

Digital Nomadism

New places, new links?

TERMONUTT Project / Presentation and main results

TERRITORIAL AND DIGITAL MOBILITIES THROUGH TOURISM AND WORK
TERRITOIRES ET MOBILITÉS NUMÉRIQUES PAR LE TOURISME ET LE TRAVAIL

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February 6th, 2020
TIDES Seminar

A few words about Digital Nomadism

- Contemporary changes in lifestyles and ways of working linked to the “Civilization of leisure”
- Possible phenomenon origins
 - historically : “Grand Tour”: long trip to Europe made by wealthy young people in the 18th century and wanderlust from Romantic Germans
 - also sabbatical leaves (US, Germany) and travel bloggers
 - More recently: flatsharing and Erasmus program (« L’auberge Espagnole »), low cost flights, work-holiday visa and ... coworking (collaborative spaces)
- Expanded with the development of digital tools and networks
- Consequences on certain territories? Many, including new "social infrastructures" such as coworking spaces (more on this later).

COLLECTION DE L'ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE DE ROME - 308

LE GRAND TOUR REVISITÉ

POUR UNE ARCHÉOLOGIE DU TOURISME :
LE VOYAGE DES FRANÇAIS EN ITALIE,
MIIEU XVIII^e SIÈCLE - DÉBUT XIX^e SIÈCLE

GILLES BERTRAND



TERMONUTT: a brief history of the project

- “Spin-off” of a project about innovation in coworking spaces located in peripheral areas
 - Innovation capabilities through networking outside metropolis
 - Coworking spaces as a new development tool for remote territories
- Visit of a coworking space in *Audierne*, a small fishermen village in *Brittany* in 2015
 - People from Paris and abroad coming for a temporary retreat in order to be more productive, creative, innovative and to focus on their projects
 - Leaving an overflow of social connections
 - Temporary hosting a population called digital nomads
 - Mixing leisure / tourism and professional activities during their stay
- « *When regular coworking spaces are not enough, we look further* »

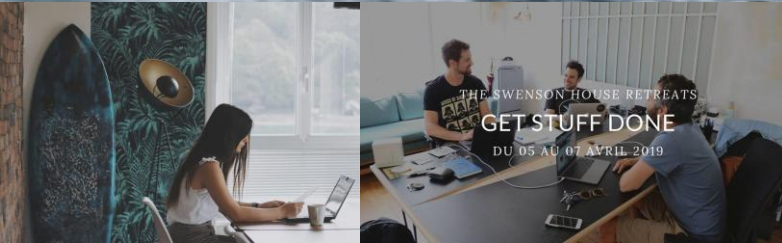
Houses to build moments dedicated to reflexion, sensitization and project creation to improve coastline and ocean resilience.



INSPIRING COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WHO DO THINGS

Swenson is a community dedicated to outstanding people who do things. By joining, you'll have the opportunity to meet with other passionate makers combining their energy, network and resources to help each other achieve professional & personal success.

The community was created to give people moments to share their stories and get inspired by others **to do great things in magical places all around the world.**



General context

- Digital Nomads (Makimoto et Manners, 1997 ; Müller, 2016 ; Mohn, 2017): No fixed location and no anchorage for their professional activities
 - Independent workers and freelancers
 - Solopreneurs
 - Employed teleworkers
- Between 0.5 million and 1 million individuals worldwide (Reddit forum, Facebook)
- Injunction to creativity and productivity, to the reinvention of their professional practices (not physically surrounded and supported by an organization)
- Work without geographical constraints, only dependent on accessibility to digital networks (Dal Fiore et al., 2014)
- Coworking spaces as "third places" (Oldenburg, 1991 ; Jeffres et al., 2009) that now host a large proportion of these digital workers (Suire, 2016)

Research topic: from the third place to the fourth place

- Other types of places that have been developing in recent years -> new hybrid places: fourth-places (Marinos, 2018; Aelbrecht, 2016)
- Considered as spaces
 - at the centre of a triptych "work, home, holidays (or wanderlust), "
 - also called « Coworkation spaces »
 - located in territories far from major urban centres
- Digital nomads who, a priori, can free themselves from any form of anchoring to a place of production (the office) ...
- ... but who, through their practices of temporary hybrid mobility (work, leisure/tourism), favour specific locations.

Approximately 200 in the world who identify themselves as coworkation spaces



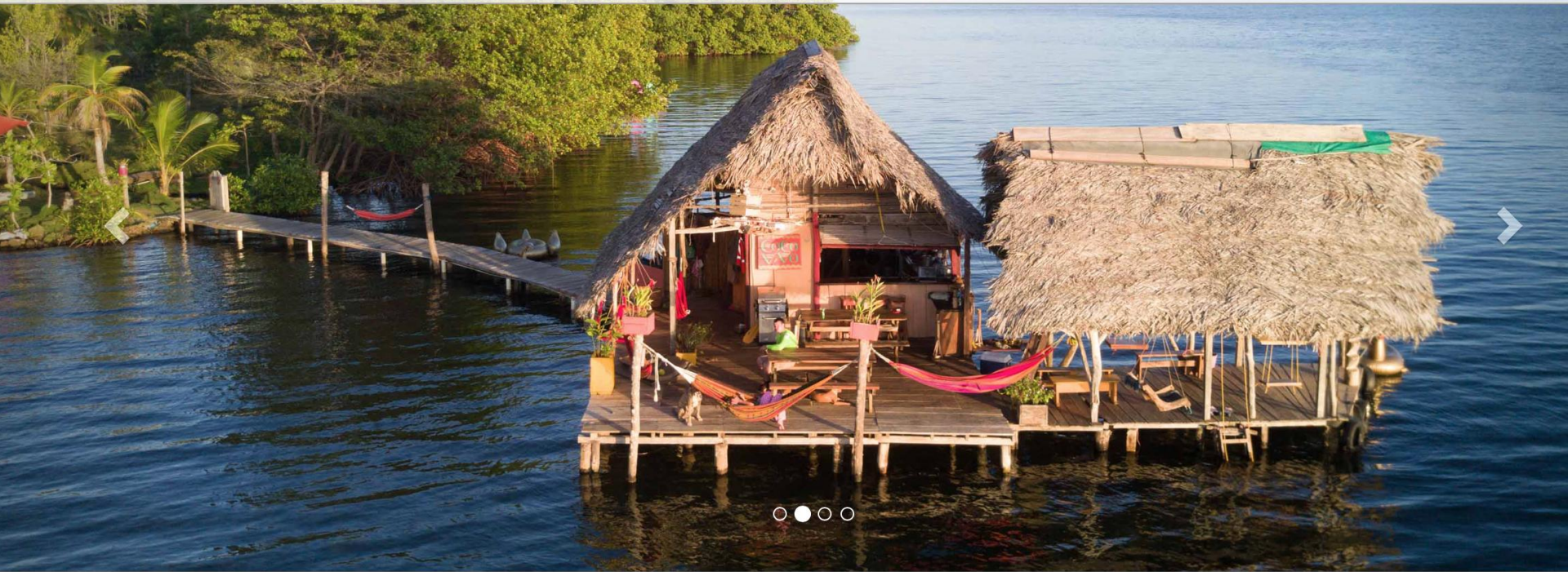
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ARCTIC COWORKING LODGE

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Hidden at the southern tip of Isla San Cristóbal, discover a remote tropical paradise. **CocoVivo** is the best-kept secret of the **Bocas del Toro** archipelago, a true hidden gem. Explore 145 acres of jungle, vibrant with wildlife, contoured by the pristine waters of the **Tierra Oscura** Lagoon.

Aims of the research project

- To characterize and analyze this form of hybrid spaces and the associated mobilities
- To question the perception, representation and use of the territory by these spaces (managers and members)
- To identify the criteria for choosing destinations
- To question the community dimension of these fourth-places
 - External: relations with local stake-holders
 - Internal: emerging peer communities

A multidisciplinary approach: management, information and communication, geography, economics, etc.

Main Hypothesis

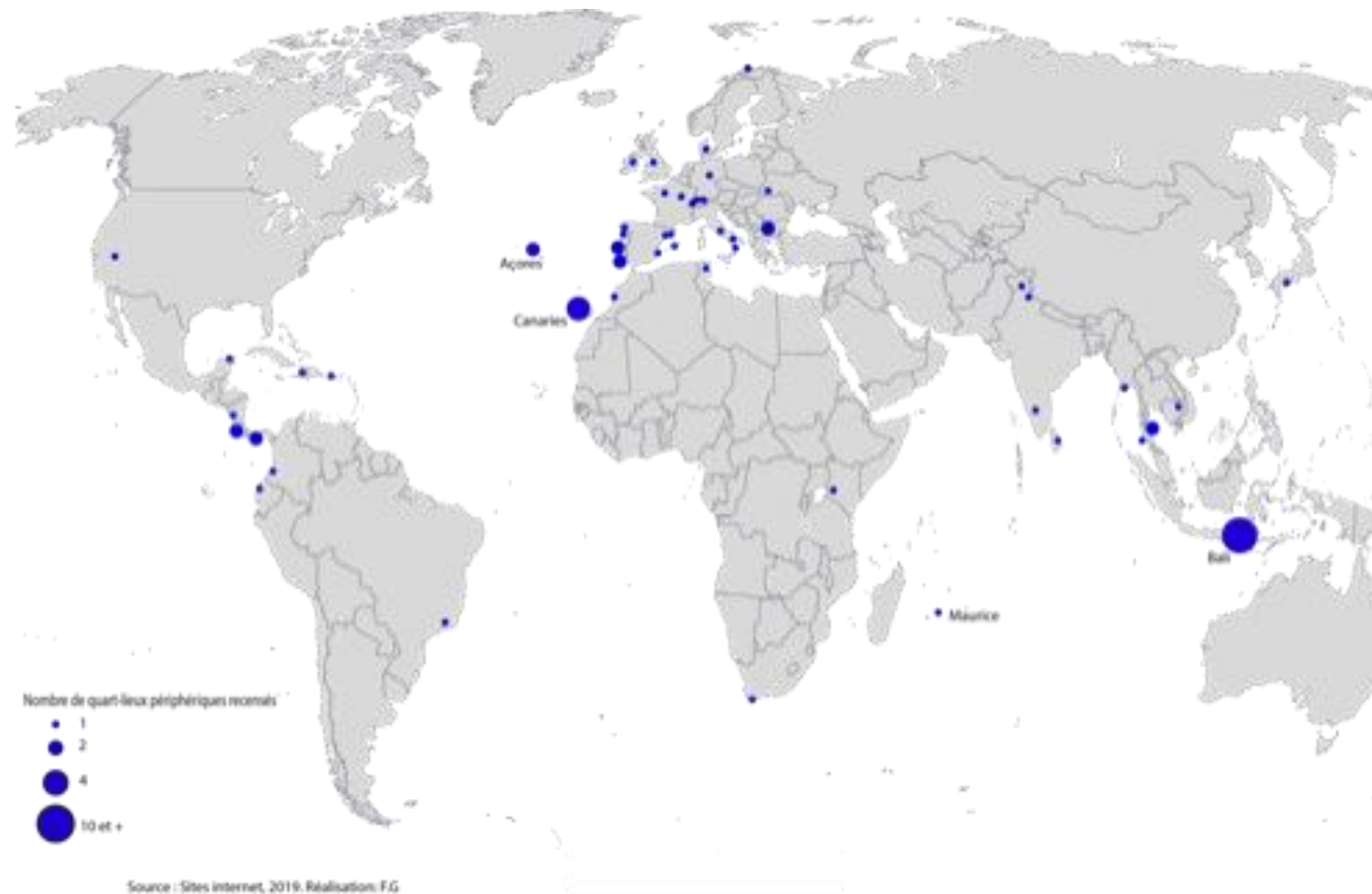
**The relationship to time and space is
reinvented in these new spaces**

1. Working there (physically) ... and elsewhere (digital ubiquity)
2. Working all the time without any schedule constraint
3. Abolishing the temporal boundaries between work and personal time
4. Being a tourist and a (local) worker at the same time ... a new category of people
?

Methodology

- Construction of an analytical database of 55 fourth-places
 - Main source: secondary data from the websites of the spaces
 - Fourth-places located outside major urban centres, outside the main hubs of the digital economy (Silicon Valley, Western capitals)
- Semi-directive interviews with founders, facilitators, managers and guests (25 completed so far)
- Distribution of an online questionnaire to users / guests / digital nomads (proceeding)

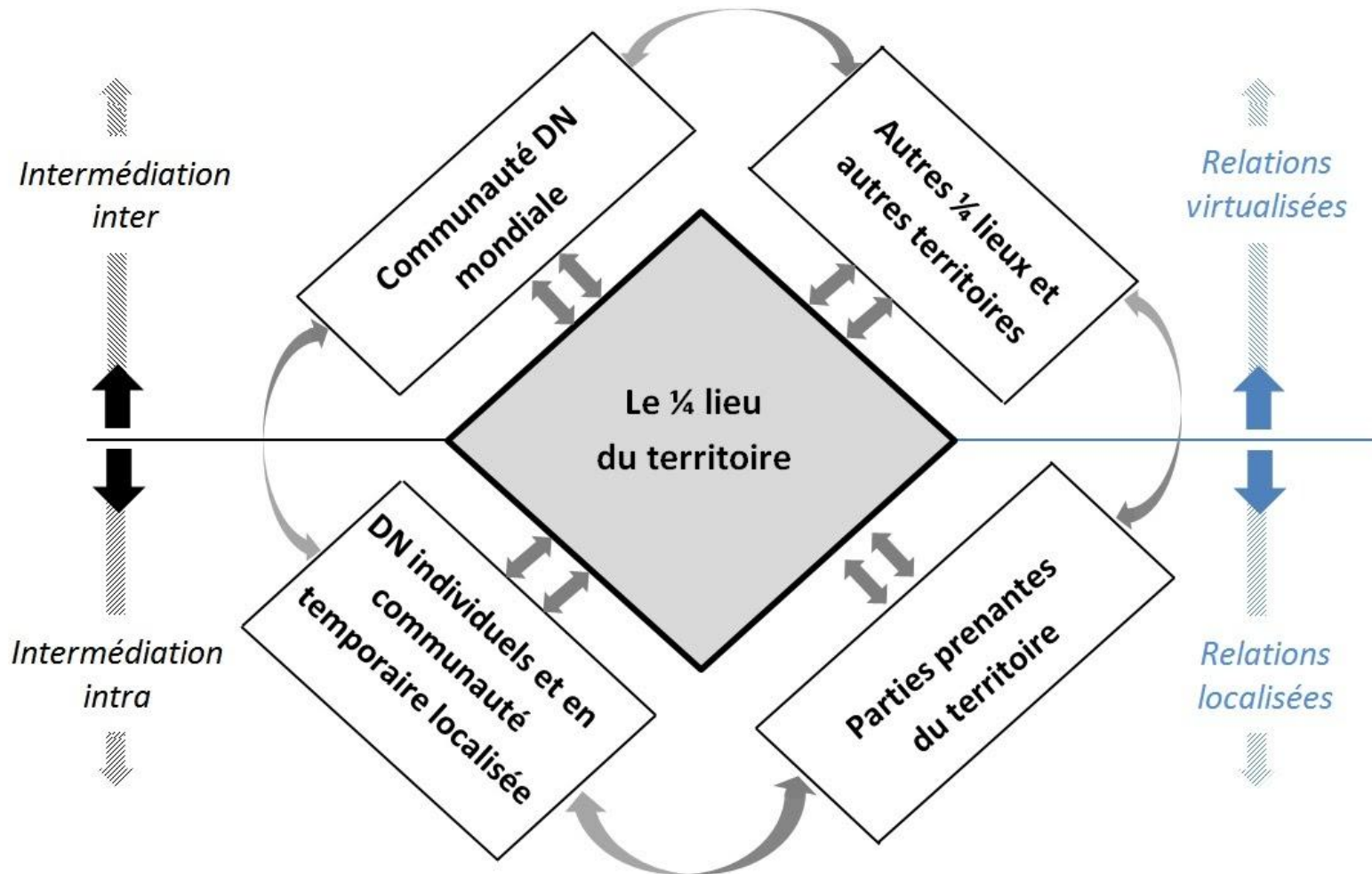
Location of fourth-places



Exploratory results: situations of territorial intermediation

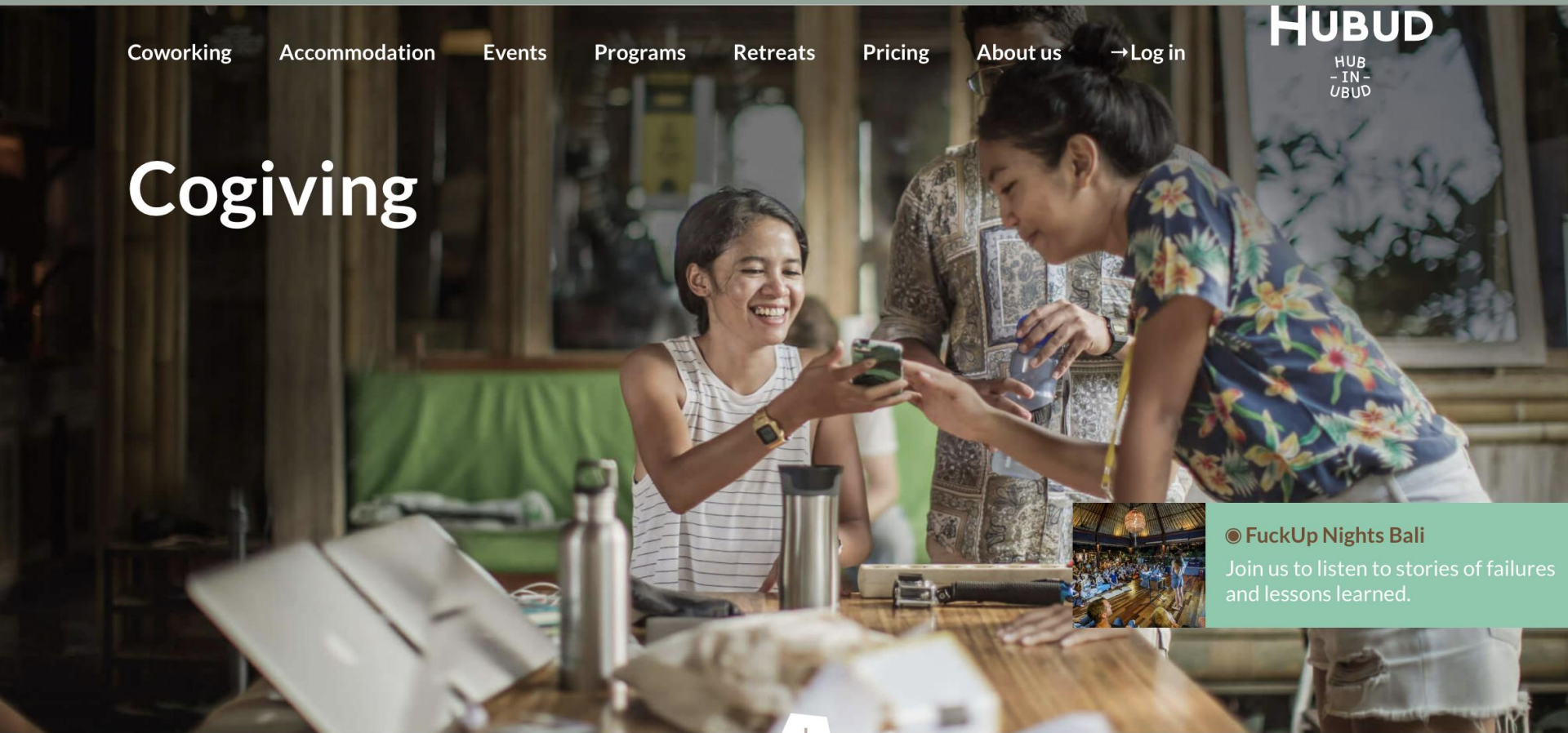
- Intermediation between local and global scales
 - Local anchoring for globalized and hyper-mobile workers
 - Social networks and websites as the main vectors of visibility of places on the "world map".
- Valorization and promotion of the territory by the creators and managers of the places.
- Networking of places (and their territory) by the
 - flow of digital nomads
 - exchanges between managers all over the world
- Fourth-places that question new forms of economic development
 - Networking, exchanging, innovating, creating a system with local actors? (« co-giving »)
 - Role of the facilitator in activating proximities (Rallet and Torre, 2004) and social embeddedness (Granovetter, 1985)?

Exploratory results: situations of territorial intermediation



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Cogiving



● FuckUp Nights Bali

Join us to listen to stories of failures and lessons learned.



A pop-up “community crew” focused on social impact + collaboration among Hubud members.

For many of us, Ubud isn't just a gorgeous travel destination—it's home. Our Cogiving program is how we create meaningful interactions + experiences with local businesses, the Balinese community, and each other. Participants chose to [go beyond being a “digital nomad”](#) and step into the dynamic role of interconnected team member—whether their stay is short or lasting.

Exploratory findings: three fourth-places paradoxes

1. **Singularity VS Standardization : authentic and original places but standardization of the functioning, the services, the public, the websites ...**
 - Process of institutional isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983)
 - Same public (age, social categories, ...), common objectives and common representations?
 - A-spatiality of the web
 - Hypermobility of digital nomads (Thompson, 2018) -> dissemination
 - Places nevertheless rooted in their environment (Debarbieux, 2014)
 - Territorializing of fourth-places (Liefoghe and Leducq, 2018)
 - Integration of local specificities and profiles of the founders/managers

Exploratory findings: three fourth-places paradoxes

2. Centrality VS Periphery: peripheral places that become central places, “compulsory passages”

- New global value chain decomposition (Defever and Mucchielli, 2006)
- Digitization of work that questions the Theory of Location of Activities (Krugman's New Geographic Economy)
 - No proximity to the market?
 - Online competition?
- Geographic centrality as a condition of innovation for the creative class (Florida, 2003)?

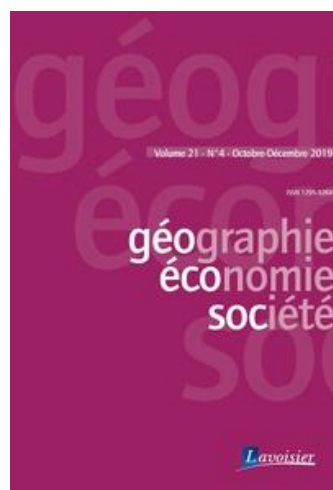
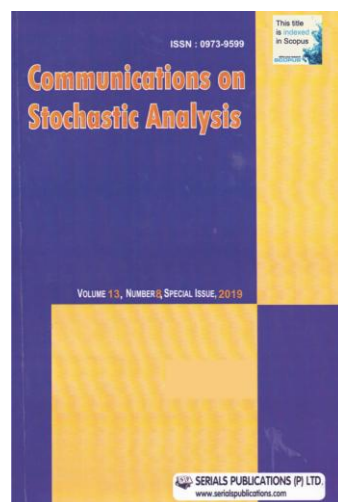
Exploratory findings: three fourth-places paradoxes

3. Connection VS Disconnection: looking for isolation but also for social and community relations

- On the one hand, social relations provide access to resources for innovation (Fabbri et al., 2016; Suire, 2013) ...
- ... on the other hand, the fourth-places are based on temporary exclusion, relative isolation
 - Encourages creativity (Borrillo, 2002)
 - "Participants in the creative process would be more likely to be creative as they move away from the original sources" (Ward et al., 2002).
- It questions the theory of clusters (Porter), the effects of agglomeration (innovation economy) ... of the spatial accumulation of social capital (Putnam, 1995).

Scientific valorization

- *Les nouvelles situations d'intermédiation territoriale : l'exemple des « quart-lieux » périphériques (espaces de coworkation)*, Géographie, Economie et Société (to be published)
- *Digital Nomads Tourism in Bali*, Communications on Stochastic Analysis, vol. 13, No. 8 (Special Issue 2019), 133-145
- Organization of a special session during the *ASRDLF congress* (ERSA for francophones), May 2020



57^e Colloque ASRDLF

Territoire(s) et numérique
Innovations, mutations et décision

30 juin 1^{er} et 2 juillet 2020

Proposition de session spéciale
Les nomades numériques, nouveaux lieux et nouveaux liens ?
Avignon, 30 juin au 2 juillet 2020

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Mots clés (4 max) : nomades numériques, territoires, liens lieux, travail, tourisme

Courte description de la session spéciale proposée (450 mots max + bibliographie indicative)
L'avènement des technologies numériques conduit un nombre croissant d'individus à s'affranchir des contraintes de localisation dans leur activité (Burtelino-Sagan et Nozava, 2017). Pour cette population, la proximité géographique ou lieu de travail devient superflue : ce sont d'autres critères qui interviennent dans le choix de leur lieu de vie. Les aménités territoriales et la qualité de vie s'emparent ainsi et jouent un rôle important. Autrement dit, leurs activités professionnelles ne contraignent pas ces individus à voyager mais bien ne les obligent pas plus à rester sédentaires.
Qu'ils soient entrepreneurs, travailleurs indépendants, ou télétravailleurs salariés, les nomades numériques (Baskinolo et Mourves, 1997 ; Wang et al., 2018) interrogent les paradigmes dominants concernant les choix de localisation des activités tant productives que récréatives : les avantages supposés des territoires denses en termes d'opportunités et d'externalités de réseau ne permettent pas d'expliquer certains choix de localisation pérennes. C'est à être désigné des grands centres économiques et des bassins de vie fortement peuplés. On observe ainsi de profondes mutations de certains territoires dits périphériques (Nozava, 2016).

Logo of the organizing institutions at the bottom.

Research perspectives

- Continuation of the analysis of the triptych “holidays, work, home” (fourth places as an intermediation device)
- Instrumentalization of peripherality (notion of ”tamed” peripherality)
- Analysis of the representations of the place by the users
- Measure the impacts in terms of economic development
- ...

International cooperation

- Partnership with Indonesian researchers
 - From Udayana Universitas (Bali)
 - Research trip planned this summer
 - Supported by the French Embassy and the French Foreign Affaires Ministry
 - 2 years funding
- Opportunity to make the project bigger
 - Strengthen the team with Las Palmas academics?
 - ERC type funding?
- On the longer term, create a research community about digital nomadism studies?

GRACIAS POR SU ATENCIÓN

*TERRITORIAL AND DIGITAL MOBILITIES
THROUGH TOURISM AND WORK*



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