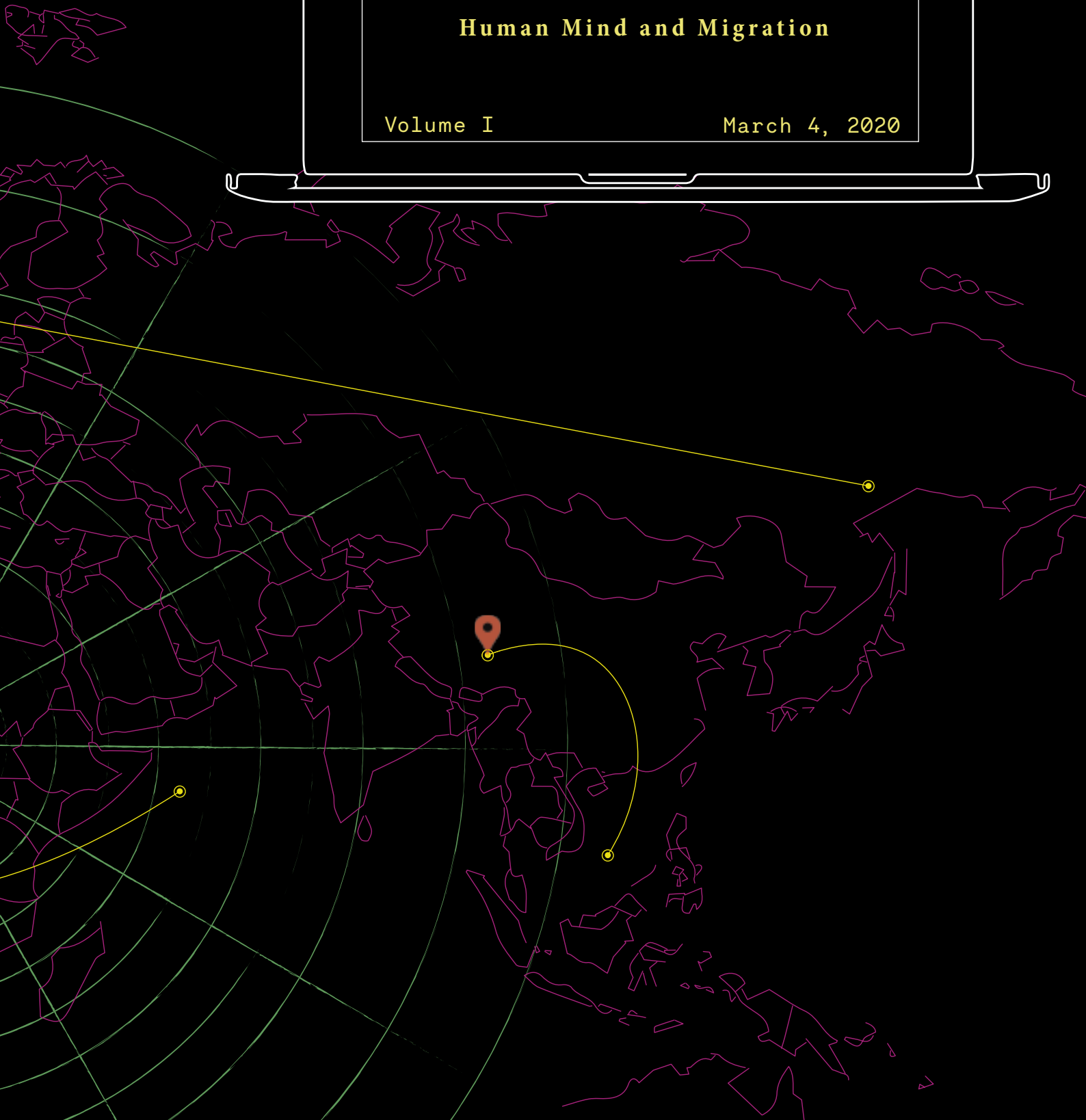


DIGITAL NOMADS

Human Mind and Migration

Volume I

March 4, 2020



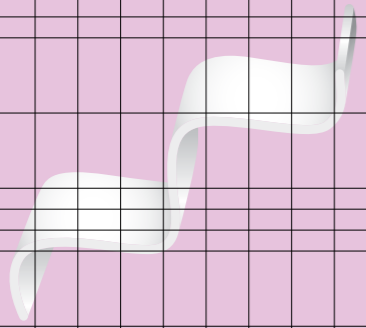
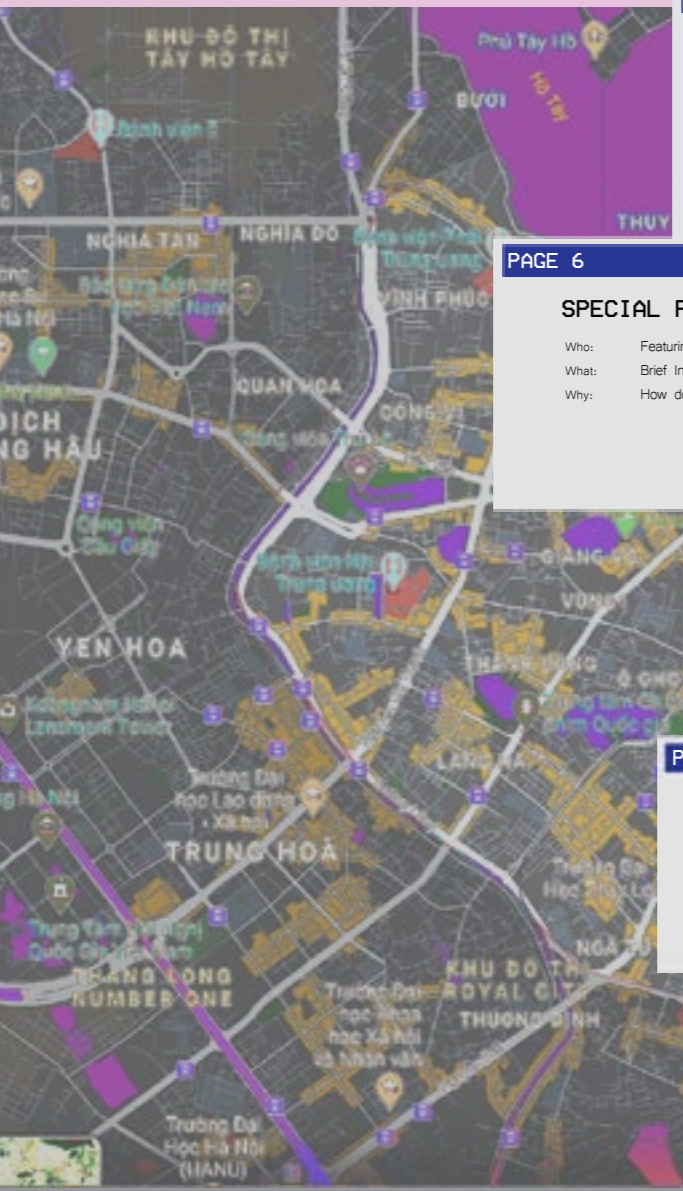


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Who: Written by all staff.
 What: Credits and acknowledgements.
 Why: To say thanks to all those who made this possible!

OK



Digital nomad

Digital nomads are a type of people who use telecommunications technologies to earn a living and, more generally, conduct their life in a nomadic manner. Such workers often work remotely from foreign countries, coffee shops, public libraries, co-working spaces, or recreational vehicles. [Wikipedia](#)



A digital nomad refers to individuals who work remotely using information and communications technology. As such, a digital nomad may work out of cafes, beaches, or in hotel rooms as they are not tied down to any one location.

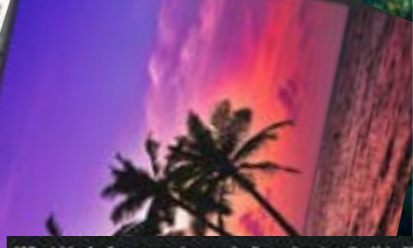
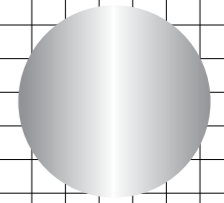
[Digital Nomad - Investopedia](#)



content now. You go online and you're going to see 30 different styles on a page at once. You have styles from the pop-up ads on sites to the style of the site itself. We live in a mashup world—that's how we interface.

And then there's also sort of if you're, maybe this is related to what the first part of an influencer. But if you're sort of marketing yourself, is this digital nomad type then you're gonna be posting your trips to waterfalls on Instagram and stuff like that. It's assuming you're digital nomads and your conception are living mostly in kind of beautiful, tropical places, cuz that's where a lot of them seem to go.

The advice and advice is something that is unambiguously clear and joyful. It isn't spread in a casual way, but it does seem to be the feeling that she (the author) has.



What kind of person do you believe best suits this lifestyle? Is privilege a factor to partake in this subculture?
 Morison W.: I think any person can live this lifestyle. You just have to find your own way of doing so. For example, I worked hard for years to save up before I've stopped working to live this Digital Nomad lifestyle. After living this lifestyle for awhile, I've found my own way to continue paying my own living expenses. So it's not necessarily a privilege, it's more of being street smart and finding your own way to survive.



vagari:

ORIGIN
 late 16th century (also as a verb in the sense 'roam'): from Latin *vagari* 'wander'.

nomads in nature

WRITTEN BY JOANNE MUN

a desire for
a
transformation
of
digital nomadism

GO TO GOOGLE IMAGES AND LOOK UP "DIGITAL NOMAD": YOU WILL FIND A TRIO OF REPEATING OBJECTS:

A PERSON, A LAPTOP, AND LANDSCAPES — BLUE BEACHES, HUNG HAMMOCKS, AND LUSCIOUS GREENERY. TALK TO A DIGITAL NOMAD, AND THEY WILL MOST LIKELY POINT YOU TO INDONESIA, VIETNAM, OR MALAYSIA. WHY?

BECAUSE THEY PROBABLY HAVE DONE IT ALREADY. THESE BLESSED INDIVIDUALS ARE NOT ONLY VISITORS, BUT ALSO CALL THESE TROPICAL AND BEAUTIFUL PLACES A (TEMPORARY) HOME. MOST DIGITAL NOMADS ESCAPE TO THESE FORESTS, BEACHES, AND MOUNTAINS TO REPLENISH, REVITALIZE, REJUVINATE.

What is a digital nomad? According to Julia Haking, a digital nomad is a "location independent entrepreneur, freelancer or remote employee who uses digital technology to do their work." Sweden-born, but Bali's short-term resident, Haking considers herself a "semi-digital nomad" and conducted her PhD research thesis in 2017 on the *Digital Nomad Lifestyle: A Field Study in Bali*.

With the help of Haking's research and psychologists, this article will explain how these nomadic migrations affect our brain and our soul.

"NATURE ITSELF IS THE BEST PHYSICIAN."

-HIPPOCRATES

DIGITAL NOMADS THAT RETURN TO NATURE RESTORE THEIR MINDS:

According to an article from *Health Promotion International*, those who seek contact with nature "intuitively understand the personal health and well-being benefits." Currently, mental health disorders, including mental illness, is one of the biggest constituents of the global burden of disease. There is a direct correlation with mental illness and restrictions of human-to-nature contact, especially in cities. "Urbanization, resource exploitation, and lifestyle changes" have restricted our possibility for human contact with nature in many societies. For millennia, humans thrived while adapting in natural environments; however, it has only been a few generations that humans have inhabited an urban lifestyle.

A recent study by Stanford Psychophysiology Researcher Gregory Bratman and Psychology Professor James Gross evaluated brain activity in nature versus a city. Those that took nature walks had decreased neural activity in the subgenual prefrontal cortex, which controls our brain's rumination activity. The nature-goers had less negatively repetitive thoughts compared to city walkers, demonstrating nature is medicinal -- it actually helps regulate our emotions.

Furthermore, George Mackerron and Susana Mourato on *Happiness is Greater in Natural Environments* explains why nature enriches mental well-being more than the city. We lose sleep over the 2 a.m. honks and 5 a.m. construction, raising our stress levels and blood pressure, coupled with the poor air quality polluting not only our immune systems, but also our planet. However, in nature, we are socially and actively recreational. We eagerly do not mind jaunting around organic greens and blues with our friends or even strangers, promoting and encouraging physical exercise and social interaction. The more our physical and mental behaviors and habits come into contact with nature, the merrier and more at peace we can be.

"NATURE IS MADE TO CONSPIRE WITH SPIRIT TO EMANCIPATE US."

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

DIGITAL NOMADS THAT RETURN TO NATURE REDISCOVER THEIR INDIVIDUALITY:

Transcendentalism is a philosophy that values the spiritual, rather than the material, in pursuit of life fulfillment. Coined by philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, he hurried away from the bible to find himself in nature. He believes that while we search for ourselves, our individuality will manifest when we return to nature. In my interview with Julia Haking, I asked if transcendental concepts influences this digital nomad culture, and she responded immediately with, "Yes, absolutely."

This philosophy concerns self-reliance, self-discovery, and individuality. One achieves personal authenticity by engaging with the natural world. Emerson believes "God" is a divine spirit rather than an actual being, and is in every part of this world's creation. Thus, the divine spark is in each and every one of us. By following ourselves, we release divinity in ways that are hidden in history, society, and religion. The individual is a "god in ruins," but we have it within us to reconnect and come closer to the divine by casting off customs to rebuild ourselves.

In Haking's interview, she mentions how digital nomads aspire to have autonomy and to "escape the system" of cultural, political, and societal norms. These digital nomads release themselves from the prisoned cubicle nine-to-five jobs and instead, open their office to the outdoors where their lungs are met with crisp air and minds are touched with something greater than mankind. Thoreau and Emerson believed people fulfill themselves as humans with self-reliance, self-confidence, independence, and nonconformity. These ideas of the real individual can form a true and genuine community and society.

Freedom is the greatest key of all. Haking can attribute her positive digital nomad experiences to the three pillars of freedom: professional freedom, spatial freedom, and personal freedom. "Just feeling that you have all these opportunities, and you don't need to follow a certain system," Haking claims; to have this freedom experience, "creates excitement all the time." Thus, in order to be free, we need to return to the places where nature and systems of conformity are untouched by human hands. As we explore the beauty and grandness of landscapes and materials untouched by nature, we poetically discover ourselves from new connections that sprout into deeper meanings.

Nature is our friend, our mothers, and our home. Remember to go visit her. She misses us just as much as we miss her.

COMMUNITY & BELONGING

MIYOUNG CHUN, FORMER EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE KAVLI FOUNDATION, LED THE U.S. BRAIN INSTITUTE, AND IS CURRENTLY THE CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF ALZHEIMER X.

**What do people do when they are not rooted in a community?
What happens, for example, to people who live like nomads?**

Miyoung: I think this is a profoundly fundamental question for global international citizens. I fully embrace my heritage of Korea and the amazing opportunities that is given to me from America. I love both countries very much.

On the other hand, at this stage of my life, I often ask myself *Who am I? Where do I belong? How do I define myself so I can share it to my children and grandchildren? What would they see of me?*

This is a profound problem for those of us who have taken opportunities in life—[combining] of our old culture and bringing in new.

I was telling our friends who lived on the beautiful land that the Māori reclaimed. I was really jealous and envious to be honest. I hope they utilize this opportunity. We don't have it—we are struggling on how to get ourselves together, finding our anchor.

They have an anchor—on a site that billionaires dream of—with a 360 view. I hope they make the best out of their opportunity.

MĀORI LAND IN
NEW ZEALAND.



MIYOUNG CHUN, LED THE U.S.
BRAIN INITIATIVE, PICTURED
WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA WHO
ANNOUNCED THE INITIATIVE
DURING THE STATE OF THE
UNION IN 2013.

Comfort & Code

WRITTEN BY LAIC BEUGRE

Historically, technology brings comfort. It increases access to resources and increases comfort by creating new services to satisfy demands. Technology and migration are two concepts that overlap, with technology affecting the migrations of those who work (e.g. leaving a city because you lost your job to a machine). But it has also created a new social identity -- the digital nomad.

Jonas Onland is a digital nomad specializing in digital innovation for cities. He works passionately, advising institutions on creating better systems to allow citizens access to services their cities offer. His interview addressed topics on Estonia, globalization, work, and migration.

Onland also had experience working with Estonia's E-residency program. The e-residency program is a visa that allows digital nomads to "set up shop" in Estonia. Digital nomads can create businesses and operate those businesses with the same rights as Estonian citizens. If you google Estonia's e-residency program, the title of the URL reads: "What is E-residency? How to start your EU company online." If you're motivated to click on the link, the page loads you to their dashboard with huge letters claiming "Run your business without borders as an e-resident of Estonia!"

Estonia is a country located by the Gulf of Finland bordered by Latvia and Russia. The official languages are Estonian and Russian. Estonia was a country in strife during its conception after being freed from the Soviet Union in 1991. In 1992, the Estonian government had their first independent election -- a long needed peace during a time of unrest and public mistrust in the government. In an article by Serge Schechman regarding the state of Estonia in 1992, he said, "Estonia's drive for independence was fueled by the national idea. Every Estonian politician drew on feelings of threatened and injured nationhood." Moreover,

the condition that Estonia was in when it gained independence lacked the resources necessary to support its citizens which contributed to civil unrest.

"WHEN THE COUNTRY WAS FREED FROM RUSSIA IN 1991, THE PUBLIC'S TRUST WAS REALLY LOW. IN 2014, THE ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT STARTED OFFERING ACCESS TO DIGITAL SERVICES. THE TRANSPARENCY, EASE OF USE, AND RELIABILITY RESULTED IN TRUST FROM THE PUBLIC."

Estonia utilized technology and married a public and private perspective to build an e-government. The Estonian government uses technology to digitize some of its most important services so all citizens have access to them.

"98% OF ALL GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN ESTONIA ARE DIGITAL. THE ONE THING THAT'S REALLY SPECIAL IS THAT ONLY 5% OF HUMANS ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS; THE REST IS MACHINE TO MACHINE."

- JONAS ONLAND

By creating digital signatures for each of its citizens, Estonian folks use the identifiers for banking, insurance companies, and government services. Estonians can vote online or complete their taxes in 10 minutes. The key to Estonia's success was that they made being a citizen easy, by making the governmental resources simple and easy to do. Estonia has become a country that measured its success by the comfortability of its citizens.

"AS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESTRUCTURES THE WORK SITUATION, IT ABSTRACTS THOUGHT FROM ACTION"

- SHOSHANA ZUBOFF

As a philosopher, I love thought experiments. See if you can follow along:

An informational civilization exhibits the means people have to live and work to produce information. Sam is a digital nomad who conducts business and works solely using the internet. She operates her business using various other online companies. Her genetic information is on an application on her phone in case she gets in an accident. When the companies send her app suggestions, she clicks on them. She has her location and

even her cookies set on. If anyone wanted to access her information, they only need the company's permission or her computer. Comparatively, Diane, a farmer, rarely uses her information on the internet. If someone wanted her information, they would need to access paper records and maybe some internet records. As a digital nomad, is Sam's autonomy comprised in a way that Diane's isn't?

Digital nomads are an increasing class as the world crosses into an informational civilization. While Sam might have privacy different than Diane, I argue that Diane has just as much agency as Sam and possibly even more. While Diane may not hold all of her data, that is only a reason for why she ought to fight for more of it. Technology serves as comfortability. I see no reason why Diane or any person in an informational civilization has less agency than Sam has in hers. Technology serves to improve the comparability of its users. Digital nomads are folks who identify as migrants out of necessity rather than coercion, which does not exclude agency. Rather, they seek comfort. These folks grew up watching their parents work nine-to-fives, in efforts to seek comfort. With that said, technology produces the opportunity for a different vision of work and the migrant worker. Autonomy is more complex than possession of information. Rather, digital nomads demonstrate agency in a situation that seems anti-autonomous. Many are Millennials and soon to be Generation-Z folks who enter the professional workforce. We are folks born into the "condition" (internet, digital identification, etc.). Yet, we all use technology and we still have agency.

Jonas Onland, like many other digital nomads, is motivated by his "ground projects" -- the projects that are not necessarily what first comes to mind when he first wakes up, but are grounding reasons to move forward. Bernard Williams refers to these types of motivations as "ground projects", they're the type of motivations in our lives that make life meaningful for every individual. These projects are subjective, contextual, and meaningful. In an age of information civilization, folks like Onland are rooted by their ground projects, despite the fact that they are determined by social and political norms. Those ground projects are informed by social identity and personal identity, and people still have agency.



ABOUT . . .

>> THE *impactmania* PROGRAM HUMAN MIND AND MIGRATION – IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ART, DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE MUSEUM, NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, AND DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES (UCSB) – CONSISTS OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND GLOBAL PARTNERS TO DELIVER A SUITE OF INTERVIEWS, INTERACTIVE PRESENTATIONS, AND PERFORMANCES.

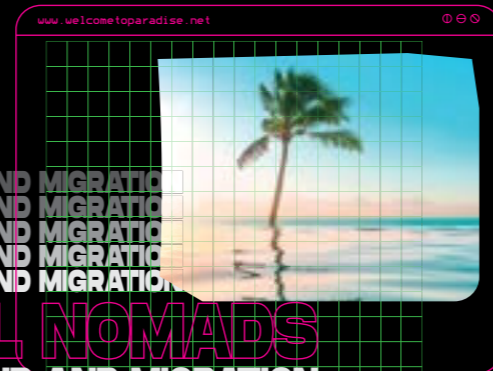
CONSIDERING THE PRESENT HISTORICAL MOMENT AND THE SOCIOPOLITICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COCKTAIL OF ISSUES RELATED TO MIGRATION – FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE TO PUBLIC POLICYMAKING SUCH AS FOREST FIRES; RISING HOUSING PRICES; AND ONGOING THREATS OF HUMAN WARFARE – IT IS MORE URGENT THAN EVER TO PROVIDE PLATFORMS FOR MEANINGFUL BROAD-BASED ENGAGEMENT TO TAKE PLACE. WE WANT TO HELP TRANSLATE AND BRING INTO SHARPER VIEW THE RICH INSIGHTS AND KNOWLEDGE BEING PRODUCED IN MORE REMOTE CORNERS OF THE INTELLECTUAL & ARTISTIC LANDSCAPE, SO THAT THE 7 BILLION HOMO SAPIENS PRESENTLY LIVING (AND MIGRATING) ON EARTH CAN IMAGINE THE MOST OPTIMAL AND REALISTIC FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES AND THE PLANET.

>> SHARE YOUR OWN MIGRATION STORY: WWW.HMM.UCSB.EDU.

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>> THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE EXPLORATION OF HOW DIGITAL NOMADS EXPERIENCE MIGRATION. OUR CONTEMPORARY DIGITAL DRIVEN SOCIETY PROPELLED A MULTITUDE OF REMOTE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES. NOW MORE THAN EVER, INDIVIDUALS ARE ESCAPING TO BECOME DIGITAL NOMADS. WE AIM TO DISCOVER HOW THEIR WAY OF LIFE AFFECTS THEIR IDENTITY AND INFLUENCES SOCIETY AS A WHOLE BY QUESTIONING THE SPIRITUAL, MENTAL, ETHICAL, AND SOCIETAL ISSUES RELATING TO THIS UNCONVENTIONAL, YET NOW DESIRABLE WAY OF LIFE.

>> FIND FUTURE FINDINGS WWW.HMM.UCSB.EDU TO SEE HOW WE CONTINUE EXPLORING ART, ECONOMICS, CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND HOW MIGRATION AFFECTS THE BRAIN.



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