity to construct elaborated and detailed answers in ways in which their intended meaning was clear for the researcher.

The interview tools used in this research provided the participants with the opportunity to choose 'the venue' of the interview according to personal preferences or practical reasons; therefore, the situational context of the interview may be considered as 'neutral' in the sense that the interview venue was not defined by the researcher or by the interviewee (Fielding, 2003). The researcher considers that carrying out interviews in Spanish as the common native language between her and the interviewee did not represent a distinctive feature in the creation of rapport with the participants; instead, the researcher argues that to some extent the development of rapport was facilitated by the researcher's own 'international experience' concerning country of origin, native language and previous transnational relocations, information that was freely visible in the online social networks used for the purposes of this study.

Assuming a semi-structured approach meant that the researcher had to improvise feedback during the interview; the feedback served to maintain the flow of the conversation during the interview and encourage the participants to clarify or to expand on particular aspects in their narratives (Cortazzi, 2007; Fielding, 2003; Wengraf, 2001). Following conventional interview etiquette (O'Connor *et al.*, 2008), the researcher offered a brief introduction of the research explaining the objectives of the study and an overview of the interview procedure; the researcher also sought to gain informed consent from the participants to record the interview, and assured their anonymity as well as the confidentiality of any sensitive information manifested during the interview.

Prior to the interview process the researcher prepared an introductory open question and a list of five core themes concerning transnational mobility in the pursuit of work and as a way

of life. The initial question was intended to prompt the interviewees to narrate their story 'from the beginning' (Riessman, 2008). Specifically, the researcher asked the participants to recount past events as working professionals, which in accordance with the criteria for the selection of participants necessarily involves a series of transnational relocations; such a mobile lifestyle influences the private domain, concerning family, friends and community life, as the participants' encounter different socio-cultural contexts in geographically dispersed locations. The introductory question allowed the participants to spontaneously narrate their life story regarding the professional career path they originally intended to follow, and how they came to relocate internationally for the first time.

The core themes were defined following the review of the literature concerned with individuals leading a highly mobile lifestyle (Butcher, 2010; Colic-Peisker, 2010; Costas, 2013; D'Andrea, 2006; Fechter, 2007; Meerwarth, 2008; Meyer, Kaplan and Charum, 2001; Nowicka, 2007; Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009; Ossman, 2004; Pittinsky and Shih, 2004; Polson, 2011). The themes represent topics of interest in this study; they were only used during the interviews as reference to construct follow up questions that acted as feedback, keeping the conversation within the scope of the research (Riessman, 1993; 2008). In other words, during the interviews the researcher used the core themes as a frame of reference to emphasise certain aspects of the participants' narratives by asking subsequent questions. This does not mean that the interviews followed a set structure; the intention was to ensure that key issues related to the objectives of the research were covered during the interviews, while encouraging detailed accounts of particular aspects in the narratives. The researcher did not require the use of standard questions as prompts, because due to the open and informal approach of the semi-structured interview the participants spontaneously raised the themes or topics of interest as part of their narratives. The core themes or topics of interest used during the interview process were:

- Participants' motives for adopting an internationally mobile lifestyle: why the participant relocated internationally for the first time, and why he/she continued to relocate internationally after the initial experience abroad.

- Participants' idea of 'home': how the participant sustained his or her relationships with family and friends who are spatially distant, and how the participant's repetitive transnational mobility influenced such relationships.

- Participants' view of the future: the participant's expectations for the future from the perspective of personal aspirations and professional goals.

- Participants' approach to the local culture: the participant's relationships with the local culture-community of the different localities in which he/she has lived and worked, including the language or languages used in the context of work and socially.

- Participants' attitude to the discourse of nomadism: the participant's considerations regarding the term nomadism and to what extent he/she associated his/her lifestyle with such a concept. The focus of the analysis is on the associations the participants made between nomadism and their own mobile lifestyle within the work context; the accuracy of the participants' definitions or the extent to which their lifestyle actually resembles the way of life of traditional nomadic communities are not considered in the analysis.

The interview process was carried out in two stages, during which the final sample of research participants was interviewed on two different occasions with a twelve-month period in between each interview. The reason for undertaking two sets of interviews was to obtain a longitudinal view of the participants' narratives; the researcher sought to analyse to what extent the participants' attitude towards their own mobile lifestyle had changed as they considered past events and experiences from two different temporal and situational perspectives.

3.3.1 Stage I of the interview process

The first stage of the interview process lasted a total of nine months, from December 2010 to August 2011; during this period the researcher simultaneously searched for potential participants via online social networks, and carried out interviews as participants were contacted and the calls arranged. A tentative target figure of 25 participants was set at the beginning of the empirical research, with the intention to undertake the first set of interviews during a period of six months. However, after a critical analysis of the sample of research participants gathered after six months, the researcher decided to extend the interview process for a further three months with the intention to gather a similar number of female and male participants, and to achieve a wider diversity in terms of the participants' nationality

and profession. The intended sample of 25 participants was thus exceeded, and by the end of the first stage of the interview process the sample comprised 50 research participants. No further interviews were carried out as the researcher considered that data saturation had been achieved, in the sense that no new information was being collected in accordance with the objectives of the study (Fielding, 2003; Hewson *et al*. 2003).

The sample of 50 participants was reduced to 16 following the introduction of the additional criterion for the selection of the sample of participants (i.e. the participants had secured employment in the country of destination prior to arrival). This particular aspect proved difficult to clarify with the potential participants prior to the interview, so it was not until a preliminary analysis of the transcripts was carried out that the researcher was able to consider it for the definition of the final sample of research participants. A smaller sample does not compromise the validity of the research, which is achieved by the depth of the analysis and not by the width of the sample (Hewson *et al*. 2003; Riessman, 1993). In accordance with the objectives of this study, the researcher was concerned with the depth of the narratives collected during the interviews because they can provide rich and detailed information about the participants' feelings and opinions about their life story as transnational professionals.

Out of the 16 interviews that comprise the final sample, 14 were carried out via Skype, one via traditional telephone and one via e-mail. The interviews through Skype and traditional telephone lasted between 50 minutes and 1 hour 40 minutes, with an average of 1 hour 20 minutes. 11 interviews were carried out in English and five in Spanish; the interviews in Spanish correspond to the participants who are native-speakers of the language. Upon request of the participants (both female), the video facility was used in two of the interviews that took place via Skype; however, this audio-visual data was not included as part of the analysis. It can be argued that to some extent the length of the interviews is a representation of the capacity of the methods selected for the gathering of research data to facilitate the building of confidence, rapport and disclosure between the researcher and the interviewee; in particular, the researcher argues that the interviewees felt particularly confident and willing to give elaborate accounts that involve personal feelings and opinions because the physical presence of the researcher was not required, and because the participants had the opportunity to choose the situational context of their interview, which included hotel rooms, public cafeterias, offices and the participants' home. Additionally, the use of Skype, e-mail and

telephone were appropriate because the interviews could be easily rescheduled; this flexibility also meant that no financial costs were involved in the gathering of research data (e.g. the cost of traveling to a given venue).

The interview carried out via e-mail followed a similar approach to the spoken interviews in order to encourage the participant to spontaneously construct her narrative as a transnational professional while remaining within the scope of the core themes outlined above. The e-mail interview was semi-structured, meaning that the researcher was able to participate in the flow of the conversation despite the temporal interruptions characteristic of this medium (Fielding, 2003; O'Connor *et al.*, 2008). In accordance with ethical considerations in research interviews, the researcher sent a first e-email to the research participant stating the aims of the study, ensured the anonymity of the participant and outlined the procedure of the interview; this initial correspondence was followed by the informed consent given by the research participant to the researcher to use the data collected from the e-mails for the purposes of the study. The e-mail interview lasted three weeks, when the researcher considered to have reached saturation in the sense of not obtaining new information from the participant in regard to the research's aim and objectives. It is worth mentioning that the use of e-mail for this interview was upon request of the participant, who chose it on the basis of the flexibility and practicality this tool offers regarding her highly mobile lifestyle; this view supports the argument of using online communication technologies as research methods in situations where the participants are not easily accessible (Hine, 2001; Kivits, 2005).

3.3.2 Stage II of the interview process

The second stage of the interview lasted a total of nine months, from December 2011 to August 2012. During this period all 16 participants that comprise the final sample were re-interviewed approximately 12 months after their first interview. The aim of a second interview was to provide the researcher with new narratives by the same sample of participants, in order to analyse potential transformations in the participants' attitudes towards their own mobility from the perspective of a different temporal and circumstantial context. Eight of the 16 interviews took place via Skype, of which two used the video facility (the same female participants who chose to use video in the first interview); seven interviews took place via e-mail and one via telephone. The spoken interviews lasted between 20 and 45

minutes with an average of 30 minutes, and the e-mail interviews lasted between two to three days. The shorter length of this set of interviews in relation to the first interviews can be considered as appropriate because the second interview was focused on a more defined period in the life of the participants (i.e. the period of 12 months between the first and second interview). 11 interviews were carried out in English and five in Spanish; the interviews in Spanish correspond to the participants who are native-speakers of the language.

The interviews in this second stage also followed a semi-structured approach; however, in the introductory question of these interviews the participants were asked to recount past events since their last interview, and the focus of the conversation was placed on any further transnational relocation as well as in changes in attitudes towards the nomadic lifestyle.

3.4 Online discussion forums

Online forums are virtual spaces where users or 'contributors' can 'post' messages to participate in a discussion that usually follows a given theme or subject; online discussion forums are asynchronous research methods as the researcher and the subjects of study do not need to use the online tool at the same time. Online discussion forums represent a social and communal phenomenon that can aid to the understanding of a particular aspect of social organization or a given social practice (Kozinets, 2010); as for example the sense of community of highly mobile individuals constructed on the basis of a shared lifestyle (Fechter, 2007; Polson, 2011). The use of online discussion forums as research method supports the aim and objectives of this study because they concentrate on a targeted portion of the general audience of online communication technologies (Hewson *et al*. 2003); more specifically, the researcher was able to reach individuals who share their interest for the subject of discussion or who consider themselves as part of the online community for whom the forum is intended (O'Connor *et al.*, 2008).

It can be argued that the online forums analysed in this study were to some extent an ongoing conversation between the participants or contributors in the forum (including the researcher) as they were able to provide and to receive written feedback following previous messages or comments. To some extent it can be argued that the narratives constructed in the online discussion forums resemble the notion of 'antenarrative' advocated by Boje (2001), in the

sense of being fragmented stories that are collectively produced (see section 3.7 below on narrative theory). Although these personal narratives are here considered as the participants' unique account of their life story, they are constantly being constructed and deconstructed as the participants make reference to past events and experiences while seeking accordance with the discursive developments during the discussion.

3.4.1 Data collection

According to standard norms of etiquette in the Internet, the messages added in an online forum should be relevant to the interests of the given discussion (O'Connor *et al.*, 2008). This guideline was followed for the advertisement of the research in existing forums in online social networks and for the creation of the online discussion forums dedicated to the study. The themes used to initiate the threads or discussions, which were concerned with the nomadic lifestyle of a certain class of professionals in the pursuit of work, were in accordance with the overall orientation of the online social network in which the forums were contained. The researcher focused on two online social networks for the creation of the online discussion forums: *Linkedin* (www.linkedin.com) promoted as 'the world's largest professional network' (2014); and *InterNations* (www.internations.org) whose blurb reads 'connecting global minds in 390 cities around the world' (2014). The core themes or topics of interest used as a frame of reference during the interview process (see section 3.3 above) were also used as the subjects of discussion to initiate the online forums; namely the motives for relocating internationally more than once, and the individuals' attitudes to home, culture and career.

A total of nine forums were created at different times between December 2010 and November 2011; these were maintained until the researcher considered that the theme of discussion had reached saturation as no new information was being collected. The maintenance of the forums meant that the researcher actively participated in the discussions by incorporating feedback, questions and comments. In order to ensure the anonymity of the research participants, the discussion forums were deleted from the host websites at the end of the research process in July 2014. Four of the nine forums from the research sample were created in *Linkedin*; the discussions in this social network were initiated in two interests groups dedicated to the 'expatriate community' that are part of the wider social network. In the case of *InterNations*, the discussions were created in the section named 'Expat Q&A' that

is part of a wider section called 'world forum'. In general terms, all the members of the social networks had access to all the discussion forums available in the given website, meaning that they had the opportunity to choose the discussion forums or interest groups in which to contribute; in other words, all the research participants had equal access to the online discussion forums dedicated to this study, and that their contribution was voluntary.

In all the forums the researcher disclosed her identity, explained the academic purpose of the discussion and assured the participants' anonymity in the analysis of the data collected. Disclosing the role of the researcher in the forums was an important ethical consideration because the 'presence' of the researcher is not always obvious in the virtual spaces of the Internet (Fielding, 2003; Hine, 2001; Hooley, Wellens and Marriott, 2012; Rutter and Smith, 2005; Whiteman, 2012). The active nature of the online discussion forums, in the sense of the variety of contributors involved at any given moment, made it difficult for the researcher to ensure informed consent for the use of the data collected; for this reason, the researcher regularly added messages in the forums repeating the academic purpose of the discussion, and provided contributors with the opportunity to contact the researcher via e-mail if they preferred that their posts were not included in the final sample of analysis. As a response to these announcements many of the contributors in the forum confirmed their consent to take part in the research by posting messages in the online discussion or via private e-mail; only the narratives provided by the research participants who gave informed consent were used in the analysis.

The group of participants that constructed the sample of personal narratives used for the analysis comprises 10 female participants and 22 male participants. The sample of narratives was selected following the criteria outlined above for the selection of research participants; however, in the online discussion forums the last variable proved more difficult to be confirmed as the participants rarely offered that sort of detailed information (in most cases the contributors in the discussion did not specify if they had secured employment in the host country prior to their transnational relocation). Additionally, the researcher sought to choose narratives with expanded descriptions regarding the participants' transnational relocations; these narratives are a sort of juxtaposition of fragments of information to which meaning is embedded as the discussion develops and the participants incorporate new posts with more comments, opinions and feelings.

Not all of the participants mentioned their profession, age and family situation, so these variables are not considered in this sample of research participants. Among the countries of origin of the research participants are Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Nepal, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the USA. English, as the standard language of communication in the online social networks of the sample, was used by all the participants in all of the forums. The extracts presented in the analysis and in the discussion can be considered as partial representations of the data collected (Rapley, 2008), in that the researcher corrected the grammar and selectively omitted aspects from the original texts, such as company names, abbreviations and text symbols.

3.5 Sample of corporate texts

The term 'corporate texts' as used in this study refers to a single corpus of texts comprising the sample of books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, and the sample of corporate websites of consultancy firms. The sections below present the criteria used for the selection of corporate texts carried out between January 2012 and August 2013. This corpus of corporate texts is a representative sample of a genre of managerial literature that can potentially support the dissemination of the ideology of neoliberalism by mobilizing existing discourses, such as the discourse of corporate global nomadism, to support the interests of modern corporations.

3.5.1 Texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization

Certain texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization are considered as part of a type of literature that shares generic features: the guru status of the authors who produce them, the prescriptive nature of the ideas and concepts they advocate, and the ways language is used to covey given meanings (the review of this genre of literature is offered in section 2.2.1). The following criteria were set out for the selection of the sample of books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization:

1) The texts are of a prescriptive nature; information is presented as prescriptions or guides for individuals on how to think and act according to the image of the world depicted by the

authors of such texts. The normative tone of the texts generally positions individuals as responsible for their own success and future development. Rhetorical language and metaphors are primarily used by the authors with the intention to render the text 'inspirational' for individuals.

2) The texts depict an image of the world framed by contemporary processes of globalization, mostly concerned with developments in technologies of travel and communication, to sustain the authors' claims and prescriptions. The authors' personal opinions and ideas are used to construct a view of the world presented in an oversimplified and idealistic manner that overlooks the complexities of the realities of modern society.

3) The texts portray the authors as 'experts' in a given field through mentions of extensive personal experience and statements of popularity of their books. The texts may provide examples or 'case studies' that draw upon the authors' personal experience to support their claims and give credibility to their ideas. Mentions of prior research or established organization theory are broadly introduced as 'evidence' to support the authors' claims of authority, rather than a source for academic discussion on the basis of their findings or theoretical approach.

4) The texts must be published after the year 2004, on the basis that the central developments in online communication technologies referred to in the texts are relatively recent phenomena.

5) The texts must incorporate to some degree the discourse of individual global mobility with the context of contemporary society, generally seeking to legitimize and justify such a discourse by appealing to universal principles and the common good.

3.5.1.1 Breakdown of the sample

The sample of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization comprises six books by five different authors. The texts are organized below by year of original publication and grouped by author.

Thomas L. Friedman	'The World is Flat: The globalized world in the 21st century', first published in 2005.
Kenichi Ohmae	'The Next Global Stage: Challenges and opportunities in our borderless world', 2005.
Richard Florida	'Who's Your City? How the creative economy is making where to live the most important decision of your life', 2008.
	'The Great Reset: How the post-crash economy will change the way we live and work', 2011.
Susan Bloch and Philip Whiteley	'The Global You: Ten strategies to operate as an international business player', 2011.
Lynda Gratton	'The Shift: The future of work is already here', 2011.

3.5.2 Texts by consultancy firms

This section is concerned with online texts (i.e. corporate websites) produced by a particular sector of consultancy firms, which to some degree address the international mobility of individuals in the context of work as part of their services and products. The compilation of the sample of this category of texts was achieved through online search engines using key terms such as 'consultancy services', 'expatriation' and 'international assignments'. The principles used for the selection of the sample of corporate texts by consultancy firms are founded on the theory of the genre of popular literature discussed above (see section 2.2.1); these principles are outlined below.

1) The texts are primarily concerned with the international mobility of individuals within the corporate context; specifically, some of the services and products offered by the consultancy firms are addressed to professionals with the intention to support their transnational mobility in the pursuit of work.

2) The texts have a normative tone; offering guidance and reassurance to professionals concerning a variety of aspects related to their international mobility in the context of work. This advice or guidance is primarily presented using rhetorical language and metaphors mobilized in ways in which may result 'inspirational'.

3) The texts depict an image of the world framed by contemporary processes of globalization, mostly concerned with developments in technologies of travel and communication, to sustain the consultants' claims and prescriptions. Such descriptions of realty relate to some extent to the central ideas and metaphors identified in the sample of managerial and popular globalization texts.

4) The texts portray the consultants who are members of the firms as 'experts' in their particular field; such alleged expertise is sustained through claims of extensive personal and professional experience comprising the international dimension. The corporate websites may offer publications produced by the consultants and/or 'testimonials' or 'case studies' to claim credibility and popularity.

3.5.2.1 Breakdown of the sample

The sample of texts by consultancy firms comprises four corporate websites. The sample is presented below, including the description that accompanies the firm's name as displayed in their corporate website.

Dean Foster Associates (DFA)	Intercultural Global Solutions, LLC [www.deanfosterassociates.com]
GROVEWELL	Global Leadership Solutions, LLC [www.grovewell.com]
MKB	Conseil & Coaching [www. mkbconseil.ch]
Transition Dynamics	A consultancy serving the international expatriate and repatriate community [www.transition-dynamics.com]

3.6 Critical discourse analysis

'Discourse' is here considered following the ideas of Michel Foucault (1926-1984) and the critical approach which Norman Fairclough develops from them; according to their perspective, discourse is at the same time a mode of social action and a mode of representation of social life. Discourse or 'semiosis' is an element of 'social practice' that includes all forms of spoken and written language, nonverbal communication and visual images; social practices refer to relatively stabilized forms of social activity within a particular social context (Fairclough, 2001a; 2006), for example, the international mobility of professionals for the fulfilment of corporate objectives . A discourse is thus a particular form of social practice that through dialectical relationships with other social elements (e.g. social actors, social relations or cultural values), contributes to the reproduction and transformation of 'social structures' (e.g. a social class or a language) while also being determined by them (Fairclough, 2001a; 2010).

Discourse as a representation of social life is embedded in language use; therefore, discourse analysis encompasses textual analysis as well as the wider context in which texts are produced and used as resources for interpretation (Fairclough, 2001a; 2013). In this research the notion of 'texts' refers to forms of written language that include printed texts and transcripts of spoken texts (i.e. interviews). Based on this theoretical framework for analysis, this research aims to study the degree to which the participants have internalized the discourse of corporate global nomadism as they consider it from the perspective of different contexts in their everyday life, namely the corporate domain, the private sphere and the socio-cultural environment in local communities.

The critical dimension of discourse analysis focuses on the close or 'hidden' relationship between language, power and ideology; specifically, critical discourse analysis explores how certain discourses are potentially 'invested' with dominant ideologies defined by the power relations in a given social context (Fairclough, 2006). The concept of ideology in the sense given here refers to the universalization of particular meanings and hegemonic assumptions shaped by the perspective of dominant interests (Fairclough, 1997; 2001), such as the ideology of capitalism as mobilized through the politico-economic discourse of 'neoliberalism'.

Fairclough (2001a, p. 2) emphasises the importance of identifying ideological assumptions in the critical analysis of discourse because the unequal power relations they involve are implicit in the social conventions that shape how people interact, but of which they may not be consciously aware; ideologies, therefore, may be perpetuated and legitimized through ways of behaving, including language, that are socially adopted as familiar and ordinary (Fairclough, 2001a).

The dominance of a particular discourse over others is historically preserved by transforming itself through incorporating other prevalent discourses in a given era (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Fairclough, 2006). In the case of the ideology of capitalism, the simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of other dominant discourses follows the changes generated by important transformations in the capitalist forms of production and consumption; therefore, the contemporary discourse of neoliberalism draws on the discourses of 'globalization', 'flexibility' and 'mobility' to support the interests of new capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002). For example, the contemporary discourse of labour flexibility encompasses transformations in the social organization of work and employment relationships as modern corporations attempt to follow fluctuating economic demands and meet increasing global competition; these transformations are manifested, for instance, in underemployment and job insecurity, such as part-time work and the proliferation of temporary employment contracts (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Harvey, 1990).

Fairclough (2001a) maintains that discourse plays an increasingly important role in contemporary social life as a result of the economic processes of globalization, because they facilitate the dissemination of the emerging discourses of late capitalism across geopolitical and cultural borders, potentially transforming social practices beyond the localized setting in which such discourses are generated. An example of this phenomenon is the so-called 'guru' texts, such as those analysed in this research; powered by developments in communication and travel technologies 'new management ideology' is made available to a worldwide audience, simultaneously contributing to the reputation of the 'gurus' and to the popularity of the ideas they advocate (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004; Huczynski, 1993; Jackson, 2001). From this perspective, this research contributes to explore the globalization of 'guru knowledge' through the study of the extent to which representations of the discourse of corporate global nomadism in the sample

of corporate texts carry the ideology of neoliberalism; and how such representations are reproduced or resisted in personal narratives constructed by research participants who are of different national origins, and who have participated in a variety of socio-cultural environments as part of their nomadic lifestyle.

3.6.1 Order of discourse

The social conventions that underline the production, distribution and interpretation of discourses can be considered as a selective organization of a 'system of rules' that is socially and historically associated with a given social practice; a system of rules refers to pre-established associations and shared beliefs that encompasses manifest discourse or 'an already-said' as well as what is silenced or omitted (Foucault, 2010a). As mentioned above, the neoliberal discourse incorporates other dominant discourses that convey particular meanings that are used as frames of reference to represent social reality and to interpret it in ways in which are consonant with the interests of late capitalism; these discourses, presented as common sense assumptions, constitute prior texts of what have been said in different socio-temporal conditions. For example, the neoliberal discourse of globalization, depicted as the abstract dissolution of geopolitical borders consequence of developments in communication and travel technologies, primarily draw on the 'power of spatial mobility' of capital and labour to support the claims of free trade in contemporary markets as the best possible condition for organizing economic and political life (Harvey, 1990). The globalization discourse, therefore, conveys a relationship with other texts and specific meanings that are incorporated not only as universal assumptions and imaginaries of society, but also embodied through social practices, material conditions and social relations, including those in which power is embedded (Fairclough and Thomas, 2004).

The system of rules that determine the particular relations of the elements of a given discourse within a specific setting and during a given period in time, is what Foucault (2010b) originally called an 'order of discourse'; following this, the ideology of neoliberalism can be considered as an order of discourse from the standpoint of work as a social activity (Foucault, 2010b; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002). In the semiotic sense, the elements of an order of discourse are categorized as 'genres', 'styles' and 'discourses': genres are a form of action, such as the narrative interviews and the contemporary texts that are part of this study; styles

are ways of being in the sense of the constitution of identities, for example, the identity of the research participants as transnational professionals; discourses are representations and self-representations of a social practice from a particular perspective that result in different associations and forms of social status, for instance, as explored in this research, the international mobility of professional generates different hierarchies of values in the workplace and in the private sphere of everyday life (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough 2001a, 2004).

Critical discourse analysis questions dominant discursive relations in the production and interpretation of texts and the ways in which such relations remain 'invisible' and undisputed (Foucault, 2010a, p. 32). Following the ideas of Foucault, the centre of Fairclough's (2006) argument is placed on the potential tensions and contradiction among the system of rules or elements that constitute an order of discourse. From the perspective of critical discourse analysis, the specific articulation of the elements of an order of discourse is considered as a work of 'texturing', understood as a process of meaning making that can potentially contribute to the dissemination and perpetuation of dominant ideologies (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Foucault, 2010a). For example, the aforementioned neoliberal discourse of globalization mobilizes a specific relationship between the discourses of the 'global' and the 'local', in which the former is represented as the 'freedom' to move capital and labour across geographical boundaries in the pursuit of universal progress; in these terms, the depicted 'new global economy', as opposed to government control characteristic of previous forms of capitalism, carries the interests of neoliberalism in terms of the geographical expansion of the capitalist order (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Fairclough, 2004; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004; Harvey, 1990).

Fairclough (2004) argues that the analysis of the structural and scalar changes in orders of discourse can aid the understanding of the transformations occurring in social practices. Structural changes in an order of discourse involve a dialectical process of colonization and appropriation of discourses, referring to how discourses enter new domains of social life and the degree to which they are internalized; scalar changes are the permeability of discursive elements across different scales of social organization (Fairclough, 2004). The discourse of neoliberalism, as a socio-politico discourse generated to encompass the transformations brought about by new capitalism, has infiltrated the corporate context and transcended local and global scales of institutional practices (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough, 2001b;

Fairclough, 2004). For instance, the neoliberal discourse of flexibility is positively associated with the notions of 'flexible accumulation' and 'flexible forms of labour' as the means to follow fluctuations in the economic market; as a result, the flexibility discourse provokes changes in social practices that infiltrate different areas of social life, such as the reconfiguration of corporate systems that are adopted by corporations and social actors around the world as forms of acting and of representing reality (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Harvey, 2005). Similarly, the contemporary discourse of 'nomadism' makes equivalent terms that are traditionally associated with different social practices; for example, geographical mobility and subjective detachment from place attributed to traditional nomadic communities are used as a source of romanticized representations of the international travel of professionals in modern corporations (Augé, 2012; Bauman, 2000; Cresswell, 1997).

Following this methodological approach to critical discourse analysis, one of the main concerns of this research is to identify similarities and contradictions across the samples of texts comprised in this study regarding the representation of the discourse of corporate global nomadism; these disparities and tensions are considered here as a manifestation of the extent to which the hegemonic assumptions embedded in the discourse may be perpetuated or sustained as well as the struggles it may cause or encounter. For this purpose, the study exposes textual and discursive connections that draw upon dominant discourses of individual global mobility associated with the ideology of neoliberal capitalism, and analyses the ways in which such discourses are contested or presented as common sense assumptions, how they are rendered as positive or as negative ways of acting and being, and how they are used to transform, to include or to exclude prior discourses and terminology.

3.7 Narrative analysis

The concept of 'narrative' is here considered as a particular type of text that involves meaningful representations of events (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 1998). This approach to narratives is in the literature also referred to as 'stories'; for instance, Gabriel (2004, p. 63-64) describes narratives as temporal sequences or chains of interrelated events or actions carried out by characters, and stories are narratives embedded with meaning or that have a 'plot'. According to Gabriel (2004), narratives that entail 'story-work' are 'poetic elaborations' that emphasise the significance certain events have over others for narrators and audience; in

these terms, stories present 'facts-as-experience' as events are embedded with meaning, in contrast to descriptive accounts or 'reports' which are rather concerned with historical accuracy intended to communicate 'facts-as-information' (Gabriel, 2003a; 2004). The narrator or storyteller possess a sort of 'poetic licence' that allows the use of narrative material to communicate experience while claiming to represent reality; as part of the 'psychological contract' or bond between storyteller and audience, the former can mould, twist, embellish and omit events or facts for effect as well as to express feelings and personal interpretations (Gabriel, 2003a; 2004).

Gabriel (2004) argues that the narrator's representations of events, actions and characters can vary throughout their narratives by emphasising some of them in relation to others, which in turn may be purposely marginalized in the plot ('framing' and 'focusing'); narrative material may also be omitted, adapted and merged together ('filtering', fitting' and 'fusing' respectively), and their significance transformed in different parts of the text as they are brought out of focus and then fully silenced ('fading'). According to Gabriel (2004), the process of making sense of events and creatively connecting them in a meaningful way for narrator and audience involves the use of interpretative devices that he calls 'poetic tropes'; these poetic tropes generally refer to the ways in which the narrator or storyteller consciously describes events or actions for emotional and aesthetic effects (Gabriel, 2004). For instance, the narrator may render events meaningful by referring to their motive or purpose, establishing causal connections through the introduction of chronology into the sequence of events, or by attributing responsibly to given agents or characters who are blamed or credited for the events (Gabriel, 2004). Other poetic tropes noted by Gabriel (2004) are the portrayal of individuals or objects as an distinguishable class, such as contemporary representations of the 'nomadic elite' in comparison to geographically sedentary individuals (Bauman, 2000); or as possessing particular qualities, as it happens with globally mobile individuals who are attributed with a sense of 'cosmopolitanism' as a personal ability (Nowicka and Kaweh, 2009; Ossman, 2004; Polson, 2011).

The interest of narrative analysis is to explore how events are interrelated and adapted to express particular negotiations of meaning (Czarniawska, 1998; Gabriel, 2004). The attributed coherence of the temporal order of events gives them a particular perspective that the audience may accept, reject or transform; in other words, the narrator connects events with one another according to his or her intentions, although this is not to say that the process of

interpretation necessarily follows such a standpoint (Czarniawska, 2004). This approach considers narratives as 'sense-making devices' for the individuals to represent their 'disorderly' reality (Gabriel, 2004; Riessman, 1993). In the semiotic sense, the notion of a disorderly reality encompasses 'postmodernist' theory in that narratives are considered as unique representations of events that are not determined by 'metanarratives' or 'grand narratives'.

The concept of grand narrative can be described in general terms as predicted interpretations that aid to give events a sense of order and unit; such as the metanarrative of 'self-management' as an idealism that claims the individuals' liberation from everything that may be perceived as preventing them from governing themselves (Boje, 2001, p. 36). Within the organizational setting, the so-called 'postmodern condition' results as individuals are continuously involved in a variety of fragmented stories, understood as a disparate collection of events, actions and characters that are collectively produced and interpreted but which may not fully accord with a dominant corporate discourse or narrative (Boje, 2001). For example, the discourse of corporate global nomadism, from which the participants draw upon to construct their narratives, can be seen to render the life of transnational professionals as 'disorderly' as it does not follow the 'norm' of traditional discourses or narratives of spatial stability and continuity.

For Boje (2001) the attempt to give meaning and order to fragmented and sometimes chaotic experiences or series of events is to translate story into narrative; such as the authoritative corporate narratives intended to provide linear and ordered 'tales' in organizational life. His approach, that places stories before narratives, differs from Gabriel's (2003a; 2004) views presented above regarding terminology, but it is similar in that a plot is required to bring events together into a 'meaningful whole' (Czarniawska , 1998, p. 2). According to Boje (2001), when stories lack an agreed plot they are referred to as 'antenarratives'; an antenarrative is thus a story constructed from the flow of lived experience before coherence is agreed and translated into a concluded or hegemonic narrative. Making reference to the ideas advocated by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard, Boje (2001) describes antenarratives as 'local stories' in comparison to established or dominant grand narratives; he argues that although antenarratives may be partially embedded in grand narratives, the latter can be resisted to prevent them from becoming hegemonic narratives. On this view, Boje's

(2001) construct of antenarrative challenges the process of construction and legitimation of dominant narratives in organizational life (Boje, 2001).

The core argument of the approach followed in this study rests on the view of narrative as a system of interconnected texts as advocated, for example, by Boje (2001) and Czarniawska (2004); these authors consider grand narratives as part of the process through which other texts are interpreted and drawn upon to construct narratives. The analysis of narratives as presented here combines 'structuralism' and 'poststructuralism' in the sense that texts are examined for 'what' they say through associations with other to texts and 'how' they are incorporated (Boje, 2001; Czarniawsk, 2004; Gabriel, 2004). The basic premise of structuralism is that to some degree all narratives have common properties or structure that is shared with other texts; the structure of a narrative is founded on the 'function' that certain actions carried out by one or more characters have in the overall meaning of the text (Barthes, 1977; Czarniawska, 2004). For example, actions can be categorized as 'heroic' or 'villainous' depending on the functions such actions play in the significance of the story (Czarniawska, 2004). Poststructuralim differs from the structuralist view in that the argument or plot that unfolds as an intended linear sequence of events is essentially unique to each narrative constructed at a given point in time and under specific circumstances (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 2004). The combination of these theoretical approaches serves to explore how certain actions are narrated in ways in which their function closely resembles prior texts whose set of plotting principles are used as a structural model (Barthes, 1977), while identifying the ways in which the meaning of such actions as part of a completed narrative change as a result of the narrator's unique work of emplotment (Czarniawska, 2004).

3.7.1 Personal narratives or life stories

The approach to narrative analysis discussed in the section above is used as the theoretical framework for the analysis of personal narratives or life stories collected from the sample of research participants. A life story is understood as a narrative of an individual history, in the sense that it is a text produced by the individual who inhabited or lived the story rather than being narrated by someone else (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 2004). As happens with discourse, self-narration is shaped and influenced by the context in which it is generated; in the case of the participants' narratives these are produced within two distinctive settings, the setting of

the research interview and the setting of the online discourse forums. The online discussion forums can be related to the approach advocated by Boje (2001) because it refers to texts that are collectively produced within a shared environment (i.e. the online forum and the subject or theme of the discussion); more specifically, it can be argued that this kind of narrative results from the participants' work of emplotment on pieces of texts that are produced, incorporated and contested by different narrators or participants, and who in turn consciously or subconsciously draw upon other narratives and discourses (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 2004; Fairclough, 1992).

As discussed above, narrators construct their narratives with the intention to portray a particular perspective or intention (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 2004; Gabriel, 2004). However, within a narrative contradictions and tensions may be identified, reflecting a certain amount of inconsistence with the overall sense of the narrative as it may intended by the narrator. Dorrit Cohn, in her work *Transparent Minds* published in 1978, argues that narratives involve the conscious and subconscious incorporation of narrative elements that result in what the author calls 'consonance' and 'dissonance' in self-narration. Through the analysis of fiction literature, Cohn (1978) proposes an approach to narrative that can be applied to the study of life stories or 'self-narratives', such as those gathered in this research. Cohn (1978) advocates that in self-narration there is a discursive distance between past events and the act of narrating, or the process through which lived experiences are remembered and reproduced. In other words, in constructing a personal narrative, the individual represents a particular textual relationship between the 'narrating self' who recounts past events from the current temporal perspective, and the 'past self' or 'experiencing self' who lived the events being narrated (Cohn, 1978).

According to the model put forward by Cohn (1978), in dissonant self-narration the perspective of the narrating-self is cognitive and analytical; the narrator evaluates, criticises, interprets and incorporates opinions and information about the events, actions, characters and experiences being narrated (Cohn, 1978). In consonant self-narration the discursive distance between the act of narrating and the past self is reduced as the narrator does not emphasise the cognitive narrating self over the experiencing self; past events are reproduced through the expression of feelings and opinions that are less critical and closer to the perspective of the experiencing self (Cohn, 1978). Consonant self-narration and dissonant self-narration result from the conscious or subconscious incorporation of information or

comments that sustain or contradict the accordance among different parts of the narrative, and which may transform its overall sense (Cohn, 1978).

3.7.2 Deconstruction

The analysis of personal narratives or life stories collected for the purposes of this research primarily follows Boje's (2001) approach to 'deconstruction', which is based on the author's proposition to study nonlinear and fragmented stories by seeking discrepancies in the narrative, rather than assuming that a core structure is imposed upon the narrative, even if imposing such structure is the intention of the author of the narrative. Deconstruction, a philosophy of reading literacy texts originated by Jacques Derrida in 1976, follows the view that texts contain contradictions and disruptions that undermine the underlying structure or core principles from which meaning is constructed; deconstruction is thus a way of reading texts that exposes authoritative centres or 'ideological tracks' (Boje, 2001, p. 19). The basis of deconstructionism is that texts 'self-deconstruct' on their own; the production of texts (the act of narrating) and the interpretation of texts (the act of reading a narrative) are active processes of dissembling, transforming and reassembling texts (Boje, 2001). Following the approaches advocated by Boje (2001) and Czarniawska (2004), deconstruction can be considered both as a methodology for analysis and as a technique to unmask the centralizing aspects within a text.

On the basis that dominant narratives may seek to legitimate a particular interest or ideology, Boje (2001) proposes a series of analytical guidelines that trace the influence of deconstructionism and encompass his theory of antenarrative. In brief terms, these guidelines refer to the structuralist approach of identifying dualities in the narrative; however, following the perspective of poststructuralism, the interest is to determine the hegemonic assumptions that underline the hierarchy between the elements of the duality, rather than assuming such opposition as structural principles within the text (Boje, 2001). Hierarchies are represented in ways in which the centre or ideological viewpoint in the narrative is supported through associated meanings; deconstructionist analysis shows how such hierarchies are constructed by exposing the voices that are privileged as well as those that are marginalized or silenced (Boje, 2001). Although Boje (2001) primarily focuses on the analysis of organizational narratives as texts that are 'collectively' produced and interpreted, his approach is here used

in the study of the research's personal narratives because it considers people's subjectivity, emotions and values as elements that are subjected to dominant narratives that are part of the wider context in which individuals live and interact socially.

3.7.3 Intertextuality

The term 'intertextuality' was first introduced by Julia Kristeva (1980), following her view of the 'redistributive' quality of texts ('destructive-constructive'). This approach to intertextuality refers to the idea that within a given text, such as a novel, various 'utterances' taken from other texts 'intersect and neutralize one another' as they are linguistically incorporated (Kristeva, 1980, p. 36). According to Kristeva (1980), the abstract relationship of texts in a wider social and historical dimension is reflected in the production of a given text (Kristeva, 1980). In other words, texts can be considered as systems that interlace past, present and anticipated texts, in that they are the product of the networking of other texts that are situated within different temporal and situational contexts (Boje, 2001; Fairclough, 2006). Intertextuality, therefore, transforms texts as they come to be incorporated as part of the production of a new text, and which in turn is distributed and used as reference for the constitution of other kind of texts (Fairclough, 2006).

Intertextual analysis in this research follows the critical approach assumed by Fairclough (2006) and Boje (2001), according to which the transformation of past texts incorporates shared conventions and hegemonic assumptions that seek to perpetuate dominant ideologies. As discussed above, this approach partially relates to the structuralist view in that texts contain traces of other texts as well as structural features intended to impose order and unity to the narrative; for example, the use of dominant binary opposites (two terms or concepts that are opposite in meaning such as management-worker) and the particular function of certain actions which meaning is embedded in past texts (e.g. actions that are rendered 'heroic' or 'villainous'). Dominant discourses can be considered as a sort of structural principles that are consciously or subconsciously incorporated in personal narratives as frames of reference to render past experiences meaningful and coherent (Fairclough, 2006). Intertextual analysis, therefore, not only identifies connections and references to other texts on a temporal continuum, such as historical archetypes as argued in the next section, but also examines how such connections are articulated in ways in which are

consonant with the interests of dominant ideologies (Boje, 2001; Fairclough, 2006). Fairclough (2006) argues that the close relationship between intertextuality and ideologies can be explored by identifying 'manifest intertextuality', or the explicit references to other texts, and 'constitutive intertextuality' or 'interdiscursivity', referring to the particular selection and configuration of discursive elements in the production of a given text ('orders of discourse').

As Barthes (1997) advocates, intertextuality is not the tracing of the 'origins' of a text but rather the 'citations' that make up a text and which are "anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*" (p. 160 –Italics in the original). From a critical standpoint, Fairclough (2001a) is particularly concerned with how prior texts are incorporated and transformed in the constitution of new texts, and how these texts come to be legitimized and projected as universal presumptions or 'ready-made' textual interpretations. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity are used as methodologies in this research to explore how the selected corporate texts incorporate and transform discourses that convey the interests and representations associated with the ideology of neoliberalism, and to what extent these discourses or prior texts, considered as part of the social context in which the participants live and interact, are perpetuated, contested or silenced in the constitution of their personal narrative. Additionally, from a structuralist perspective, intertextuality is used to trace patterns of emplotment in the participants' narratives that draw upon existing narratives; in particular, the analysis identifies the use of 'archetypes' as structural principles that represent specific cues for the interpretation of the narratives.

3.7.3.1 Archetypes

Archetypes can be considered as structural principles used for the plotting of a narrative or textual unfolding of events; this view sees narratives as intertwined one another through underlying associations that draw upon prototypical interpretations, concerning the function certain actions and events have in a given story (Barthes, 1977). In a study of literacy myths, Brunel (1992) argues that stories always contain to different extents some representations or particular features that correspond to one or more archetypes; following the ideas advocated by Carl Jung, Brunel (1992, p. 111-117), proposes that the meaning of the term archetype can be considered from three different dimensions.

An archetype is a 'prototype' or the original conception or symbol of something, because their characteristic features provide a sort of matrix for future representations of themselves from one text to another according to the imagination and subjectivity of the authors or narrators who consciously or unconsciously draw upon them. The Platonic Ideas can be considered as prototypical plots as they represent original notions that render stories romantic, tragic, comedic or ironic (Boje, 2001; Brunel, 1992). An archetype is also an 'ideal model' understood as a preconception against which actions, characters and events are measured by; this perspective refers to the image recreated by an archetype rather than to the original instance that it represents. For instance, an archetypal figure as an ideal 'heroic' model is embedded with knowledge and virtues that are unique to him or her and that are used as a reference for the interpretation of prior and future texts. In the case of management and organizational narratives, Boje (2001, p. 27) notes that they typically have a romantic plot in which the figure of the chief executive is pervasively represented as the hero in the story. Similarly, Gabriel (2003b) relates the archetypal story of *The Odyssey* to the world of organizations on the basis of associations between the figure of the modern manager and the central qualities of versatility, strategic thinking and persuasive speech attributed to the poem's protagonist Odysseus.

The third dimension that Brunel (1992) refers to corresponds to the archetype as the 'supreme type'; this metaphysical perspective refers to absolute and perfect images that are reproduced through language. In this sense, the archetype is the essential point from which all other representations generate despite their particular circumstances and context; it is universal and instinct knowledge that transcends the personal psyche, and so it is spontaneously shared among individuals as a sort of permanent structure to organize their reality (Brunel, 1992; Jung, 1990). Following Jungian psychology, archetypes are a 'collective unconscious' from which individuals subconsciously obtain the source of their dreams, delusions and symbolic material used for the creation of religious, cultural and mythical texts (Brunel, 1992; Hatch, Kostera and Koźmiński, 2005; Jung, 1990).

Archetypes retain their original or basic pattern as they are drawn upon and reproduced in other texts; however, they are adapted to the social and historical contexts in which those texts are created. For example, Hatch, Kostera and Koźmiński (2005, p. 76) identify archetypal elements in contemporary managerial and organizational texts that include the god, the hero, the mother, the judge, the servant and the soldier, which can be translated into

the roles of the chief executive officer, executive, secretary, customer, administrator and salesperson, respectively. Although this research considers archetypes as conveying a structural principle that underlie how individuals understand and represent different aspects of their reality, they are not assumed as a definitive form through which all texts can be analysed; rather, archetypes are here considered as a narrative element that the participants consciously or subconsciously use to plot events, actions and characters in order to render their narrative consonant with their intentions.

CHAPTER 4 – ANALYSIS

PART I – TEXTS BY MANAGEMENT GURUS AND POPULAR WRITERS ON GLOBALIZATION

This section identifies how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is manifested in the sample of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, and to what extent it conveys the interests of late capitalism. The texts are examined from the perspective of critical discourse analysis following the theoretical framework proposed by Norman Fairclough (2001a), with a particular emphasis on his work with Eve Chiapello, which concentrates on the relationship between the discourse of neoliberalism and the new management ideology (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002). As discussed above (see section 2.2.), new management ideology as advocated by Chiapello and Fairclough (2002) embodies prescriptions of identity, flexibility and mobility associated with the broader ideological system of the new spirit of capitalism as described by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) argue that the ideas, beliefs and values that justify commitment to capitalism are embedded in three dimensions of legitimation: 'stimulation', 'security' and 'fairness'. These dimensions are identified at different levels in the sample of texts concerning the discourse of individual global mobility presented from the perspective of neoliberal ideology.

The analysis below is organized into five subsections that correspond to the authors of the six books that comprise the sample, of which two are by the same author.

4.1 Thomas L. Friedman

Thomas L. Friedman is a columnist for *The New York Times* and author of several books that focus on the subject of globalization among which are 'bestsellers': *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (1998), *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999) and the text here analysed *The World is Flat* (first published in 2005). The notion of a 'flat world' popularized by Friedman (2006) in the latter book, refers to the author's metaphorical representation of contemporary processes of globalization according to which countries, companies and individuals from 'all corners of the

world' have the opportunity to collaborate and compete at a 'global' scale. This image of modern society is constructed by the author through descriptions of the 'forces' that according to him have been 'levelling the playing field of global competition' since around the year 2000; a condition that he claims provides individuals with equal access to economic opportunities independently of their geographical location. Friedman's (2006) central metaphor of a 'flat world' broadly refers to developments in travel and communication technologies as phenomena that are empowering individuals to 'go global':

> "[…] people all over the world started waking up and realising that they had more power than ever to go global *as individuals*, they needed more than ever to think of themselves as individuals competing against other individuals all over the planet, and they had more opportunities to work with those other individuals, not just compete with them. As a result, every person now must, and can ask: Where do *I* as an individual fit into the global competition and opportunities of the day, and how can *I*, on my own, collaborate with others globally?" (Friedman, 2006, p. 11 –Italics in the original)

The 'flattening' metaphor as mobilized in the text incorporates the dimensions of stimulation and fairness through references to personal gains ('fit into the global competition and opportunities') and the common good ('collaborate with others globally'). The idea of the global as depicted in the text may result stimulating or inspirational for individuals because it carries strong utopian concepts of freedom and equality (Jameson, 2005); however, this view oversimplifies the complexities in contemporary society regarding geopolitical borders, cultural differences and social class divisions, for example. Moreover, the idea to go global is in the text discursively associated with the notion of 'the future' as the opposite element of 'the local' which is represented through references to the nation-state as an obsolete idea of 'the past'. It can be argued that the central metaphor of the world's flatness carries a utopian message because 'being global' is portrayed as an opportunity for individuals, whereas 'to be local' means to be left in the margins of progress and economic growth (Augé, 2012; Virilio, 2008). This view is consonant with the ideology of neoliberalism in that 'the global' is discursively privileged in comparison to 'the local' (Fairclough, 2004; Harvey, 1990; 2005). The prescription for individuals to 'go global' in response to the view of the world described by Friedman's (2006) is thus ambiguous as it conveys both a sense of excitement and a sense of obligation. Specifically, the discourse of global mobility is represented in the text as an opportunity for people and society to benefit from the changes brought about by globalization and as the indisputable and inevitable reality of modern society. This is what

Chiapello and Fairclough (2002, p. 200) refer to as the 'slippage from description to prescription' characteristic of 'guru style'; statements that appear as factual but that are embedded with implicit or explicit normative force.

From the perspective of economic markets, Friedman's (2006) flattening metaphor refers to the geographical expansion of corporations, labour and capital promoted and supported by international trade free from government control; a process which he claims is transforming 'the walls, ceilings, and floors' that have traditionally structured the economic and political context in which individuals live (p. 239). Friedman (2006) associates this description of the 'flattening process' with what Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels set out in the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 in reference to the dissolution of national identities and local barriers powered by the geographical expansion of the capitalist order (p. 233-4). This reference to the archetypal text of communism is ironic given Friedman's (2006) neoliberal orientation; however, the texts are intertwined through the utopian idea of a better world beyond the state and government control as the central axis for economic systems. Neoliberal globalization, considered in terms of the strengthening of financial markets, is presented by Friedman (2006) as 'the inexorable march' towards 'global commerce' (p. 234); through this teleological metaphor the author claims that contemporary society is undergoing an inevitable process of restructuration of old mechanisms, norms and boundaries into new ones which encompass the new 'levelled field' of global competition. Friedman (2006) calls this 'the great sorting out'; a process of selective changes of the frames of reference for identity construction and social organization that transforms previous conceptions about how society, corporations and governments structure the individuals' life. In the text, this is represented, for instance, through references to the 'obsolete' notion of the nation-state, consequently provoking a discursive division between those individuals who internalize the 'utopian collectivity' (Jameson, 2005) of the new global and those who do not.

The changes in the way individuals' experience the local and the global as inscribed in the prescription for individuals 'to go global', can be associated with Sloterdijk's (2013) argument of the 'self without place' and 'place without self' as conditions of modernity that challenge the traditional perception of the state, which Sloterdijk (2013) describes as a structure, that is at the same time imaginary and real, intended for the convergence of place and self that translates into national identity. According to Sloterdijk (2013), following the dissolution of the illusory relationship between place and self, the sense of collective unity is generated

through a symbolic 'deterritorialization' or 'imaginary communities' formed and sustained outside the subjective and actual boundaries of the state. The term 'imagined community' was coined in 1983 by Benedict Anderson to describe nations (Anderson, 2006, p. 6); from his perspective a nation is 'imagined' because it is created 'in the mind' of the individuals who consider themselves as members of the nation's community. Similarly, Jameson (2005) uses the term 'utopian collectivity' to refer to the group of people who enact the utopia. In Friedman's (2006) text, the idea of a 'flat-world platform' can be considered as the 'imagined community' of the global that replaces the state; an utopian condition where individuals find comfort and protection in their relations with others who are also culturally and economically detached or freed from local policies and constraints.

Friedman's (2006) portrayal of today's globalized society and his predictions of the future are rendered 'inspirational' through negative associations attributed to the discourse of the local. For instance, the metaphorical flatness of the world represented as the end state of neoliberal globalization can be considered as a 'utopian cosmopolitanism' because it carries the desire to transcend local privileges and differences associated with culture and history in the name of universal economic progress (Halsall, 2012, p. 68). In particular, the flatness discourse as used in the text claims to offer 'equalizing power' and 'equalizing opportunities' for all individuals as privileges and disparities among people and societies are eliminated. However, this idea of being part of a sort of global community is somewhat contradictory as Friedman (2006) advocates that globalization promotes individuality at the same time it preserves cultural diversity, because people, according to him, are able to access opportunities across geopolitical borders without having to emigrate (p. 479). This situation is described in the text by drawing upon traditional labour migration that refer to the mobility of individuals from 'developing countries' to the West; nonetheless, Friedman (2006) offers reassurance to those individuals who 'have had to uproot themselves' claiming that they can 'hold on' to their local culture by accessing local news online from their country of origin and communicating with family and friends via the Internet, for example (Friedman, 2006, p. 479).

Friedman's (2006) idea that individuals can 'hold on' to their culture as they migrate to another country may be understood as an assumption that ties to place can hinder individual mobility; in the same way, feelings of national identity or sense of belonging to a given country are presented in the text as an obstacle to success. Moreover, Friedman (2006) advocates that not all individuals have equal access to the new global; individuals need to live

in countries and regions in which they can access the necessary 'skills', 'tools' and 'infrastructure' to participate globally in a 'meaningful' and 'sustained way' (p. 546). Outside these areas of economic growth, which represent the 'flat world', are the 'undeveloped countries' or the 'dark corners of the developed world' which Friedman (2006) calls the 'unflat world' (p. 538). Following this view, those individuals who remain immobile in the margins of the globalized world represent the 'small ones' as defined by the values of modern capitalist society. Friedman (2006) justifies these socio-economic disparities by claiming that some individuals are too sick or live in areas too poor or too remote to access the opportunities brought about by globalization; while others ('the half flat') live in proximity to the 'flat world' but are not able to benefit from it: "the half flat are all those other hundreds of millions of people […] who are close enough to see, touch, and occasionally benefit from the flat world but are not really living inside it themselves" (p. 546). Global mobility is thus portrayed as an ideal form of behaviour that responds to demands external to the individual, but which is nevertheless necessary if the latter are to follow the flows of capital and work opportunities across geopolitical borders.

According to Friedman (2006), globalization generates a 'global intimacy' as societies and cultures are in more direct contact one another; such a situation is embraced by some cultures as an opportunity for collaboration, whilst others feel 'threatened, frustrated and even humiliated' as they are able to compare their situation to that of others. As Friedman (2006) puts it, the 'shrinking' of the world not only facilitates global collaboration but it also "makes it very easy for people to see where they stand in the world vis-à-vis everyone else" (Friedman, 2006, p. 555). The discursive division between the glossed image of the 'flat world' and the dark and marginal 'unflat world' assumes that society and individuals share a desire to pursue the promises of comfort, luxury and cosmopolitanism that neoliberal capitalism is thought to provide: "the cars, the houses, the educational opportunities" (Friedman, 2006 p. 546). However, following Friedman's (2006) claims, the benefits brought about by contemporary processes of globalization call for a transformation of the individuals' attitudes towards their national identity. Such a claim can be considered as similar to the notion of the 'Second Ecumene' put forward by Sloterdijk (2013). Sloterdijk (2013) argues that in modern times the 'unity of humans' is no longer based on a shared metaphysical exploration of 'mankind' from within the individual, but on a view of the self from 'the outside' as all individuals "in their respective regions and histories, have become synchronized, affected from a distance, shamed, torn open, connected and overtaxed" (p. 147). Conceiving the self in

its role as a globalized entity seems to be the desired condition of 'great man' in Friedman's (2006) portrayal of society; such a condition, however, may generate struggles for individuals as their self-identity is constructed and manifested through a globalism devoid of personal meaning: "the exemplary human in the Second Ecumene is the world star who will never understand why they had more success than other people" (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 147).

4.2 Kenichi Ohmae

Kenichi Ohmae is an international management consultant and popular author concerned with the consequences of recent transformations in economic markets for society and in the corporate context in particular. Some of the previous publications for which Ohmae is known are *The Borderless World* (1990) and *The Invisible Continent* (2000); it can be said that the popularity of these texts is partly sustained through the perpetuation of the core ideas they advocate in subsequent works by the author. The 'borderless world' metaphor, for instance, is present in *The Next Global Stage* (Ohmae, 2005), the book here examined, to depict contemporary processes of globalization as the indisputable reality of society, acting as the foundation for the claims and predictions of the future inscribed in the text. The borderless world motif as represented by Ohmae (2005) primarily refers to today's state of the global economy in the sense that the flows of capital, corporations and consumer goods are not delimited by traditional geopolitical borders (p. 20). Somewhat similar to Friedman's (2006) claims on the constitution of the 'flat-world platform', Ohmae (2005) refers to modern developments in communication and travel technologies as the infrastructure that supports the growth of economic markets across local boundaries and allows interconnectivity among the 'players' in the business world.

In the text, Ohmae (2005) draws on Shakespeare's metaphor of 'the world as a stage' to construct his view of a borderless society; a claim that carries a sense of finality as there seems to be no alternative for individuals, but to dwell in the 'global arena' that transcends local or individualistic differences: "The world is one huge arena for economic activity, no longer compartmentalized by barriers or other unnecessary stage furniture. We all form part of a giant troupe of interdependent actors and actresses" (Ohmae, 2005, p. 5). According to this view, the individuals' reality is now framed by global interconnectivity and interdependence between corporations and national governments; such an environment,

Ohmae (2005) says, can be 'confusing' and 'disorienting', so he provides prescriptions, or 'a new script' as he puts it, for individuals and organizations on how they should 'perform' to overcome the challenges and benefit from the opportunities in 'the new global stage'. For Ohmae (2006) the consequences of the global economy are 'invisible' and affect everyone across the world; a notion that draws upon his view of 'the invisible continent' he presents in a previous publication (Ohmae, 2000), and which alludes to the 'invisible hand' metaphor originally used in 1776 by Adam Smith in one of the classic texts of economic liberalism, *The Wealth of Nations* (2008, xxxvii), to describe the 'invisible' effects (universal benefits and the wealth of society in general) of a market driven by free competition and self-interests.

One of the main claims Ohmae (2005) puts forward is the need for individuals and organizations to acquire 'novel outlooks', changing the way they act and think in face of today's world economy (p. 18). Ohmae (2005) uses a series of rhetorical elements through which he transmits his message of 'utopian collectivity' (Jameson, 2005) that results from his view of globalization; the imagined community of the global is a 'giant troupe of interdependent actors and actresses' who are able to adapt their behaviour or 'performance' according to the demands from fluctuating markets. According to Ohmae (2005), the use of 'old mind maps' and 'old paradigms', such as the state as centre of economic control and source of national identity, impedes financial success and progress for corporations and society; a central neoliberal ideal that is also used by Friedman (2006) as discussed in the text presented above. This teleological view is ambiguous because claims of an absolute reality involve promises of economic growth, whilst they are presented as the only possible alternative for individuals, corporations and governments to 'survive' in such an environment.

The negative portrayal of the state as an 'old mindset' mostly refers to the effects of government control and traditional financial policies on the international expansion of organizations; nonetheless, Ohmae (2005) also claims that national 'ornaments and symbols' (e.g. flag and anthem), which he says are intended as the means to foment loyalty and a sense of belonging on individuals towards their country, are an obstacle in today's globalized society (p.84). This view relates to the tradition of thinkers like Immanuel Kant and Karl Marx in depicting the nation-state as 'backward' in order to portray the 'cosmopolitan utopia' as desirable (Halsall, 2012). Ohmae (2005) uses the concept of 'branding' to criticize the way countries in the nineteenth century sought allegiance from their people, and advocates that such feelings of loyalty to one country or 'brand' left individuals with "no room for choice or

'shopping around'" (p. 84); on this basis, he claims that the adoption of free trade policies by governments worldwide results in "the liberation of the individual, consumers, corporations, and regions from the legacy of the nation-state in which they belong" (p. 122). Here Ohmae (2005) draws upon the aforementioned classic work by Adam Smith (2008, xxxvii), in that the 'natural liberty' of self-regulated markets ultimately contributes to the common good.

The notion of 'shopping around' as a possibility for individuals generated by the dissolution of ties with national origins as a marker for identity construction, can be understood following Bauman's (2007) views regarding the manufacturing of subjectivity through the 'shopping of choices'. Bauman (2007) argues that the 'self-fabrication' of identity takes the form of a 'shopping list' in order to encompass the flexibility required to meet the volatility of a market in which demands and needs are constantly changing (p. 15). From this perspective, the concept of 'the new global stage' put forward by Ohmae (2005) serves to motivate the individuals' detachment from a given national or cultural context, at the same time it provides a frame of reference for the creation of flexible identities that can adapt to the directions of the flows of capital across the globe.

It can be argued that to some extent Ohmae (2005) draws on the discourse of individual global mobility in his prescriptions for people to transcend the local and embrace the global; more specifically, the traditional values of fixity and rootedness associated with previous forms of capitalist production and consumption are substituted in the text by a vocabulary that renders desirable contemporary demands for flexibility, geographical expansion and dissolution of regional constraints (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Harvey, 1990). The utopia of a borderless world, therefore, is sustained in the text by favouring the discourse of the global over the discourse of the local; 'openness to the outside world', as claimed by Ohmae (2005), represents a prerequisite for capital expansion: "The rest of the world must be viewed positively, as the source of prosperity" (p. 94). This view draws on the argument of free trade advocated by Adam Smith, according to which commercial exchange between countries should be 'a bond of union and friendship'; a key point that Smith makes on the basis that the wealth of other countries is beneficial for universal economic prosperity: "The wealth of neighbouring nations, however, though dangerous in war and politics, is certainly advantageous in trade" (Boaz, 1998, p. 262).

From the standpoint of individuals, Ohmae (2005) incorporates the discourse of global mobility in his claims that leaders in the global economy must proactively seek 'exposure to the world' in order to succeed: "The global scene should not hold any terror" (p. 241). This perspective presents international travel and living in foreign countries as means for individuals to develop 'a feel' for how people in other areas of the world "think, act, react, and express themselves" (Ohmae, 2005, p. 241). Prescriptions are present in the text for corporations and individuals alike on how to think and act in order to 'negotiate' their route through the shifting 'scenarios' of contemporary society (p. xxiv); for instance, the author claims that "people will have to learn to be lifestyle managers [...] People will have to take more responsibility upon themselves if they wish to reap the benefits of the global economy" (p. 239). The concept of 'lifestyle manager' can be considered as the need for individuals to 'develop the self' from the perspective of neoliberalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007); for example, this is represented in the text trough the discourse of 'flexibility' used to describe contemporary society and as a prescription for individuals, as shown in the extract below:

> "There are many opportunities for personal development within the global economy, but they will not be delivered on a plate. This is not a rousing call for a return to the tradition of hard work, as some notions, such as work, may be transformed in the global economy. Flexibility will be central to success, and inflexibility in any area, be it work practices or industrial relations, can only lead to hardship, the lack of the vision necessary to cut through the jungle of the global economy." (Ohmae, p. 239)

The discourse of flexibility, part of the 'new planetary vulgate' of neoliberal capitalism (Bauman, 2008; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001; Harvey, 2005), is mobilized in the extract as a desirable form of self-improvement for individuals and as a necessary condition to avoid 'hardship' in their working life. The relationship between flexibility and success is incorporated in the text as an assumption which meaning stresses the role of individuals in assuming the responsibility of seeking the 'opportunities' available in the new global ('they will not be delivered on a plate'); however, this claim is rather vague because references to personal financial gain, a key element in the working life of individuals, are implicitly inscribed in the notions of progress, success and development. In other words, the normative orientation of the text is masked by a moral tone, providing justifications for the individuals' commitment to the changing requirements of the capitalist order that discursively 'silence' the economic interests that underline labour flexibility.

4.3 Richard Florida

Richard Florida is an urban studies theorist mostly concerned with the social and economic changes in contemporary society. He is presented on the back covers of *Who's Your City* (2008) and *The Great Reset* (2011), the books analysed below, as a 'leading public intellectual' and an 'economic development expert', respectively. His claimed 'expertise' is said to be founded on his personal and professional experience which includes being a regular columnist for numerous magazines and newspapers, a university professor, and author of 'bestselling' book *The Rise of the Creative Class* first published in 2002.

In his book called *Who's Your City* (2008), Florida advocates that place in contemporary society has a critical role in terms of the individuals' economic future and overall sense of happiness; he claims that 'finding the right place' where to live has become 'the most important decision' in the individuals' life because it has a great influence on their access to work opportunities ('finding the right job') and on personal relationships ('finding the right partner'). In the text, Florida (2008) portrays global mobility as a matter of 'choice' and a desirable action for the great majority of people on the basis that it generates positive results for both individuals and society in general. More specifically, Florida (2001) says that geographical mobility provides opportunities for personal economic gain and the fulfilment of personal goals, while contributing with the collective good because it supports the growth of localities. The idea Florida (2008) puts forward draws on the notion of the 'clustering force' he introduces in a previous publication (Florida, 2002) to describe the contemporary concentration of 'talented and productive people' in particular regions and cities, making both individuals and the place they inhabit more productive (Florida, 2008, p. 89). According to Florida (2008), the particular socio-economic organization of certain areas of the world attracts 'people, productivity and capital'; a phenomenon that he says simultaneously helps local development and financial growth and increases the disparity between people and localities.

The concept of the 'clustering force' can be understood as the 'new polarization' of society consequence of globalization as argued by Bauman (2000), in that 'mobility' has become the main class stratifying factor that separates the rich and the poor. According to Bauman (2000), the mobility of individuals in late modernity is guided by 'the aesthetics of consumption'; the wealth of the rich is measured by "the ability to pick and choose the contents of their lives,

places to live in now and then, partners to share those places with –and to change all of them at will and without effort" (Bauman, 2000, p. 95). As the embodiment of modern mobility Bauman (2000) proposes the image of 'the tourist' and its counterpart 'the vagabond'; the mobility of tourists and of vagabonds is equally driven by the desire to inhabit the kind of world that is presented to them as desirable and consumable, but while the tourists move because 'they want to', the vagabonds move because 'they have no other bearable choice' (p. 93). In other words, contemporary processes of neoliberal globalization render global mobility a necessary condition that the 'vagabonds' struggle to achieve and the 'tourists' seek to sustain: "'staying at home' in a world made to the measure of the tourist feels like humiliation and a drudgery and in the long run does not seem a feasible proposition anyway" (Bauman, 2000, p. 92).

The unequal 'extreme concentration' of financial and human resources provoked by the 'clustering force' is what Florida (2008) calls a 'spiky world'; a notion that he presents in opposition to Friedman's central metaphor of 'flat world' (p. 15-17). The idea of a 'spiky world' is described in the text following graphic representations of the world's economic activity and concentration of population; Florida (2008) says that the 'spikes' of the world are the cities and regions that drive the world economy because they are the centres of attraction of people and wealth. The author uses the concept of 'megaregions' to group together these cities and regions that constitute 'new natural economic units' defined by their financial proximity, rather than by geopolitical borders or their geographical location; in other words, the sense of closeness between certain cities and regions of the world is provided by similarities in terms of concentration of talent, productive capability and innovation: "The more that two megaregions-regardless of their physical distance or historical relationship-have in common financially, the more likely they are to develop similar social mores, cultural tastes, and even political leanings" (Florida, 2008, p. 41). This view draws on the neoliberal discourse of globalization, which, in a similar manner as identified in the texts by Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005), renders irrelevant local differences (i.e. national and cultural identities).

According to Florida (2008), the growing of these centres of economic activity augments their attractiveness to 'skilled and productive people', resulting in a 'sorting' of individuals across the globe that increases the gap between those in the 'peaks' and those in the 'valleys'. This notion relates to Friedman's (2006) description of a division between those individuals in the

'flat-world' and those in the 'unflat world', or rather, the social segregation between those individual who are able to assume the demands generated by globalization and those who are left in the margins of economic growth. Florida (2008) draws on the contemporary discourse of individual global mobility in his claim that mobile individuals have better access to professional and financial opportunities in comparison to those who are 'rooted' or tied to a place:

> "The mobile possess the means, resources, and inclination to seek out and move to locations where they can leverage their talents. They are not necessarily born mobile, nor are they invariably rich. The mobile understand that the pursuit of economic opportunity often requires them to move." (Florida, 2008, p. 71)

According to this view, the advantage of some individuals above others is more about having the 'right attitude' towards their own mobility and less about possessing the means and the resources to be mobile: "Many people with the means to move choose to stay rooted […] even though they know they could potentially do better elsewhere" (Florida, 2008, p. 72). In the extract above, the discourse of mobility is embedded with a sense of stimulation represented as a personal ability to pursue 'economic opportunities'; however, the underlying claim is that mobility is a necessity for individuals imposed by the interests of corporations and the flows of labour and capital. Moreover, Florida (2008) differentiates within the category of 'the rooted' those individuals who have the 'good fortune' to live in places with 'thriving economies and optimistic futures', from those who are 'stuck' by economic circumstances or are "born poor and do not possess the resources to move" (p. 72). Being 'stuck' in a locality is thus represented as an undesirable condition for individuals because geographical mobility is discursively associated with the notion of individual freedom. From this perspective, it can be argued that the opposition between the mobile and the immobile, or 'the nomads and the settled', is depicted in the text as the new form of status that divides 'the rich and the poor' (Bauman, 2000).

This polarity established on the basis of individual mobility relates to the duality of 'cosmopolitans' and 'locals' as depicted by management guru Rossabeth Moss Kanter. In her book called *World Class* (2002), Kanter positions 'cosmopolitans' and 'locals' on opposite ends of "the class divide of the emerging information economy" (p. 22). At the extreme end of the local class are the 'isolates', referring to those individuals who are geographically 'stuck' as their opportunities are defined by and limited to particular places; the global elite at the

opposite extreme of the cosmopolitan class comprises those individuals who are 'rich' in terms of their personal competencies and broad mindset as they are able to access resources and knowledge anywhere in the world (Kanter, 2002, p. 22). This view, as happens with Florida's (2008) claims, renders individuals responsible for controlling their participation in the globalized world through the assumption of the necessary attitudes to become 'world class'.

The discourse of 'freedom' depicted by Florida (2008) is associated with the individuals' ability to choose to be mobile and to choose where to live; however, this idea is contradictory because the notions of 'sacrifices' and 'trade-offs' that the author associated with the life of the mobile individual. For example, Florida (2008) mentions that those individuals who choose to move in order to pursue their professional career may give up 'the joy of being near family and lifelong friends', while those who choose the latter may give up economic opportunities (p. 5). Florida (2008) justifies the experience of subjective sacrifices and trade-offs by those individuals who 'choose' to be mobile, by incorporating a sense of security and a sense of stimulation in the portrayal of places as providers of a 'bundle of goods and services' for the fulfilment of personal and professional interests. However, Florida's (2008) claim that individuals have the 'freedom to choose' where to live, is rather an 'obligation to choose' (Bauman, 2007) the places that individuals believe have the potential to meet their needs. From this perspective, geographical mobility involves the manufacture of a lifestyle in which individuals move to places that 'offer' whatever it is they desire or require during the different 'stages' of life (Florida, 2008).

To describe the individuals' attitudes to their own mobility Florida (2008) uses a vocabulary that can draws on the business context; for instance, he claims that "the place where we live is our single largest investment" (p. 8). This 'technologization of discourse' (Fairclough, 1997) (meanings that draw from the economic domain are incorporated in the social practice of labour mobility) depicts the mobile individual as a sort of 'enterprise-unit' following the notion of the migrant as an 'entrepreneur of himself' argued by Foucault (2008, p. 230). Places, according to this 'commercial' perspective, are depicted as consumer commodities which purpose is to satisfy specific needs and desires at a particular cost; the form of investment are thus the personal sacrifices and trade-offs which generate some kind of improvement for the individual: "When given a wide range of choices, we need to identify our key needs and priorities and then find a place that meets them at a price we are willing and

able to pay" (Florida, 2008, p. 8). In this environment, the international mobility of individuals represents "the ability to treat any life-decision as a consumer choice" (Bauman, 2008, p. 89) whereas such choices are shaped by the market's demand.

Florida's (2008) idea of 'a wide range of choices' refers to his view of the world as a 'menu of places' from which people can 'pick' where to live depending on personal 'priorities' regarding aspects such as family and friends, career prospects and cultural interests: "we are fortunate to have an incredibly diverse menu of places –in our own country and around the world- from which to choose" (Florida, 2008, p. 7). Florida (2008) offers 'some real-world tools' and 'a ten-step plan' to help individuals 'narrow the field' and 'make the decision' of where to move (p. 251). As Chiapello and Fairclough (2002) argue, the use of 'lists' is a common feature in this kind of literature because they serve to present information in ways in which can be easily remembered, such as happens with 'shopping lists' and 'to do lists', thus facilitating 'the transition from prescription to action' (p. 198). The image of the world as a 'menu of places' can be considered as a sort of 'shopping list' as it calls for a mental organization of cities and countries according to the degree to which they may satisfy the needs and desires of the day (Bauman, 2007), reducing to manageable terms the reality of the physical world (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002).

As part of the life of the mobile individual, Florida (2008) mentions the necessary transformations occurring in people's attitude towards their physical home; in this sense, he claims that home ownership limits the mobility and flexibility required by individuals to take advantage of new opportunities (p. 129). In his book called *The Great Reset* (2011), Florida describes how the current financial crisis has changed the way people live and proposes advice to help individuals and society in general "to move more quickly down the path to real recovery" (p. xii). Florida (2011) uses the metaphor 'reset' to name the periods that follow important economic crisis; during 'great resets', the author says, "an economy is remade in ways that allow it to recover and begin growing again" (p. 4). The sense of 'start anew' involved in the notion of 'reset' somewhat resembles Ohmae's (2005, p. 106) claim that local systems and structures can be 'reinvented' to meet the changing economic demands; in other words, the 'resetting' metaphor serves to offer the idea of eliminating the complexities involved in the processes that lead to an economic crisis and the consequences it provokes by restoring conditions to an ideal state. According to Florida (2011), a 'true reset' starts from

fundamental changes in the way people live and work, eventually reaching all levels of social organization for the common good:

> "A true Reset transforms not simply the way we innovate and produce but also ushers in a whole new economic landscape. As it takes shape around new infrastructure and systems of transportation, it gives rise to new housing patterns, realigning where and how we live and work. Eventually, it ushers in a whole new way of life –defined by new wants and needs and new models of consumption that spur the economy, enabling industry to expand and productivity to improve, while creating new and better jobs for workers." (Florida, 2011, p. 5)

Florida's (2011) view draws on the portrayal of mobility and flexibility as the 'key principles' of late capitalism; in this context, owing a house limits the individuals' ability to follow the fluctuations in economic market, thus reducing their potential to contribute to the region's 'reset': "If you've invested in a house, you're less likely to pack up and move when times get tough" (Florida, 2011, p. 173). The changes on the way individuals perceive housing ownership is described by Florida (2011) as one of the 'realignments' needed to aid the recovery of the economy, as the society's supporting system for progress and prosperity, thus incorporating the logic of common good as part of neoliberalism's dimension of justice or fairness. Moreover, the idea of 'not wanting to own a house' is part of the 'new wants and needs and new models of consumption' referred to by Florida (2011); a view that not only conveys a sense of contributing to greater processes of social transformation, but that it also incorporates the dimension of stimulation through the promises of being part of 'the new' (e.g. 'new economic landscape' and 'new housing patterns'). Although Florida (2011) generally speaks from the perspective of the society in the United States of America, his claim that owning a house is a 'burden' rather than a 'shelter' for individuals can be seen as 'universal' because he addresses the collective good:

> "It's not that home ownership per se is bad, it's that home ownership on the scale it has grown to is plainly ill suited to today's postindustrial economy. Letting go of it as the centerpiece of our collective aspirations might be among the healthiest, most liberating steps we can make." (p. 174-5)

Florida (2011) says that the financial recession of present years has created an opportunity for governments to remake the housing system in ways in which it is 'more in tune' with the need for flexibility and mobility in today's economy. The author proposes, as a theoretical solution, a 'plug-and-play' housing scheme that will allow individuals to remain flexible and

geographically mobile in accordance with wider economic needs (Florida, 2011, p. 177). The metaphor 'plug-and-play' as mobilized in the text is consonant with the ideology of neoliberalism because it illustrates the need for flexibility in a world where mobility is among the highest values that infiltrates all aspects of social life (Bauman, 2000; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Harvey 2005). To 'plug-and-play' can be considered from the perspective of Bauman's (2007; 2008) view of life as a succession of 'episodes', or, in a similar sense, as a succession of 'projects' as argued by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). In the text, the portrayal of individual mobility as a compelling necessity is sustained by the depiction of an idealised infrastructure that reduces the hardships of reality (socio-economic crisis) into easily manageable episodes or projects that can be 'dealt with one a time' (Bauman, 2008); as a result, changing houses and localities in accordance with demands from fluctuating economic markets is represented as a process of consumption ('plug/unplug') and even entertaining ('play') for individuals as they can be used and left at will. Moreover, just as happens with the 'reset' metaphor and the view of the world as a 'menu of places', the notion of 'plug-and-play housing' seems consonant with the portrayal of individual as an 'enterprise of oneself' (Foucault, 2008), in the sense of organizing all aspects of life (profession, housing, family) into a project with investments and incomes.

4.4 Susan Bloch and Philip Whiteley

The text by Bloch and Whiteley (2011) here analysed is *The Global You*; this book can be considered as 'managerial' in that it is generally aimed at professionals within the context of contemporary organizations. In the text, Susan Bloch is presented as an 'executive coach and leadership consultant', a 'Chartered Psychologist' and 'a truly global citizen' on the basis that she has lived and worked in five countries; Philip Whiteley is presented as author and journalist who is mostly concerned with management in the areas of 'leadership, motivation and strategic human resources' (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, no pagination). Bloch and Whiteley (2011) draw upon Friedman's (2006) idea of a flat world, which is also used in an earlier work by the authors titled *How to Manage in a Flat World* (2007), and on Ohmae's (1990) popular idea of a 'borderless world'; these metaphors are incorporated as common sense assumptions to describe the authors' view of reality that serves to justify their claims and prescriptions.

The general idea that Bloch and Whiteley (2011) present in *The Global You* is primarily sustained by the claim that the modern context of work is becoming 'so multi-cultural' that individuals have 'no choice' but to become 'global workers'; people, the authors say, require a 'borderless' way of thinking as they are all part of the interconnected global economy whether it was their career plan or not (p. 2-3). This view assumes that the work context is multi-cultural, and that the only possible course of action for individuals is to accept such a context by internalizing it as a condition of the self, that is to say, to become 'global' or 'international'. According to the authors, individuals are not required to 'shed their heritage' or to 'absorb all cultures and worldviews' to be global; rather, 'the global you' is about 'perceiving the world from different standpoints' (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 3). Modern communication and travel technologies as well as the worldwide growth in the migration of 'middle-class professionals' are presented in the text as examples of why nowadays "there are more people becoming global in outlook, both by accident and design" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 3). This situation means that inter-cultural encounters are now part of the everyday life within corporations, so the authors refer to the need for individuals to learn about other cultures in order to facilitate work relations (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011).

To a certain extent, the authors' use of the central discourse of 'the global' can be seen as a 'common superior principle' that establishes a form of status by claiming universal validity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). For example, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) seek to legitimize their claims through allusions to the notions of 'the flat world', 'the global stage' and 'the borderless world' mobilized to convey the values of individual freedom and flexibility; however, these interdiscursive and intertextual connections are presented as implicit assumptions without direct references to the works by Friedman (2006) or Ohmae (2005). The dimension of security and the dimension of stimulation are identified in the discourse of the global represented as the right or even natural way of thinking and behaving for individuals in contemporary society to ensure 'employability', or rather, to remain 'a sellable commodity' (Bauman, 2007, p. 12) in the labour market:

> "Having a global mindset, acknowledging global behaviours, and developing global traits -cultivating, in other words, the Global You- are essentials for remaining highly employable. What could be more important, in times of economic uncertainty, that to ensure that companies will always want to work with or for you?" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 11)

The metaphor of 'global you' as used by Bloch and Whiteley (2011) can be interpreted through Jameson's argument of the hermeneutic utopian 'body'; according to Jameson (2005), one way individuals experience utopia is through spatial 'corporeal transcendence' that goes from the individuals' local context to an imagined greater level: "from the streets of daily life and the rooms of dwelling and work place, to the greater locus of the city as in ancient times it reflected the physical cosmos itself" (Jameson, 2005, p. 6). The notion of 'borderless thinking' depicted by Bloch and Whiteley (2011) can be analysed as the individuals' ability to emotionally 'transcend' the local space of their reality, by constructing an 'ideal cosmopolitanism' ('global you') through the acquisition of experience and knowledge about other cultures (Halsall, 2012). However, this cosmopolitan outlook is rationalized in the text by presenting it as a process that professionals can control and orientate towards specific aims; a perspective that can be understood as the 'mastery of a culture' described by Hannerz (1996) in the sense that the competence of alien cultures as a "kind of cosmopolitanism where the individual picks from other cultures only those pieces which suit himself" (p. 103). This view is exemplified in the next extract, which resembles Ohmae's (2005) claim that other countries are 'a source of prosperity', and Florida's (2008) metaphor of the world as a 'menu of places' from which individuals can choose where to live according to personal needs and desires:

> "Thinking globally isn't a utopian vision of trying to absorb every single culture. It's better to think of it as a process: a way of orientating yourself towards considering all parts of the world as potential markets, and potential places to work, relocate or do business." (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 291)

Bloch and Whiteley (2011) advocate that 'resistance to globalization', a negative view towards 'locals' in a given country, can be overcome by 'thinking globally, that is to say, by acknowledging and addressing the advantages and disadvantages of the differences between cultures. On this basis, the authors provide numerous lists and 'exercises' aimed at aiding individuals in their 'quest to become the global you'; more specifically, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) claim to have created a "travel guide to that unknown country called 'borderless working'" (p. 4). The metaphor of 'unknown country', used to represent an 'unexplored' or new experience, draws upon Ohmae's idea of 'invisible continent': a 'continent without land' that has been 'discovered' during the past few decades of globalization (Ohmae, 2000, p. 1). Exceeding the history of terrestrial exploration, the new 'invisible' continent is thus an ideal that provides a sense of adventure and excitement embedded in the discourse of 'discovery',

by focusing on what it is 'new' within 'the old-world' defined by territorial borders and local controls. The metaphor of a 'travel guide' is consonant with the way information in this genre of popular literature is presented as 'practical advice' for individuals in their dealings with the world as depicted by the authors, while providing reassurance and inspiration for readers (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002).

In brief terms, the 'strategies' to construct the 'global you' focus on the 'mastery' of selective aspects regarding alien cultures, such as the local language, religion and traditions; this information, according to Bloch and Whiteley (2011), 'equips' professionals to 'make the most of advantages' in the future because they 'never know' when such knowledge may be "called upon for deployment on the international stage" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 11). The global identity as represented in the text can be considered as a sort of 'immunity' to cultural differences as it is aimed at preventing 'culture shock' (Hannerz, 1996, p. 108); for instance, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) say that people need to be able to "engage with people from anywhere and everywhere, while blocking prejudices and stereotypes about religions and cultures unconsciously imbibed over the years" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 5). This approach to culture is articulated in the text to encompass the neoliberal principles of equality and freedom; however, in the same manner as identified in the other texts in the sample, the global is a cosmopolitan utopia in which local and historical differences between nations are eliminated for the common good, albeit the social discrimination and segregation created by such differences are a consequence of the same system that claims to eliminate them (Harvey, 1990; 2005).

Moreover, the 'challenges and difficulties' Bloch and Whiteley (2011) say that are involved in being a 'global worker' are compensated by the 'many opportunities and rewards' it provides; here the authors draw on Friedman's (2006) ideas to describe the global as a 'levelled playing field' in the sense that the individual's national origin and local culture are ignored abroad, allegedly providing equal participation in the labour market. Specifically, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) claim that aspects that make up the individuals' identity 'do not matter' when working outside the country of origin; as the next extract exemplifies, this is a positive situation that masks the potential difficulties and prejudices individuals may find when working internationally:

"International working can be rewarding, even if it is difficult […] Going global can in fact even be liberating. You will find that there can actually be more opportunities and fewer barriers working internationally than working in the country of your upbringing, where your religious or class background can cause you to suffer discrimination. Often just your name, or where you went to school, becomes an automatic barrier in your home country – but abroad may be ignored." (Bloch and Whiteley 2011, p. 22)

Bloch and Whiteley (2011) advocate that by working and living abroad individuals gain a 'broader view of the global world' that can be a personal asset in the workplace. Under the strategy called 'travel whenever you can', the authors claim that individuals should 'grab every opportunity' to visit another country 'for fun or for work', whilst emphasising the value of international experience as a form of status in the corporate context: "If you take the trouble to visit the countries related to your work, the very fact that you have made an effort will be well appreciated by your boss, customers or potential partners" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 48). The negative associations attributed to transnational relocations from the standpoint of individuals (e.g. 'taking the trouble' and 'making an effort') are justified in the text through references to the 'essential intelligence' about foreign cultures and customs that individuals allegedly acquire during their international experience, and which are said to facilitate the creation and maintenance of the kind of social and professional networks needed for 'international working' (Bloch and Whiteley 2011, p. 48).

Particularly addressing international relocation for work purposes, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) provide a list of 'must dos' and 'must haves' that individuals are advised 'to take care of'; for example, the list includes advice on how to 'live like a local' by seeking 'total immersion' in the local culture: "On your travels, get on a local bus or train, and mix with locals rather than staying in your 'Western-style' hotel, disengaged from the local population" (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 49). The authors also claim that individuals need to 'plan' their eventual return to their country of origin in order to prevent a re-entry 'culture shock', which they say can result from their 'immersion' in the local culture of the host country during their time abroad. This involves changes in the home country ('new buildings, new local celebrities, new items of gossip and news') and transformations occurred in the individuals' attitude after their international experience that can make them feel 'on the outside' within their own culture (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011, p. 59).

4.5 Lynda Gratton

Lynda Gratton is a Professor of management practice and author; her books can be considered as part of the genre of managerial literature as they address individuals in the context of work. In the book analysed here, *The Shift* (2011), Gratton is described by the *Financial Times* as "the management guru most likely to impact on the future" (no pagination); and in a similar manner as in the other texts in the sample, there are references to her previous publications and awards to support her alleged authority in the field of work.

In *The Shift* (2011), Gratton (2011) describes and interprets the 'forces' that she claims are transforming the life of individuals in contemporary society, and 'predicts' how they 'will shape the future of work'. Gratton's (2011) projections of the future of work are presented in the text through fictional stories of a day in the life of professionals in the year 2025 which are compared to the world of work in 1990; these, the author says, are not a 'mechanical forecast' of what the future of work will be, but rather a sort of 'journey' for individuals to reflect on the validity of their pre-established 'mental maps' and assumptions in order to choose 'the right path' to create a 'future-proofed career' (p. 17). The imagined stories of future lives included in the text are divided into the 'default future' and the 'crafted future', representing the two 'versions' or 'paths' that Gratton (2011) claims illustrate how the future of work is likely to evolve. These predictions are offered as possible 'scenarios' or ways of 'seeing the future' to guide and inspire individuals in their choices: "Through the eyes of our future workers we can see the paradoxes they face, the choices they make and the troubles and anxieties they experience" (Gratton, 2011, p. 53).

The default future concentrates on how the negative aspects of the forces that influence the work context can lead to "a future of isolation, fragmentation, exclusion and narcissism" (Gratton, 2011, p. 15). The crafted future, in contrast, depicts a future in which individuals actively seek to enhance the positive aspects of the transformations occurring in work practices. On the basis of these possible scenarios, the author advocates that individuals have the potential to 'choose' the forms of behaviour and attitudes that best suit their interests and desires. This is what Gratton (2011) refers to as the 'shift'; the making of some fundamental changes or shifts in the way individuals think and act in order to take the 'right path' towards' success, or rather, "to choose the crafted future rather than to succumb to the default future" (p. 16).

The 'crafting' metaphor is presented in the text as a sort of 'development of the self' as advocated by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), in that individuals are allegedly able to change and adapt in an attempt to preserve a sense of control and permanence amid a changing and uncertain world. The idea that individuals are able to 'future-proof' their career against risks and uncertainties conveys a sense of protection and stimulation, in that individuals are said to have the potential to acquire the skills required to satisfy fluctuating demands in the labour market. However, feelings of security are somewhat weakened as the responsibility for choosing or 'predicting' the competencies and skills that will be in 'short supply' in the future is placed on the individuals' own abilities; nonetheless, the author offers reassurance to readers by providing information on how to achieve 'serial mastery' and describing why some skills create more value than others in the corporate context. This situation is an example of how the normative tone of the text responds to the particular image of the world depicted by the author; in other words, descriptions are transformed into prescriptions for individuals of how to think and to act if they are to 'succeed' in such a world.

Gratton (2011) incorporates the notion of 'morphing' to refer to the actions individuals can take to adapt as circumstances change: "Your challenge will be to become deep, and yet over time slide or morph, through personal development, or through new networks, in other areas of mastery" (Gratton, 2011, p. 203). To morph, the author says, is a process of 'experimenting' with the opportunities available in terms of professional skills, and the creation of 'eclectic networks' that can serve as a source of new ideas and as a point of comparison: "This enables you to begin to grow your new self by watching and emulating the people you admire" (p. 237). This kind of self-transformation can be considered as a condition of modern society as argued by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), in the sense that individuals' are required to sacrifice a certain 'fidelity to the self' to adjust to the people with whom they relate and to adapt to the constantly changing situations in which they are obliged to interact (p. 124).

Gratton's (2011) claim of the need to 'morph' is presented as a solution to the potential consequences of developing 'mastery', which is conversely another of the fundamental prescriptions for individuals she introduces: "You can be sure to avoid becoming too narrow by sliding into another related areas of mastery, or morphing into something completely different" (Gratton, 2011, p. 234). Individuals, the author says, need to develop 'serial mastery', meaning that they need to go "from being a shallow generalist, who knows a little about lots, to being a serial master, who has in-depth knowledge and competencies in a

number of domains" (Gratton, 2011, p. 204). This shift involves the individuals' work of 'self-marketing' referring to their 'investment' in the creation and crafting of credentials necessary to become members of 'the global talent pool' (Gratton, 2011, p. 240). Personal credentials, according to the author, are 'subtle cues' or information about a given individual that are 'easily visible' to others, such as appraisal scores and performance ratings acquired and displayed within the professional context; however, Gratton (2011) claims that in the future the creation of credentials and their visibility in the global dimension (i.e. through online communication technologies and beyond the scope of a given organizational setting) will be an important skill for individuals in their work of self-marketing.

The discourse of global mobility is incorporated in the text as part of the second shift required of individuals to develop serial mastery, and to create the necessary relationships or social networks that can support the promotion of their personal and professional credentials; here the author directly quotes Florida's idea of the 'clustering force' on the basis that people naturally want to be near those from whom they can learn (Gratton , 2011, p. 230). Gratton (2011) says that individuals need to be thoughtful about the communities in which they decide to live because some localities will be more 'regenerative' than others as people and capital concentrate in particular areas of the world. 'Regenerative communities' are described in the text as places that are 'open and tolerant to differences' providing individuals with opportunities to establish new social relations; this kind of environment is said to prevent feelings of isolation and fragmentation that contemporary globalization can potentially generate in individuals:

> "In the past we did not really have to think or indeed work on a regenerative community –the family and the community simply provided that for us. In the future we cannot assume this provision. What was once assumed has now to be found and crafted." (Gratton, 2011 p. 277)

In a similar manner as identified in Florida's (2008) text, Gratton (2011) describes the life of the mobile individual using terms that draw on the 'commercial' context; for instance, she refers to the investments, negotiations and trade-offs required by professionals to 'make the shift into the future' (p. 226). Gratton (2011) also associates the concept of 'play' with working life as she refers to individuals as 'gamers' who 'play' to achieve mastery in the workplace. The intention of this association is to merge work with the private sphere of individuals as an essential requirement for success –"The future of work will increasingly be about breaking down the barrier that separates work from life, and work from play" (p. 232).

Gratton (2011) relates such a view to the ideas advocated by Marx according to which work should be a process of active self-realisation instead of an alienating system of production and consumption (p. 233). As is the case in Friedman's (2006) text, interdiscursive references to Marxist ideas are ironic considering the neoliberal ideology underlying the claims and prescriptions of the author; in Marxist terminology, freedom of workers from alienation would result from the workers taking over the means of production. These texts are connected through the idea that work should be for individuals a meaningful aim in itself rather than the means to generate monetary remuneration, but in the neoliberal text, this is divorced from any political consideration of why work may not be meaningful.

This appeal to shift the focus of work beyond personal economic stimuli towards a subjective internalization of the transformations brought about by globalization, draws on the values that support the new spirit of capitalism as argued by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). In these terms, the text provides 'moral' justifications for the individuals' commitment to the capitalist system; for instance, the third shift proposed by Gratton (2011) is to go from being a 'voracious consumer' to being an 'impassioned producer'. To describe this shift in the individuals' attitude towards work, the author mobilizes positive associations such as meaningful experiences, freedom and opportunities; however, this transformation is ambiguous because it is presented as an attractive possibility for individuals claiming to facilitate the satisfaction of personal and professional needs, and as a requirement to achieve happiness and success: "without this third shift it's hard to imagine how you can craft the future working life you want and deserve" (Gratton, 2011, p. 286).

PART II – TEXTS BY CONSULTANCY FIRMS

This section identifies how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is manifested in the sample of corporate websites by consultancy firms, and to what extent they draw upon the core ideas and metaphors identified in the sample of managerial and popular globalization texts. The feature that unifies the four consultancy firms in this sample is their interest in the international mobility of professionals within the context of modern corporations; their corporate websites are examined as a single corpus of texts showing similarities in the ideas and claims they promote. The analysis follows the same approach to critical discourse analysis

used in the study of the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization; the subsections below are structured according to the main discourses and concepts that interlace the texts in this sample. The year the data was collected is used as the year of publication to reference the texts by the consultancy firms, unless it is indicated otherwise in their corporate websites.

In a similar manner as found in the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, the consultants and coaches of the firms claim personal expertise in the field of 'intercultural consulting' in ways in which places them in a position of authority or as experts in assisting executives, managers and professionals in their dealings with cultural diversity. The portrayed expertise of the firms' members is sustained in the texts through references to professional credentials and personal experience that in some cases are said to be gained from living or working in different countries; additionally, it is a shared practice among the firms to include case studies and 'testimonials' of previous customers, as well as articles and surveys developed by members of the firm or by related companies in the field. This sort of information is generally intended in the text as 'evidence' of the credibility of the consultants' claims, thus serving to construct a sort of 'guru status' within the context of 'intercultural consultancy' (Furusten, 1999; Huczynski, 1993; Jackson, 2001).

4.6 'Culture' as a corporate discourse

As a generic feature of the genre of popular literature, the texts by the consultancy firms provide descriptions of a particular aspect of social life, in this case cultural diversity in the context of modern organizations, and prescriptions or 'guides' for individuals and corporations on how to act and think in order to succeed in such an environment. These prescriptions convey a 'practical' approach to the image of the world depicted by the consultants in comparison to the utopian views found in the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, in the sense that the former address aspects in the everyday life of professionals who relocate internationally in the pursuit of the 'opportunities', 'success' and 'happiness' that are said to be available in today's globalized society, as claimed, for example, by Friedman (2006), Florida (2008; 2011) and Ohmae (2005). Specifically, the consultancy firms offer products and services that claim to support individuals in their dealings with the 'challenges and difficulties' associated with transnational relocation in the

context of work, and provide advice on how to 'craft' their working lives in order to become a 'global employee', which is assumed as a desirable condition for professional in modern corporations in the same way as it is prescribed by Bloch and Whiteley (2011) and Gratton (2011).

The sample of texts by consultancy firms position the aspect of 'culture' at the centre of their claims, offering 'customized' or 'tailored' services that are said to encompass the need of professionals and organizations regarding cultural differences. For example, Grovewell (2013) says that their services are "culturally calibrated to reflect local and regional business practices, mindsets, and values"; and DFA (2012) provides travelling professionals with a 'Culture Compass', described as "a personalized set of tactics and strategies you can use to get you going in the right direction as soon as you step off the plane". The discourse of culture, as incorporated in the texts, mostly refers to the set of particular characteristics embedded in the society of a given country; these are presented as the origin of differences between professionals who can potentially hinder working relationships and the achievement of organizational goals. More specifically, culture is depicted by the firms as a sort of 'barrier' among individuals which needs to be transformed or even eliminated: "Through our work together you'll learn how to engage cultural differences so that they, themselves, transform from walls of separation into bridges of connection" (Transition Dynamics, 2012).

The extract above can be related to the utopian message of cosmopolitanism as depicted by Friedman (2006) following his references to the ideas of Marx and Engels in the 'Communist Manifesto' (1848). The claim that culture represents 'walls of separation' that can be transformed 'into bridges of connection' discursively privileges the global over the local towards the achievement of an ideal globalized world (i.e. a 'flat world' or a 'global stage'), and depicts culture as a commodity that can be managed in favour of personal and corporate interests. Moreover, the term 'bridges of connection' can be considered as a direct reference to the aforementioned work by Kanter (2002), *World Class*, in which she claims that "cosmopolitans can build bridges that connect islands of resources to the rest of the world" (p. 352). Kanter (2002) draws on Enlightenment views of cosmopolitanism in her descriptions of 'cosmopolitans and locals' in which the former are represented as more 'enlightened' than the latter. According to Kanter (2002), cosmopolitans are able to 'destroy the walls' that separate the locals so 'everyone has access to the world's best' (p. 352). This elimination of 'walls of separation', which may come at the expense of traditional local cultures and

structures because such walls represent a protection against external influence, is thus justified by Kanter (2002) by making references to the supposed universal principle of common good.

The 'need' to connect to the world, as claimed by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, conveys the neoliberal view of globalization as something 'inevitable' (Fairclough and Thomas, 2004); this assumption is incorporated by the consultancy firms to sustain their claim that if cultural differences are 'left unattended' the results will be detrimental for professionals and corporations alike, as the next extract exemplifies:

> "When a business globalizes or accelerates its on-going globalization, it encounters challenges quantitatively and qualitatively different from those it faced during its relatively homogeneous past […] we upgrade leaders' repertoire for effectively responding to the relationship, communication, and trust-related challenges of physical distance and cultural difference, essentials for global success." (GrovewellI, 2013)

Following these descriptions of the contemporary world, the consultancy firms offer 'guidance' and 'advice' on how to manage the 'challenges' posed by cultural differences in order to support working relationships and benefit business activities. The services offered by the consultancy firms include 'training', 'programs', 'solutions' and 'workshops' to assist individuals in 'multicultural' work contexts in the home country and/or abroad. For example, one of the services provided by DFA (2012) is 'culture-to-go', a sort of 'quick cosmopolitan fix' (Hannerz, 1996, p. 108) offered as online packages of information that comprise 'all the important cultural dos and don'ts' needed by individuals to make their international experience a success (DFA, 2012). These services refer to the professionals acquisition of competencies and 'basic know-how' intended to create a sort of 'immunity to culture shock', which, as Hannerz (1996) argues, is more for the benefit of corporate objectives than for the private interests of the individuals involved. 'Intercultural training', therefore, is proposed by the consultancy firms as a set of 'tools' that professionals require in their dealings with others; conveying a sense of security for individuals as it claims to 'equip' them with essential knowledge 'to navigate the unfamiliar society', although it is primarily intended to benefit corporations: "With this type of training, work can go more quickly and smoothly and company avoid costly mistakes" (DFA, 2012).

4.7 The transnational professional as a corporate asset

The 'global' is a discursive element that is often used across the texts by the consultancy firms (e.g. 'global leaders', 'global competences', 'global mindset', and so on). This discourse is mobilized in similar ways as identified in the managerial and popular globalization texts, for instance, to describe the modern context of contemporary organizations and commercial activities as a 'global arena' (Grovewell, 2013; Transition Dynamics, 2012), and to define internationally mobile professionals as a particular class of 'global employees'. Moreover, the concept of 'a world without borders' (MKB, 2012) is incorporated in different ways in the texts of the sample to depict globalization as the uncontested reality of today's society, and to provide prescriptions for individuals on how to act in such a world; these representations draw upon Ohmae's (2005) metaphor of a 'borderless world', incorporated in the texts as an assumption which meaning is taken for granted and without making direct reference to his writings.

Another common feature between the managerial and globalization discourses and the texts by the consultancy firms is the representation of global mobility as the means for individuals to acquire skills, knowledge and experiences that can benefit corporate interests; for instance, in the next extract the discourse of global mobility is at the same time associated with the geographical expansion of businesses, for which transnational professionals are represented as valuable assets, and with personal rewards from the standpoint of those professionals who move internationally. In other words, individual global mobility is simultaneously represented as a form of status within the corporation and as the means for self-development:

> "Your firm's partnership in an overseas project offers an unparalleled opportunity for the gathering of useful global intelligence. Just think of it: In a distant market of interest to you, your people can actually live in local communities and work shoulder-to-shoulder with local nationals, insiders with nuanced understandings of local business practices and effective informal ways of getting things done. Your people can capture this fresh information and bring it back alive […] Don't just require it. Reward it, too. Offer annual awards to those who not only learn from their experiences abroad, but effectively disseminate their new knowledge or skills to colleagues." (Grove, Hallowell and Gossie, 1999)

The extract above is part of an article published in Grovewell's website; in the article, the authors claim that professionals can contribute to the organization's strategic activities by

acquiring 'useful global intelligence' from their experience abroad and by 'disseminating' that learning to others in the workplace. The contemporary discourse of individual global mobility from the perspective of neoliberalism is present in the text because the portrayal of international mobility is embedded with a sense of 'greatness' in the corporate context (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007); specifically, mobile professionals are portrayed with a sort of 'superior status' in comparison to their sedentary counterparts, because through their travels they are said to be able to 'capture' knowledge or information from localities that are of interest for the commercial growth of the organization. However, as represented in the previous extract, mobile professionals seem to be considered as 'corporate assets' in the sense that the function of their actions is intended to meet the organization's goals ('your people', 'insiders with nuanced understandings of local business practices'), a situation that the authors attempt to justify by making reference to the personal benefits involved for the mobile professional ('reward it', 'offer annual awards').

The sense of elitism associated with transnational professionals in comparison to non-mobile individuals is broadly sustained in the texts through references to particular personal qualities; for instance, Grovewell (2013) refers to professionals who 'face the challenging transition' of an international relocation as 'highly motivated people', 'very accomplished' and 'determined to regain peak performance' in the new environment. Feelings of exclusivity associated in the texts with the mobile elite of professionals are further reinforced by the ways in which the consultancy firms address the process of selecting 'candidates' for foreign assignments. In an article titled 'The ideal expatriate' published by Grovewell (2013), the consultants claim that certain 'personality traits', 'situational readiness' and 'past behaviour' place some professionals more at 'risk of failure' than others when dealing with the challenges of an unfamiliar culture, and so the latter, according to the article, "should be encouraged to withdraw their candidacy" (Grove and Hallowell, 1998). Among the desirable personal qualities or traits that the consultancy firms claim to positively influence the possibility for success overseas are 'interest in the local culture', 'flexibility', 'initiative', 'open-mindedness' and 'positive self-image'; additionally, the firms highlight the need for employers to consider the candidate's spouse and family and to evaluate how their particular circumstance may affect their 'readiness' to move to a different country.

The consultants and coaches of the firms in the sample offer a variety of services to prepare and to support the accompanying family members in their 'immersion' in the new context;

according to the firms, the level of integration and adaptation the employees' family achieve in the host country can greatly influence the success of the international assignment, hence affecting the corporation's objectives: "without intercultural training, the employee and family are left to find their own way through business and social situations that may make or break the assignment" (DFA, 2012). In this extract, the sense of elitism associated with internationally mobile professionals is challenged by claiming that individuals by themselves may not be capable to cope with 'intercultural encounters' in the workplace and socially. The extract is an example of the 'intermediary' position of the consultancy firms between the individuals and the prescriptions of going global advocated by the management gurus and popular writers on globalization, offering 'solutions' and 'training' to aid the former as they attempt to incorporate such prescriptions as forms of behaviour and ways of being. However, in a similar manner as identified in the analysis of the sample of managerial and popular globalization texts, the ability to potentially access the alleged opportunities found in the global remains dependent upon the professionals' acquisition of particular set of skills as well as their 'natural abilities'.

In the texts by the consultancy firms, individuals are depicted as having the 'freedom to choose' to become globally mobile as part of a process of self-development, although this statement is opposed by references to the need for individuals to 'fit the profile' required for 'international working'. This circumstance seems to render professionals as 'sellable commodities' (Bauman, 2007, p. 12) which value in the global labour market is defined by their ability to encompass the corporations' demands. For example, in an article titled 'Now, more than ever' published by DFA (2012), the firm claims that 'fully developed global mindsets' and 'fully functioning intercultural competencies' are critical for the 'survival' of individuals and corporations in today's 'tough global times'. The article refers to the 'miserable state of the global economy' in which the corporations' 'greatest arena of growth, opportunity and profit' is no longer in domestic markets but in the emerging economies of the so-called 'developing world' (DFA, 2012). The general intention of the article is to emphasise the need for organizations to make the acquisition of 'global intercultural competencies' a priority, on the basis that in 'the new reality' the transnational professional 'cannot fail and must succeed' in their work assignment abroad. The article draws on the 'global playing field' metaphor used by Friedman (2005) to describe the 'global playspace':

"The economic crisis has made this playspace even more expensive and risky. Now, more than ever, organizations need to insure their presence in the one area which will determine their future existence, and this requires pure and simple, intercultural knowledge and skills." (DFA, 2012)

4.8 The 'transformative potential' of international experience

The challenges and difficulties that according to the texts are encountered by individuals during international relocations, and which are mostly described through the discourse of culture, are in some cases presented as the cause of personal transformations; these transformations are broadly portrayed as positive for the individuals in that they are valued in the context of work. As mentioned above, training programs that claim to mitigate the 'culture shock' said to be involved in the interactions between professionals of different national origins are aimed at transforming the way people think and act, so their 'transition' into the new context is successfully achieved for the benefit of corporate activities. For instance, Transition Dynamics (2012) depicts the individuals' experience of 'culture shock' as a "useful learning opportunity rather than something we want to hide from under the covers"; this perspective represents individual global mobility as the means for personal growth:

"The intercultural emphasises a learning orientation; it reorients you through very practical strategies from being a 'responder to circumstances' to a 'creator of experience.' Challenges are profoundly reframed into opportunities for personal and professional development."
(Transition Dynamics, 2012)

The tensions and uncertainty attributed by the consultancy firms to the life of the transnational professional are transformed into positive views, through the portrayal of the individuals' ability to control and shape their experiences to satisfy personal interests. In the extract above by Transition Dynamics (2012), being a 'creator of experience' refers to the concept of 'personal leadership', one of the programs provided by the firm that claims to support individuals in 'crafting' their life as 'expatriates'; an approach that renders the contemporary mobile professional as a kind of 'lifestyle manager' in the sense put forward by Ohmae (2005): "Become the creative centre in your own life; refuse to live as a 'victim of circumstance' and instead step into the transformative potential made possible when you craft your life with purpose and intention" (Transition Dynamics, 2012). This view can also be related to the claims by Gratton (2011) in that the professionals' working life is represented as

a self-structured project that can be 'crafted' following demands from the labour market. The contemporary discourse of nomadism is identified in the text by Transition Dynamics (2012) through representations of personal transformations in terms of a sort 'intellectual mobility' that results from the individuals' exposure to different cultural environments:

> "The expatriate and repatriate experience provides you with opportunities to become more fully present in your life. Precisely because they are fraught with ambiguity, frequently confusing intercultural encounters, and often significant isolation from known support systems, they present you with unparalleled opportunities to 'wake up' to your authentic self. Living as an expatriate or repatriate takes on a dimension at one and the same time supportive, spirited, and immanently practical when you start to explore ways of being and of interacting with the world [...] You become able to free your attention from habitual patterns, to create shifts in viewpoint, and to explore from a deep place of personal vision the possibilities that arise when you move beyond expectations, limitations, and fixed identities." (Transition Dynamics, 2012)

In this extract above, global mobility is described as a kind of spiritual journey of self-exploration; however, the 'nomadism' regarding the individuals' subjectivity refers less to a subversion against set conventions and fixed ways of thinking, as argued, for instance, by Braidotti (1994) and Deleuze and Guattari (2004), and more to the individuals' attempt to cope with the 'ambiguity and confusion' continuous 'uprootedness' generate in their lives ('isolation from known support systems'). According to Transition Dynamics (2012), the 'transformative potential' of international experiences is a process of self-development that requires practice and commitment by the individual, and which can be supported by adequate 'coaching services' such as those offered by the firm. The pervasive feature that underlines the text is that the organizations' demand for global mobility is not contested but rather taken for granted as part of the individuals' professional development; the prescriptions the consultancy firms offer, therefore, are intended to facilitate the individuals' adoption of global mobility as a form of life

As part of the personal transformations that the firms claim to result from the professionals international experience are the changes in their attitudes towards culture, both their own and that of others. For example, according to an article titled 'Onward!: Training the Perpetual Expatriate' published by DFA (Foster, n.d.), individuals change 'culturally' after their first transnational relocation or work assignment abroad and become 'bi-cultural'; such a transformation, the text states, can be leveraged to benefit future relocations through

cultural training suited to the new experience. In the article, the term 'perpetual expatriate' is used to refer to those professionals who relocate to a different country after an overseas assignment; although the professionals' initial intention when they relocate internationally is to return 'home', they often choose to expatriate again and may continue to repeat this pattern in the future (Foster, n.d.). The article's concern with 'perpetual expatriates', also referred to as 'onward employees', is founded on the claim that these professionals require a 'guided and structured' cross-cultural training as each international assignment involves a new and unfamiliar environment: "For their success, and the global success of the organization, providing onward-specific support is nothing less than fundamental" (Foster, n.d.).

Reference to continuous mobility as a feature to further divide the class of the highly mobile professional is also found in the texts by MKB (2012) and Transition Dynamics (2012). These firms use the term 'global nomad' to refer to those individuals who lived in two or more countries during their development years; such a condition is portrayed as an identity marker that serves to differentiate this category of mobile professionals from their counterparts in the workplace. For instance, MKB (2012) differentiates between 'global nomadic leaders' from 'expatriate leaders'; the latter are described as professionals who have lived and worked abroad as adults, and who have a strong cultural identity with their home country. Global nomadic leaders, in contrast, have a 'collective cultural identity' because they "do not identify with any one place, race, religion or tradition which makes them flexible" (MKB, 2012).

According to MKB (2012) and Transition Dynamics (2012), 'global nomads' have in common certain unique or natural abilities that result from their highly mobile lifestyle independently of their national origin and differences in personal circumstances. The firms claim that these personal attributes are highly valuable in the workplace, so leaders need to 'leverage' them for the benefit of the organization and develop them in managers and other professionals who have not had international experience. For example, MKB (2012) refers to the 'innate intercultural instincts' of global nomadic leaders; these professionals are described in the text as 'rootless and restless' individuals who 'thrive on change' and 'often clash with the status quo': "They readily understand how to run business and manage employees across cultures, promoting cohesion while respecting diversity" (MKB, 2012). In a similar manner, Transition Dynamics (2012) claims that global nomads share 'a unique cultural heritage' referring to their attitudes regarding the aspects of 'change', 'personal relationships', 'world view' and 'cultural

identity'; for instance, global nomads learn to be adaptable and flexible as 'survival skills' to confront 'change': "they develop a measure of confidence in the process of change, and perhaps even become so accustomed to change that life without it seems somehow incomplete" (Schaetti and Ramsey, 1999).

In an article titled 'When 'home' is the world' (Burrus, n.d.), available from MKB's website, global nomads are said to be of interest to multinational corporations because in times of 'accelerating change and globalization' they require professionals who "think globally, act locally and possess an exceptional ability to accelerate business development in complex cultural environments" (p. 17). The focus of the article is on the claim that organizations need to address the particular needs and demands of global nomadic leaders in order to retain them as members of the organization and develop their skills for the benefit of corporate objectives. For example, the article states that global nomadic leaders require a stabilizing factor, such as a mission, a person or their sense of home, in order to succeed in their assignment abroad, if these stabilizing factors are 'pulled out from underneath them', global nomadic leaders will 'change scenarios': "This is the critical moment when talented and groomed leaders may pack their bags and leave a company without a second thought" (Burrus, n.d., p. 18). From this perspective, the professionals' ability to be able to change jobs, organizations and/or countries can represent a disadvantage for organizations.

A similar claim is found in a recent publication titled *The Rise of The Global Nomad* (2011) by Jim Matthewman. This text can be considered as part of the genre of popular management literature examined in this dissertation, and the author, a 'human capital consultant', can be referred to as a 'management guru' by the manner in which he is presented in the text. The prescriptions and claims Matthewman (2011) puts forward are primarily oriented to 'chief executives' and 'business leaders' who are responsible for the 'management' of mobile professionals; specifically, the text provides advice on how to mobilize the particular abilities of mobile workers in order to support the interests of the organizations. Matthewman (2011) uses the term 'global nomad' to describe the 'new breed of professionals' in a manner that resembles the sample of texts by consultancy firms.

In Matthewman's (2011) terms, 'new professional nomads' have an 'insatiable desire for new experiences', 'thirst for knowledge' and a 'sense of personal destiny', meaning that they are always ready to 'pack and go' (p. 57); for them 'stagnation is boring' and so they incorporate

'change' as part of their everyday life (p. 20). These professionals, the author claims, are always seeking new challenges and new locations so their loyalty is not to a given corporation or to a given profession: "the individual has become more of a free agent with a much higher degree of choice in deciding to stay with a given employer or moving from one to another" (Matthewman, 2011, p. 56). According to the text, global nomads are able to perpetuate their 'nomadic lifestyle' because they possess professional knowledge and technical skills that are transferable across organizational settings and geographical locations, and which provide them with 'significant negotiating power' in their quest for new work opportunities (Matthewman, 2011, p.56).

PART III – PERSONAL NARRATIVES OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

This section is dedicated to the analysis of the narratives collected from the research participants through online one-to-one interviews and the online discussion forums. The analysis identifies how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is manifested in the research sample of personal narratives; the focus is on the participants' attitudes towards their own international mobility in the pursuit of work, represented through the narrative of their own life story. The personal narratives are critically examined following the theory of narrative analysis, particularly the approaches to deconstruction and intertextuality.

In accordance with the vocabulary used in this dissertation, the term transnational professional refers to those individuals who continuously relocate internationally in the pursuit of work, which is referred to as a nomadic lifestyle. Following ethical considerations, the research participants and their respective narrative are here referred to by using a coding system defined by the researcher (see Table 1, section 3.2.3.2). The code protects the identity of the participants, and provides information regarding the method used to collect their narratives: those gathered via the online discussion forum have an additional letter 'F' that stands for 'forum'. The grammar has been corrected in the extracts from the narratives presented in this section.

4.9 Global mobility as a marker for identity construction

A common feature among the personal narratives is to depict a division between a category of professionals who have lived and worked outside their country of origin and a wider category that includes all other individuals who lack such a kind of 'international experience': "I feel very different than the people I know or meet that have not spent long periods of time outside the US" (P2). For the purposes of this analysis, the concept of 'the mobile' is used to refer to individuals who continuously relocate internationally in the pursuit of work, whereas 'the sedentary' is used as an oppositional concept to represent individuals who are geographically stable in terms of remaining in a given locality for long periods of time. In the narratives, the figure of the mobile individual is broadly represented as a distinctive class that is discursively disassociated from the sedentary using mobility as the frame of reference: "there are not many people like us" (P1).

The distinction made between the mobile and the sedentary generally imbues the former with a marked sense of elitism or superiority on the basis of personal attributes or characteristics that are thought to be gained as a consequence of their experience living and working abroad: "I think people who travel a lot and have lived in different places just develop an extra skill for openness, flexibility, getting around more easily in the world" (FP10). The value of global mobility is thus measured against the image of the sedentary as portrayed in the narratives: "we like to think of ourselves of being perhaps more flexible than the average person, more willing to take risks and perhaps more willing to engage in more cultures than most people" (P9). As a narrative element, individual global mobility represents a consonant element that establishes a hierarchy in the duality mobile-sedentary, incorporated as a marker for the narrator's identity construction. For instance, in the next extract, the participant refers to global mobility as a personal ability that simultaneously distinguishes the narrator from the sedentary and establishes a form of status in the narrative:

> "[Being a transnational professional] is not for everyone and I don't expect
> it to be -if anyone could do it, I would not feel so special! In truth, that is
> probably one of my motivations. I don't want to be like everyone else.
> Living in a new country, or changing countries regularly, makes sure that I
> always feel different in a positive way." (P2)

In the extract global mobility is depicted as a lifestyle that is somewhat exclusive to those individuals who are able and willing to pursue it ('it is not for everyone'; 'not anyone can do');

the narrator discursively creates a class of transnational individuals which members, such as herself, are 'special' and 'different' from the traditional sedentary individual. These feelings of being special and different are provided by the participant as a motivation for pursuing a nomadic lifestyle that sets her apart from her counterparts. On this view, global mobility is a natural form of life for individuals who are or feel 'different' to what is considered as the ordinary and normal: "out of necessity expats have a different mentality. Or maybe they become expats because of their different way of thinking" (FP7). This extract can be understood as the participant's perceived need to adopt a particular attitude or 'mentality' when relocating to a different country; a view that to some extent draws on the contemporary discourse of nomadism which uses mobility as indicating individuals' metaphorical 'deterritorialization' from established intellectual systems (Braidotti, 1994; Deleuze and Guattari, 2004; Maffesoli, 1997; Sloterdijk, 2013).

The discourse of individual global mobility as a frame of reference for the participants in constructing their narratives can be considered following the ideas put forward by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). In these terms, transnational professionals represent 'the great ones' in the hierarchy of the narratives as they possess greater knowledge and experience than the sedentary, who are 'the small ones': "the sad thing that draws a line between us and most other professionals who have not expatriated before, is that they do not understand our drive and will to share experiences [..] we find them very narrow minded" (FP15). In this extract, the class of the mobile professional is discursively differentiated from the sedentary, who are referred to as 'narrow minded' as they are 'unable to understand' the former, which is a 'sad thing' because the sedentary 'miss out' from the knowledge and experience the mobile possess. In a similar manner, another participant refers to the subjective distance global mobility establishes between her and her family who represent the sedentary counterpart:

> "They don't understand why I'm doing it […] I mean take my brother, he lives in the same town as my parents […] I don't think he understands what I'm doing […] and I don't need him to, it's something that I choose, and something that I like, but it's something that is very different to what they value and appreciate, that's just how it is." (P3)

In the extract, feelings of being misunderstood are a kind of 'heroic indifference' ('I don't need him to') that somewhat 'liberates' the mobile from set conventions that shape sedentary life. This is a representation of the participant's conscious intention to construct a narrative consonant with her feelings of self-management over her nomadic lifestyle, which is

manifested by making attribution to personal motives ('something that I choose'). The positive emphasis the participants often place on their feelings of control over their nomadic lifestyle stresses the idea that individuals are responsible for their own success or failure; a condition that is rendered desirable by drawing upon the principles of 'autonomy', 'flexibility' and 'entrepreneurial virtues' from the perspective of the ideology of neoliberal capitalism (Bauman, 2000; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Harvey, 2006). For instance, in the next extract, being self-sufficient and self-motivated are used to depict the narrator's liberation from 'bureaucratic nonsense', which in new capitalism is considered as a positive condition in comparison to previous stages of capitalism that valued the paternalistic role of organizations over the individuals' professional development: "expats are indeed far more self-sufficient, self-motivated, decision makers and abhor bureaucratic nonsense […] This has come about from the nature of the expat adventurousness" (FP11). Reference to a sense of 'adventure' endows the narrator with a 'heroic status' in that he has the innate ability and desire to surpass rigid systems that may hinder his drive to seek new experiences. Similarly, another participant draws on the contemporary discourse of individual global mobility in the portrayal of the supposedly freedom to move of professionals in modern society as a personal ability, a view that can be related to the extended metaphor of the 'borderless world' put forward by Ohmae (2005):

> "I don't believe that there are real boundaries anymore; the boundaries between countries are just for political reasons, to say, ok this is Germany, this is the area, but from a professional perspective I do believe that people can work wherever they want to, if they want to, if they want to make it happen." (P1)

Global mobility as a frame of reference for the construction of personal narratives draws on the duality global-local from the perspective of neoliberal ideology, which pervasively privileges the global over the local as evident in the sample of corporate texts. In the extract above, the narrator is represented as a 'global worker' in that he is able to choose to work 'wherever he wants to'; traditional geopolitical boundaries, in this extract, are not for the privileged mobile elite. In the next extract the participant makes direct reference to the 'flat world' metaphor popularized by Friedman (2006) to render positive his own 'global' status as a professional:

"I think it is seen as part of the reality of this world today, you know, it is flat, I mean you have to be global if you are going to have a career in the global environment of the 21st century, you have to be that kind of person who is not tied to [place]." (P9)

The discourse of the global is incorporated as a consonant narrative element to sustain the narrator's self-representation as a 'global person', in terms of his detachment from place as a negative association with the discourse of the local. However, the global discourse creates dissonance in the extract because it expresses a necessity for the participant to change ('you have to be that kind of person'); in other words, the narrator has no choice but to become a 'global employee' who is detached from his national origin and own local culture in order to pursue work opportunities independently of their geographical location. This view encompasses the ideology of neoliberalism in that the narrator feels he has to emphasise every aspect of the self that could be an advantage to capitalism, including his career and his detachment from national origins. In the narratives, reference to the individuals' detachment from place primarily constitutes a consonant element because it supports the participants' intentions to depict global mobility as a desirable marker for identity construction; however, to become a 'global person' may be seen as a negative consequence for the transnational professional who no longer has the traditional frame of reference of sedentary life (i.e. feelings of national identity): "I think I just call myself global citizen […] because that's for most people who don't really know where they are, where they belong" (P10).

4.10 The 'heroic status' of the mobile

There is a shared assumption among the narratives that global mobility in the context of work involves a particular set of personal rewards and financial gains; this assumption draws on traditional associations of the expatriate with notions of 'luxury, leisure or moral decline abroad' (Fechter, 2007, p. 3). Such a conception of the figure of the expatriate is taken for granted by the participants in the sense that it is not only intended to reflect their own circumstances, but it is also attributed to all other transnational professionals, and by extension, it encompasses how the participants believe others perceive them: "expats are always seen as 'the rich' compared to [the local community]" (FP13). Some of the negative connotations the participants attribute to the term expatriate draw on the perceived 'imperialist' aspect involved in their actions as was the case of the 'original' colonial

expatriates from the Western world: "expats that fail are self-imposing, hell bent on driving their culture down the throats of the host country" (FP15). In this narrative the participant makes reference to famous figures of history as 'examples' of expatriates: "one of the first expat activities that failed its objectives was probably King Richard the Lion Heart and his Crusade to the Holy Land" (FP15). This narrative character is compared to 'Mother Theresa', Gandhi' and 'Jesus' who he describes as "expats that have succeeded to the honour of humanity" (FP15). These characters are opposed in the narrative according to the portrayal of the supposedly traditional attitudes of mobile professionals against what the participant believes is the right attitude 'to make a successful expat': "understand and respect the local culture, do not try and force your culture down anybody's throat" (FP15).

In a study of the expatriate discourse in the life of transnational professionals, Fechter (2007) argues that the traditional relationship made between past colonials and contemporary expatriates has become the popular iconic image of the latter 'leisurely sipping one's gin and tonic' which draws on particular representations in the literature of the British colonials (p. 2). This image is found in one of the narratives as a positive element to describe the participant's idyllic desire to be "sipping margaritas on a sunny beach at Barbados or Jamaica" (FP9). These assumptions are incorporated in the narratives mostly as marginal information in the sense that they do not become the focus in the texts; however, this narrative in particular (FP9) positions personal monetary gains as the central element to describe the 'real expatriate': "whores, soldiers of fortune and expats have one thing in common. They're all in for the money" (FP9). The narrative characters 'whores', 'soldiers of fortune' and 'expats' are related in the narrative on the basis that 'money' is the motive that drives their actions; the participant is comparing himself, as a transnational professional, with prototypal characters that involve negative connotations.

Moreover, the participant claims that money can buy 'know how', which in the narrative represents the saleable skill of the expatriate: "everyone has his or her price tag attached" (FP9). Although the participant focuses on the pursuit of economic rewards as the primary driver for professionals to pursue work opportunities abroad, he introduces other narrative elements to describe his own. Specifically, the participant makes reference to his sense of 'adventure', which may be seen to create dissonance in a narrative strongly focused on the monetary motif: "I became an expat for the adventure and money mainly, and yes for the kick of getting things done under extreme circumstances [...] I accepted jobs in places where

others would tend to stay away from" (FP9). The participant incorporates here the narrative character of the 'adventurer' as the means to justify his own quest for monetary rewards. Through this narrative character, the participant imbues his actions as a transnational professional with a 'heroic status', understood from the perspective of the hero as an adventurer proposed by Joseph Campbell in his famous book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, originally published in 1949. Campbell (2004) refers to the 'call to adventure' as the motive that drives the hero to embark on a mythological journey; the hero, 'summoned by destiny', sacrifices the sense of security of a familiar environment in order to explore the 'unknown'. This risky enterprise, filled with both 'treasure and danger', is completed by the hero's return having survived the 'impact of the world' (Campbell, 2004, p. 209). This representation of the hero as an adventurer is further elaborated in a different extract from the same narrative:

> "You know what a real professional expat is? Someone like me that opens the Saturday edition of his local newspaper in the foreseeable future, and reads an ad like 'we've created a breathable atmosphere on planet Mars, and are now looking for a bunch of pioneers to go live there and set up a society from ground level onwards...' and then steps on a space shuttle on Monday morning […] Expats are and always will be the first wave, I guess. People willing to take mega big commercial and, yes, social risks. And yes with a price tag attached to it." (FP9)

The consonant-self in this narrative is constructed by drawing on the attributes of opposite narrative characters; characters whose actions are motivated by money ('whores', 'soldier of fortune' and 'expats') and the 'adventurer' who is driven by novel and stimulating experiences (Kostera, 2012). The participant also draws on the prototypical character of 'the entrepreneur' to describe his view of 'real' transnational professionals in comparison to other mobile professionals. An entrepreneur can be described as someone who seeks radical transformations; someone who offers novelty and innovative solutions to existing orders and structures: "the work of an entrepreneur consists mainly in taking risky, innovative actions, in paving the way for others" (Kostera, 2012, p. 169). The imagined story in the above extract is used by the participant to reinforce his heroic status in the narrative; an entrepreneur who seeks adventures and challenges by living and working in countries to which he thinks other professionals would not go. The narrator is thus a 'pioneer' who will embark on dangerous travels, not only to attain money as the final reward of his venture, but also to contribute to the benefit of the future of humanity.

A similar archetypal story is found in the tale of 'the Argonauts', considered as a journey of romance and adventure that has the idea of individual geographical displacement at the centre of the plot. Apollonius' poem *Argonautica*, dated in the 3rd century BC, narrates the adventures and misfortunes of Jason and the Argonauts, a name that derives from the *Argo*, the ship in which the crew travels, in their quest to retrieve the 'Golden Fleece' from the remote land of Colchis (Rieu, 1971). The journey of the Argonauts is one of exploration that takes the personages far from their homeland; this plot can be related, for example, to the extract above in that the narrator's predisposition to travel (ready to 'step on a space shuttle') and to take risks ('commercial and social') presumably symbolises the Golden Fleece he retrieves from his 'voyage', and which he believes is of value to others ('set up a society from ground level onwards').

In a recent publication called *The New Argonauts* by AnnaLee Saxenian (2006), the poem of *Argonautica* is alluded to as a metaphorical representation of contemporary entrepreneurial ventures across geopolitical borders: "Like the Greeks who sailed with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece, the new Argonauts undertake the risky but economically rewarding project of starting companies far from established centers of skill and technology" (p. 3). Saxenian (2006) refers to skilled professionals who travel 'back and forth' between their country of origin and Silicon Valley in the United States of America as example of a new kind of migration; these individuals are described as 'pioneers' of the transformations occurring in international economic markets. Following Saxenian's (2006) text, the Golden Fleece in the original story of the Argonauts is a symbolic representation of the knowledge and technical skills individuals are able to acquire in today's society by working or studying in foreign countries ('brain drain'), and which they bring back to their country of origin ('brain circulation') as potential assets for the development of new corporate ventures and local economic growth.

In a different narrative the figure of the 'mercenary' is introduced to depict personal monetary gains as the drive for the transnational professional; this is a consonant narrative character used to represent global mobility as the means to an end: "expats are mercenary in that they work anywhere, for anyone and normally for large sums of money" (FP15). From a similar perspective, the term 'industrial gypsy' (FP12) is used by another participant to describe the kind of mobility in the work context; the unifying feature among these archetypal characters (gypsy, mercenary, whore, soldier of fortune, expatriate) is that the function of

their actions is purely to satisfy personal goals and ambitions. In the next extract, for example, the figure of the 'gypsy' is as a consonant element that sustains the image of the narrator as an adventurer driven by a constant desire to seek 'change':

> "Industrial gypsies are driven by restlessness. Always looking for a professional challenge which is accompanied by the intercultural aspects. After a while you get bored by what you do and where you are and so you start looking for the next opportunity - if possible in another country. An industrial gypsy tries to combine the amenities of a globetrotter with his professional career." (FP12)

As incorporated in the extract, the narrative character 'industrial gypsy' is consonant with traditional representations of gypsies which refer to individuals who share a way of life and have similar occupations with no cultural distinction (Belton, 2005; Clébert, 1970; Mayall, 1988); however, the participant directly associates the figure of the gypsy to the figure of the 'globetrotter', which draws on the archetypes wanderer and adventurer. The participant's description of 'industrial gypsy' can be related to the notion of the 'global nomad' as identified in the texts by the consultancy firms; although the extract uses the narrative character gypsy and not that of the nomad, the latter is present as a discursive element in the indirect references to the 'restless' and 'multicultural' characteristics attributed of the transnational professional ('always looking for a professional challenge which is accompanied by the intercultural aspects'). The notion of change, in particular, is presented by the consultancy firms as a feature of the modern global nomad in the corporate context; however, the expression of feelings of 'boredom' is a dissonant element in the above narrative because it represents the participant's admission that the drive to relocate internationally is motivated by boredom, rather than planned as part of rational life project that 'combines the amenities of a globetrotter with the professional career'.

The archetype of the adventurer is mobilized in a similar manner in some of the participants' narratives to bring into focus the moral intentions of their actions as transnational professionals, thus marginalizing the economic stimuli that they assume are involved. For example, in the extract below, the participant attempts to justify his international mobility in the context of work by making reference to his profound desire (in his 'soul') to 'explore' beyond the margins of ordinary environments ('behind the facade'):

"The people who really love being expats, or being not just expats for being international, there is a certain amount of adventure in their souls, a certain amount of exploration, or wanting to see, what's down the alley, what's behind the facade for the tourists, and that is me." (P9)

The rhetorical expressions of 'down the alley' and 'behind the facade of tourists' are used by the participant to portray the narrator as an 'explorer'; a self-representation that is consonant with the other narratives in that the narrator pursues a form of life that is fundamentally different to that of the sedentary. As a narrative element, the figure of the tourist is used by the participant to self-portray as an ideal cosmopolitan who seeks 'contrasts rather than uniformity' (Hannerz, 1996, p. 103). However, the opposition between the prototypal characters of tourist and explorer as mobilized in the narrative can also be considered as the participant's attitude to place and its local culture as aspects that can be self-regulated; in other words, the narrator is represented for his ability to 'pick' those elements from the host culture that 'suit' him (Hannerz, 1996). In a different part of the narrative, the participant discursively compares his portrayed condition as an explorer and adventurer against the mobility of other professionals:

"I know guys who went for a year or two they just wanted to get a punch in their tickets to say they had some international experience; it was very few people who wanted and who were passionate about travelling and exploring as I was and just as few of my friends were." (P9)

The metaphor 'a punch in the ticket' is used by the participant to contrast the seemingly banal mobility of some professionals, who only travel to get a stamp on their passports, against the idea of his natural predisposition to relocate internationally. From this perspective, global mobility is represented as a valued element in the work context; however, according to the extract above, individuals seek international experience to fulfil a requirement as part of their professional career rather than as an opportunity for self-growth, in the sense of being intended to fulfil an inner desire, as the narrator claims. The idea that individuals relocate internationally only 'to get a punch in their tickets' can be related to the narrative characters of the 'whore', 'soldier of fortune' and 'mercenary' discussed above, in that their actions are driven by seemingly selfish interests and not motivated by noble intentions as is the case of the archetypal character of the adventurer. A romanticized portrayal of travel is commonly used in this narrative by making attribution to emotions; for instance, as shown in the next extract, the participant recounts a childhood memory with the intention to embellish his story. The participant describes his 'daydreaming' about other countries during his youth and

his early interest in reading travel literature, which is perhaps the source of the narrative archetypes from which the participants consciously or unconsciously draws upon to depict himself as having a 'natural' predisposition towards international travel:

> "I grew up with a passion for reading and learning, probably that more than anything else ignited a desire in me to see the world, you know, and I constantly read about other countries. My favourite thing to do, even today, was to lie down in the evening and look up at the moon and thinking about what it looks from where I'm laying right now versus what it looked when I was laying in Amsterdam, or laying in Japan, or Singapore. Just a little thing I do, but, when I was a little boy I used to lie down on my backyard and wonder what it would look like if I were laying in England or in Japan." (P9)

The incorporation of imagination and fantasy in this extract can be understood as the portrayal of international mobility as the materialization of 'a dream'. Similarly, another participant refers to his childhood as the origins of his desire to travel internationally: "to me my biggest dream when I was young was to move, explore around the world" (P10). The exploration motif as part of the archetypal adventurer is rationalized by the participant in terms of his working life; for example, in the next extract the participant draws from discourses found in the corporate domain as a frame of reference to measure the value of his international experience:

> "I think the big difference when you are working overseas is that it really opens up your mind, especially coming from a smaller economy to a bigger economy, you get much more skilled [...] the good think about it, it's you get to know a lot of people from different parts of the world, so you also build up your network quite well [...] so I think international experience is quite important, otherwise you stay attached to your local market." (P10)

This participant seeks to construct a consonant narrative by justifying his own transnational relocations through the value of personal growth, which in this extract is about becoming 'open minded' and 'more skilled' and creating international networks as opportunities for future mobility, thus avoiding being 'attached' to a 'local market' which opposes the principles of flexibility and detachment from place promoted by neoliberal ideology. The narrator draws on the neoliberal discourse of individual global mobility to describe his attitude towards his own transnational relocations as the means to 'discover' something, in the sense of acquiring new knowledge and experiences that otherwise could not be attained; in particular, the narrator claims that by working in different countries he is able to learn about distant markets

('opens his mind') in order to benefit his working life. To describe this situation, the narrator uses a vocabulary that draws on the context of economic markets (i.e. 'smaller-bigger economy', 'networks', 'market') in ways in which he self-represents as a sort or 'enterprise-unit', using Foucault's (2008) term; specifically, the narrator refers to being 'attached to a local market' to illustrate his relationship with the place in which he lives and works.

The aspect of 'culture' is incorporated in some of the narratives as part of the participants' self-development: "I feel I'm more fluent culturally, that is, I know what's normal and what's not normal in different cultures" (P11). The idea of culture in these narratives mostly refers to the participants' acquisition of particular experiences and knowledge that are thought to facilitate their working relationships: "it's more an emotional intelligence […] being emotionally aware of how others are feeling, and know how we communicate with other people" (P4). The notion of 'emotional intelligence' as presented in the narrative refers to the knowledge and skills the participant believes to acquire regarding the culture of others within the corporate environment; in other words, such knowledge and skills are not about the local culture of the host locality, but about professionals in the workplace who are of different national origins, as the next extract shows:

> "I could have been in the UK and it would have been the same because there are about sixty different nationalities just in the headquarters […] it's not like I'm learning about Swiss people while I'm in Switzerland […] you learn how the Swedes are different to British people or how the working culture is different." (P4)

The term 'emotional intelligence' in this context draws on the corporate discourse of 'cultural intelligence', which is mobilized in the literature of career as a personal ability to 'reshape' thinking and behaviour in order to facilitate working relationships among individuals of different national origins (Thomas and Inkson, 2004). According to career theory, emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence are 'tools' for individuals to improve their 'awareness' in their dealings with unfamiliar situations (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011, p. 189). Such a discourse is articulated in the texts by the consultancy firms as 'essential knowledge' that professionals acquire through international experience and which is allegedly highly valuable in modern corporations; this view infiltrates the narratives through the assumption that global mobility is an opportunity for self-development: "being in all these cultures, in all the different countries, makes you a more valuable employee" (P4). In this extract the narrator self-presents as a sort of commodity or corporate asset in the sense that he, as an individual,

becomes 'more valuable' according to a form of status in the work environment (which values global mobility and 'cultural intelligence'). In other words, the narrator assumes the value of his international experience as a 'human capital' that is not separated from him but that is part of him (Foucault, 2008), thus increasing the perceived 'worth of himself' in the context of work. On this view, if international experience is the means for professionals to acquire more value in the workplace, it may be the case that continuous transnational relocations translate into more corporate benefits or rewards.

A different participant also depicts individual global mobility as a form of value in the corporate context: "[expatriates] are necessary to the well-being of large organizations. They help to spread the global essence of the working world" (FP15). The narrator draws upon the archetypal hero to describe how his actions in the world of work 'help' others ('the well-being of the organizations') and contribute to the common good ('to spread the Global essence'). The 'global essence' in the world of work presumably means the knowledge and skills individuals ('expatriates') acquire by living and working abroad and which they transfer or 'spread' to others in the workplace for the benefit of the organization, thus resulting 'valuable' for himself and to others; in terms of the archetypal hero, this 'lesson' the narrator learns helps him "to save the world and to help fellow human beings" (Kostera, 2012, p. 10). The extract also draws on the contemporary discourse of 'global employee' as expressed in the sample of corporate texts; in these terms, the expression 'the global essence' refers to the set of 'unique' skills attributed to transnational professionals or global nomads, such as 'multicultural identity' and 'cultural intelligence' thought to be gained through international experience. These 'global employees' are said to be able to transcend their own local culture, supporting the spreading of standardized and unifying attitudes and ways of being within the organization and across different countries in ways in which result beneficial for corporate interests ('well-being').

4.11 The life of the transnational professional represented as a 'journey'

The view of international experience as the means to become a 'global person' is represented in some of the narratives through the aforementioned duality local-global; in particular, the participants refer to their desire 'to go out and see the world' (P3) as the personal motive for

adopting a nomadic lifestyle. The portrayal of 'the world' in the narratives constitutes a Romantic archetype that refers to the individuals' transcendence of the traditional boundaries of the parochial, bourgeois environment in which they live ('the local'). For example, a participant represents global mobility as a sort of liberation from subjective boundaries and limiting conditions associated with the local: "I felt I was geographically kind of stuck [...] not seeing with my eyes new things and not meeting new people that think differently, I was missing out on that" (P11). This representation of global motility can be seen as an epic journey of exploration that draws on the archetypal plot of the *Odyssey* (Gabriel, 2003b). The *Odyssey*, believed to be dated in the 8th century BC, constitutes one of two major poems attributed to Homer (1980); it narrates the return to home of Odysseus, its protagonist character, after the ten years of absence that followed the defeat of the Trojans which is the plot of the first poem, the *Iliad* (Gabriel, 2003b). The *Odyssey* is primarily seen as a journey driven by the nostalgia for 'home' that for Odysseus is both the land of Ithaca and the return to his throne and to his wife; in the *Odyssey*, as well as in later representations and associations in the literature, the heroic image of Odysseus is based on a series of stories that recount the dangers, adventures and discoveries that fill his trajectory or journey (Gabriel, 2003b).

The participants' international relocations in the pursuit of work are generally described in the narratives as 'intentional' mobility; that is to say, the original motivation to change locations is ascribed to the narrator rather than to external agency: "it's a decision, it's a lifestyle, and it's not better or worse than any other, it's simply another way to live" (P7). In this extract, the participant renders her narrative consonant with her intentions to self-represent as in control over her nomadic lifestyle; however, there are some comments that describe her transnational mobility as a consequence of corporate demands, hence opposing the overall sense of the narrative. For instance, in a different extract from the same narrative, the participant places the responsibility of her transnational relocations on the organization for which she works: "I sold them my life, you could say, I sold them my soul for a while" (P7). The participant draws on the Faustian myth of selling one's soul to the devil to describe a twofold view of the life of the mobile professional; from a 'pact with the devil' (i.e. the organization) the participant gains the ability to be mobile which is perceived to generate personal 'rewards', such as "the opportunity to grow professionally" (P7). Following the Faustian myth, the devil eventually claims a payback from the pact; in the case of this narrative the participant makes reference to the 'sacrifices' involved in the life of the transnational

professional: "everybody sees what they invest in, what is the capital invested in life; the capital I have invested is not to have a stable romantic relationship, so it's one thing for another" (P7). This extract is consonant self-narration as the participant portrays her nomadic lifestyle as a rational project in which professional goals are achieved at the expense of personal objectives; however, dissonance occurs as the participant perceives that such an exchange can potentially represent a 'failure' in her life:

> "I don't want to sacrifice that side of my life, to say that I'm a successful
> person and I have lived in 50 countries of the world, for me, to do that,
> and to do it alone, being alone for doing that, for me, that doesn't worth
> it, for me that would be a failure." (P7)

References in the narratives to the sacrifices in the private sphere of the participants' life are mostly associated with the difficulties of maintaining stable relationships (i.e. romantic relationships) due to their highly mobile lifestyle: "you can't do your life, you can't have kids, you can't have a family" (P12). To a certain extent, these 'sacrifices' (P7) or 'trade-offs' (P2) in the life of the transnational professional are consonant with the archetype of the hero as an adventurer, in that the narrator is continuously challenged during his journey (Kostera, 2012); however, contrary to the prototypical epic plot in which the protagonist ultimately finds gratification, the nomadic lifestyle provokes contradictory feelings for the participants, as the next extract exemplifies:

> "I have been 'feeding' the professional part of me, the part that want to
> see and conquer the world. But the part of me that wants to be close to
> my family and friends […] has been suffering. So being abroad as a single
> is very rewarding, but there is also a price." (P3)

In this extract, the consonant-self, portrayed through the heroic intentions of the narrator to 'see and conquer the world', is deconstructed and the dissonant-self is presented in the inner 'split' manifested in the comment 'I have been feeding the professional part of me'. The narrator is thus represented as a divided self in the sense that one side has achieved success at the expense of the other: "for me it has only been half a life; only half of me was 100% happy" (P3). A 'true hero' would not have this conflict because the sacrifice of leaving home to embark on a journey 'to conquer the world', in this case the participant's nomadic lifestyle, only serves to enrich the protagonist and results in knowledge that is valuable to others (Campbell, 2004; Kostera, 2012).

The perception of mobility as a personal asset that is gained through a sort of exchange in the corporate context is common in the narratives; although the participants make attribution to personal motives as the driver to become internationally mobile, such mobility is said to be achieved via the corporation for which they work in the sense that the latter directs and supports the participants' transnational relocations. For instance, a contradictory view is identified in a different narrative as the participant claims that travelling is a 'choice' of lifestyle shaped by corporate interests: "we chose to travel, we chose to live abroad […] and because they move me, they literally move me, I'm pretty sure I have it much better than many people" (P13). In the extract 'we' refers to the participant and his spouse and 'they' refers to the corporation for which he works; the comment 'to have it much better than many people' refers to the level of organizational support the participant receives in comparison to his counterparts who lack such support. The narrative characters of the 'spouse' and 'the organization' are articulated to construct a consonant self-narrative, in the sense that central elements or aspects in the narrator's life are rationalized to sustain his intentions of pursuing a nomadic lifestyle.

Another participant makes contradictory references to organization control over her transnational relocations: "I am waiting for that same global business head to tell me where he needs me […] and of course, if he needs me somewhere else I will be likely go" (P2). This participant refers to her nomadic lifestyle as 'a pleasant surprise', meaning that she perceives her global mobility as a consequence of a series of corporate decisions about her career development, rather than a purposely sought course of action. However, the comment 'a pleasant surprise' constitutes a dissonant element that challenges the view of international mobility as a structured career path, which constitutes the consonant-self intended by the narrator: "all of my moves have been career-driven" (P2). In other words, the participant's international mobility is incorporated in the narrative as something unexpected or not entirely part of her career-project which she uses as reference to organize her life. Moreover, the participant says that her global mobility serves as the means to satisfy a personal desire to travel: "it feeds my wanderlust" (P2); which may be intended as a self-justification of being 'nomadic', but that can also be considered as a dissonant element in a narrative that otherwise can be seen as consonant, because 'to wander' opposes the notion of 'direction' in a life driven by career-related goals.

The 'accidental' element recurs in another narrative to explain the participant's adoption of a nomadic lifestyle; it constitutes a dissonant element as it is immediately justified through references to personal intentions: "I didn't actually look for jobs […] but since the opportunity fell on my lap, I thought I might just as well apply […] I like traveling for work, get to experience different countries […] it just seemed very exciting and fun" (P4). The narrative is rendered consonant by making reference to positive feelings ('exciting and fun'), thus shifting the emphasis from the accidental element to personal agency; more specifically, the notion of 'travelling for work', which is a career objective, is justified by the idea of 'experiencing different countries', which is a personal desire.

Another participant expresses similar contradictory feelings regarding her nomadic lifestyle: "I suspected it might happen; I knew I wanted to see the world but I didn't think I would keep doing it for ten years" (P8). In consonant self-narration the participant draws on the archetypal adventurer to describe the motives of her actions, that is, an innate desire 'to see the world' ('I suspected it might happen'); however, dissonance occurs as the narrator portrays the continuity of her mobility as accidental or unplanned ('I didn't think I would keep doing it for ten years'). Moreover, in the first section of the extract, international mobility is presented as a kind of 'requirement' or as something that it was 'meant to happen' in the life of the participant. From this perspective, it can be argued that the narrator draws on the contemporary discourse of corporate global mobility, which depicts international travel as a desirable form of action in the professional context; however, this view is contradicted in the second section of the extract as the narrator portrays her mobility as somewhat directed by external circumstances rather than by personal agency (the narrator 'did not know' that her initial desire to travel would result in more, almost undesired, mobility). International travel, therefore, can be considered as an assumption in the narratives in the sense that it is not questioned, but presented as a personal need or desire in the life of the participants who, as discuses above, depict their professional career as the means to satisfy such a need. For example, a different participant depicts the origin of her nomadic lifestyle as a sort of 'journey' on which she embarks following a desire that seems 'superior' or external to the self, almost as if the narrator was 'summoned by destiny' (Campbell, 2004):

> "when I got the offer to move […] almost instinctively new that I had to take it, I mean I was terrified initially, but I also knew that it would open a new life for me, and I also knew that I when I left home I will never go back." (P6)

The idea of 'a new life' is a consonant element because the narrator, as 'the adventurer' in the story, seeks experiences that are new and different in comparison to the ordinary life of the sedentary; the narrator's 'instinct' is to leave the safety and familiar environment of her 'home' to become a transnational professional ('the journey'). The negative feeling of 'being terrified' is also consonant with the archetype of the adventurer because it serves to depict global mobility as a risky enterprise; similarly, in other narratives the experience of relocating internationally is described as 'jumping into the void' (P14) and as a 'stressful experience' (P11) that the narrator has no choice but to confront. However, in the previous extract (P6), the sentiment of never being able to return home ('I will never go back') is a dissonant element that contradicts the narrator's self-representation as an adventurer; specifically, the participant seems to feel almost 'cursed' to wander, which can be understood as an undesired consequence of the Faustian pact in the sense discussed above (in exchange for the ability to become globally mobile the participant is destined to live away from home).

A related archetypal element is found in the legend of *The Flying Dutchman* according to which a sea captain who, in his quest for self-enrichment, is doomed to sail eternally; condemned by the devil to never bring his vessel to harbour (Pelzer, 2004). The myth of *The Flying Dutchman* is considered to represent discontent with modernity and the loss of stable frames of reference for the individuals' sense of identity; the story symbolises society 'moving away' from the order provided by traditional ways of thinking and established cultural structures, resulting in the individuals' loss of a 'harbour to which anchor their system of meaning' (Pelzer, 2004, p. 143). In the case of the extract above (P6), the expressed intention to become internationally mobile in the pursuit of 'a new life' is opposed by dissonant feelings of being 'eternally castaway' from what the participant considers as 'home'. Considered as a discourse, the view of international mobility as 'a new life' can be related to the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization; 'the new', as incorporated in the narrative, draws on the corporate discourse of the global in terms of the challenges and opportunities that are allegedly available to those individuals who are willing to embrace the demands of globalization (Friedman, 2006; Ohmae, 2005). The duality of this narrative element is 'the old life' of the fixed and the local ('home') which the narrator (P6) claims to leave behind as she follows her 'instinct' to relocate abroad in the pursuit of work; although this view is not directly expressed in the narrative, it is present as an assumption of sedentariness as the less attractive alternative for the participant in a context that demands for 'global working' (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011).

4.12 Personal transformation as a narrative element

Transformation as a narrative element is often used as part of the archetype of the hero as an adventurer, in the sense that the participants' 'journey' ultimately supports his or her learning and growth (Campbell, 2008; Kostera, 2012). For instance, in the next extract, the transformational motif is incorporated as a positive element that sustains the narrator's desire to seek 'change' as the means for self-development: "I like to do something different, just to keep changing, because I think you always learn something new […] for me [to relocate internationally] was to develop myself" (P5). However, the transformational element becomes a dissonant element in a different part of the same narrative: "you learn a lot of things about yourself […] you have to find some way to grow […] but in the end it is a bit confusing, because you are always moving around" (P5). For a 'true' adventurer personal transformations generated by their continuous mobility would not create conflicts ('it is a bit confusing'), but rather contribute to the character's self-growth in the story.

The portrayal of transnational relocations as events and experiences from which the transnational professional learns something new and which results in new ways of looking at the world, can be related to the texts by the consultancy firms in their claims that international experience are 'learning opportunities' for individuals in their pursuit of professional opportunities (Transition Dynamics, 2012). In the extract below, for example, the narrator describes her transnational relocations in similar terms:

> "It is like learning to swim as a child. Once you swim, new water ways and horizons open, and where horizons open, there are so many more opportunities that you would not have discovered without taking that first plunge." (FP3)

In the extract, international travel is represented as an experience that generates more mobility, because the rhetorical view of the world as a 'sea of opportunities' can only be achieved by being constantly on the move; from this perspective, it can be argued that the participant became nomadic as a consequence of her first international relocation, which may or may not have been her original intention ('after the first plunge'). Another participant describes international travel as a sort of 'drug' to which individuals become addicted to: "I think travelling around and working in different places is like a drug, some people do it for some time and then stop, other people cannot find out how to stop" (FP8). The drug

metaphor used to describe the nomadic lifestyle of professionals is both a consonant and a dissonant element in the extract; the desire to pursue continuous global mobility becomes a need that somewhat 'controls' or dominates the individuals' life. On this view, the participants seem to become 'victims' of their own international experience in the sense that being a transnational professional results in the need for more mobility; like a 'drug' that is difficult to resist: "I feel like I need to take the opportunities that I can while I can" (P8).

Another participant uses the metaphor of 'life as a book' to describe her international mobility as an intentional or pre-planned 'transformation' from being sedentary to assuming a nomadic lifestyle: "for me this is simply like to open a book, or to have opened a book, and I want to read it until the end, and this book is simply the world" (P7). However, in a different section of the same narrative, the participant expresses contradictory feelings regarding such a transformation: "I would like to see how life on the other side is; perhaps it will be too boring and continue in this twister of changes" (P7). This extract reflects the changes in the way the participant perceives the life of the sedentary ('life on the other side') as a consequence of her nomadic lifestyle. In consonant self-narration global mobility is indirectly depicted as stimulating by referring to sedentariness as 'boring', but the expression 'twister of changes' creates dissonance in the narrative because it gives the impression that the participant's life is 'turbulent' and 'chaotic', rather than a self-structured project in which she can regulate the extent of her own mobility ('to open a book and read it until the end'). Additionally, the narrator's 'transformation' (from sedentarism to nomadism) is a dissonant element because repetitive international mobility is depicted as a negative condition that opposes the participant's values of stability and continuity in the context of work:

> "It was a bit difficult for me to break that paradigm inside my head, that
> everything can change, perhaps it sounds very dramatic, but if you want
> to survive, or if you want to stay emotionally stable in this job you have to
> accept that everything is going to change and very fast, and you have to
> make that change yours, otherwise it's going to affect you too much." (P7)

The expression 'to break the paradigm inside my head' indirectly portrays global mobility as a condition that is somewhat 'forced' upon the participant, who feels the need to adopt 'change' as part of her life in order to 'survive' (referring to the narrator's 'emotional stability' as she continuously relocate internationally in the pursuit of work). However, drawing on the archetype of the hero, the 'survival' of the narrator may be seen as part of the 'risky venture' that is her life as a transnational professional; the participant's conscious use of 'drama' as a

narrative element is thus a strategy to render her story consonant with her intention to self-represent as in control of her nomadic lifestyle (which she claims is 'a personal choice'). Nonetheless, the manifestation of the transformational motif as a dissonant element recurs in a different part of the same narrative as the participant describes her nomadic lifestyle as shaped by the corporate context: "they have converted me into a little soldier who is conditioned to accept those changes and who sees them as normal […] for others doing this is not seen as a symbol of strength but as a symbol of total instability" (P7). The 'corporate soldier' is a dissonant narrative character because it emphasises the participant's inability to manage all aspects of her nomadic lifestyle; being a corporate solider positions the narrator under the organization's control, in the sense that the narrator's actions are intended to respond to external interests rather than to her own motivations and desires. Moreover, according to the participant, her nomadic lifestyle ('the twister of changes') is considered as 'normal' from the standpoint of a particular class of mobile professionals, whereas it confronts the view of those individuals who are on the 'outside'; the character 'soldier' is thus used to symbolise the narrator as being 'conditioned' by the organization for which she works to adopt standardized attitudes within the setting of modern corporations.

Other narrative elements are identified in different narratives to express contradictory feelings regarding how the participants believe are perceived by individuals who lead a sedentary lifestyle: "they actually see you like an element, as a weird bug" (P15); "I think what you suppose to do is settle down, you don't suppose to keep moving on like this, that is something weird about you" (P8). In these extracts the participants depict a sort of self-transformation that results from their nomadic lifestyle, presented as a metaphorical 'metamorphosis' of the self into a 'weird bug' in comparison to the 'normal' sedentary individual. This use of self-transformation as a narrative element relates to *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka originally published in 1915; in Kafka's story, the protagonist character Gregor Samsa, who is a traveling salesman, wakes up one ordinary morning and realises that he has mutated into an insect-like creature. Gregor assumes his 'metamorphosis' and attempts to carry out the everyday tasks of his working life; however, he encounters rejection from his family who see him as the different other into which he has become. *The Metamorphosis* is considered a critique or 'rebellion' against bourgeois society and the individuals' 'punishment' for it (Sokel, 2002, p. 17). In Kafka's story, the motif of self-transformation is a central narrative element that symbolises the individuals' self-alienation that results from their struggle in meeting demands from contemporary society; this struggle

is expressed through Gregor's conscious feelings of self-estrangement that are finally visible to others as his body is also transformed (Sokel, 2002, p. 219).

In the case of the personal narratives, the conscious or intentional transformation from being a traditional sedentary individual into being a transnational professional generates contradictory feelings; specifically, the participants' sense of elitism generated by feelings of 'being different' in comparison to their sedentary counterparts, a perception that is sustained in the context of work, translates into negative emotions as the participants consider their mobility from the standpoint of the private sphere. As in Kafka's story, the participants' assume their 'metamorphosis' as a new way of being: "being different becomes a normal feeling" (P3), although they think that their family 'hope' that they will eventually return 'back to normal', which is to say, to lead a traditional sedentary life: "my mum considers this as one of the phases that I have to go through, and soon it will be over and I will come back and be normal" (P3); "my family hope that this is a stage, that I am going to settle and have a calmer life" (P6).

The element of self-transformation is also identified in some of the narratives through the expression 'reinventing the self', depicted as a personal ability to adapt to the particularities of each new environment as the participants relocate from one country to another: "it's starting from the beginning each time, it's to reinvent yourself each time" (P7). This portrayal of 'reinventing of the self' draws on the prototypical metamorphosis originally found in the *Odyssey*'s character Proteus who is able to change shape at will; Proteus, as the archetype of self-transformation, is also found in Ovid's famous epic poem *Metamorphoses* which tells the story of characters who use their shape-shifter's skills to evade misfortune or to cope with challenging situations (Fantham, 2004). In the participants' narratives the metamorphosis motif is a consonant element incorporated to represent the narrators' virtues of self-transformation in their quest for new professional opportunities: "I think it is very important to be able to constantly reinvent myself and go where the opportunities are" (P7). However, such a 'shape-shifter skill' becomes a dissonant element in certain narratives as it is represented as a sort of 'chore' in the life of the participants: "It is not so enjoyable when you have moved so much […] to adapt to the different countries and to the people, it gets to a point where you get tired" (P16). Expressions of feelings of 'tiredness' towards continuous mobility, which are common in the narratives, generally refer to the participants' need to 'start from zero' (P14; FP4) each time they relocate internationally, in the sense of adapting to

the culture, the language and the community of the new host locality. The portrayal of the life of the transnational professional as repetitive or 'cyclic' creates dissonance in the narratives because it contradicts the sense of excitement and adventure associated with international travel. Moreover, drawing on the Kafkaesque metamorphosis, the participants feel that the continuous 'reinventing of the self' results in self-alienation, as the next extract exemplifies:

> "The first few times you move is difficult, but something happens, something changes, it's like something breaks [...] or it's lost; then it's very easy, it doesn't matter anymore, to leave it all behind once, and again, and again." (P7)

In her narrative, this participant rationalizes her 'metamorphosis' by adopting it as a new form of life: "the changes are the only constant that one has in this lifestyle, the changes are your routine, so that's why they continue to be sought" (P7). The counterpart of this perception is that sedentariness becomes an undesired condition: "when one has been living this type of life, the worst fear that one confronts is to stay stuck, stay stuck in a job that you don't like, stay stuck in a place" (P7). In this extract, global mobility ('this type of life') conveys a sense of security because it is depicted as something 'liberating' (the narrator feels free from attachments to a given place or job); at the same time, global mobility can be seen as a necessity for the narrator because her 'fear' of being sedentary may result in more mobility. This negative portrayal of sedentariness is also present in the discursive association of global mobility with success; in the next extract, for example, the narrator seems to be 'doomed' to continuously relocate internationally in order to be 'successful': "if I stay in the same place I will no longer be so successful; it will end the drive that has taken me to carry on progressing, acquiring more prestige professionally, acquiring new perspectives" (P7). The participant rationalizes the 'need' for continuous mobility in the work context by adopting feelings of detachment from place and individuals: "one tries not to get too attached to the place or to the people, because then it will be more difficult to carry on making those steps" (P7) (the 'steps' refer to the changes involved in the participant's life as a transnational professional). A level of struggle is thus identified in the opposition between the desire to acquire the prestige and success perceived to be gained in the corporate context, and the narrator's 'natural' inclination ('one tries not to') to establish close social relations with the local community and the place in which she temporarily lives.

In a different narrative, the transformation in the participant's attitudes or ways of being as a consequence of her nomadic lifestyle also constitutes a contradictory element because it is

represented to generate more mobility: "you always kind of want to be somewhere else, and that's a big a problem for me […] it's a terrible condition that I have to get over" (P8). Reference to the desire to be internationally mobile as a 'terrible condition' portrays the narrator as a sort of 'victim' of such a condition; as in the myth of *The Flying Dutchman*, the participant is somewhat 'condemned' to wander eternally because the need to always be somewhere else means that no place will ever become a 'home' in which to settle. In this circumstance, the fear of being 'stuck' in a sedentary lifestyle becomes the risk of never settling again; in the next extract, for example, the participant recounts the story of her 'failed' attempt to settle back in her country of origin:

> "I really tried to, I even bought a lot of furniture and I got a nice flat, and I really wanted to try, but I remember one day I was […] with my mum, and my mum and my sister were talking about something and I just burst into tears and said I have no idea what you or anyone else is talking about, I just had no idea […] and it was really weird […] it's hard to relate to people at home because I felt I've been, you know, travelling the world and doing all this stuff, and my friends at home got married and had kids, always lived in the same place, and we didn't have much to talk about anymore, and it was really quite strange." (P8)

The Kafkaesque metamorphosis motif recurs in the extract as the narrator feels self-alienated from her family and friends following personal transformations in her attitudes towards traditional sedentary values ('my friends at home got married and had kids, always lived in the same place') which she claims that result from her nomadic lifestyle ('travelling the world'). The extract includes positive elements that are consonant with the aforementioned hierarchal duality mobile-sedentary by representing the narrator's transnational relocations as opportunities to 'see the world' and to live new experiences. However, the transformational motif contradicts the overall sense of the extract as it is manifested through negative feelings for the participant ('burst into tears', 'it's hard to relate', 'really weird' and 'quite strange').

4.13 Attitudes towards the figure of the nomad

Most of the participants use the figure of the expatriate as a narrative element to differentiate between their own international mobility and the mobility of the nomad; the disassociation is broadly established through references to personal attitudes towards global

mobility, rather than to the level or kind of mobility, for example. In the next extract, for instance, the expatriate and the nomad are opposed on the basis of the participant's idea of 'home': "the difference between an expat and a nomad is that the first still retains allegiance, customs, a sense of identity and a longing to return to a particular country; whereas for the latter home is everywhere and nowhere" (FP5). Here the narrator draws on the contemporary discourse of nomadism to describe the condition of homelessness popularly attributed to the nomad, serving as a marker to compare with the typical conception of the expatriate who preserves strong affiliations with a given country. The participant introduces de character of the global nomad in a different part of his narrative to render homelessness a positive characteristic in the individuals' life: "In my mind a global nomad is someone who has embraced the world as his/her home and does not identify with a specific national culture" (FP5). In this extract the participant draws on the contemporary discourse of cosmopolitanism to present the 'condition of homelessness' of the traditional nomad as an 'openness to the world', which is assumed as a positive attribute through the association with the idea of home ('embracing the world as home').

The idea of 'the world as home' recurs in a different narrative, but in this case the participant rejects the figure of the nomad as a narrative character to describe his own mobility: "I am uncertain 'nomad' captures the right connotation/image of us who have spread our backyards beyond those of most. Rather, I'd suggest it's a matter of individual perception of one's backyard" (FP21). The narrator uses his view of international travel as a differential element from the nomad, who is indirectly presented as lacking of national identity; specifically, the narrator self-portrays as having strong affiliations to his country of origin which he symbolises with the image of the 'backyard' (he preserves his sense of 'being at home' independently of the country to which he relocates). Moreover, the backyard metaphor conveys a sense of cosmopolitanism in that the narrator seems to 'bring the world inwards' his 'home', resembling the idea of 'embracing the world as home' (despite national and socio-cultural differences, for instance): "I see it as a type of open-minded view with expanded (backyard) borders" (FP21). As represented in these extracts, the narrator's 'open minded view' does not compromise his sense of home, which, as mentioned above, is traditionally used in descriptions of the nomad; such a 'cosmopolitan attitude' is contradicted by the backyard metaphor because the narrator discursively favours his own local culture and national identity ('home') over other nations and cultures (his 'backyard').

The condition of 'homelessness' attributed to the figure of the nomad is commonly associated in the narratives with the idea of never-ending mobility: "I don't see myself spinning around the world all my life, I like this life of adventure, but I guess that at some point one wants to settle down somewhere […] not to be so gypsy" (P14). In this case, the narrator uses the character 'gypsy' as a strategy of differentiation on the basis of negative associations of endless mobility. The extract presents global mobility ('spinning around the world') as a consonant element that sustains the narrator's status as an adventurer ('I like this life of adventure'); however, global mobility becomes a dissonant element as the narrator considers it as a permanent condition ('at some point one wants to settle down somewhere'). The idea of 'returning' to sedentary life is generally presented in the narratives as a part of the life of the transnational professional; therefore, global mobility as a form of life is embedded with a sense of temporariness that opposes the view of endless mobility associated with nomadism ('not to be so gypsy').

The expression of the desire to return to the life of the sedentary is consonant with the archetypal hero as an adventurer, because the journey of exploration and conquest culminates as the protagonist returns home; for example, the journey of Odysseus, as originally represented in Homer's poem the *Odyssey*, can be considered as a 'journey with a task' because the function of the actions of the protagonist are driven by his intention to return home (Gabriel, 2003b). In the participants' narratives, the 'journey' (the narrator's repetitive transnational relocations to 'explore' and 'conquer' the world) is underlined by the need of belonging which is often used to disassociate the actions of the narrator from the notion of 'wandering'. From this perspective, the 'longing for home' that drives Odysseus' tempestuous journey can be understood as the participants' desire to eventually return to a 'normal life' from the standpoint of the sedentary; that is to say, to 'settled down' in a given locality and to maintain meaningful long-term relationships.

The negative portrayal of individual global mobility as never-ending mobility draws on the archetype of the 'wanderer', a dissonant element that opposes traditional sedentary values of returning 'home' (a notion that the participants associate with 'feeling normal', being settled, or their homeland). The character of the 'wanderer' is a Romantic archetype of liberation; for instance, in the story *From the life of a Good-for-Nothing* by Joseph von Eichendorff, originally published in 1826, the wanderer motif is mobilized as a representation of the ideal of freedom from traditional intellectual and artistic models (Cusack, 2008, p. 222). *The life of a Good-for-*

Nothing is the story of a young man who wanders away from his family home to seek his fortune 'out into the world'; he wanders from place to place towards Italy in search of what is for him exciting and different in comparison to the ordinary context of his native village in Germany. The protagonist in Eichendorff's story feels an overwhelming desire to 'be on the go', always daydreaming of future travels; even when he thinks to finally find happiness during his journey, he continues to contemplate the idea of wandering somewhere else in search of the ideal place. To travel, therefore, represents for the protagonist the fantasy of being 'somewhere else' despite having realised that everyday life in distant places can also be monotonous and ordinary once the excitement provoked by the new and unfamiliar has passed. Eichendorff's lyrical narrative is considered as a critique of the confines of 'sedentary' bourgeois society represented through the figure of the wanderer; it proclaims the individuals' liberty 'to be spontaneous' and 'to seek pleasure' in face of the pervasive rationality and uniformity that characterized modernity (Cusack, 2008, p. 226). The notion of 'becoming a wanderer' is thus turned into an ideal that clashes with the values of previous forms of capitalism, but that relates to the principles advocated through the contemporary discourse of global nomadism; specifically, the Romantic tradition of the wanderer motif highlights the individualizing tendency of society as a separation from fixed systems and established intellectual models, which according to Cusack (2008) are represented in German literature as a positive form of 'homelessness' in the sense of being 'indifferent to natural origins' (p. 225).

In the narratives the wanderer motif is consciously or subconsciously associated with the figure of the nomad; the basis of the association between these narrative characters is that their mobility is driven by a desire to seek 'the next exciting place to go' (P2), which as discussed above, is used as a consonant element to describe, for instance, positive feelings of 'wanderlust' and as a dissonant element that represents a 'terrible condition' or a 'drug'. In the next extract, to be 'always on the move' is associated with the nomads' disengagement from local communities and local cultures; considered as a negative attitude of the wanderer as it represents their 'dissatisfaction' with the places in which they live. To be 'less like a nomad', in this case, means to feel 'connected' with others in the host locality:

> "A nomad is for me someone who never really settles into their current home, and perhaps is a bit disconnected from the world because of it. I have some of the nomad tendencies; I do get wanderlust every couple of years […] I think I connect better with where I live […] To me a nomad

sounds like someone who is continually dissatisfied with where they are, whereas I am generally happy, I am just looking for new challenges." (P2)

In the extract, the wanderer motif is present as a positive element to represent the narrator's desire to seek 'exciting places' ('nomad tendencies', 'wanderlust'). Nonetheless, the narrator disassociates herself from the nomad/wanderer by making reference to her relationship or positive 'connection' with the local community in which she temporary lives and works. This is used to portray the narrator's mobility as driven by a desire to 'change places' in her quest for 'new challenges', which draws on the archetypes of the adventurer and entrepreneur, rather than as a consequence of 'being continually dissatisfied' with any given place as a feature that the narrator attributes to the nomad (which draws on the prototypical wanderer). In the next extract, the wanderer motif is manifested in the participant's accounts of her transnational relocations (presented as a series of 'lives') driven by her desire to find 'something different':

"After four years I think I want to move, or I need to move, or there is something better, or there is something different […] I'm slowly realising that different countries will bring different things to you, there is never probably going to be a perfect place; like in El Salvador I loved the people, the weather […] Taiwan was good for the professional development and for the money, [Germany] has been truly wonderful, really amazing […] suddenly I'm looking at my life and thinking, ok, does this mean that three years from now I'm going to look again and think that I need to move? But why? What is it that I'm looking for that I haven't found in three or four lives already? And if I change again, what is that place probably going to bring to me? One of the things that was important to me, now that I'm going on record, is that I felt I needed to be able to socialize, and to be able to date, that was not possible in Taiwan, at all." (P6)

As in Eichendorff's story, the narrator in the extract above believes that other countries may be better and different in a positive way than her current location; thus to change and to move is at the same time a desire and a necessity for her ('I want to move, or I need to move'). The narrator justifies this view by making reference to the benefits she perceives derive from each of the places to which she has relocated in the pursuit of work. This view can be related to Florida's (2008) metaphor of the world as 'a menu of places', according to which places are considered as providers of a particular 'bundle of goods and services' that can satisfy changing personal and professional interests. For instance, the narrator describes her transnational relocation from Germany to Taiwan as motivated by her need to 'socialize', or more specifically, 'to date'; through the use of the expression 'to go on record' the narrator 'officially' expresses this need to justify her own mobility. The idea of 'going on record' can

also be seen as the narrator's own recognition of such a need, but which she represents as a fault of the place (Taiwan), rather than as an aspect of the self, so she moves in order to find a location that will provide her with the opportunity 'to date'.

Moreover, the extract above (P6) reflects the 'episodic thinking' of the narrator ('after four years', 'three years from now') which renders her life as a succession of 'projects' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007) on which she organizes her entire life. Continuous global mobility is thus articulated as a consonant narrative element that sustains the narrator's nomadic lifestyle, depicted a self-structured life plan to find places that 'best suit her' ('what is that place probably going to bring to me?'). However, the narrative becomes dissonant as the narrator questions her own mobility ('why?'); in particular, the expression 'what is it that I'm looking for' is contradictory because it reflects the negative emotion of being 'doomed' to wander eternally in the quest for a non-existent ideal place ('there is never probably going to be a perfect place'). The portrayal of life as a continuous search for the ideal place recurs in a different narrative; as in the previous example, the narrator's attitude to place is expressed in terms of what she believes to gain from them, almost as 'commodities' in her life:

> "I think the word 'nomad' is a term someone like me can easily relate to; although I do feel that at some point we will eventually settle down in one place, when we have finally found something that 'tick all the boxes' for us, both personally and professionally. I think generally people move in search of that 'thing' which they believe will help them achieve the fulfilment of their hopes and dreams." (P1)

According to this extract, repetitive international relocation is the means for the narrator to search for the fulfilment of happiness ('hopes and dreams'); this view draws on the prototypical wanderer in the sense that no locality satisfies the narrator, thus she continues to wander seeking for a place that will 'tick all the boxes'. The initial positive association the narrator establishes with the figure of the nomad is quickly negated by making reference to her intentions to 'settled down at some point'; the discursive disassociation is established by comparing the narrator's desire of being rooted with the endless wandering of the nomad. This is a representation of dissonant self-narration because the narrator questions her nomadic lifestyle as a form of life for the future. In a similar manner, in the extract below the participant makes reference to the 'typical expatriate' (someone who always returns 'home') to disassociate herself from the nomad who is indirectly portrayed as a negative marker for self-identity:

> "I think it sounds a little bit more exotic to be an expat [than to be called a nomad] because there are so many people who want to be that […] also, an expat comes back, they go out and they come back, so I think it fits better to my norms, about having to go back." (P3)

The prototypical character of the expatriate is used in this extract as a consonant element by associating it with the narrator's values and norms ('having to go back'); the narrator is indirectly portraying the continuous mobility of the nomad as an undesired condition because it opposes the traditional sedentary values of spatial stability. However, the extract is contradictory because the life of the narrator as a transnational professional is depicted as 'exotic'; a mode of life that she says is sought after by individuals because it is perceived as 'special' or fundamentally different to the ordinary and familiar life of the sedentary, which, drawing on the archetype of the wanderer, is popularly used in contemporary representations of the nomad.

The idea of returning to the life of the sedentary is used in the narratives to render the nomadic lifestyle as a temporary stage or condition that is part of a self-planned life path. The representations of control over the nomadic lifestyle can be understood as an 'entrepreneurial virtue' attributed to the narrator; for instance, in the next extract, the narrator is depicted as an entrepreneur who organizes different aspects in his own life for the pursuit of global mobility: "we don't have a house but we have six apartments that we rent, we have structured our lives in a way that we can have a nomadic life until the day we decide to settle" (P14). The nomadic lifestyle is described as a pre-defined and temporary phase in the life story of the narrator ('until the day we decide to settle'). Therefore, nomadism as a form of life is a consonant element in the narrative, but only to represent continuous mobility as a temporary condition that can be controlled or managed by the narrator; in the extract above, the 'wanderer' motif is first introduced as a positive element to represent the narrator's intended course of action ('have a nomadic life'), but it becomes a dissonant element as the narrator considers continuous mobility from the perspective of his 'future-self' (who wants to 'settle').

In a similar manner, in a different narrative nomadism is associated with aimless wandering, incorporated as a negative element on the basis that it opposes the sense of purpose the narrator attributes to her mobility:

> "A nomad for me would be someone that hasn't got a destination, or a goal […] I wouldn't consider myself a nomad under this definition, because even if I don't have a permanent home, I have a purpose, I have something, an engine that drives me to change from one place to another […] I have a sense of why I am doing it, why I am achieving it." (P7)

The narrator's conscious intention to disassociate herself from the figure of the nomad is used to support her self-representation as a goal-oriented individual, who is driven by well-defined objectives rather than by a banal desire to change locations, as it is commonly associated with the prototypical representations of the nomad and the wanderer. In other words, to wander without a 'goal' or a 'destination' is negatively represented in the extract, so the narrator uses this idea as a differential element to support her actions in the story in ways in which are consonant with her intentions. However, the narrative becomes dissonant as the narrator evaluates her nomadic condition through the comment 'even if I don't have a permanent home', meaning that the narrator believes that by not having a stable place of residency she is challenging what she perceives is a social 'norm' (i.e. to have a permanent home).

4.14 The 'bubble' of the nomadic lifestyle as a narrative element

International mobility within the corporate context is presented in the narratives as a sort of protective environment for the participants; in particular, the metaphor of the 'bubble' is used to describe the life of the transnational professional. As a narrative element, the 'expat bubble' is generally associated with negative connotations concerning the participants' relationships with the local communities of the host countries in which they temporarily live and work; as the next extract exemplifies:

> "Living in the expat bubble means that you arrange your life to isolate yourself as much as possible from the country you are in, and re-create the country you left behind. In the expat bubble you don't learn the local language, make local friends, explore local foods or locations beyond the common touristy ones […] You go home as frequently as possible, keep your social ties there, stay more involved in home news vs that of where you are, and generally behave as if you are on vacation rather than living in your new country. It's less scary but you do miss out on a lot; for example, in Canada I had no local friends outside the office, I was mostly alone on weekends, I didn't explore the country beyond business trips […] Looking back, it was a real shame." (P2)

In this extract the narrator 'looks back' at past events in her life story and evaluates her previous actions in ways in which are consonant with her intentions to represent the bubble of the transnational professional as a negative element in her narrative. Through the expression 'it was a real shame' the narrator regrets or disapproves her past attitude towards the host locality in a previous transnational relocation; the narrator is thus indirectly presenting the assumption that to 'integrate' with the local community and to adopt the local culture ('learn the local language, make local friends, explore local foods or locations') would have been a more desirable form of behaviour. This assumption draws on the discourse of corporate cosmopolitanism in a manner that resembles the sample of corporate texts; for instance, as claimed by Bloch and Whiteley (2011, p. 56), the transnational professional should 'live like a local' and avoid being 'closeted in the expat community'. In the extract above, the expression 'it's less scary' endows the narrator with a 'heroic status' because, according to her descriptions, 'living in the expat bubble' protects individuals from the local context and hampers their opportunity to experience the new environment (a 'hero' will face the dangers of the outside world and learn from their experiences).

In a different narrative the bubble metaphor is also used to describe the narrator's lifestyle as a transnational professional: "I move, I arrive and I leave places in a relative bubble" (P13). The bubble motif in the extract refers to the organizational support the participant perceives in terms of relocation costs and practical aspects such as visas and housing arrangements; in other words, the 'expat bubble' is used in the narrative to represent the narrator's extension of the securities and comforts of the life of the sedentary across geographical borders: "I arrive in a place where they are waiting for me, a job is waiting for, a home where to live is waiting for me, a community is waiting for me" (P13). Such a protective habitat in which the narrator claims to move creates dissonance in the narrative as it contradicts the cosmopolitan attitude of the narrator manifested in a different part of the text: "[home is] the world […] we are not attached to anywhere" (P13). In this circumstance, the participant's relationship with 'the world' is shaped and regulated by the corporate context, and the frame of reference for his sense of identity is no longer a given country, but rather the 'bubble' of the transnational professional to which he belongs. Or as another participant puts it: "the only sense of community that one has many times is not belonging to a community; the expats are the community of those who haven't got a community" (P7).

Another negative connotation attributed to the prototypical image of the expatriate is the perceived status of 'outsider' in the local community: "if you do not show any sign of being a foreigner the local community will accept you, but if you started living your same life as back home you will always be ignored" (FP22). This extract draws on the transformative attribute of Proteus (Homer, 1980) in that the narrator claims to change according to the context of the local community in which he lives in order to be 'accepted' by them, which is the intended action of the narrator; self-transformation, therefore, is a consonant element in the narrative because it supports the positive idea of 'immersing' in the local culture of a given environment (not showing 'any sign of being a foreigner'). This perspective relates to the sample of corporate texts regarding the forms of behaviour that the authors claim to be required by transnational professionals if they are to successfully 'immerse' in the local community; however, this alleged immersion refers to particular elements from the host culture that are 'picked' for the fulfilment of corporate interests, rather than for the benefit of the individual (Hannerz, 1996).

Similarly, another participant describes how he behaves in ways in which he believes are consonant with the customs of the host locality with the intention to be seen less as an outsider and more as 'a local': "you try to go to the same places where local people go, you get to know the local routines, so you don't behave like a foreigner" (P10). This extract reflects the narrator's conscious intention to adopt particular attitudes and ways of being in order to 'mask' the outsider he actually is (i.e. not a local or native); 'being a foreigner' in a place, therefore, represents a negative condition for the participant so he chooses to 'ignore' his own national identity and local culture, although he does not question such actions. In a different part of the same narrative, the participant says that the process of 'settlement' in a new country can be supported by 'mixing with local people' and avoiding places 'where only foreigners hang around'; however, as a way of example, he says: "when I moved to [China], for instance, I mixed a lot with local colleagues, a lot of them were from Canada, the US, Europe, but they lived there long enough to become locals" (P10). In consonant self-narration the narrator expresses a cosmopolitan attitude through his desire to 'blend with the locals'; however, dissonance is created by the 'bubble' motif which is indirectly present in the comment regarding the 'locals' the narrator claims to 'mix' with, but who are also outsiders in the host community ('expatriates').

In a different narrative, the participant describes his 'transformation' to adapt to the local environment as a sort of 'display' in the eyes of the other, which, as Hannerz (1996, p. 104) argues, seems to turn cosmopolitanism into 'proteanism':

> "Yes I am an expatriate, but it's not a question of whether I am an expatriate, because I enjoy the old alleys of the city, I'm fed up with so much glass and steel […] when I go out you wouldn't know that I was an expatriate, you wouldn't know that I'm paid what I'm paid here, you wouldn't know that; I mean, I go out in a t-shirt, with torn jeans, with a rucksack, I don't do it intentionally, that's just how I dress when I'm off duty, as it were. There is a guy who I chat to, who is a little cobbler on the street who mends shoes, and he sits on a carpet and mends shoes, and I sit down and have a coffee with him, and it's quite a laugh actually." (P12)

In the extract, the participant uses a series of narrative elements to construct a self-representation that intends to differentiate himself from the traditional image of the expatriate, a narrative character introduced at the beginning of the extract, but quickly rejected by the narrator as an identity marker. The narrator makes reference to the assumed superior status of the 'typical expatriate' in comparison to the local community; this is present in the mentions of personal financial gains ('what I'm paid'), and in the descriptions of how the narrator says to dress when he is 'off duty' (in a t-shirt, with torn jeans, with a rucksack). According to the narrator, his self-transformation from an 'organization man' into a 'native' (Hannerz, 1996) is not 'intentional', which is consonant with the overall sense of the narrative that shifts the focus from the narrator's status of expatriate towards his cosmopolitan orientation. The narrator draws on the Romantic archetype of the explorer who temporarily abandons the comfort and luxuries of the corporate world ('glass and steel') and adventures into 'the old alleys of the city'; to illustrate this idea, the narrator provides the story of the 'little cobbler on the street' as part of his recounting of past events.

The metaphor 'glass and steel', used in the narrative to refer to the corporate world of which the participant is part, draws on Sloterdijk's (2013) reference to the 'Crystal Palace' as a representation of modern capitalist society whose 'interior' is completely controlled and manipulated by dominant elites. In this sense, the reference to 'glass and steel' in the extract above (P12) is used to represent the 'luxuries and commodities' in the life of the contemporary transnational professional as opposed to the 'undomesticated' world of the local (depicted in the cobbler story). The underlying social disparity in such a perspective is used as a consonant element in the narrative as the narrator is shown to transcend class

differences; this is discursively supported by rejecting the corporate world ('I'm fed up with so much glass and steel') and welcoming the disparities ('I go out in a t-shirt, with torn jeans, with a rucksack', 'I sit down and have a coffee with him').

Moreover, the narrative element of the cobbler story draws on the archetype of the 'vagabond' as the oppositional image of the transnational professional. This duality of characters, vagabond-expatriate, can be understood in terms of the relationship between the 'vagabond' and the 'tourist' as argued by Bauman (2000) in his critique of the insecurities individuals experience in modern society as a consequence of globalization. Bauman (2000) describes vagabonds as the 'alter ego' of tourists; tourists 'have a horror' of vagabonds because they represent what the tourists may become tomorrow if they fail to meet the fluctuating demands from today's 'society of consumers/travellers', as individuals "cannot be quite sure where do they stand at the moment and even less can be sure that their present standing will see the light of the next day" (p. 97). However, Bauman (2000) argues, if there were no vagabonds being a tourist would not be so enjoyable; the 'hardships' in the life of the tourist are endurable because vagabonds are a constant reminder of 'the alternative': "The worse is the plight of the vagabonds, the better it feels to be a tourist" (p. 98). From this perspective, the extract above (P12) can be considered as an expression of the narrator's attempt to temporarily 'be a vagabond' as a reminder of the alternative to his own lifestyle; feeling 'fed up' with the corporate world is thus one of the 'hardships' of the 'expatriate condition' that he nonetheless perpetuates for the comforts and luxuries it provides.

Some of the participants use words such as 'artificial' (P5; P7) and 'sterilised' (FP13) as negative elements to describe the life of the 'typical expatriate'; these representations are intended to enhance the narrators' 'cosmopolitan attitude', which, as mentioned above, is displayed as a willingness to explore the local culture in the host locality rather than living in the 'expat bubble'. However, dissonance is identified as the participants make reference to the temporary nature of their interactions with any given host community; for example, a participant presents her continuous mobility as a sort of 'learning experience' that changes her attitudes towards place: "you learn that if you are in a place that you don't like much it doesn't matter because you will move from there soon" (P7). The temporary nature of the transnational relocations in the life of the participant is used as a consonant element in this extract to support the narrator's self-representation of being free from attachments to place; specifically, for the narrator place 'does not matter' because she will eventually leave. In a

different part of the narrative the narrator reinforces her portrayal of this attitude by extending her feelings of detachment to her relations with individuals in the host community: "you learn to be kind of colder, you know that it's better not to get too attached [to the host community] because you are going to have to detach yourself very soon" (P7). The next extract is another example of the conditional relationship between the participants and place; in this case the narrator describes what he thinks is the 'true' nature of the transnational professional:

> "Ask any true expat and he or she will tell you not to get too involved with the country you are currently working in as it will never become 'home'. A long time ago I learned the hard way to have a 'Plan B' ready 24/7. I mean, to know when to get out if trouble starts or markets collapse."
> (FP9)

The extract is consonant with the narrator's intended self-representation of being in control over his nomadic lifestyle, represented through his ability to regulate his attitude towards the local community ('not to get too involved') and to manage his life as a self-structured project ('to have a 'Plan B' ready 24/7'). The extract is contradictory as it opposes the narrator's heroic status identified in a different part of his narrative (e.g. 'I accepted jobs in places where others would tend to stay away from'). In the extract above, the narrator 'knows where the exit is' (Hannerz, 1996, p. 104); he knows that as a transnational professional he is able to leave a place at will (which draws on the bubble motif). However, from the perspective of the prototypical hero, the ability to leave a place at will becomes the narrator's weakness because he moves on to a different place rather than to stay and cope with the adversities and 'dangers' he encounters ('trouble starts or markets collapse'). Moreover, dissonance is present in the extract in the expression 'it will never become home', because it portrays the narrator as somewhat 'doomed' to always feel as an outsider.

4.14.1 The role of language in the life of the transnational professional

The ability to speak English is mobilized in the narratives as a crucial element in the corporate context; specifically, the participants assume English as the 'lingua franca' (Tietze and Dick, 2009) of the transnational professional independently of their national origin and/or geographical location. This assumption, however, is not questioned by the participants but presented as part of their reality. For example, the participants who are non-native English

speakers feel that to learn the language was a sort of 'natural necessity' in their life: "my dad used to tell all the kids, if your English is not good you will never go anywhere in this world" (P1); "you have to speak English perfectly [in order to work in any multinational company]" (P15). Moreover, the significance of being able to speak English in the pursuit of professional opportunities abroad is assumed as 'a fact' by some of the participants: "no doubt, if I was not comfortable in English I would not have been able to make it" (P3); "as an expatriate, English is a must for me" (P14). For native English speakers the role of English is also represented as a core element, or rather a necessity, in their nomadic lifestyle, as this extract shows: "the biggest threat for me will be if I lost my job as an English speaker; it's quite hard to find another one" (P8). For this participant, the local language of the places in which she lives and works is rendered irrelevant because she relies on the use of English in the corporate context to move from one country to another.

As a narrative motif, the use of the English language is represented as part of the metaphorical bubble in which the transnational professional moves; therefore, the participants' references to the use of the English language to facilitate their 'integration' with the local community creates dissonance in their narratives because it reflects the conditional nature of their social relations: "I have been quite lucky except for Taiwan, where nobody speaks any kind of English" (P12). As mentioned above, in some of the narratives the 'local community' refers to those individuals in the host locality who also speak English: "most people in the region speak English, it's rather an international area" (P2). It can be argued that from the perspective of non-native speakers of English to learn the language is adopted as a prerequisite to join the class of the transnational professional, although it remains undisputed by the participants in their narratives.

Moreover, as represented in some of the narratives, the use of a foreign language (which may or may not be English) can provoke a subjective estrangement from others during social interactions. In the next extract, for example, the participant (Spanish native speaker) says that the use of English acts as a sort of 'filter' between herself and others: "when I'm speaking in English is like all the words are filtered, even in a discussion I don't get so passionate as much as I would in my own language, like if everything was softened" (P7). In a similar manner, a different participant (French native speaker) says that to speak German on a daily basis generates negative feelings for her: "everything is in German, I have to renounce my own culture […] to put it like in the background […] I don't recognise myself" (P5). To be able

to speak the local language would generally be a consonant element in the narratives because it opposes the expatriate who moves in a self-regulated 'bubble'; however, in the previous extract, the narrator feels that she has to 'renounce' her national origins in order to 'fit in' the local context. This extract brings back the metamorphosis motif in the sense that learning the local language is a sort of transformational consequence of the narrator's nomadic lifestyle; this transformation creates dissonance in the narrative because, as happens with Gregor Samsa in Kafka's story, it results in the narrator's self-alienation ('I don't recognise myself'). Similarly, in the extract that follows, the local language is associated with feelings of self-alienation, although in this case the latter is incorporated as the 'lesson' the narrator has learned from her international experience:

> "I spent so long in [China] not being able to communicate, that I now realise that I really adapted and modified my mind-set towards having people speak a language I don't speak around me […] if people are speaking around me and I can't follow the conversation or I don't want to, I've realised that based on what I learned in [China] I just sign off. Literally, my mind just shuts off and I move onto something else in my own mind, in [China] I didn't think that would be a skill or something that would come handy, but it really is." (P6)

The narrator refers to self-alienation as a personal 'skill' through which she is able to 'sign off' from the immediate social context when confronted with a language barrier; self-alienation, therefore, is intended as a positive element to sustain the narrator's ability to regulate her level of integration with the host locality. However, self-alienation can be considered as a contradictory element because such a 'portable skill' originated as a necessity in a rather negative situation ('I spent so long […] not being able to communicate'). Moreover, the narrator's conscious self-alienation from those individuals who do not speak English (her native language) means that her social relations with the host community in non-English speaking countries are greatly limited (e.g. her opportunities 'to date', as mentioned above). Nonetheless, the narrator transforms a negative condition into a 'practical skill' that contributes to the perpetuation of her nomadic lifestyle.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

The objective in this section is to identify how the discourse of corporate global nomadism is represented, whether in similar or contradictory ways, across the different set of texts that constitute the research's corpuses. This section merges the analysis of the corpus of corporate texts, which comprises the selected books by management gurus and popular writers on globalization and the corporate websites by consultancy firms, with the analysis of the sample of the participants' narratives collected though the interviews and the online discussion forums. The discussion combines the methodological approaches of critical discourse analysis with narrative analysis, tracing intertextual and interdiscursive connections across the texts while using key theoretical concepts as framework for the analysis; this is summarised in Table 3 (see section 5.5).

5.1 Individual global mobility as the 'state of greatness' in the world of work

The notion of 'state of greatness' as here understood follows the theoretical framework of the new spirit of capitalism proposed by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). According to the analysis of contemporary management texts carried out by the authors, the 'common superior principle' that dominates this genre of literature is 'activity'; activity establishes a 'form of status' according to which acts, things and individuals are judged and measured by the ability to generate 'projects'. In such an environment, the authors argue, the 'development of oneself' becomes the individuals' long-term personal plan as they take control over their own evolution so they are always involved in a project; always having something in mind for the future because the lack of activity is considered as a 'condition of smallness', which involves risks of exclusion or 'death' in a reticular universe (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 111). Some of the dominant discourses that Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) identify as part of the new spirit of capitalism are found in the research texts; namely, the discourses of mobility, flexibility, adaptability and availability as well as the underlying notion of activity. One way in which these discourses are incorporated across all the texts analysed in this research is through the neoliberal discourse of the global. The global discourse is mostly incorporated in the texts through references to detachment from place, fixed systems or ways of thinking, a detachment that is sought to provide individuals with a sense of liberation from limiting

environments and established borders, and to enable them to access opportunities that can potentially lead towards progress and success.

In the corpus of texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, the utopian message on which the authors construct their claims originates in the idea of the global as a teleology of the inevitable and indisputable reality of modern society (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004). For example, the prescription for individuals to 'go global' advocated by Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005) conveys a sense of freedom that is generally founded on the dissolution of boundaries defined by nation-sates as centres of politic and economic control; therefore, references to detachment from place involves the individuals' liberation from the local as a traditional frame of reference and the global as the source of equal opportunities. However, the utopia of going global has two aspects; whilst the global carries promises of freedom and progress, the authors claim that there is no alternative for individuals if they want to 'survive' the changes or 'forces' brought about by contemporary globalization.

In the case of the personal narratives, the global motif is widely incorporated through rhetorical expressions of the participants' desire 'to see the world'; this perspective involves changes in personal attitudes and forms of being that are offered as justifications for the participants' continuous mobility in the pursuit of work. As a narrative element, the desire 'to go global' is the causal connection to the narrators' self-transformation from being a sedentary individual to becoming a transnational professional. The participants rationalize their nomadic lifestyle as a sort of liberation from the limiting life of the spatially settled; this is often represented through the duality 'mobile-sedentary' used as a narrative element to disassociate the life of the narrator from the character of the sedentary, in other words, global mobility serves as a marker for identity construction. The sedentary is in the narratives the 'antithesis' of progress and success as their actions are associated with lack of advancement and the loss of opportunities. For the research participants to remain spatially fixed or 'stuck' in any given place is 'to miss out' on the new horizons that they believe 'the outside world' offers; a view that is depicted in the corporate texts as remaining in the margins of contemporary globalization (Florida, 2008; Friedman, 2006; Ohmae, 2005).

Individual global mobility represents a form of status in the narratives, according to which the narrator constructs a sort of class or elite that encompasses the mobile and segregates the

sedentary. The hierarchy in the duality 'mobile-sedentary', as established in the narratives, positions the mobile as somewhat superior to the sedentary on the basis of personal abilities and actions which are portrayed as desirable in contemporary society. Following the terminology advocated by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the mobile can be considered as 'the great one' in the narratives which renders the sedentary as 'the small one'; the assumptions that underline such a form of status is consonant with the ideology of neoliberal capitalism, in that sedentarism is negatively associated with ideas of 'inflexibility' and 'rootedness' that generally oppose the logic of activity. To be internationally mobile, in this sense, is represented as a valuable condition in the narratives because it enables the narrator to pursue new projects. For example, the narratives depict individual global mobility as a personal ability to transcend the life of the 'geographically stuck' and access 'the new'; this is expressed through references to 'the world' as a rhetorical element representing a 'new life' for the narrator in the quest for 'new opportunities' and 'new experiences'.

The idea of setting out into the 'outside world' in the personal narratives refers to the participants' relocation outside their country of origin; however, in a similar manner as identified in the corporate texts, the view of going global in the narratives refers not only to international travel, but also involves a particular representation of 'the local' that draws on the ideology of neoliberalism. In the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, for example, the global is rhetorically privileged over the local on the basis that the latter impedes success and economic growth for individuals and corporations. In these texts, the global is portrayed as a source of prosperity, whereas the local is associated with 'old paradigms' such as the paternalistic role of governments in controlling financial markets (Ohmae, 2005). Detachment from the local is thus often depicted as an imperative for individuals in the corporate texts, represented by a shift from the nation-state as a frame of reference for identity, to the imaged global community, or 'utopian collectivity' (Jameson, 2005) that promises 'equalizing opportunities' to all individuals independently of their national and cultural origins (Friedman, 2006).

In the personal narratives the notion of 'old paradigms' of thought is identified in the traditional values attributed to the life of the sedentary, which fundamentally opposes international mobility as a form of life. The duality global-local is used as a positive element in the narratives to embellish the narrators' motives for becoming a transnational professional; in particular, the global is portrayed as a personal aspiration to lead a lifestyle that is different

and even 'better' than that of the ordinary life of the sedentary, concerning economic and professional opportunities and the sense of stimulation involved in international travel. However, notions of fixity and rootedness traditionally associated with sedentarism are depicted in the narratives as a desired condition that provides a sense of belonging and the opportunity to establish meaningful relationships; values that the participants are said to require but which cannot be fulfilled due to their nomadic lifestyle, subsequently generating negative emotions. Therefore, it can be argued that although the narratives draw on the neoliberal discourse of individual global mobility inscribed in the corporate texts as the means to achieve professional success and personal growth, it encounters contradictions as the narrators describe their continuous international mobility as a form of life.

The texts by the consultancy firms can be positioned somewhere in between the utopian state of the global depicted in the corporate texts and the individuals' relations with the local community. The management gurus and popular globalization writers use the global discourse as a prescription for individuals to be mobile across allegedly weakened national borders and their respective social, cultural and political particularities; whereas, the consultancy firms claim to address these particularities of the local in ways in which the professionals are able to realise the ideals of freedom and opportunities, while contributing to the 'common good' by participating in the 'well-being' of organizations. For example, the claims made by Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005) in terms of which today's globalized society is depicted as free of geopolitical borders and cultural differences, are incorporated by the consultancy firms as assumptions on which they construct their services. Friedman (2006, p. 239), for example, speaks of the contemporary transformation of 'the walls, ceilings, and floors' that have traditionally structured the economic and political context in which individuals live and Ohmae (2005, p. 5) refers to the elimination of the 'unnecessary stage furniture' as the barriers that traditionally compartmentalize economic activity.

The consultancy firms draw on these metaphors to portray culture as a barrier among individuals; Transition Dynamics (2012), for instance, claims that the firm can support professionals to 'engage' with cultural differences in order to 'transform from walls of separation into bridges of connection'. This particular statement draws on management guru Kanter (2002) who presents 'cosmopolitans' as having the ability and the authority to 'destroy the walls' of traditional ways of thinking and frames of reference, and 'build bridges' that can connect locals to the world (p. 352). In the case of the personal narratives 'to feel connected

to the world' is presented as an 'optional' element in the life of the transnational professional, in the sense that the participants feel that they can regulate or manage their level of integration with the local community of the countries in which they temporarily live and work. From this perspective, the consultancy firms are placed in a position that serves to perpetuate the discourse of corporate global mobility through the alleged 'management' of socio-cultural differences that the professionals may encounter as they 'go global', potentially facilitating their physical and emotional transition from country to country in order to successfully complete work assignments.

The personal narratives are thus connected in the discursive dimension to the managerial and popular globalization texts and to the texts by the consultancy firms. The discourses on which the participants draw in constructing their narratives constitute the frame of reference that defines the value of other narrative elements that render the narrative consonant or dissonant. For instance, the underlying assumptions in the corporate discourse of individual global mobility render positive the participants' self-representation as part of 'the mobile elite'; therefore, the narrators seek to present the function of their actions consonant with the overall intention of their narratives, which is to discursively emphasise principles of change, adaptability and availability over ideas of fixity and rootedness attributed to the sedentary. However, such discourses and the hegemonic assumptions embedded in them also generate contradictions in the narratives that represent the participants' struggles in their attempt to follow a nomadic lifestyle. Under this circumstance, the 'condition of greatness' involved in the contemporary discourse of individual global mobility is a source of positive associations for the transnational professional, inasmuch it is considered from the perspective of the corporate context; considered from the perspective of the personal domain, however, the same discourse seems to result in the 'condition of smallness'.

5.2 Global nomadism as a corporate discourse

In broad terms, traditional nomadism is considered as an economic strategy for survival based on the regular mobility of individuals in the pursuit of opportunities that can support the subsistence of their community and the perpetuation of their lifestyle (Barfield, 1993; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998; Legrand, 2008). Nomadism as a lifestyle is thus sustained by the nomads' ability to be flexible and adaptable, changing locations without having to migrate

to a new region (Baker, 1978; Johnson, 1969; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998). As a discourse, nomadism is often represented in terms of its opposition to sedentary life, oversimplifying the differences between ancient forms of nomadism and the particularities of different nomadic communities (Cresswell, 1997; Legrand, 2008; Noyes, 2004; Pels, 1999; Stengers, 1997; Wood, 2005). Contemporary discursive representations of nomadism as a form of life have shifted from a traditionally negative portrayal of the nomad as a threat to the stability of sedentary societies, to positive and even glorified associations of freedom and opportunities (Clébert, 1970; Cresswell, 1997; Stengers, 1997). The discourse of nomadism is also used a source for metaphorical descriptions of physical displacement and relationships to place and home; for instance, in the literature concerned with the highly mobile professionals, this class of professionals are referred to as 'nomadic workers' (Meerwarth, 2008), 'global nomads' (D'Andrea, 2006) and 'knowledge nomads' (Pittinsky and Shih, 2004).

It can be argued that the discourse of going global as depicted in the sample of managerial and popular globalization texts draws on the contemporary discourse of global nomadism on the basis of its romanticized associations with people's liberation from fixed systems and traditional ways of thinking (Braidotti, 1994; Cresswell, 1997; Deleuze and Guattari, 2004; Maffesoli, 1997; Sloterdijk, 2013; Stengers, 1997). While the notion of nomadism is not directly incorporated in the sample of corporate texts, they draw on traditional nomadism through extended metaphors of flux, adaptability and boundary crossing, which value in modern society is measured against the traditional notions of solidity, fixity and rootedness that characterized previous forms of capitalism (Augé, 2012; Bauman, 2000; Cresswell, 1997; Deleuze and Félix Guattari, 2004). In a similar manner, the texts by the consultancy firms draw upon the contemporary discourse of nomadism to describe the set of attitudes and forms of behaviour required by professionals to facilitate their transition to a new country, and which generally focus on the individuals' subjective detachment from their local culture as they become 'global employees'. The notion of nomadism is directly incorporated in two of the texts by consultancy firms, which use the term 'global nomad' to refer to a particular class of modern professionals who as a consequence of their highly mobile lifestyle during their formative years are 'restless', 'highly adaptable' and 'change seekers'. Following this, 'global nomadism' can be considered as an emerging corporate discourse that serves to perpetuate neoliberal ideology, because it 'adjusts' the new spirit of capitalism by incorporating other dominant discourses that encompass contemporary social and politico-economic changes (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

In the personal narratives, the discourse of nomadism involves a mixture of positive and negative connotations in terms of the participants' continuous international mobility, and how such a level of mobility influences their attitudes towards place, culture and career. As a positive element, nomadism is implicitly identified in the hierarchal duality mobile-sedentary, through which the narrator disassociates him/herself from the figure of the sedentary on the basis that the former possesses a particular way of thinking that sets him/her apart from the latter –in the contemporary discourse of nomadism the notion of mobility is often associated with intellectual disengagement from set conventions and established thinking, which symbolise the sedentary state (Braidotti, 1994; Deleuze and Guattari , 2004; Maffesoli, 1997; Sloterdijk, 2013). When nomadism is directly incorporated in the narratives, it is negatively associated with aimless wandering and the condition of homelessness which the participants attribute to the figure of the nomad, features that are also consonant with traditional representations of the nomad in the literature (Barfield, 1993; Cressey, 1960; Johnson, 1969). These associations generate contradictions in narratives that use detachment from place and freedom to move as consonant elements, and which also draw on the contemporary discourse of nomadism. The figure of the nomad is thus mostly rejected as a reference for the participants' self-representation in the narratives, albeit they draw on romanticized characteristics attributed to traditional forms of nomadism in constructing consonant self-narratives.

To a certain extent, the value embedded in spatial and intellectual detachment from place relates to the claims identified in the corporate texts, in that global mobility in the world of work is depicted as supportive of the narrators' career development and economic gains; however this is mostly present in the participants' narratives as assumptions associated with the prototypical image of the expatriate. The life of the transnational professional, as portrayed in the narratives, involves personal rewards concerning professional status and financial benefits. These elements are generally marginalized in the narratives as they bring into focus different aspects associated with international travel in the corporate context, such as a sense of direction and an interest in other cultures, which are used as elements of differentiation between the narrator and the figure of the nomad. In some of the narratives, however, the economic stimuli in the life of the transnational professional are positioned as the primary motive for relocating internationally; specifically, the prototypal characters of 'gypsies', 'mercenaries', 'whores' and 'soldier of fortune' are used in these narratives as reference to construct the narrators' self-representation. These narratives incorporate other

elements, namely the sense of adventure and entrepreneurial virtues, which serve to mitigate the narrators' interest in the personal monetary gain involved with global mobility in the corporate context. Similarly, other narratives emphasise different objectives to counterbalance the monetary motif, such as the 'development of the self' in terms of personal abilities (e.g. flexibility and adaptability) on which the narrator draws to cope with the changing nature of their nomadic lifestyle.

Following this, it can be argued the discourse of corporate global nomadism encompasses a moral dimension that serves as justification for the choice of a lifestyle that opposes the traditional values of the sedentary; these justifications are represented and sustained through the heroic status attributed to the narrators, which is sought by drawing on the archetype of the hero as an adventurer and entrepreneur. The portrayal of the narrators as the heroes in their stories means that the participants' conscious intention is to depict their continuous global mobility in the pursuit of work as a desirable form of behaviour; at the same time, by drawing on prototypical epic plots, the narratives seek to portray global mobility as a self-structured life plan, rather than as a necessity imposed by demands from the corporate context. In this circumstance, the corporate discourse of individual global mobility underlies the narratives as an assumption that being a 'global person' is a valuable asset in the workplace; however, a level of resistance is identified in the narratives in conscious or subconscious expressions of negative feelings in the private sphere associated with the nomadic lifestyle.

In the personal narratives, the archetype of the hero as an adventurer is represented through the narrators' mobility away from 'home' in order to 'explore the world'; in particular, the narratives draw on the character Odysseus (Homer, 1980) to describe how, in becoming a transnational professional, the narrators leave the familiar life of the sedentary in the quest for new adventures. From this perspective, repetitive transnational relocations are depicted as a desirable and necessary 'journey' towards the 'unknown' in which the participants move away from their home country to pursue opportunities that they believe could not be attained otherwise. Following the claims in the corporate texts, the hero protagonist renounces the old paradigms of thoughts and embraces the opportunities of the new global (Friedman, 2006, Ohmae, 2005); however, it may be said that the 'heroic' individual in modern society becomes the 'victim' of the changes brought about by new capitalism, because to go global is the only alternative for individuals if they are to progress and succeed. This view may reveal the dual

structure of the discourse of corporate global nomadism; in one sense there is the feeling of freedom to be mobile, and in another sense there is no other choice but to be mobile if individuals want to be 'the great one'. To some extent, this view of the mobility of modern professionals can be traced to traditional discursive representations of nomadism; for example, in the writings by Arnold J. Toynbee (1954, p. 169) the nomadic lifestyle is said to convey a sense of 'superiority' over the sedentary on the basis that nomads are able to maintain their status by adapting their life; however, nomads pay the 'penalty' of becoming 'enslaved' by the environment they conquer as their mobility is dictated by climate changes.

References to the entrepreneurial virtues associated with the prototypical hero are incorporated in the narratives to sustain the view of the mobile professional as 'the great one' in relation to their sedentary counterparts; these virtues are used to describe the narrators as 'pioneers' who seek radical transformations that generate personal rewards at the same time that they result in benefits for the organization. In the narratives, these radical transformations are manifested as the knowledge and skills that are thought to be attained through international travel and which the participants' believe are valuable in the workplace; for example, to be readily able to change and to adapt to required demands from the corporate context. This assumption conveys the discourse of individual global mobility as depicted in the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, according to which the resources and skills that result in valuable assets for individuals and corporations are available to those who 'go global'. This view is used in the texts by the consultancy firms to sustain the claim that, if 'managed correctly', the professionals' international experience can contribute to the achievement of corporate goals; which is to say, it can potentially influence the individuals' employability. More specifically, the consultancy firms claim that to learn and to experience new things to support the professionals' intentions of self-enrichment and self-development can also contribute to the organizations' 'well-being'.

The understanding of international relocation as the means to acquire 'essential knowledge' as expressed in the narratives and in the corporate texts draws on the archetypal myth of the Argonauts (Rieu, 1971). In these terms, the competencies that individuals can allegedly develop by 'going global' are symbolised by the Golden Fleece the transnational professionals retrieve from their 'voyage'. For example, the consultancy firms refer to 'the cultural intelligence' professionals acquire during their work assignment abroad and that they metaphorically bring back to the organization for its future growth by using it in further

assignments or by sharing it with others. This particular view of culture is identified in the narratives through mentions of becoming 'fluent culturally' and developing 'emotional intelligence' as a result of the participants' nomadic lifestyle; notions that draw on the literature of career studies and which in general terms refer to the professionals' awareness and management of cultural differences with the purpose of facilitating working relationships (Dickmann and Baruch, 2011; Thomas and Inkson, 2004).

5.3 'Self-transformation' as a required ability for the transnational professional

The notions of change and adaptability associated with the discourse of global nomadism are represented in the personal narratives as a sort of personal transformation that refers to the narrators' transition from being a sedentary individual to being a globally mobile professional; in this respect, some of the narratives draw upon the Kafkaesque metamorphosis motif to illustrate the participants' perception of being 'out of the norm' or a 'weird bug' in the eyes of the sedentary. In a similar manner, the transformational element is articulated through the participants' idea that the nomadic lifestyle is the starting of 'a new life' that demands the 'reinvention of the self' each time they relocate internationally. In some instances the transformational element is consonant with the intention of the narratives as it draws on the archetype of the hero who assumes change as an opportunity to enrich the self through the acquisition of new skills or knowledge. However, personal transformations that result in the perpetuation of nomadism as a form of life in the future cause dissonance in relation to the overall intention of the narratives because they depict the narrators as somewhat 'condemned to wander forever'. Drawing on the legend of *The Flying Dutchman* (Pelzer, 2004), the narrators seem to be 'doomed' to wander forever almost as a 'punishment' for setting themselves apart from traditional sedentary life and their own local culture. This view is identified in the narratives in the participants' portrayal of their first transnational relocation as the starting of something 'new' ('a new life', 'opening a book', 'learning to swim'); the undesired consequence of which is that they may never be able to return to the life of the sedentary.

From this perspective, the ability to change and adapt according to demands from the nomadic lifestyle generates contradictory emotions for the participants, because the

transformations that are rewarded in the domain of work sometimes oppose values in the private sphere. These tensions are identified in the narratives as a kind of 'split' in the narrators' self as the professional-self is discursively dissociated from the family-self, in the sense that one side in the life of the transnational professional benefits at the expense of the other. The participants' feel that their family life 'suffers' as a consequence of the nomadic lifestyle because it negatively impacts on their sense of belonging; whereas in the professional context the participants believe they are satisfying their desire for success and prestige. The split element is also present in the narratives in the participants' 'metamorphosis' into a transnational professional; in the domain of work being a 'global employee' is considered as 'normal' or even 'superior' in comparison to non-mobile professionals, but in the family sphere the participants feel alienated for 'being different' from the standpoint of traditional sedentary values.

The rhetorical transformation of the participants into 'global employees' can be related to the central metaphors promoted in the sample of corporate texts; for instance, Gratton (2001) refers to 'the shift' professionals are required to undertake in order to remain employable in the future, Florida (2011) speaks of the 'the great reset' occurring in the life of individuals and in society in general, and Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005) refer to the individuals' emancipation from old mental maps and obsolete paradigms if they are to survive in today's 'flat' and 'borderless' world. The transformative element, from this standpoint, draws on the discourse of 'development of oneself' which, as Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) argue, refers to contemporary demands for individual flexibility, adaptability and availability in the context of work. However, in the everyday life of the participants, their attempt to conform to these demands causes negative feelings of being doomed to remain 'stuck' in an eternal pursuit for new opportunities and experiences.

As a result, the participants' attitudes towards sedentary life are transformed. Sedentary life is represented in the narratives as a consonant element through feelings of boredom the narrator attributes to it, and which are used to emphasise the sense of excitement and adventure they associate to their nomadic lifestyle. However, the constant changes involved in continuous transnational relocations are described by some of the participants as 'tiring', 'tedious' and 'unpleasant'; emotions that contradict the ideas of elitism and novelty commonly present in the narratives to describe international travel, and which are intended to depict sedentary life as 'monotonous' and 'boring'. The participants' expressions of the

need 'to do it all again' with each transnational relocation can be said to describe their lifestyle as repetitive or 'cyclic'. This view resembles Costas' (2013) study of highly mobile professionals in which she uses of the Sartrean metaphor of 'stickiness' to describe the ambiguities in the life of these individuals; specifically, the sense of 'exclusiveness' and 'glamour' they usually associate with international travel opposes their feelings of 'being stuck' in a never-ending mobility cycle from one location to another.

At the same time, sedentary life is represented in the narratives as the means to fulfil personal desires in the private sphere, namely the establishment of meaningful relationships and sense of belonging; these personal aspirations are described in the narratives as temporary 'sacrifices' and 'trade-offs' the participants make to sustain their nomadic lifestyle, but that can be satisfied by returning to sedentary life, which is consciously or subconsciously present in the narratives as the participant's intention. The notions of sacrifices and trades-off as narrative elements can be considered as a direct reference to Florida's (2008) text; according to the author, to be globally mobile necessarily involves an exchange of 'the joy of being near family and lifelong friends' for the ability to pursue career advancement and economic opportunities (p. 5). This is the 'price' professionals have to 'pay' as they choose to move to a location that has the potential to provide the resources and skills to progress in the professional context (Florida, 2008). In the same manner as happens with the narratives, this view draws on the mythical Faustian pact with the devil in the sense that transnational professionals have to 'give up' certain aspects in their lives in order to satisfy others. However, unlike Florida's (2008) claims that repetitive mobility can support individuals in achieving success and an overall sense of happiness, the perpetuation of the nomadic lifestyle in the future represents a 'failure' for the participants because it is considered as a threat to their intentions in the private sphere, that is, to 'settle' in a given location. On this view, continuous global mobility as a form of life, rather than a defined phase in the participants' lives, is portrayed in the narratives as an undesired condition for the narrators and is associated with the figure of the nomad as an eternal wanderer.

The figure of the wanderer is considered as a Romantic archetype of liberation from ordinary models and traditional intellectual systems (Cusack, 2008). 'The wanderer' is incorporated in the narratives as an oppositional narrative character that challenges the narrators' intention to return to sedentary life; at the same time the participants draw on the wanderer motif to describe their 'natural' desire to travel ('to feed their wanderlust') which sets them apart from

what they perceive as traditional and ordinary sedentary values. Moreover, the wanderer is directly associated in the narratives with the figure of the nomad on the basis that the latter is said to lack a sense of purpose to direct his or her mobile life; this is articulated as a negative condition that serves to render the idea of pursuing defined goals as a self-justification for the participants' nomadic lifestyle. Drawing on Eichendorff's story *From the life of a Good-for-Nothing* as an archetypal narrative of the wanderer, the rhetorical representations of international travel in the narratives ('to see the world') can be understood as a romanticized expression of the participants' emancipation from traditional sedentary values, that they perceive limit their ability to purse new and better opportunities and challenges. However, the participants' desire to always be somewhere else is described in the narratives as a 'terrible condition' in their lives; a sort of 'drug' to which they have become addicted. However, in constructing consonant self-narratives, continuous global mobility is rationalized as a temporal condition as part of the narrators' self-structured life plan, and which is destined to eventually culminate as they 'settle' in a given location.

In the sample of corporate texts, change and adaptability as personal abilities are depicted as a prerequisite for success in modern corporations; for example, two of the consultancy firms, through the notion of the global nomad, refer to the need to change and the capacity to adapt as valued attributes for professionals that can result in benefits for organizational interests. Gratton (2011) uses the idea of 'morphing' to illustrate the changes individuals assume in order to adapt to fluctuating circumstances; according to the author, these changes are part of the process of 'crafting' a working life in ways in which encompasses the new skills demanded in the labour market. Change and adaptability, therefore, are claimed to be required by individuals to remain employable. For the participants, the idea of continuously relocating from one country to another represents the means to attain opportunities that the sedentary cannot access; the counterpart of such a view is that sedentariness as part of the participants' life project is challenged by the need for more mobility. In this context, the nomadic lifestyle becomes the new frame of reference in a life where change and adaptability are assumed as essential skills for the participants.

5.4 Continuous international mobility as a self-structured life plan

Studies concerned with highly mobile professionals identify a particular aspect in the life of these individuals as the core element that provides them with a sense of continuity and unity amid constant changes. For example, Nowicka and Kaweh (2009) identify the cosmopolitan attitude of this category of individuals as a way to make sense of the struggles unfamiliar environments generate in their everyday lives; global mobility is thus perceived by the individuals as an opportunity to learn about the other through meaningful experiences that can contribute to self-growth. However, the authors argue, the discourse of self-growth may be the means for individuals to justify their continuous mobility to themselves and to others, as it imbues their actions with a sense of self-direction. From a related approach, Colic-Peisker (2010) proposes profession as the central axis for identity formation for highly mobile individuals; career, in these terms, represents a long-life project that serves as a 'cosmopolitan passport' in that it facilitates the individuals' transnational mobility. D'Andrea (2006) advocates that for the modern 'global nomad' mobility is a component of their self-identity and sense of belonging that is sustained by a shared lifestyle; and Nowicka (2007) found that for highly mobile individuals taking new opportunities, or 'grabbing the chance', is part of their general life plan, rather than a particular interest in a given organization or the geographical location of such opportunities.

In the narratives in this research, the participants' cosmopolitan outlook and their view of profession are portrayed as aspects in the life of the transnational professional that can be self-regulated to sustain and to facilitate their nomadic lifestyle. Specifically, the participants' attitudes to place and career can be understood as elements that constitute their 'human capital' (Foucault, 2008), in the sense that they can be controlled and coordinated by the individuals as forms of investment intended to maintain global mobility as a form of life that produces economic and subjective profits. From this perspective, global mobility in the pursuit of work is perceived by the participants as part of their self-structured life plan according to which they shape and transform all other aspects in their lives. For instance, the participants claim that their international experience helps them to assume 'the right attitude', such as being 'open minded' and able to 'reinvent the self', in comparison to their sedentary counterparts; in particular, in constructing their narratives, the participants consciously or subconsciously refer to the changes in their attitudes and ways of being as a consequence of their nomadic lifestyle. The transformation of the self is thus the participants' long-term

project that provides them with a sense of stability and continuity, albeit a development which demands continuous uprootedness. Therefore, by addressing the dimension of stimulation through expressions of feelings of adventure and exploration the participants may attempt to mask or to 'soften' the reality of having to dedicate their whole life to the development of the self in order to compete in the labour market.

The participants' narratives can be related to the pervasive claims in the corporate texts in terms of the individuals' responsibility for taking control over their own success in the future; for instance, the idea of becoming a 'lifestyle manager' as advocated by Ohmae (2005) is a narrative element indirectly adopted by the participants through the portrayal of global mobility primarily as a personal project, rather than, for instance, to discursively emphasise mobility as a career objective or as part of their employment contract with the organization for which they work. In a similar manner, Gratton (2011) uses the crafting metaphor to refer to the individuals' ability to construct and mould their life according to corporate demands for the achievement of personal goals; consultancy firm Transition Dynamics (2012) draws on the same metaphor to describe their idea of 'personal leadership', according to which individuals craft their life as mobile employees in ways in which they 'reframe' challenges into opportunities for personal and professional development. It may be said that the 'heroic' image of managers characteristic of previous forms of capitalism in providing support and direction for other individuals in the corporation, is now attributed to the individuals themselves as they are required to assume the 'ownership of the self' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

From a related approach, the representations of place and career in the narratives as manageable assets can be related to Florida's (2008) metaphor of the world as a 'menu of places'. According to the author, individuals not only have the liberty to choose where to live and work in order to satisfy personal preferences and professional needs, but they can also change locations at will to meet the demands of different life stages. On this view, places are depicted primarily as providers of 'goods and benefits' for those who move, meaning that they can be used or 'consumed' at will by individuals. This claim is to some extent identified in the narratives in the participants' portrayal of the series of international moves in their life as a sort of sequence of 'episodes' (Bauman, 2008), or 'projects' using the vocabulary of the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). In this sense, the participants' descriptions of their transnational relocations refer to the benefits they perceive to gain from a given

location, or rather how some places 'tick the boxes' in a system of values defined by the participants according to their professional and personal aims. These benefits are represented, for example, as the cultural knowledge the participants say to acquire ('to learn' about the other), the perceived improvement on their professional status ('monetary gain' and 'prestige') and the ability to establish social or romantic relationships ('to make friends', 'to date'). To be mobile, therefore, seems to be assumed as a personal asset that can be used by the participants according to their own 'hopes and dreams'; however, this view is contradicted by the references in the narratives to the 'control' organizations have over the participants' mobility, in terms of directing the flow of their transnational relocations and the duration of their assignments in each location. In other words, the countries to which the participants relocate are defined in reality by the corporations for which they work and by the availability of work opportunities in the labour market, rather than by the participants' own desires and interests, as claimed in the corporate texts.

5.4.1 Attitudes to place, culture and 'home'

As discussed above, the positive representation of the participants' subjective detachment from place, and in particular from the idea of home in terms of national origins, is considered as a personal asset in the workplace because it involves a privileged lifestyle and economic rewards; however, this is contradicted by the need to belong to community expressed in the narratives through references to future settlement in a given location as part of their intended life plan. This opposition between the development of the self in the professional context and the values of the sedentary is to some degree justified in the narratives through the bubble metaphor of the transnational professional. Described in the narratives as a self-regulated environment in which the participants move, the 'expat bubble' seems to constitute the alternative to sedentary life as a source of stability and continuity. Although in the narratives the bubble of the transnational professional is consciously used as a negative element from which the narrators seek to disassociate themselves, it is subconsciously incorporated as the context that satisfies their need to belong to a community.

The community of transnational professionals is referred to in some of the narratives as 'the local community' in the host localities in which the participants temporarily live and work, thus representing a source for social relationships in their everyday life. In other words, the so

called 'locals' are also transnational professionals and not natives of the host locality, meaning that the 'local culture' of this community is 'international' rather than defied by the traditions and values of the host country. In a similar manner, the English language is represented in the narratives as an essential element in the participants' daily life, because it is the common language they use in the workplace and socially with other transnational professionals and natives in the host locality who also speak English, meaning that in cases in which the participants do not speak the local language their relations and level of integration with the local community are limited.

The value attributed to the English language as part of the life of the transnational professional is not questioned by the participants independently of their national origin; specifically, within the context of the research narratives, the role of English in the contemporary world of work remains unchallenged even by the participants who are non-native English speakers. However, the desire to learn the local language in order to facilitate their sense of adaptation is equally manifested by all the participants, meaning that their attitude towards culture seems to transcend the assumption that transnational professionals can rely on the 'global' nature of English. However, this is often contradicted in the narratives as the participants consciously or subconsciously incorporate dissonant elements or comments, such as the 'threat' of not finding jobs for English speakers and the idea that learning the local language in non-English speaking countries is 'optional'. In some of the narratives the temporary nature of the participants' experience in any given location is presented as a justification for their 'decision' of not learning the local language, even if doing so was their original intention before they relocate internationally as part of their desire to experience and to learn the culture of others; the participants' attitude to language is thus also transformed as a consequence of their nomadic lifestyle. Moreover, English is perceived as a unifying element in the class or community of the transnational professional; therefore, to learn English represents a necessity or a prerequisite for non-native speaker of the language who aspire to join such a community.

The community of the transnational professional as represented in the narratives relates to the 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2006; Jameson, 2005; Sloterdijk, 2013) of the 'global individual' as advocated in the corporate texts, in which local attachments and national origins are rendered irrelevant or 'ignored' for the construction of identity. The bubble metaphor can be considered as a symbolic representation of the participants' nomadic

lifestyle, in that membership is established on the basis of a shared form of life, rather than by a defined territory or country. A similar view is proposed by Polson (2010) through the notion of 'class' formation; according to the author, the high degree of transnational mobility of some individuals serves as a frame of reference to create a sense of being part of a group in which members have similar perceptions of what it means 'to be international', or a 'global individual' drawing on the vocabulary used in the corporate texts. In the narratives in this research, the community of the transnational professional is enacted by the participants themselves , expressed through discursive representations of their 'membership' to the group or elite of the mobile professional, perhaps as the means to cope with the loss of 'home' as they pursue work opportunities in different countries. The participants' subjective detachment from their own local culture in an attempt to embrace the community of the transnational professional is a contradictory element in their narratives; presented at the same time through negative feelings of homelessness and as a positive and even desirable condition that represents the participants' liberation from established structures.

Expressions in the narratives of feelings of belonging to the community of transnational professionals on the basis of a shared lifestyle and attitudes towards place, draw on traditional forms of nomadism in that the sense of identity of the nomads as members of a given group or tribe is sustained by shared moral codes, traditions and culture, as well as lineage and ethnicity (Abu-Lughod, 1988; Barth, 1986; Belton, 2005; Berland and Salo, 1986; Keohane, 1994; Lancaster and Lancaster, 1998). This element is taken by contemporary representations of nomadism to describe the condition of modern society as a consequence of globalization; for instance, Sloterdijk (2013) refers to the 'mobile cocooning' in which nomads dwell as social ties are not defined by the grounds they inhabit but by a shared mode of life. Sloterdijk (2013) mobilizes the 'cocoon' metaphor as a critique of the modern condition of the 'self without place', that he argues results from the dissolution of the individuals' subjective and real alliances to a given nation-state as the frame of reference for identity construction.

As part of the contemporary discourse of global nomadism, the concept of 'home' is often studied from the perspective of highly mobile individuals; for example, Nowicka (2007) and Meerwarth (2008) propose that this class of individuals construct their idea of home through the relationships they have with people, objects and places, which are always being reconfigured as the individuals move localities. However, Butcher (2010) argues that highly

mobile individuals are confronted by the need to associate their sense of 'being at home' with a given place in order to manage feelings of unsettlement generated by their continuous mobility. These views are identified in the sample of narratives in this research in the participants' representations of their idea of home which they perceive to construct through their personal relationships with family and friends, as well as their level of assimilation of the local culture of the countries in which they temporary dwell. However, drawing on the aforementioned legend of *The Flying Dutchman* (Pelzer, 2004), the participants feel that no place can ever be home, just as the sea captain in the legend who is doomed to never return to harbour. The participants consciously or subconsciously make reference to the need to retain their sense of detachment to any given place or people in order to perpetuate their nomadic lifestyle, thus continue to be able to follow the changing flows of labour and capital across the globe; this represents a negative element in the narratives because the idea of never returning home, which is to say, to the life of the sedentary, is depicted as a 'threat' to the narrators' intentions and a 'failure' in their lives.

In terms of culture, the metaphorical bubble of the transnational professional is described in the narratives as a negative condition, because it is said to hamper the participants' ability to integrate with the local community. Specifically, the narrators refer to their desire to 'immerse' in the host locality of the countries in which the participants temporarily live and work; this view, which is primarily incorporated as a differential element to disassociate the narrator from the prototypical expatriate, draws on the discourse of corporate cosmopolitanism as portrayed in the corporate texts. For example, Bloch and Whiteley (2011) claim that professionals should assume a 'global outlook' by acquiring information about other countries and pursuing opportunities to travel in order to experience their local culture. The culture aspect is in particular presented by the consultancy firms as the centre of their services and programs; culture, in these texts, is depicted as an asset that can be acquired and 'managed' to support the professionals in achieving 'success' in their transnational relocations, for example, through online packages of information containing 'tactics' and 'strategies' about a given local culture which allegedly aid professionals in their encounters with the different other. These 'tips' on cultural and language codes are an example of what Hannerz (1996) refers to as a 'quick cosmopolitan fix', popularly promoted as part of the 'culture shock prevention industry' that seeks to regulate the corporate benefits of individual mobility (p. 108). In this sense, interest in the culture of the other is in the corporate texts

primarily intended to support organizational objectives and businesses activities, rather than to contribute to the professionals' self-growth.

This view of culture as a self-regulated attitude is found in the narratives, as the participants describe how the acquisition of a particular set of competencies and forms of behaviour can support their working relationships and facilitate their intention to 'blend' with the locals; this view, however, creates dissonance in the narratives as it contradicts the narrators' expressed desire to 'immerse' themselves within the local community. For example, the participants claim to 'act' in ways in which they believe are consonant with local customs in order to challenge the image of the 'typical expatriate' who remains within the bubble of the corporate world; however, the function of these actions are contradictory because, as discussed above, the participants also claim to purposely retain a sense of detachment from the local community in order to remain 'flexible' and 'available' to pursue the next opportunity or the next adventure. Moreover, in circumstances in which the participants encounter a language barrier in their interactions with the local community, they 'disengage', in the intellectual sense, from the immediate social context; this feeling of self-alienation is incorporated in the narratives as a 'portable skill' that the participants' perceive to have acquired as a result of their nomadic lifestyle.

A similar view of mobility is described in the study carried out by Ossman (2004), in which she argues that 'serial migrants' actively seek to disassociate from other forms of mobility, such as that of casual travellers and traditional migrants in the host locality. Ossman (2004) notes that for this category of mobile individuals mobility becomes a value to measure the individuals' achievement, on the basis of the knowledge and skills they acquire as they overcome the series of 'obstacles' they encounter as they relocate from country to country; such as to learn a new language and to develop a cosmopolitanism that is performed in social situations (p. 117). It can be argued that in Ossman's (2004) study the discourse of global mobility draws on the archetype of the hero as an adventurer in ways similar to the personal narratives in this research, in that the obstacles and difficulties the participants claim to encounter during their symbolic journey of exploration that is their nomadic lifestyle are assumed as opportunities for self-development. However, references in the narratives to the negative aspects in their life as transnational professionals, such as the difficulty of learning the local language, render culture more as an obstacle form which the narrators seek 'immunity' than an opportunity for self-growth (Hannerz, 1996).

Descriptions in the narratives regarding the narrators' regulation of their image as 'outsiders' in the host locality, may be understood as a representation of their need to establish some sort of relationship with the places through which they move, so they are perhaps less experienced as 'non-places'. The idea of non-places as advocated by Augé (1992), are spaces 'without past' that lack the meaningful and historical relationships that tie individuals with 'anthropological' or 'existential places'; non-places, in this sense, are 'ephemeral' as individuals who experience them are 'in transit', such as it is the case of airports and train stations. It can be argued that for the transnational professional Augé's (1992) division between anthropological places and non-places has been transcended as the participants establish temporal and conditional relationships with the localities in which they live and work. In other words, the host localities seem to be for the participants places of 'transit' that are perceived in terms of the function they have in sustaining their nomadic lifestyle (the acquisition of skills and knowledge or better job opportunities, for example).

The contradictory feelings generated by the participants' self-identification as outsiders in the places they live and work may be examined following Georg Simmel's (1971) proposition of the figure of 'the stranger'. According to Simmel (1971), the discourse of 'wandering' involves a state of detachment from any given place as individuals persistently feel the freedom 'to come and go' from places and groups; the wanderer, in this sense, opposes the figure of 'the stranger' as the outsider who becomes fixed to a certain space or group on the basis of a shared occupation, nationality or social status. Simmel's (1971) view of the stranger involves a particular relationship of closeness and remoteness between the individual and a given place or group; the stranger does not initially belong to the space or collective but becomes an element that is at the same time considered as a member and as an outsider. This intellectual position of simultaneous nearness and distance is described by Simmel (1971) as the stranger's 'objective attitude'; this objectivity involves a sense of freedom as the stranger has the ability to experience and to assess his close relationships from the distance. Being both near and far is thus a condition that relates the stranger to a group or a place as well as to other strangers in terms of his 'alien origin' (Simmel, 1971, p.148).

For the participants it may be the case that by self-regulating the level of closeness and distance to the host localities and its members they are able to simultaneously satisfy their desire to belong, which originates in the private sphere, and the need for detachment as demanded from the professional context. Additionally, the participants' descriptions of the

community of transnational professionals as the source for their own identity draws on Simmel's (1971) figure of the outsider in terms of the individuals' allegiances with others who share the nomadic lifestyle. The contradictory element in this perception is that the participants' sense of belonging to the community of the transnational professional is conditional on their feelings of detachment from national origins. In the corporate texts, this is represented as an advantage for individuals because in the 'utopian collectivity' (Jameson, 2005) of the global national differences and local cultures are 'ignored' (Bloch and Whiteley, 2011; Friedman, 2006; Ohmae, 2005); however, as identified in the narratives, this is also a dissonant element because the participants feel that the class of the global is for those who do not know to where they belong.

5.4.2 Attitudes to career

In the personal narratives, the element of career is expressed as a feature that holds a prominent position in the recounting of past events, but which does not constitute the focus of the narrative. As a narrative element, career does not represent the objective of the narrators' global mobility, but rather the means to satisfy their inner desire or 'dream' to travel internationally; in other words, in constructing their narratives, the participants do not attribute career as the primary motive that drives their transnational relocations, although the latter may directly benefit from it, in the sense that the participants' international relocations are dependent upon their ability to secure employment which in turn is influenced by their profession. It can be argued the participants view career as a manageable aspect as part of their life plan in the same way as happens with place and culture, for example, the participants refer to their interest in working for a 'global corporation' or pursing a 'global career' with the purpose of becoming a transnational professional; specifically, international travel is depicted in the narratives as an aim in itself. However, in some cases the narrators' intentions to portray their nomadic lifestyle as a personal project are contradicted through conscious or subconscious expressions of the 'accidental' nature of their continuous mobility, or the ways in which it is defined by corporate objectives.

Drawing on the aforementioned metaphor of a pact, the personal predisposition to be flexible and available is depicted in the narratives as the element the narrator exchanges with the corporation in order satisfy their 'wanderlust'. It may be argued that the participants are able

to become globally mobile inasmuch their mobility is directed by demands in the context of work; in other words, the countries to which the participants relocate are defined by the interests of managers and organizations and not by an interest in the given location. The consequences of such an exchange, motivated by the intention to travel internationally, are the participants' professional development and sacrifices in the personal sphere; these are presented as oppositional elements in the narratives at the centre of which is global mobility. In constructing their narratives the participants bring into focus emotions and rhetorical descriptions of the personal motives that drive their mobility and marginalize the career element as a personal gain; this is for instance identified in the use of the figure of the expatriate as an oppositional character to the narrator.

The figure of the 'typical expatriate' is portrayed in the narratives as a professional who chooses to remain in the comfortable and protective environment of the corporate world, as opposed to 'immersion' in the local culture which is the image the narrators draw upon for their self-representation. The expatriate character is used in the narratives to emphasise the popular relationship between this group of professionals and the corporate world, thus portraying their global mobility as being 'business orientated' rather than being the outcome of a desire to 'embrace the world' that originates from 'within' the individual, from 'the soul', as claimed by the participants to describe their own mobility. The discursive disassociation established between the narrators and the figure of the expatriate is perhaps the participants' attempt to justify a lifestyle that is traditionally associated with personal monetary gains and professional status. For example, the expatriate is portrayed in some of the narratives by drawing on the archetype of the hero as an entrepreneur; in this sense, the transnational professional is someone who embarks on risky ventures to help pave the way for others in the future (Kostera, 2012). The epic tone in the narratives somewhat masks underlying assumption about the role of the expatriate in modern corporations, which is to undertake work assignments in other countries for the benefit of the organization's commercial activities, and that result in 'generous packages' of financial benefits for the professional (Fechter, 2007).

The narratives bring into focus different elements with the intention to challenge the traditional association made between the notion of 'colonialism' and the figure of the expatriate (Fechter, 2007). The narrators marginalize the view of transnational professionals as 'the rich' and 'exotic' in comparison to 'less fortunate' and ordinary individuals in the host

locality and embellish the function of their actions in terms of personal abilities, such as entrepreneurial virtues and their natural orientation to seek change and adventures. The desire to 'explore' and 'conquer' the world expressed in the narratives, which draws on the 'imperialist' aspect involved in their actions as was the case of the 'original' colonial, is discursively situated within the corporate context and opposed to the view of 'the world as home' which imbues transnational mobility with a moral tone. This opposition between work and the private sphere reflects the aforementioned 'split of the self' portrayed in the narratives, constructed as the narrators consciously or subconsciously draw on different and sometimes contradictory narrative elements to self-represent from the standpoint of each domain.

The positive emphasis of personal objectives and 'higher' aspirations over monetary gains and corporate related goals draws on the literature of contemporary careers; in particular, the narratives can be related to the notions of 'boundaryless career' and 'protean career' which depict career in terms of the professionals' personal development outside the workplace and their 'psychological success' (Briscoe and Hall, 2005; Hall, 2002; Inkson, 2006). Career theory considers the social practice of work as a core element in the individuals' life that shapes the way they perceive and understand their reality, subsequently influencing their behaviours and attitudes regarding different aspects in their life (Cappellen and Janssens, 2010; Gunz and Peiperl, 2007). In terms of the protean career, Hall (2002) claims that to 'operate effectively' in modern organizations professionals must assume 'change' as a personal characteristic: "You must be like the Greek god Proteus" (p. 219). The author is referring to the individuals' capability to change the ways they think and act in order to integrate the transformations occurring in the corporate world as part of their 'self-identity' (Hall, 2002).

In the narratives, this view is present in the participants' portrayal of their capacity to 'reinvent the self' as a valuable competence in the workplace, supporting the 'heroic status' of the narrators who are able to change and adapt according to new circumstances and fluctuating demands; however, this is also a contradictory element in the narratives because the continuous 'reinvention of the self' is associated with feelings of monotony and tiredness. Moreover, 'morphing' the self (Gratton, 2011) according to external demands in the pursuit of work opportunities may be considered as the participants' sacrifice of a certain 'fidelity to the self' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, p. 124), which generates feelings of self-alienation identified, for instance, in the narrators' rhetorical expression of putting their own local

culture, such as their native language and family values, 'in the background' within themselves.

In the language of career studies, the individuals' ability to adapt their career by moving across roles, organizations or countries, is referred to as the 'boundaryless career' (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001; Briscoe and Hall, 2005; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994; Hall, 2002; Inkson, 2006; Sullivan, 1999). Similarly, the competencies and knowledge, or 'career capital', the professionals are said to acquire through international experience are considered as 'portable' skills that can potentially support the creation of 'global careers', understood as careers that unfold in more than one country (Cappellen and Janssens, 2010; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994; Dickmann and Baruch, 2011; Gunz and Peiperl, 2007; Inkson *et al.*, 1997; Sullivan, 1999; Thomas, Lazarova and Inkson, 2005). International experience, according to career theory, is incorporated into the individuals' life from the perspective of how it influences their career; in these terms, to relocate internationally represents an asset that contributes to the development of career capital. However, as mentioned above, the intention of the narratives is to portray their professional career as one of the elements in their life that supports the fulfilment of personal aims; career-building, therefore, is portrayed as a consequence of the participants' nomadic lifestyle rather than the central axis that structures their global mobility.

In the corpus of corporate texts, the notion of 'global career' is addressed in particular by Gratton (2011) and Bloch and Whiteley (2011). According to these authors, the individuals' attitudes and behaviour concerning their professional career must encompass the changes brought about by contemporary globalization. For instance, following Gratton's (2011) claims, professionals must choose 'the right path' of 'crafting' a 'future-proofed career', rather than "to succumb to the default future" (p. 16). Drawing on the extended metaphor of the borderless world popularized by Ohmae (2005), Bloch and Whiteley (2011) advocate that a critical step for individuals to become a 'global worker' is to adopt a 'borderless thinking', which according to their claims is a requirement for individuals in the context of modern corporations. In the narratives, these ideas are identified in allusions to the utopian message inscribed in the texts by Florida (2008; 2011), Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005); for example, the participants' claim that they can live and work 'anywhere in the world' is used to self-portray in their narratives as someone who is free to choose places independently of national and cultural differences, a view that draws on the pervasive 'gloss' neoliberal discourses put on the global mobility of the modern professionals (Bauman, 2000). Moreover,

the sense of 'finality' about the globalized or 'borderless' state of today's society as depicted by Friedman (2006) and Ohmae (2005) is identified in the extracts as there seems to be no other alternative for the participants but to become a 'global employee'.

The consultancy firms adopt a similar view of profession as found in literature of contemporary career, in that career advancement is described as a life-project for individuals; in particular, the consultancy firms address the ways in which they can support individuals in their 'transition' to an 'unfamiliar' environment with the purpose of completing their work assignment abroad, which in turn results in subjective rewards (e.g. public recognition in the workplace) and career advancement (e.g. promotions). However, the transnational professional is portrayed in the texts by the consultancy firms as a sort of corporate asset or 'commodity' (Bauman, 2008) for organizations, because the intention of their mobility is to support the growth of corporations and the geographical expansion of business activities. In the narratives, expressions of 'fear of being stuck' in the nomadic lifestyle reflect the participants' perceived need of being readily able to relocate internationally and adopt new attitudes and forms of being ('reinventing the self') in order to pursue work opportunities; the incorporation of never-ending mobility as a negative condition for the narrators is thus consonant with their feelings of 'missing out' whatever the 'world out there' may have to offer, which is to say, to 'be stuck in the local'. In other words, the participants may pursue global mobility to overcome the insecurities and anxieties of the 'locally fixed' (Bauman, 2000); however, in doing so, they become 'victims' by the need for more mobility.

These feelings are contradictory from the perspective of the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism. The modern mobile professional or 'global nomad' does not want to be settled; conversely, for the participants, continuous global mobility is the 'terrible condition' they have to confront in their everyday life. Following Bauman's (2007, p. 12-5) argument, it can be said that the participants' perceived 'freedom to move' turns into a necessity to be mobile in the pursuit of work opportunities, resulting in an endless 'shopping around' for knowledge and skills in order to remain 'a sellable commodity'. This circumstance may be understood as the individuals' need to constantly seek 'activity' in modern society as argued by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007); in these terms, repetitive transnational relocations as a self-structured life-plan results in the conception of life as a 'succession of projects', or 'episodes' (Bauman, 2008), for which the participants accordingly assume 'the right attitude'

in their attempt to find justifications and validity for leading a nomadic lifestyle that, at an essential level, generates insecurities and contradictions in their life.

5.5 Linkage between theoretical concepts, discursive constructs and narrative concepts

The following table outlines the linkage between the research's key theoretical concepts (a), the discursive constructs identified in the sample of corporate texts (b) and the narrative concepts manifested in the participants' narratives (c). The cross-analysis of these elements serves to understand the extent to which the sample of participants have internalized as ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour the dominant discourses and hegemonic assumptions in which the corporate discourse of global nomadism is inscribed (d).

a) Theoretical concepts: Outline of the core theoretical concepts associated with the global mobility of individuals from the perspective of the ideology of neoliberal capitalism, and the key authors who present them.

b) Discursive constructs: Outline of the discursive constructs that address the global mobility of individuals in the context of modern organizations identified in the sample of corporate texts. Each discursive construct is related to the theoretical concept that serves as framework for the analysis.

c) Narrative concepts: Outline of the narrative concepts identified in the participants' narratives. Each narrative concept is related to the discursive construct to which they are connected in the interdiscursive and intertextual dimension.

d) Example of transcripts: Extracts from the transcripts to exemplify the cross-analysis of each of the discursive constructs and the associated narrative element. Outline of the extent to which the participants' attitudes towards their own international mobility reinforce or resist the discursive constructs.

Table 3 - Linkage between theoretical concepts, discursive constructs and narrative concepts

	Theoretical Concept	Discursive Construct	Narrative Concept	Example of Transcript
1.-	*Duality global-local*: The neoliberal discourse of the global draws upon universal values of individual freedom, economic growth and the common good; these are opposed to negative representations of the discourse of the local, particularly concerning traditional attitudes and forms of behaviour that characterized previous states of capitalism. Key authors: Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Fairclough, 2004; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004; Harvey, 1990; 2005; Jameson, 2005.	*The global as the inevitable and indisputable reality of modern society*: The utopian message on which the authors construct their central ideas originates in the view of 'the global' as a teleology of the inevitable and indisputable reality of modern society. The texts draw on contemporary processes of globalization to support the claims of the dissolution of traditional boundaries and the weakness of 'the local', which are expressed through strong utopian concepts of freedom and equality.	*The world as a Romantic archetype of the individuals' transcendence of boundaries*: Expressions of 'going out into the world' represent the narrators' metaphorical transcendence of the traditional boundaries of the environment in which they live (e.g. the sedentary lifestyle). There are contradictions created by descriptions of a sort of 'exchange' in which the narrators' have to 'give up' or 'sacrifice' certain aspects in their life, such as long-term meaningful relationships, in order to satisfy others, such as professional advancement and prestige (i.e. archetypal myth of the Faustian pact with the devil).	*'If I stay in the same place I will no longer be so successful; it will end the drive that has taken me to carry on progressing, acquiring more prestige professionally, acquiring new perspectives'* **(P7):** The world is perceived as a source of personal and professional future prospects; as a result, spatial sedentariness seems to become the antithesis of progress and success associated with lack of advancement and the loss of opportunities.
2.-	*Individual global mobility:* Mobility, flexibility and adaptability are dominant discourses that encompass the interests of neoliberal globalization, particularly concerning contemporary flows of labour and capital across countries to meet the changing demands in the economic markets. Key authors: Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001; Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002; Harvey, 1990; 2005.	*Mobility, flexibility and adaptability as dominant discourses:* The neoliberal discourses of mobility, flexibility and adaptability are incorporated as prescriptions for individuals to 'go global'; represented at the same time as an opportunity to achieve personal advancement and success and as an obligation for individuals if they are to 'survive' contemporary globalization.	*Individual global mobility is associated with notions of adventure and excitement:* The narrators' draw upon the archetype of the hero as an adventurer (i.e. *Odysseus*) to describe their transnational relocations as the means to 'explore and conquer the world'. The narrators' draw upon other archetypes (e.g. 'the wanderer', 'the nomad' and 'gypsies') that render continuous global mobility as an undesired condition that opposes traditional sedentary values.	*'Does this mean that three years from now I'm going to look again and think that I need to move? But why?'* **(P6):** The participants' idealised representations of international travel are offered as justification to repeatedly pursue work opportunities across countries; however, continuous mobility in their life seems to become a necessity or negative 'condition' which they cannot fully control or understand.

	Theoretical Concept	Discursive Construct	Narrative Concept	Example of Transcript
3.-	**Self-transformation:** Human capital in the theory of neoliberalism represents an ability or skill that can be acquired or formed. The 'development of the self' becomes a requirement for individuals to preserve a sense of control and permanence amid a changing and uncertain world. Key authors: Bauman, 2007; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Foucault, 2008; Hannerz, 1996.	*Becoming a 'global person' as a personal ability in the context of work:* To change or to 'morph' according to demands from the work context represents a personal ability that can be of advantage for both the employee and the organization. This is incorporated as prescriptions for individuals to adopt 'the right attitude' and modify their ambitions and lifestyle in order to access the alleged benefits of contemporary globalization.	*Becoming a transnational professional as a metaphorical transformation of the self:* To become a transnational professional or a 'global employee' is metaphorically represented as a self-transformation that at the same time serves to construct the image of elitism and exclusiveness of the narrator as a mobile professional, and that results in estrangement from others. The archetypal Kafkaesque metamorphosis is drawn upon as the narrators compare themselves to the 'normal' sedentary individual.	*'For me it has only been half a life; only half of me was 100% happy'* (P3): Contradictory representations of a kind of 'split' in the narrators' self. In the domain of work being a 'global employee' is considered as 'normal' or even 'superior' in comparison to non-mobile professionals, but in the family sphere it generates negative feelings as the participants feel alienated for 'being different' from the standpoint of traditional sedentary values.
4.-	*The imagined community of the global:* Spatial and intellectual detachment from the nation as a marker for identity construction is a condition of modern society that is idealised to support neoliberal interests. The sense of identity as a member of a given group or community is constructed on the basis of a shared lifestyle and attitudes towards place, rather than by the places in which individuals dwell. Key authors: Anderson, 2006; Augé, 2012; Deleuze and Félix Guattari, 2004; Jameson, 2005; Simmel, 1971; Sloterdijk, 2013.	*The community of the global as a cosmopolitan utopia:* The view of the global as a 'community' is a cosmopolitan utopia constructed on the idealized dissolution of local and historical differences between countries as a consequence of contemporary processes of globalization. In such a 'global community' individuals are said to have 'equal power' and 'equal opportunities' as differences associated with their local culture and national origin are allegedly ignored.	*Sense of belonging to a particular community of mobile professionals:* Positive representations of the narrators as part of a particular class or elite of individuals that share a lifestyle and attitudes towards continuous mobility in the context of work. However, there are contradictory expressions of a sense of 'homelessness' as the participants 'fear' the risk of never settling again as they wander eternally from one place to another in the pursuit of what may be 'different' and 'better' (i.e. archetypal plots of *The Flying Dutchman* and *From the life of a Good-for-Nothing*).	*'You try to go to the same places where local people go, you get to know the local routines, so you don't behave like a foreigner'* (P10): The participants' references to feelings of belonging to the imagined community of the globally mobile professional are confronted by a 'nostalgia' of the sedentary lifestyle, identified in expressions of their need to establish some sort of relationship with the places and communities through which they move.

Theoretical Concept	Discursive Construct	Narrative Concept	Example of Transcript
5.- ***Attitudes to career and culture***: Individuals are encouraged to assume the management of their own professional career rather than being directed by the organization, relying more on their personal 'talents' in their search for employment and seeking 'psychological success' in their changing work settings. The ability to 'reshape' thinking and behaviour in respect to the culture of others is said to facilitate working relationships and the achievement of corporate objectives. Key authors: Arthur and Rousseau, 2001; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994; Doherty and Dickmann, 2009; Hall, 2002; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009; Thomas and Inkson, 2004.	***Sense of national identity as an obstacle to success***: Feelings of national identity or sense of belonging to a given country are pervasively depicted as to hinder the individuals' ability to progress personally and professionally. Culture is represented as an element that can be self-managed by individuals; it is described as 'essential' knowledge and competencies that professionals can acquire through international experience and which are allegedly highly valuable in the contemporary world of work.	***The life of the transnational professional represented as a 'journey'***: The archetype of the hero as an entrepreneur is drawn upon to depict the life of the narrator as a sort of 'journey' motivated by the quest for 'opportunities' and 'unique skills' that he/she believes can only be attained through international travel (i.e. a symbolic representation of the Golden Fleece in the archetypal story of the Argonauts). The narrators assume the value of their international experience as a personal asset that increases the perceived 'worth of the self' in the context of work (i.e. 'heroic status').	*'I have to renounce my own culture […] to put it like in the background […] I don't recognise myself'* **(P5):** The participants view culture as a personal asset in the sense of being able to self-regulate the level of assimilation of the local culture through the acquisition of a particular set of competencies and forms of behaviour that they believe can support their working relationships and facilitate their intention to 'blend' with the locals; however, the participants' need to control their own local culture in their interactions with others results in contradictory feelings of self-alienation.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Addressing the research questions

1) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the corpus of managerial and popular globalization texts, and to what extent does it convey the interests of late capitalism?

The analysis of this corpus of texts was carried out following the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis. The objective was to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections with the ideology of neoliberalism as part of the wider context in which the texts are produced, distributed and consumed.

In the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization the discourse of corporate global nomadism is identified in the discursive duality global-local used in the portrayal of modern society, in which the global is pervasively privileged over the local as a result of transformations occurring in economic markets. In this genre of texts, the notion of contemporary globalization is primarily mobilized as the dissolution of geopolitical boundaries and the weakening of local control over the international flow of capital and labour, powered by new developments in technologies of travel and communication. The discourse of 'going global', therefore, is the foundation of the central metaphors used by the authors to justify and to legitimize their claims and prescriptions of ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour. Using the language advocated by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the 'condition of greatness' of the 'global individual' is sustained by notions of future success and progress, that at the same time render rootedness and spatial fixity as the undesired 'condition of smallness' in modern society.

However, this view is ambiguous because it presents the changes brought about by late capitalism as opportunities for individuals and society in general, albeit, according to the authors, there is no other alternative but to adopt such changes. On the basis of these claims, individual global mobility is portrayed both as a desirable and a required course of action that not only generates personal benefits, but that also contributes to the common good; such a perspective conveys the dimensions of stimulation, security and fairness to mask underlying

assumptions associated with the ideology of neoliberal capitalism. Following the framework of the new spirit of capitalism as argued by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007), the texts in this sample draw upon the discourses of flexibility, adaptability, availability and mobility in ways in which are consonant with the principle of 'activity'; in these terms, the individuals' quest for 'new projects' is identified in the relationship the neoliberal texts establish between the notion of going global and the access to valuable knowledge and experience about the culture of others that otherwise could not be attained.

The prescriptions for individuals to go global inscribed in this corpus of texts depict individuals as responsible for their own success in contemporary society; this is expressed through the discourses of autonomy and individual freedom that from the perspective of neoliberalism represent society's liberation from government control and free trade in economic markets. From the standpoint of the individual, this claim of liberation is translated in the texts into demands for flexibility and mobility, which are rhetorically presented as the individuals' ability to develop entrepreneurial virtues in order to adapt to the transformations brought about by these 'globalizing forces'. According to the management gurus and popular writers on globalization, the promises of professional advancement, financial growth and an overall sense of happiness are available to those individuals who are willing to detach themselves from their national origins and adopt the global as the new frame of reference for identity construction, meaning that those who are attached to the local remain 'stuck' in the margins of financial growth and progress.

2) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the corpus of corporate websites by consultancy firms, and to what extent they draw upon the core ideas and metaphors identified in the corpus of managerial and popular globalization texts?

The analysis of this corpus of texts was carried out following the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis. The objective was to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections with the texts from the sample of managerial and popular globalization literature.

The message of individual participation in the global inscribed in the texts by management gurus and popular writers on globalization is present in the texts by the consultancy firms

through the idea that international relocations are the means for professionals to gain or to access a particular kind of knowledge and experience about the culture of others that can benefit individuals and corporations. Contemporary globalization in terms of transformations in the capitalist system is incorporated in this sample of texts as an underlying assumption in a manner that resembles the ideas popularized by the authors of the sample of texts discussed above; for example, the metaphors of 'borderless' and 'flat' respectively mobilized by Ohmae (2005) and Friedman (2006) to describe modern processes of globalization are used in the texts by the consultancy firms in ways in which their meanings are hegemonic. The discursive privileging of the global over the local is thus rhetorically presented in the latter as the inevitable and indisputable reality of modern society in order to supports the claims that individuals have no choice but to become a 'global employee'.

The view of society assumed by the consultancy firms generally focuses on the aspect of 'culture', in particular concerning the professionals' relationships with alien or unfamiliar environments as they relocate internationally in order to undertake a work assignment. According to these texts, the idea of 'global working' involves a sort of 'transition' for the professional who encounters a different culture in the host locality. The individuals' subjective dissolution of cultural boundaries and detachment from national origins are incorporated as prerequisites for a 'successful expatriation', that is to say, the control of culture as an obstacle for the transnational professional; however, as happens with the sample of texts above, this is a neoliberal assumption that remains unchallenged by the authors. Moreover, in the same manner as claimed by management gurus and popular writers on globalization, the consultancy firms emphasise the professionals' opportunity to acquire valuable knowledge and experiences through international mobility; however, the claims in this sample of texts draw on particular aspects of the everyday life of individuals in the host locality, which mostly refer to communication codes and norms of behaviour that are assumed as characteristic of a given culture.

This knowledge of culture is represented in the texts as a set of skills or 'tools' that can be acquired and 'managed' by individuals according to personal interests but which ultimately benefit the organization; specifically, the firms claim that the acquisition of 'key' information and competencies about the culture of others can help professionals to adapt to the local culture and facilitate their working relationships in order to successfully complete their work assignment abroad, thus contributing to the achievement of corporate objectives. In other

words, what the consultancy firms seek to achieve in practice is what Hannerz (1996, p. 108) calls 'culture shock prevention', to try to stop the culture 'getting in the way' of their mobility. This view draws on the neoliberal discourse of 'development of oneself' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007) in that professionals are required to adopt certain attitudes and forms of behaviour that are consonant with the local culture, but which do not limit their ability to continue to be mobile. Under these circumstances, it can be argued that the discourse of corporate global nomadism, as articulated in this corpus of texts, demands that individuals establish a conditional relationship with the local culture that can be regulated at will in order to remain readily able to pursue future organizational goals.

3) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism manifested in the research sample of personal narratives?

The analysis of this corpus of texts was carried out following the methodological framework of narrative analysis with a particular emphasis on the approaches of deconstruction and intertextuality. The objective was to identify intertextual connections between the personal narratives and prior texts, which are consciously or subconsciously used by the participants as frames of reference in their attempt to render meaningful past events, actions and characters.

In self-narrating previous transnational relocations the participants' spontaneously make reference to various aspects involved in their nomadic lifestyle, concerning both the context of work and the private sphere. In general terms, in constructing their narratives the participants self-represent by drawing on the archetype of the 'hero' to describe and justify their motives for becoming internationally mobile. In consonant self-narration, the participants draw on the personal attributes of the prototypical hero as an adventurer and entrepreneur to represent their own ability to organize their life as a self-structured plan. This standpoint, prevalent in the sample of research narratives, can be related, for instance, to the archetypal stories of *The Odyssey* and *Argonautica* on the basis of the functions of the actions of the protagonists and the portrayal of geographical displacement as a journey of exploration. In these mythological plots the hero protagonists leave the security of a familiar environment to embark on a risky venture towards the unknown, driven by their desire to seek challenges and experiences that can contribute to their self-enrichment and help pave the way for others in the future (Kostera, 2012). In the participants' narratives, the narrators'

mobility away from their home country and 'into the world' is depicted as a desirable action because it represents the means through which they can access work opportunities and live new 'exciting' experiences. However, the narrators' positive portrayal of their nomadic lifestyle on which they found their 'heroic status', becomes a negative element as they feel 'doomed' to never return to the life of the sedentary because they remain 'stuck' in an eternal pursuit for new opportunities and experiences.

The discourse of corporate global nomadism is thus represented in a positive manner in the narratives, but only inasmuch as it is considered from the perspective of the organizational context. The participants perceive that in the work environment being a 'global employee', in the sense given in the corpus of corporate texts, is a personal asset because it can potentially translate into subjective and objective rewards; specifically, the notion of 'being global' as represented in the narratives refers to the participants' transnational relocations and the nomadic lifestyle such continuous mobility generates. Considered from the standpoint of the private sphere, however, individual global mobility provokes contradictory feelings for the participants because it opposes traditional values of spatial sedentariness and challenges their sense of belonging. In dissonant self-narration, the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism is negatively present in expressions and comments that draw on the archetype of the wanderer and its associations with continuous mobility; the wanderer motif is assumed as undesired behaviour because it contradicts the narrators' intended portrayal of their ability to control their own mobility as a temporary phase within a self-structured life path.

A transformational motif is identified in the narratives in the participants' attitudes to their nomadic lifestyle, presented at the same time as a consonant and a dissonant narrative element. In consonant self-narration, the narrators' self-transformation from being a sedentary individual to becoming a transnational professional, in the sense of being readily able to relocate from one country to another in the pursuit of work, is associated with ideas of self-growth and self-development, which is characteristic of the archetype of the hero and resembles the neoliberal views inscribed in the corporate texts. However, in dissonant self-narration, becoming a transnational professional is represented as a sort of Kafkaesque metamorphosis that results in self-alienation from sedentary individuals, such as family and friends and non-mobile professionals, who are 'unable to understand' them. This perspective reflects the participants' attitudes towards their own mobility as a form of life that allows

them to fulfil professional ambitions and personal desires, but that at the same time generates negative emotions of being 'out of the norm' or a 'weird bug' as they evaluate themselves from the standpoint of traditional sedentary values.

4) How is the discourse of corporate global nomadism represented, whether in similar or contradictory ways, across the different set of texts that constitute the research's corpuses?

The discussion of the analysis of the different set of texts was carried out following a combination of the methodological frameworks of critical discourse analysis and narrative analysis. The objective was to identify interdiscursive and intertextual connections among all the texts that constitute the research's corpuses in order to examine to what extent the discourse of corporate global nomadism is represented, whether to support or challenge underlying hegemonic assumptions and dominant ideologies.

In accordance with the aim of the research, the focus of the discussion of the analysis of the different set of texts is on the participants' attitudes towards their own transnational mobility, in order to identify the extent to which they have internalized the discourse of corporate global nomadism as inscribed in the sample of popular managerial and globalization literature through the prescription of ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour. The participants' attitudes towards their own transnational mobility are manifested in the narratives through the expression of emotions and comments that to a certain extent encompass the ideology of neoliberalism; in particular, through the idea of becoming a transnational professional or 'going global' the participants feel that they have to internalize every aspect of the self that could be an advantage to capitalism, including their career and their attributes to place, culture and home. These attitudes, which are incorporated in the narratives as self-regulated aspects in the life of the participants, draw on the corpus of corporate texts through intertextual and interdiscursive connections in ways in which they both perpetuate and contradict underlying assumptions of individual mobility framed by the interests of neoliberal capitalism.

One of the most prominent findings in the analysis of the personal narratives of the research participants, is that their attitudes towards their own nomadic lifestyle are dependent upon the perspective from which they consider it; resulting in a sort of discursive 'split' between

the self in the professional context and the self in the private sphere. In the professional context the participants associate global mobility with feelings of prestige, exclusivity and success, but this is contradicted in the private sphere in which 'being nomadic' is perceived to generate strangeness from the standpoint of family and friends. The discrepancies between the participants' self-representation from the perspective of the corporate domain and from the perspective of the private sphere are a representation of the struggles individuals confront in their attempt to assume nomadism as a form of life to pursue work opportunities. The participants' representations of the nomadic lifestyle are consonant with the assumption that in the modern corporate context the values of flexibility, adaptability and availability represent personal assets of competitive advantage for professionals; however, the nomadic lifestyle fundamentally opposes the needs and aspirations in other aspects in the everyday life of the transnational professional. The claims and prescriptions identified in the sample of corporate texts infiltrate the personal narratives but only to a certain extent, because the contradictory feelings and opinions expressed by the participants in constructing their personal narratives reflect a level of resistance from their part to enacting as ways of being the demands for continuous global mobility.

The participants' attitudes to the local culture of the host localities in which they temporarily live and work can be mostly related to the claims by the consultancy firms in terms of the acquisition of knowledge that 'prevents culture shock' (Hannerz, 1996). This claim is to some extent identified in the participants' conditional relationship with any given local community; however, the assumption of culture as a self-regulated asset also means that the participants feel the need to control their own local culture in their interactions with others. This situation is expressed by the participants through the negative emotion of self-alienation as they believe they have to change certain aspects of the self in order to adapt to different environments; for instance, the narrators rhetorically describe how their national identity and local culture are in the 'background' within themselves and the ways in which they 'act' in order to 'be accepted' by a given local community. Similarly, the cosmopolitan attitude inscribed in the utopian messages of the management gurus and popular writers on globalization, which claim the dissolution of differences based on national origins and local history, is manifested in the narratives through the participants' portrayal of 'the world as home'; however, this view is confronted in the narratives by a negative sense of homelessness that convey the participants' need to belong to a community in order to satisfy their desire to establish meaningful long-term relationships in the private domain.

The participants' attitudes to place, and in particular to the idea of 'home', are shaped by their nomadic lifestyle because repetitive transnational relocations demand ephemeral associations with localities and people. Following the terminology advocated by Augé (1992), the meaning of anthropological places, to which the individuals' identity is 'tied' by historical relationships as they dwell and socially interact in them, is transformed into abstract and homogenous 'non-places' as the participants feel unable to construct stable relations with others and with the locality. The participants' attitudes to their idea of home, therefore, involve contradictory feelings that at the same time support and challenge the discourse of corporate global nomadism as depicted in the corporate texts. In the context of work the participants' subjective detachment from 'home' (i.e. their own local culture and national origin) as a dwelling space that provides a sense of identity is incorporated in the narratives as a valuable asset; whereas in the private sphere the participants' condition of homelessness is described as a sort of 'curse' that makes them feel 'stuck' in the never-ending nomadic lifestyle. The basis of such a struggle is found in the opposition between the participants' desire to settle again in a given place and their belief that sedentariness impedes the access to new opportunities and experiences. Drawing on the discourse of corporate global nomadism, the narrators' continuous mobility supports their 'heroic status' in the world of work, but the need to always be somewhere else confronts doubts and resistance in their everyday life, somewhat becoming 'victims' of their own mobility.

The ability to speak English is depicted by the participants as another element of their personal capital in becoming a transnational professional. The English language is presented in the narratives as a necessity in the pursuit of work in a foreign country and as a valuable competence that facilitates the participants' interactions with the 'locals' of the host country; however, as discussed in the analysis of the narratives, the participants' interactions with the local community is often limited to individuals who also speak English and who may or may not be natives of the host country. Another important finding of this study concerning the use of the English language as a unifying feature among the research participants is that both native speakers of English and non-native English speakers in the sample manifested in similar ways the discourse of corporate global nomadism, meaning that the hegemonic assumptions embedded in the discourse have the potential to infiltrate different socio-cultural domains; however, that is not to say that such a transcendence is absolute or that remains unchallenged. Moreover, the participants expressed similar negative feelings towards continuous international mobility as part of their everyday life independently of national

origins; therefore, it can be argued that in constructing their narratives the participants draw upon discourses and associations, such as the conflict between the desire 'to be global' and the need 'to be normal', that are universal in the sense that they transcend local cultures.

The notion of career is present in the narratives as part of the various elements that serve to construct and to sustain a nomadic lifestyle; in other words, the participants perceive their professional career in a same manner as they perceive their ability to speak English and their subjective detachment from place, in the sense of constituting personal assets that can facilitate their 'transformation' into 'global employees'. Although the element of career is introduced in the narratives as a part of the participants' self-structured life plan, it does not constitute the central axis that determines it, as it is often represented in career theory (Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1996; Cappellen and Janssens, 2010; Gunz and Peiperl, 2007; Inkson, 2006). Nonetheless, it can be argued that to some extent the narratives draw on the concepts of 'boundaryless career' (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001; Defillippi and Arthur, 1994) and 'protean career' (Hall, 2002; Sullivan and Baruch, 2009) as expressions of the entrepreneurial virtues that are required of professionals in modern corporations. These contemporary approaches to career generally emphasise the role of individuals in assuming control over their own professional and personal development, rather than following the more traditional view of the paternalistic role of the organizations. As identified in the corporate texts, the modern context of work demands individuals to be readily able to relocate internationally and to change according to corporate interests and transformations occurring in economic markets. In such an environment, the participants' expressions of their desire to travel and 'see the world' are rather a necessity to become transnational professionals in order to sustain their employability.

This view is manifested in the personal narratives as part of the discourse of corporate global nomadism through references to continuous mobility as the means to pursue professional opportunities that cannot be attained otherwise. The participants' transnational relocations are introduced in their narratives as a series of 'episodes' or 'projects' to which they adapt according to the particularities of each location and work opportunity, in other words, by regulating their attitudes to place, culture and career. From this perspective, some localities are 'used' by the participants in terms of career development, while others are perceived to facilitate meaningful personal relationships. These attitudes represent the participants' entrepreneurial virtues that are thought to be valued in the world of work because they are

consonant with the required 'protean' abilities; however, in the personal domain the participants express negative feelings towards the need to design life as an entrepreneurial project, that demands a continuous 'reinventing of the self' in order to adopt 'the right attitude' in each new environment as they relocate from country to country.

6.2 Original contribution to knowledge

The principal original contribution to knowledge of the dissertation is to support the view that certain discourses related to the corporate context can potentially contribute to the dissemination and perpetuation of new capitalism as a dominant system. More specifically, the researcher proposes the discourse of corporate global nomadism as an example of the kind of managerial discourses that are emerging to encompass the ideology of neoliberalism, which are inscribed in a particular genre of popular managerial and globalization literature through prescription of ideal attitudes and forms of behaviour. In order to comprehend the extent to which dominant discourses and hegemonic assumptions addressing the global mobility of individuals in the modern context of corporations infiltrate the life of individuals, the researcher collected personal narratives from a representative sample of professionals who in the pursuit of work have relocated internationally more than once. The variety of the sample in terms of the participants' age, country of origin, native language, profession and family situation serves to represent the potential of the discourse of corporate global nomadism to transcend national and socio-cultural differences.

The methodological approach assumed in this dissertation constitutes an important contribution to the critical study of language use. The researcher argues that the combination of critical discourse analysis with narrative analysis helped to understand to what extent the sample of transnational professionals have internalized the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism as present in the sample of corporate texts. The argument put forward by the researcher is that in providing a retrospective account of their life story the participants drew upon the discourse of corporate global nomadism, as a discourse that forms part of the wider social context in which the participants live and interact, in order to render past events and experiences meaningful to themselves and to the researcher during the interview. The similarities identified in the narratives are a representation of the level of consonance between the attitudes expressed by the research participants towards their own

mobility and the ideas popularized by the sample corporate texts. The dissonance identified in the narratives, therefore, represents the level of resistance from the part of the research participants to assume the discourse of corporate global nomadism, meaning that they do not passively adopt and internalize the discourse despite the utopian messages it conveys.

This finding is a valuable contribution to the professional domain because it shows the struggles and insecurities in the life of employees as they attempt to meet corporate demands for continuous global mobility. The adoption of corporate discourses and associated forms of behaviour involves personal values and attitudes that may challenge the principles against which individuals are measured by others in the modern context of organizations. In other words, although the individuals may draw upon corporate discourses to justify and to validate their actions in the context of work, in terms of the individuals' subjectivity the hegemony of dominant ideologies is not absolute.

Another important original contribution this research makes is in the domain of online research. The use of online communication technologies as methods for the gathering of data was essential in this study due to the highly mobile lifestyle of the research participants. The researcher used the Internet to promote the study in order to find potential participants who met the criteria for the selection of the sample, independently of the location in which these professionals were based. The Internet was also used as a technique to carry out most of the research interviews, to collect the personal narratives from online discussion forums and to gather the sample of texts from consultancy firms through their corporate websites. From the perspective of the researcher, the use of online communication technologies was a flexible and inexpensive tool to undertake the research, as well as the most suitable means to encompass a heterogeneous sample of female and male research participants in terms of age, profession and nationality, but which is at the same time homogenous in terms of the characteristic features that constitute their nomadic lifestyle and which unify the sample. From the standpoint of the research participants, the use of online research methods was an opportunity for them to choose their location at the time the interviews took place according to their own preferences. Additionally, the researcher considers that the use of online interview as the technique for the collection of personal narratives facilitated the creation of rapport between the researcher and the interviewee, due to the lack of personal and visual contact that can potentially have an impact on the participant's responses.

6.3 Limitations of the research and suggestions for future studies

This research considers the English language as a key element in the life of the transnational professional because it represents a sort of prerequisite to become a 'global worker', in the sense identified in the sample of corporate texts and expressed in the research narratives. However, this study did not examine the extent to which the similarities found in the representations of the contemporary discourse of corporate global nomadism across the different samples of texts are a consequence of the use of English as the standard language for communication in the corporate environment in which the research participants move. Therefore, a possible suggestion for further research is to study to what degree the English language in the life of the transnational professional represents a hegemonic force in itself.

One way to address this, for instance, is by examining the role of translation in the process of constructing a personal narrative in English by research participants who are not native speakers of the language. In this research translation was systematic in that English was assumed as the standard language in all communications between the researcher, who is a non-native English speaker, and the research participants independently of their national origin. The exceptions to this were the six interviews (out of 16) carried out in Spanish as the native language of both the researcher and the interviewees; these interviews were translated into English by the researcher before the process of analysis. The researcher is confident that her translations are accurate, because the semi-structured style of the interviews provided the interviewees with an opportunity to construct elaborated and detailed answers in ways in which their intended meaning was clear for the researcher. The semi-structured approach was the same in the interviews carried out in English with non-native speakers of the language; however, for the latter it may be the case that the use of English may have shaped their narratives.

The use of the Internet as the sole means to find participants can be considered as a limitation of this research. The use of the online communication technologies was the primary method for the gathering of data and the sample of research participants was mostly limited to professionals who were members of the online social networks in which this research was promoted. However, the researcher considers that the use of these online social networks especially supported the process of recruiting potential participants, because these websites are designed to target the kind of audience of which transnational professionals are part. On

this basis, the researcher suggests that further studies could examine to what extent this type of worldwide social networks contributes to the dissemination of neoliberal discourses of individual global mobility.

Finally, the six variables used in this study to structure the sample of research participants, namely country of origin, native language, transnational relocations, profession, age and gender and family situation, can be considered as possibilities for future studies. For example, by addressing age differences between male and female participants in order to examine similarities and contradictions in the ways in which a sample of transnational professionals understand and act upon corporate discourses of global mobility.

CHAPTER 7 - REFERENCES

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