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Does Round-the-World Travelling Evoke an
‘Environmental Eye’?
Mapping Leisure Mobility and the Formation
of Global Environmental Citizenship

This dissertation is submitted as part of a MA degree in Tourism, Environment and
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MA DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Considering the need to address increasingly globalised environmental issues, this research seeks to investigate the idea that new forms of environmental citizenship operating at a global scale can emerge from leisure mobility. An ‘environmental eye’ describes both a source and expression of commitment regarding the environment which round-the-world travellers develop whilst ‘on the move’. However, as leisure mobility betrays uneven geographies in both physical and virtual travel spaces, the social practice performed by the hypermobile elite may lead to asymmetrical formations of global environmental citizenship and neglect a multi-cultural approach to environmental action, dividing the ‘environmental eye’ between mobile and immobile individuals.

Keywords: Global environmental citizenship, tourism, leisure mobility, round-the-world travel, travel websites.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Issues of globalisation have moved from academic social theory to popular discussion in everyday conversations (Urry 1999). Today, it is widely recognised that an increasing number of material and immaterial flows extend beyond the boundaries and beyond the control of nation-states (Urry 2000b; 2000c). This is especially true for flows related to the environment such as greenhouse gases, ozone threatening gases which move from more developed to less developed countries while raw materials and commodities (produced at a huge environmental costs) flow from less developed to more developed countries (Urry 1999). It is also true for flows of people. During the last decades, air travel has switched from a luxury form of mobility into a contemporary form of hypermobility where more people are able to travel further at a lower per unit cost within a time budget (Schafer 2000). This hypermobility is characterized by cheap high-speed travel, as well as by its inclusion of new social groups (at least from the global “north”), including the mass movement of long distance tourists (Burns & Novelli 2008). Obviously, these developments are not compatible long term goals and are in conflict with attempts to achieve environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, it is precisely through the expansion in size and velocity of tourist flows, that knowledge of global risks, under development and environmental degradation became inescapable issues in the public sphere (Rojek 1998). In this context, is there any sign of a new kind of citizenship emerging, in which people would see themselves as shaping responsibilities regarding global environmental issues and ties with other environments beyond national borders?

In this research, it is suggested that round-the-world travelling can contribute to the formation of new forms of citizenship which induces deep shifts in attitudes and behaviour which are required for sustainability. However, considering the increasing prevalence of many forms of connections in the contemporary world (Desforges *et al.* 2005), traditional assessments regarding the environmental impacts of tourism fail to consider the potential benefits of this activity within a broader context of mobility (Hall 2005a). Therefore, by reconceptualising tourism as a form of “leisure-oriented temporary mobility” (Hall *et al.* 2004), this paper argues that new forms of environmental citizenship operating at a global scale can emerge from leisure mobility. Focusing our attention on mobility does not undermine the notion of citizenship *per se*, but rather alters the means of analysing how people consider their sense of citizenship, their sense of belonging and their sense of responsibility (Desforges *et al.* 2005).

The approach undertaken in this research is three fold. First, I introduce a new perspective with regard to assessing the environmental impacts of tourism, by considering the social practice within a broader context of mobility and evaluating how leisure mobility may relate to global citizenship and the environment. Second, I take round-the-world travellers as a case study in order to investigate whether travellers' physical and virtual movements embody any source and/or expression of commitment regarding the environment which transcends the local scale. Round-the-world travellers are surveyed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of human geography, including a review of travel websites, mapping travellers' itineraries, questionnaire surveys and interviews with key travellers. Finally, I discuss the potential role of leisure mobility in the formation and performance of environmental citizenship at the global scale, taking both physical and virtual travel into account.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW and OBJECTIVES

Globalisation, travel and tourism

Robins (1997) describes globalisation as the dissolution of the old structures and boundaries of nation states and communities, and the increasing transnationalisation of economic and cultural life. Besides, he considers globalisation as the growing mobility of goods, commodities, information, services and people across frontiers. From an individualistic perspective, globalisation means increasing the ability to travel further at a lower per unit cost within a time budget (Schafer 2000). This is limited to a substantial proportion of the population in developed countries or elites in developing countries. For these people, new technologies such as the internet and air travel have completely changed their personal mobility. Their increased leisure time, combined with burgeoning disposal incomes for some, enables them to become dedicated worldwide travellers (Reid 2003). This has led to a new series of social encounters, interactions and patterns of production as well as consumption (Suvantola 2002). The “locales” (i.e. a setting for interaction) in which this occurs are sometimes termed as destinations, and represent a particular type of lifestyle mobility that is usually termed as 'tourism' when it occurs away from the home environment (Hall 2005a, p25).

From tourism to leisure mobility

Defining tourism is a “particularly arid pursuit” (Williams & Shaw 1998, p2). Nevertheless, it is crucially important given that this research is dedicated to tourism, but it also considers the social practice within a wider conceptualisation of leisure and mobility. In tourism studies, the term ‘tourism’ is generally defined in reference to the World Tourism Organisation’s (WTO) which defines it as:

“[T]he activity that comprises persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” (WTO 2002).

By identifying the category of day tripping as a different form of tourism behaviour, such a

technical definition of tourism clearly makes the separations between what constitutes leisure, recreation, and tourism extremely arbitrary (Coles *et al.* 2005). However, although these distinctions are sometimes necessary (Shaw & Williams 2002), the society is not divided into sports players, television viewers, tourists and so on, rather “it is the same people who do all these things” (Parker 1999, p21). Therefore, as the boundaries between the concepts are ‘blurred’ (Hall *et al.* 2004), an increasing number of academics see considerable value in viewing tourism and recreation as part of a wider conceptualization of leisure (Shaw & Williams 2002; Hall & Page 2002):

“work is typically differentiated from leisure, but there are two main realms of overlap: first, business travel, which is often seen as a work oriented form of tourism; and, second, ‘serious leisure’, which refers to the breakdown between leisure and work pursuits and the development of leisure career paths with respect to hobbies and interests” (Hall 2005a, p18).

This emphasises the need to address the arbitrary boundaries between leisure, recreation, and tourism where the latter constitutes just one form of “leisure-oriented temporary mobility” (Hall *et al.* 2004), and is constitutive of that mobility (see Figure 1).

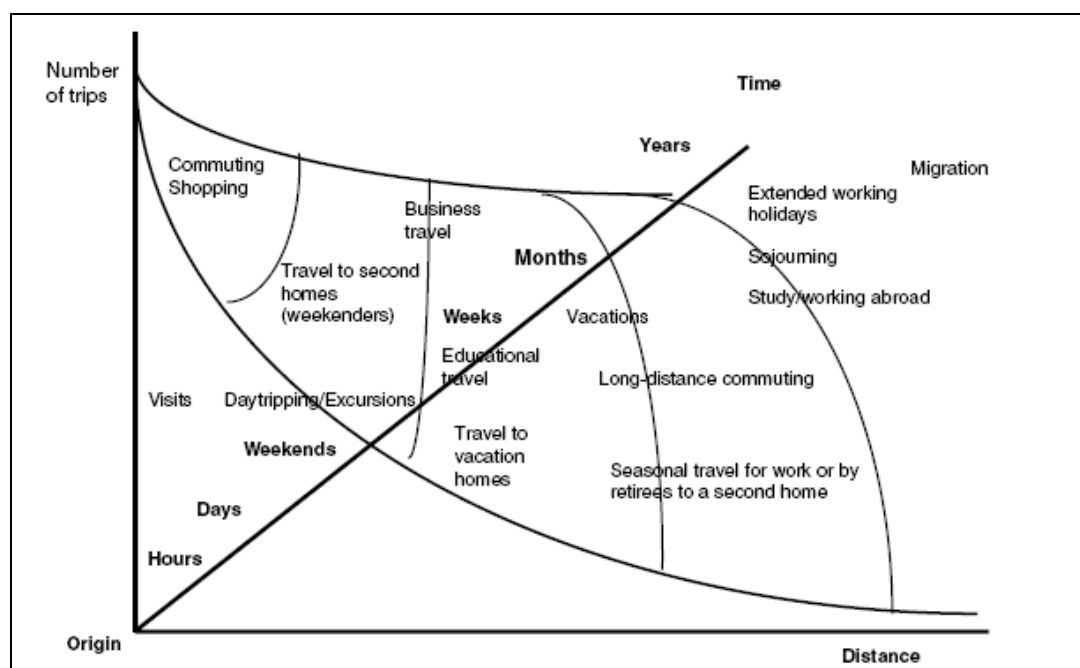


Figure 1: Extent of temporary mobility in space and time from Hall (2004a; 2004b)

Concurrently, a ‘mobility turn’ is spreading into and transforming the social science. At the intersection between transport research (including travel) and social research (including

tourism), it transcends the dichotomy between these two fields and puts into question the fundamental ‘territorial’ and ‘sedentary’ precepts of twentieth-century social science (Hannam *et al.* 2006). As Sheller and Urry (2006, p208) state, it “put[s] social relations into travel and connect[s] different forms of transport with complex patterns of social experiences conducted through communications at-a-distance”. In addition to this, the same authors argue that a ‘new mobilities paradigm’ is emerging. The concept of ‘mobilities’ is concerned with mapping both the large scale movements of people, objects and information throughout the world; as well as more local processes of daily transportation, and the travel of material things within everyday life (Hannam, 2008). Hence, the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ questions the notion of tourism *per se* claiming that “mobilities of people and objects, airplanes and suitcases, plants and animals, images and brands, data systems and satellites, all go into ‘doing’ tourism” (Sheller & Urry 2004, p1). Again, as tourism is increasingly seen as a process that has become integral to social life, it is becoming increasingly meaningful to talk about ‘leisure mobility’ when referring to individuals and their associated lifestyle mobility.

Focusing on mobility allow to make sense of some of the “chaotic conception” of tourism (Hall 2005a, p25) in such a way that its nature and its associated impacts can be explicitly addressed in terms of different forms of movement through space and time. Furthermore, mobility and its emerging patterns help in making sense of the evolving nature of the relationships between rich and poor regions of the world, ‘old’ and ‘new’ leisure patterns, and global and local realities (Burns & Novelli 2008). This becomes particularly true when considering contemporary global environmental challenges such as global warming for instance. In this research, I specifically address the change in nature of the relationship between leisure mobility, citizenship and the environment¹.

Global citizenship and the environment

Like most of the concepts in social sciences, citizenship is a contested term that often lacks clear definition. According to Turner (1993, p2), citizenship may be defined as “the set of practices (juridical, political, economic and cultural) which define a person as a competent member of society”. For Delanty (2000, p9), citizenship involves “a set of relationships

¹The term ‘environment’ will refer to the natural environment, i.e. the nature of the living space (sea or land), the climate, and the assortment of other organisms present (Mayhew 2009)

between rights, duties, participation and identity which serve to establish the terms of reference and nature of social group membership”. Actually, his definition illustrates how the notion of citizenship has moved from its decidedly ‘political’ form, to a more diffuse ‘social-cultural’ form of citizenship tied up with the question of *who* is accepted as a valuable and responsible member of a community (Painter and Philo 1995). Consequently, as citizenship is now related to the membership of a social group, it does not necessarily have to be aligned to a state anymore (Clarence 1999). Moreover, the concept of citizenship can therefore be extended to larger scales, including ‘the global’.

Following this, ‘global citizenship’ defends the idea that human beings are ‘citizens of the world’. Whether we are all global citizens or not is at the heart of the debate, but it can easily be accepted that a global citizen is a member of the wider community of all humanity, the world or a similar whole that is wider than that of a nation-state (Dower & Williams 2002). Dower and Williams (2002) identified two axes of debate based on global citizenship. First, the ‘ethical’ component is concerned with the values and the core norms for advocating world citizenship (what should they be?). Second, the ‘citizenship’ component is dealing with the sense of the title of a global citizen (is there a substantive and plausible sense of citizenship?). For instance, Bowden (2003, p355) argued that “to be in position to claim to be a global citizen is a privilege that is reserved for the modern, affluent global *bourgeoisie*”, and to join the liberal-democratic Western world, outsiders are welcome but only if they conform to Western values. However, considering the initial philosophical inspiration of global citizenship (being someone who cares for the world as a whole), the concept is considered by more and more academics as a meaningful framework for debating issues that need global responses, including environmental ones. In addition, citizenship is often highly contested. It is an actively created and negotiated status that is shifted and remodelled in response to large and small processes and movements (Marston & Mitchell 2006). Then, in order to provide important potentialities for improving and expanding the possibilities for greater equality and justice for all, it is the formation of citizenship that must be at the heart of the debate on global citizenship when dealing with issues which operate at a global scale.

Currently, one of the key issues that can potentially lead to the formation of new forms of citizenship at the global level, is the environment. As Newby (1996, p215) put it: “[t]here is an increasing awareness that the environmental challenges we face today are, increasingly, international, global and potentially more life-threatening than in the past. In this sense, each

individual's future is tied, in the title of the Brundtland Report, to 'Our Common Future' and we are all, therefore, [global] environmental citizens now". Derived from the gradual globalisation of concerns of the mid-1980s (Jelin 2000), the term 'environmental citizenship' was first coined in 1990 by Environment Canada. The federal ministry of the environment was encouraging "individuals, communities and organisations to think about the environmental rights and responsibilities we all have as residents of planet Earth" (quoted in MacGregor & Szerszynski 2003, p8). Since then, it has been slowly establishing itself as a distinctive way of linking environmental concern, the public, and policy process (Szerszynski 2006). Scales to which environmental citizenship operate vary from the local to the global, especially when considering contemporary globalisation of environmental issues. Therefore, the idea of a 'global environment' has also gradually established itself as a reality. Encompassing the idea of a shared environment, it can be regarded as a causal system that includes ecosystems, weather and climate, a system that makes relational environments possible and forms a distinct object of study (Attfield 2002). However, as Jelin (2000) argued, nobody can claim that a global consensus exists regarding how to conceptualise the global environment, furthermore, she writes:

"[The environment] is an international arena of struggle and conflict of interests and of worldviews. The universalistic scope of the environmental movement does not imply that environmentalism is a unified, homogeneous cause. On the contrary, its heterogeneity is very significant, both in terms of the agents involved and the ideological perspectives presented (Jelin 2000, p50)".

Meanwhile, environmental responsibilities regarding this controversial global environment constitute the most obvious focus of concern for those claiming to be a global citizen, as well as the territory where global obligations clearly arise (Attfield 2002). These deal with shared environmental risks such as global warming which, even if debatable, are not an abstraction for these citizens (Urry 2000a). They view the importance and vulnerability of the environment, and consider those to be their concern (Attfield 2002). From here, I consider leisure mobility as an opportunity for travellers to raise their awareness regarding the environment, including its global dimension.

The formation of global citizenship and leisure mobility

Scholars have identified civil society as a key feature in the formation of citizenship, as well as what makes the exercise of global citizenship a serious possibility (Muetzelfeldt & Smith 2002; Marston & Mitchell 2006). International non-governmental organisations are potential key institutions in the formation of global citizenship, by creating a politicized arena for discussion and action on global issues (Desforges 2004). In order to regard themselves as global citizens, constitutive members of civil society are usually inspired and motivated by their sensitivity to social, political and economic problems in areas such as development, the environment, and human rights (Dower & Williams 2002). The development of such awareness is supported by the increased interconnectedness brought about by globalisation as well as the increased mobility of individuals (at least from the global 'north') in travelling the world for work and leisure (Desforges & Wood 2005). Besides, it is precisely through the expansion in size and velocity of individual flows, that knowledge of global risks, under development and environmental degradations became inescapable issues in the public sphere (Rojek 1998). This did not undermine the notion of citizenship *per se* but rather changed the ways in which people think about their sense of citizenship, their sense of belonging, and their sense of responsibility (Desforges *et al.* 2005).

Therefore, 'mobility' has also become a key feature in the formation of global (sometimes environmental) citizenship. In this regard, Urry (2000b) identified two kinds of travel that leisure mobility incorporates: physical or real travel, which has become a 'way of life' for many in Western societies; and virtual travel, that is transcending geographic and often social distance through information and communication technology such as the internet. Following the 'mobility turn' within social sciences as mentioned above, Szerszynski (2005) argued that real or virtual movement within the world can be both a source and expression of commitments that transcend the local:

"Of course, physical travel often involves serious impacts on the environment - impacts that have to be set against any beneficial changes in ideas or attitudes that it might also engender. But a defining feature of what Zygmunt Bauman (2000) calls "liquid modernity" is an accelerated movement of people, images, ideas, products, and information across local and nation borders - a movement that is not only materially but also culturally important for the way it alters the nature of place".

While mobility represents a creative possibility in the construction of global citizenship, Desforges *et al.* (2005) argued that concepts of place and scale are also central to the structures and experiences of citizenship. These geographically inflected concepts are intrinsic to the practical reworking of citizenship and have much to contribute to the development of citizenship theory (Desforges *et al.* 2005). First, citizenship is formed through engagement with 'place' (Barnett & Low 2004). Hence, focusing on travellers' behaviour and experiences allows us to understand how these shape people, who in turn shape places; including the environment they visited and live in today. Second, citizenship seems to be shifting scales in contemporary globalised world. It moves away from national affiliations, towards global forms of belonging and responsibility (Molz 2005). Thus, while citizenship is transgressed by mobile beings, it is also formed through scale configuration and engagement with place (Desforges *et al.* 2005).

An inspection of the literature reveals that an increasing number of studies deals with mobility and its implications for global citizenship *per se*. However, scholars gave little attention to the role of leisure mobility in the formation of global citizenship, and furthermore have not addressed specifically the question of how leisure mobility can relate to the environment and the formation of global environmental citizenship. Studies concerning virtual travel investigated the role of media images in developing a sense of global citizenship in depth (Szerszynski & Toogood 2000, Szerszynski *et al* 2000, Urry 1999). An emerging body of the literature related to physical travel tends to focus on tourism and migration (Coles 2008 in Noveli), international volunteering (Simpson 2004; Raymond & Hall 2008), the 'tourism and travel' industry (Carlson 2008), or international mega-events such as the Olympic Games (Roche 2002). However, these studies fail to frame leisure practices within a broader social context of mobility. The only 'exception to the rule' in the social science literature (at least at the time of writing) is Molz's recent work on cosmopolitanism² and global citizenship (2004, 2005, 2006a; 2006b, 2008). Although she never discusses any form of environmental

² Recent debates over citizenship in the global context have revolved around the notion of cosmopolitanism, that is « an ethical theory according to which all human beings belong to one moral realm or domain and in principle have obligations towards one another across that domain » (Dower and Williams 2002, pxx). Simply understood, a cosmopolitan citizen is someone who is familiar with and at ease in many different countries and cultures.

citizenship, she took a geographical perspective to investigate both physical and virtual travel by looking at round-the-world travellers and the websites they publish while travelling around the world.

Emblematic of the new “hypermobile cosmopolitan elites” (O’Regan 2008), round-the-world travellers are at the intersection between global corporeal mobility and virtual mobility via the high-tech, high-speed realm of global information technology (Molz 2005). Drawing from Holmes’ (2001) idea that contemporary forms of citizenship are deterritorialized, Germann Molz (2005, p524) demonstrated how round-the-world travellers see their mobility not just as a right derived from a specific national identity, but also as “an obligation to produce tolerance, interconnectedness and cultural understanding out of encounters with difference”. Arguing that contemporary forms of citizenship are now defined more by mobilities than by places, she shows how round-the-world travellers reproduce and circulate a cosmopolitan form of citizenship through the narratives they publish online. Furthermore, she asserts that round-the-world travellers enact global citizenship along an “axis of risks, rights and responsibilities” which combines national and global affiliations within the context of mobility (Molz 2005, p521). Among the hazards faced by global citizens, Urry (2000a) included shared environmental risks. Global citizens are entitled to a series of rights including the right to be mobile, and the right to purchase commodities from across the globe and to consume other places and environments. In exchange for such entitlements, global citizens are subject to certain duties, including an obligation to be informed about the state of the world, to live in an ethical and sustainable manner, to act in the interest of the global public (Molz 2005). However, can Molz’s model be verified when considering travellers’ responsibilities regarding the environment? Is it applicable in terms of environmental citizenship? This research thus addresses the remaining theoretical gap regarding the interpretation of leisure mobility as a way of developing global environmental citizenship.

Objective, hypothesis and research questions

Considering the increasing prevalence of global connections of all kinds in the contemporary world (Desforges *et al.* 2005), including those allowing accelerated physical and virtual travel, and the need for new forms of citizenship in order to respond to increasingly globalised environmental issues (Newby 1996); this research aims to provide a different way of

approaching the question of the environmental impacts of 'tourism'. To do so, the social practice is conceptualized in a broader social concept of "leisure-oriented temporary mobility" (Hall *et al.* 2004) operating at a global scale, which allows a consideration of mobility, places, and scales as key features in the formation of contemporary forms of citizenship. As previously mentioned, travel may involve serious impacts on the environment, but these have to be set against any beneficial changes in ideas or attitudes that may also be engendered (Szerszynski 2006). This brings us to the main research hypothesis asserting that new forms of environmental citizenship which operate at a global scale can emerge from leisure mobility.

By taking round-the-world travellers as a case study and looking at the websites they published whilst travelling around the world, this research investigates whether travellers' physical and virtual mobility embody any source and/or expression of commitment regarding the environment which transcend 'the local'. This main research question suggests two sub-questions. First, to what extent do round-the-world travellers consider their trip to bring about environmental awareness? Second, to what extent do round-the-world travellers consider their ability to travel as a means of performing environmental citizenship? In short, does round-the-world travel evoke an 'environmental eye'? With these questions being at the centre of the discussion, the latter will then develop the potential role of leisure mobility in the formation and performance of environmental citizenship at the global scale, taking both physical and virtual travel into account. This will permit a bridging of the gaps within the exploration of the role played by leisure mobility in the formation of a frequently contested notion of global environmental citizenship.

Finally, by focusing on round-the-world travellers and the websites they publish while travelling around the world, this research forms somewhat of a response to Sheller and Urry's (2006) call for more studies related to human mobility at the global level that bring together more 'local' concerns about spatial relations of mobility, as well as more 'technological' concerns about mobile information and communication technologies.

3. METHODOLOGY and DATA COLLECTION

A human geography approach encompassing both quantitative and qualitative methods

Within the field of human geography, the approach adopted in this research embraces geographers' recent engagement with reconsidering the geography of tourism within a broader social context of mobility (e.g. Burns & Novelli 2008; Coles *et al.* 2004; Hall 2005a; Hall & Page 2009; Hannman 2008). In their investigations, geographers usually follow sociological approaches such as Urry's (2004) 'new social physics'. However, while developing a "new social physics", the contributions of "old social physics" should not be ignored, i.e. considering both "macro-level quantitative accounts of patterns of human mobility" and "micro-level accounts of individual human behaviour" (Hall 2005c, p95). This is the reason why this research considers leisure mobility over the totality of a trip as well as over individuals' perspective, and thus integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods for mapping leisure mobility and the formation of global environmental citizenship.

In addition, whilst drawing upon both their quantitative and qualitative traditions, geographers also engaged in the understanding of "actually existing citizenship" (Desforges & Wood 2005, p448). The practices of citizenship as they are enacted in everyday life in different contexts (from the heart of international institutions to the household's domestic kitchen) are central to the theorisation of citizenship (Desforges *et al.* 2005). Therefore, in this research round-the-world travellers are approached through their travel websites in order to investigate the formation of citizenship as it unfolds 'on the ground' and to evaluate one of the "real world discourses" (Schattle 2007, p24) pertaining to global environmental citizenship.

Sample

This research surveyed 75 round-the-world travel websites generally and analysed a sample of 20 websites and web authors in greater depth. The detailed sample was representative of the 75 round-the-world travel websites in terms of age, nationality and gender, and was surveyed through questionnaires and four complementary interviews. It represents thirty four travellers,

of whom fourteen were male and six were female. Ages were ranged from the early twenties to over sixty years old, but most were in their thirties. The majority of travellers were middle class, white, and were nation to Canada, United States of America, United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, France, Switzerland, or Australia. Such details about their national identity are important as it determines a traveller's ability to engage with mobility. As Bauman (1998, p86) noted, mobility is "the freedom to choose where to be", and a Taiwanese passport holder is not able to travel as many destinations as a British passport holder for instance. Therefore, as "whiteness travels well" (Puar 1994, p91), such parameters will affect the ability (or right) to travel around the world and thus influence the formation of global citizenship.

In this study, round-the-world travellers consulted were mostly backpackers (also called budget travellers or sometimes vagabonds) and independent travellers who were travelling around the world for a period varying between a couple of months and a year (e.g. gap year travellers), to as long as five years. Most of the travellers visited one to two countries per month, although some travelled to less than one and some more than three per month. Such variation of the destination ratio within the sample shows that disparities can also emerge amongst the 'hypermobile elite'. With a few notable exceptions, these travellers decided to journey around the world in order to take some time away from their studies or career, or after retiring. In contrast to the 'mobility poor' for whom the desire for mobility is dictated by climate change or economic migration needs, they are emblematic of the 'mobility rich' 21st century citizen in that their desire for mobility is mainly driven by the will to "combat ennui resulting from 'having it all'" (Burns & Novelli 2008). As Molz (2006b, p5) additionally found: "round-the-world traveller is [...] a mobile, detached *flâneur* who delights in encounters with difference, displays a willingness to risk and a stance of openness toward other cultures, but is always just passing through". Considering travellers' ability to circumnavigate the world and their 'openness' to encounter "otherness" (Bennett 2008, p132), the most interesting aspect here is the need to determine the extent to which this creates an opportunity for raising environmental awareness (either theirs and/or the one of their encounters), as well as bringing travellers to 'act in favour of the environment' (either 'on the road' and/or once back home).

Data collection

Review of travel websites

According to Molz (2005), in 2003 there were close to 2000 online travelogues catalogued by the major English-language search engines such as Google, Yahoo! and Altavista. These travel websites usually consist of regularly updated journal entries and photographs detailing what travellers experience on the road. Most of the time websites include detailed information about travellers, their trip, and their itinerary. Sometimes it includes biographical information, travel budgets, packing lists, link to relevant sites, and travel advices. For most of the travellers, updating their website is an integral part of their travel experience. Details of their whereabouts and records of their activities and feelings while travelling make of online travelogues “experiential and cognitive information” (Richards & Wilson 2004, p7) about the way they relate with the environment while travelling. Therefore, similarly to Cloke *et al.*'s (2004) vision of travel writing, these online travel writings are interpreted here for the insights it provides about ways ‘the environment’ is understood by web authors and the society he or she visited, and the ways in which those understandings may in turn affect society.

In addition, online travel narratives are at the intersection between technology and global mobility (Molz 2008), which give travellers the opportunity to produce a reflexive text visible to the online audience (Molz 2006a). The analysis thus also focused on the ways travellers used information and communication technology (ICT) to share places of environmental beauty they visited and/or report environmental concerns they observed. Furthermore, attention was also focused on determining whether or not interactive travel opens up new spaces for effective environmental debate with that geographically dispersed audiences such as friends, family, and other travellers. While travel websites were very helpful to provide qualitative information about both virtual and physical travel and the ways in which these contribute to the formation of environmental citizenship, a complementary quantitative approach had to be used to investigate physical travel.

Mapping itineraries

To capture travellers’ physical travel, a map representing their itineraries was drawn on the

basis of an inventory of the countries visited by travellers from the 75 round-the-world websites surveyed generally. This allowed travellers' experiences and their associated mobility in time and space to be framed quantitatively, and gave a snapshot of the "locales" (Hall 2005a, p25) in which travellers interact. However, as well as providing a macro-level description of round-the-world traveller's spatialities, travellers' itineraries were also considered as "temporal-spatial carriers of traveller experiences" (Wang 2006, p72), that is to say something which was determined by social, political, economical, and cultural parameters (e.g. safety, flight costs, personal interests, cultural diversity). Analysing these two aspects of itineraries assisted in unifying the quantitative and qualitative forms of leisure mobility.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire was addressed to the representative sample of twenty travellers from the 75 travel websites reviewed. It was elaborated on the basis of the websites review. For instance, different types of environmental issues were identified within travel website. Then, surveyed travellers were asked which of the issues did they face during their trip and where. The questionnaire was mostly used as vehicle for "scientific hypothesis testing, p131" (Cloke *et al.* 2004). It surveyed travellers in order to obtain empirical information related to the main study variables identified in the literature review (see table 1).

Variables	Definition	Information gathered in the questionnaire and used to measure variables
Physical travel	The more mobile a traveller is, the more geographical areas and their associated environmental issues he or she potentially encounters	How many countries did they visit? Do you think this affected your environmental awareness?
Virtual travel	Being virtually mobile through ICT such as the Internet allows sharing and reporting of environmental concerns, but also to open debates about environmental issues	What did you use your travel website for?
Place	Environmental awareness is developed by discovering particular places of the world where environmental issues are witnessed.	Which environmental issues did you face? Can you remember where?

Itineraries	Temporal-spatial carriers of round-the-world travelling, itineraries bridge both qualitative and quantitative aspects of leisure mobility	Which countries did you visit?
Experience	Environmental awareness is developed through a variety of experiences sought by round-the-world travellers, which determines the way they engage with the place and potentially the environment	What are the experiences that opened your eyes on environmental issues?
Global environmental issues	Round-the-world travel gives the opportunity to gain consciousness of the existence of a shared environment and its associated issues	Do you think the environmental issues faced during your trip have an impact on where you live at the moment?
Commitment regarding the environment	Travellers behaviour betrays their commitment for the environment	Did you take any action to be more 'environmentally friendly' when travelling?
Environmental responsibility	Travelling can change people's responsibilities regarding global environmental issues	Do you feel responsible for any of the environmental issues witnessed during you trip?

Table 1: Study variables from the author

Some limitations emerged from the questionnaires. When asking about 'citizenship', people often associated the notion solely with their national affiliation, but almost never considered extending it to the global scale or the environment. Also, despite the fact that half of the questions were 'open', people did not develop their responses extensively. In order to counter these limitations and for the integrity of my research to remain strong, complementary interviews were conducted amongst the sample of twenty people.

Complementary interviews

Following the questionnaire, four phones interviews were conducted. Ideal for open ended questions, this "sensitive and people-oriented" method (Valentine 1997, p111) permitted in-depth discussion regarding travellers' experiences and the extent to which it affected their environmental awareness and environmental citizenship. Two of the four interviews were conducted with people considered as 'committed', that is, those who where involved in an environmentally-related organisation before and after their trip, and who significantly changed their behaviours to travel in an 'environmentally friendly' fashion. The two other interviews were conducted with 'non-committed' travellers, that is, people who neither were

involved, nor changed their travel behaviour. Amongst the questions asked for the 'committed' were:

- Do you consider the environmental actions you took during your trip as an act of environmental citizenship? Why?
- To whom do you think it is going to benefit?
- Why do you think they are good?

The questions asked for the 'uncommitted' were:

- Do you think you should adapt your way of travelling?
- Is it a way to improve your responsibility for the environment?
- Would you consider this as part of any environmental citizenship?

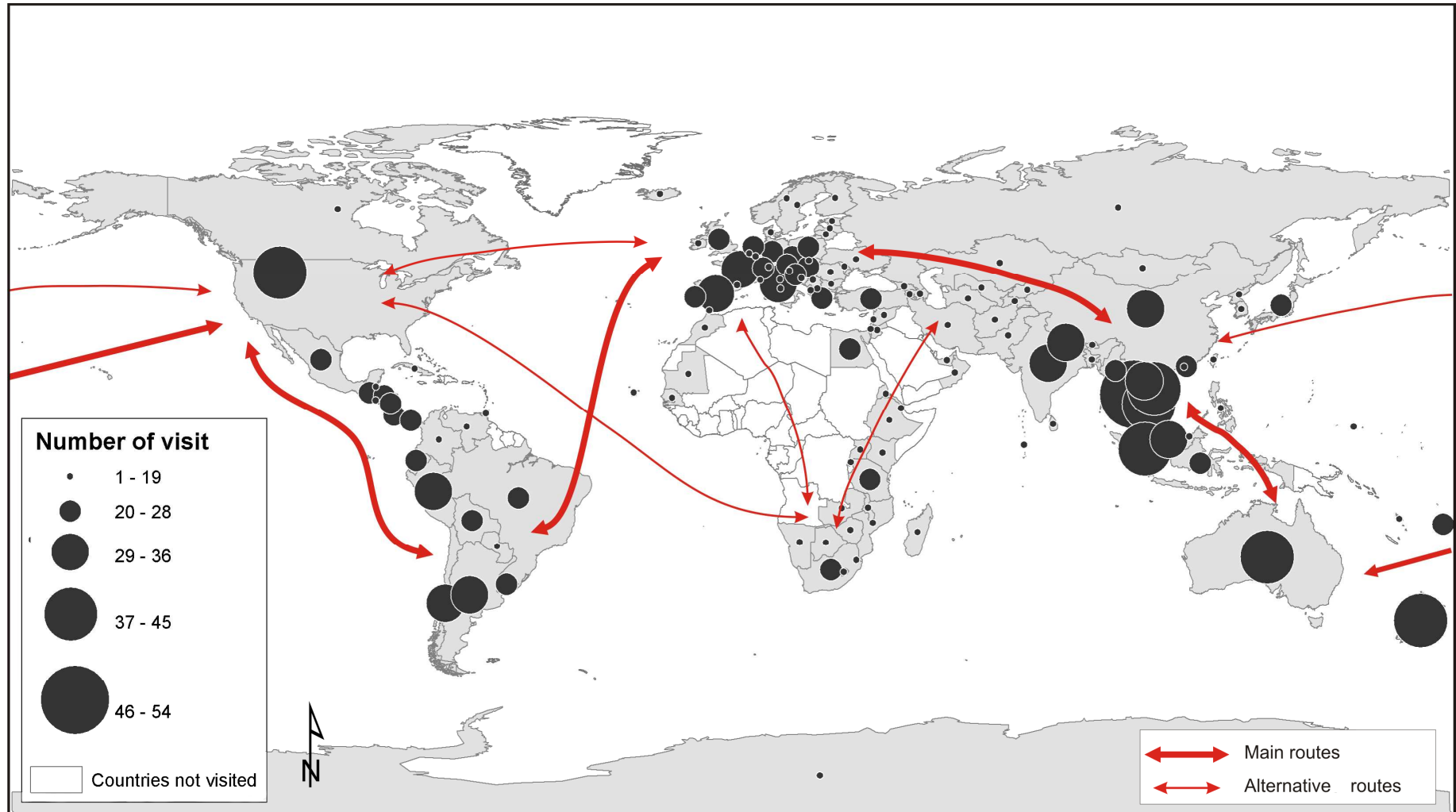
4. RESULTS and ANALYSIS

Material from travel websites, questionnaires and interviews were analysed and presented together in order to answer the research questions previously stated. This permitted a comparison of complementary information from the three different sources and allowed the results to be presented in a way which set up the following discussion.

Itineraries of round-the-world travellers

Round-the-world travellers exhibit a high degree of mobility. Not surprisingly, they travelled to every continent but also visited a wide range of geographical areas, including equatorial rainforests, polar regions, steppes plains, mountain ranges, seas and oceans, coastal zones, and deserts. But, the locations visited on every continent and the routes between them generally remained the same. The map of round-the-world travellers' itineraries highlighted three main clusters of destinations: South-East Asia (33.6% of the 75 surveyed round-the-world travellers), Europe (27.3%) and the Western fringe of Latin America (19.7%). These betray main global travel routes (see Map 1).

Map 1: Countries visited and routes followed by 75 round-the-world travellers originated from the USA, UK, Europe and Australia between 1999 and 2009 (from the author).



Travellers circumnavigating the globe from Europe generally follow the same main ‘Western route’. They first fly to South America, explore Latin America from South to North using overland transport (usually buses) in countries such as Argentina, Chile and Peru. Then from Mexico or North America, they tend to fly across the Pacific Ocean to New-Zealand or Australia, sometimes via small islands such as the Cook Islands, French Polynesia or Samoa. From Oceania, travellers take ‘short’ flights to South-East Asia. In this part of the world, Thailand is almost systematically visited, but travellers also show a great interest in surrounding countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia, and also India and China. Following the countries of the rising sun, most travellers fly straight back to the ‘old continent’. But, some travellers visit countries in Western Asia and the Middle East or Central Asia. The latter part of the world is usually crossed using the world’s longest train, the Trans-Siberian Railway. Also, round-the-world travellers originating from Europe follow an ‘Eastern route’, that is the same itinerary but in reverse. Alternatively, some visit Western Africa before going to South America; or fly down to South Africa first, then travel up north overland across Western Africa, and finally join the mainstream ‘Eastern route’. Most people travelling around the world from North America follow the ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern route’ as described above. In both cases, they usually visit more places in Europe including Eastern European countries, but most importantly France, Spain and Italy. Alternatively, on the ‘Western route’, many of them skip Oceania to flight straight to South-East Asia or avoid Europe on their way back to visit some countries of Africa. On the western route, some of them avoid Latin America to visit European or African countries first. Travellers from Australia did not show any differentiated pattern from the main western and eastern routes described above.

Places and environmental issues observed

The following table enumerates environmental issues documented in travel websites of respondents from the questionnaires associated a particular location (see Table 2). Travelling actually opened travellers’ eyes to a variety of environmental issues.

Table 2: Countries where environmental issues were observed by 20 round-the-world travellers between 1999 and 2009 (sorted by order of occurrence) - from the author

Environmental issue	Place	Count
Pollution (air and water)	China, India, Thailand, USA, Brunei Vietnam, Russia, Columbia	21
Deforestation	Malaysia, Indonesia, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Brunei, China, India, Vietnam, Australia, Canada, USA	20
Wastes (litter)	India, China, Thailand, Kenya, Egypt	12
Global warming	Antarctica, Austria, France, Canada, Chile, China, Mongolia, Nepal, Australia	10
Desertification	Australia, China, Mongolia, Peru, Mauritania	8
Overfishing	Chile, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand	5
Resource depletion	Bolivia, China, India, Canada, USA	5
Ozone hole	Australia, Antarctica, New Zealand	4
Soil erosion	Canada, USA, Bolivia, Guatemala	4
Loss of biodiversity	Costa Rica, Ecuador, Malaysia	3
Coral reef bleaching	Australia, Belize	2

The issues considered as most important were those which had a direct impact on travellers, such as waste and pollution; but also those which could be observed visually such as deforestation, and sometimes global warming. In the first case, some travellers experienced breathing and visual difficulties because of air pollution in big cities. In Bangkok, some of them were affected by seeing Police and others in the street wearing masks. In Mumbai and Beijing some people noted seeing the discolouration of the sky instead of its usual blue appearance. Travellers also reported waste related issues which were mainly in East and South-East Asia (especially in India). Many reported the rubbish thrown out of windows and along the streets, which made the cities they were visiting “un sanitary” (Matt³ 2009). In the second case, some travellers admitted having the “emotional impact” (Adrian 2009) of flying over the Amazon or the Borneo rainforest and seeing destruction of large portions of the forest. Finally, a few travellers claimed that ‘witnessing’ dramatic changes in ice melting made global warming more clear to them. Ludovic for instance, who travelled around-the-

³ Respondents’ names are pseudonyms in order to preserve their privacy.

world hitchhiking from France for five years, explained in the interview how going to Antarctica allowed him to see and learn the impacts of climate change:

Ludovic (2009): “I spent about 3 weeks with scientists and learned tons of things about climate change. Even though you can’t see the ice melting with your eyes, scientists showed me how things were a few years ago and how they are now. It is quite amazing to see such a fast change”

When asking respondents about how much these issues affect their present lives, round-the-world travellers did not see any direct effect other than a general global warming. This environmental concern is often associated with deforestation as logging diminishes the planet’s capacity to absorb carbon dioxide, which has an impact on temperatures and climate patterns. Some claim to already see the difference. For instance, an English traveller “cannot remember summers being so wet” (Matt 2009). Additionally, those living in a coastal area were aware that climate change might lead to the submersion of their cities.

Travellers’ experiences and environmental awareness-raising

Although all respondents thought themselves to be sensitive to environmental issues before they left, they considered travelling as the most important way to raise their environmental awareness beyond high school and university education. As stated by two American travellers:

Derek (2009): “It is difficult for many of us to understand the problem when you live in a fairly clean environment If people experienced the environmental problems firsthand ..., they could better understand the massive problems out there”.

Moreover:

Iain (2009): “Seeing things as a formal tourist (on trips, museums etc) you only see the image that they [the tourism industry] want to project ... [But] wandering around by yourself, talking to other travellers, to locals, or volunteering gets you ‘under the surface’ to the real world”.

Hence, travellers’ previous environmental consciousness was reinforced during their journey, but this varied greatly depending on individual’s way of travelling (see Table 3).

Table 3: Travel experiences considered by 20 round-the-world travellers as influencing their environmental awareness (from the author)

Type of experience	Count
Talking or living with locals	12
Tourist activities	12
Sharing experiences with other travellers	11
Reading travel books	10
Visiting museums	8
Working	7
Volunteering	5
Visiting relatives	2

Respondents found that both talking with locals and tourist activities were significant in raising their environmental awareness. On the one hand, travellers reported that meeting local people at a destination, who were directly reliant on their local environment (land, crops, water), made them more aware of the issues being faced. For the travellers who were engaged in ‘slow travel’ such as hitchhiking or travelling by local transportations (trains or buses), their situation allowed them to get closer to local realities, including environmental issues such as water depletion or desertification. On the other hand, other travellers claimed that being involved in tourism activities was rewarding. These included wildlife viewing tours with passionate people describing their work with the environment, and trying to raise people’s awareness on environmental issues. Although, not all travellers’ activities were ‘nature oriented’. Finally, reading travel books was considered useful by travellers as it gave them more detailed information on the background and causes of environmental issues in certain areas. These seemed more objective than tourist information.

Environmentally-responsible travel and commitment regarding the environment

Most round-the-world travellers were well aware of the environmental impact of their trip. They could make the links between environmental issues (including global environmental change) and their own daily actions. Surveyed respondents detailed an important number of actions they took on the way to be more ‘environmentally friendly’ (see Table 4). Although,

some claimed they struggled enough to save money and travel, and so refused to restrict their plans for any “environmental cause” (Wes 2009), or they simply stated that backpacking is “the most environmentally friendly way of travelling” (Rosie 2009).

Table 4 : Summary of respondents’ attitudes in order to be more ‘environmentally friendly’ (from the author)

Transportation	Marie: “[W]e walked when possible (avoided taxis).” Derek: “We tried not to use a car every day but walked and rode bikes instead.” Ludovic: “Hitchhiking (people go from A to B anyway).” Iain: “I intended to not to fly too often (only between continents) and used local transportation wherever possible.” Scott: “We travelled by train, boat, buses etc... in order to avoid flying.”
Accommodation	Adrian: “We didn’t stay at large, polluting resorts” Marie: “[We] adjusted thermostats when possible to conserve energy” Iain: “Stayed in basic hotels with none of the usual services, so no towels being supplied and washed everyday, no aircon etc.”
Food, Drinks and Goods	Annemieke: “We refilled plastic water bottles” Marie: “[We] used backpacks to carry food (rather than shopping bags)” Matt: “We tried to eat locally produced foods to keep down food miles” Travis: “...I looked for environmentally friendly travel goods and paid a slight premium compared to just choosing the lowest price item”
Wastes	Marie: “I tried to avoid using plastic” Otto: “I made sure my waste was disposed of in a proper fashion”
Tourist activities	Annemieke: “We tried to find shops and nature/wildlife watching tours that had a good reputation vis-à-vis environmental consciousness”

Opinions were divergent about travellers’ responsibilities regarding environmental issues faced during their trip. On the one hand, some travellers did not feel they had any responsibility regarding the local problems they were witnessing as they felt the solution to these problems was out of their sphere of influence:

Dalit (2009): “I felt I couldn’t do anything about it [wastes] in India, since there were no bins, and if there were bins, people who came to empty them just threw everything in the road or in the river”.

On the other hand, as members of industrialized countries enjoying the comforts of a modern

society (Rosie 2009), most travellers felt responsible in a general way. Flying over thousands of kilometres during their journey made them responsible for a global issue such as global warming.

Some travellers radically changed their behaviour in order to be more environmentally friendly whilst travelling. One did a round-the-world trip hitchhiking in five years, and the two other by train for one year. Those travellers were already involved in environmental related organisations before leaving but they all claimed that their journey reinforced their environmental awareness and convictions:

Iain (2009): “During my two years round-the-world trip, I witnessed many dramatic situations regarding the environment [...]. My environmental awareness raised a lot during this trip. This is why I decided to do a lecture tour and raise awareness at schools and universities around-the-world”.

On the contrary, those who did not change their travel behaviour significantly claimed they had no specific duty to take actions to preserve the environment once back home. Subsequently they considered that global environmental issues should be dealt with to a greater extent by international organisations.

Travel websites were also used as a mediator to encourage people to travel responsibly regarding the environment. For instance, some web authors encouraged travellers to keep their waste until they found an appropriate disposal method. Regarding respondents from the questionnaire survey, more than half of the web authors claimed they used their travel website to show places of environmental beauty they visited and to reflect on their travel. One quarter of them stated using their blog to share environmental concerns. However, none of these engaged in any specific environmental debate with the online audience.

5. DISCUSSION

On the basis of the results detailed below, this section examines how leisure mobility, either real or virtual, embodies both sources and expressions of commitment regarding the environment. It discusses the extent to which such commitment can be considered as an opportunity for the formation of global environmental citizenship.

Leisure mobility as a source for global environmental citizenship

Round-the-world travel can potentially be a source of commitment regarding the environment. Although, while the social practice of circumnavigating the globe is often considered by its proponents as an environmental awareness-raising journey, some limitations remain within both physical and virtual travel performed by travellers.

Physical travel

The potential of round-the-world travellers to relate to the environment lies in three of their main characteristics: their nationality and access to financial resources; their initial will for large scale travel; and their openness towards the “otherness” (Bennett 2008, p132). First, a key feature in the access to travel experiences and potential knowledge about the environment is traveller’s nationality and access to financial resources. Surveyed round-the-world travellers all felt that their country of origin facilitated their access to destinations. Coming from a rich country helps in obtaining visas, but also to be able to afford transportation. Moreover, ‘Western’ affiliation can sometimes be more than a tourist visa:

Ludovic (2009): “I know also that if I have been able to hitch an ice-breaker to go to Antarctica, it is also because I come from a “rich” country. Unfortunately, it would have been harder for sure if I was Colombian or Afghani”.

This perfectly illustrates how, in some cases, nationality might also give access to extra travel experiences that people from developing countries will probably never get.

Second, travellers’ global mobility enables them to visit every continent on Earth, including a

great variety of geographical environments. They can even afford to go to the most remote places of the Earth such as Antarctica or the Pacific Islands. Subsequently, this gives them the opportunity to encounter potential issues resulting from interactions between the society they are visiting and these environments. Round-the-world travellers encounter environmental degradation in both urban and natural environments. Most of the time, travellers are affected by urban environmental problems related to pollution which directly affect their health (wastes and air or water pollution for instance), but they are also affected by a variety of problems occurring within natural environments (deforestation, overfishing, and desertification for instance). The high number of places visited by surveyed round-the-world travellers and the variety of environmental issues they were able to identify illustrate the significance of the ability to travel extensively in order to heighten one's environmental awareness.

Third, travelling to many destinations helps, but what is also important are the encounters made along the way. Host-visitor or immobile-mobile interactions are key factors for a 'genuine' immersion into the local reality, but visitor-visitor or mobile-mobile interactions are also very rewarding. Travellers' openness towards "otherness" (Bennett 2008, p132) is very representative of round-the-world travellers or 'wanderers' who seek to expand their space of reflexivity (Oakes & Minca 2004), and thus wander along their itineraries in search of "the most culture contact possible on the other" (Vogt 1976, p27). Such learning processes are strongly bounded to places where encounters are made. An experience framed in a particular place draws travellers' attention to a specific environmental issue they will never forget. Even after a few years, respondents from the survey could remember a particular situation and explain with accuracy what affected them at that time (e.g. Dalit (2009) who witnessed locals emptying bins in a street of Bombay). Therefore, in addition to a traveller's nationality and access to financial resources, it is the will to discover new places driven by a high degree of mobility, and the quest for new experiences made of encounters, which actually fosters the learning process of round-the-world travellers regarding the environment.

However, what supports such experiences is predefined for most travellers by socio-cultural, economical, and political conditions which, in the end, make their journey a subjective experience. The survey of 75 round-the-world travellers' itineraries highlighted that their movement at the global scale tends to follow a general pattern (from Europe to the Americas, Australia, South-East Asia, and avoiding Africa), and their rest have the tendency to

concentrate in the same places of the world (Europe, South-East Asia and the Western fringe of Latin America). Besides, abstraction made of sending regions, countries visited by round-the-world travellers generally reflected the distribution of international tourism. Between 1999 and June 2009, on average, Asia received one third of international tourist arrivals, Latin America and the Caribbean one tenth, and Africa one fiftieth (WTO 2004; 2009), which matches with the figures from the survey. Finally, unattractive and unsafe regions are most of the time carefully avoided. For instance, countries not visited by the surveyed round-the-world travellers were all developing countries. Amongst them, one quarter were in the Least Developed Countries⁴ of which most of them were in Africa. The latter represent the biggest gaps in Westerner travellers' itineraries. The 'dark continent', as one interviewee called it, is usually by passed for its political unrest and poverty. Similarities within the itineraries of round-the-world travellers and their similarities with the distribution of international tourism reflect what Wang (2006, p75) calls the "Logos-modernity" which is characterized by overarching rationalization in contemporary societies. This means that despite their initial will to get rid of itineraries sold by travel agencies as a package tour, 'independent' travellers systematically find themselves involved in an alternative form of commoditization (by buying guidebooks and other travel materials for instance, which is a commoditization of the knowledge of potential itineraries). They therefore cannot escape the itineraries hidden in contemporary institutionalised systems which organise their routes (such as network of schedules, traffic lines and prices, booking systems of transportation and hospitality) (Wang 2006). This travel paradox is betrayed by the uneven geography of leisure mobility, which in turn affects travellers' environmental awareness.

The uneven geography of leisure mobility may affect travellers' environmental awareness in two different ways. First, because travellers' 'global mobility' is restricted to a limited number of mainstream travel routes. This separates them from places where important environmental issues prevail. For instance, only one of the 75 surveyed travellers visited the Aral Sea on the border with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the world's fourth largest inland water body which has dramatically shrunk in recent years due to an increased extraction of river water for growing cotton (Harris 2004). Besides, none of the traveller neither visited sub-Saharan African countries nor thus related the severe consequences brought about by

⁴ According to the United Nations, Least Developing Countries are countries exhibiting the lowest indicators of socio-economic development and meeting three criteria based on low income, human resource weakness and economic vulnerability (UN 2009). In our case, this means they are potentially less attractive for round-the-world travellers

desertification (Pickering & Owen 1997). Hence, as travellers may never encounter these places of the world, they will probably never improve their awareness regarding desertification and water depletion. However, even if issues like these may remain local, they may also be widespread, which will potentially affect the ‘wandering’ round-the-world traveller in another part of his or her trip. For instance, in the case of deforestation, travellers surveyed observed the same issue in different parts of the world, namely the Amazon and Borneo rainforest. In the case of global warming, this becomes even more evident as the issue has global impacts. For instance, only two of the surveyed travellers went to Antarctica which means that only a few had the opportunity to observe the “disappearing West Antarctica ice sheet” (Marie 2009) and ‘witness’ climate change. But, other travellers also observed glaciers melting in Canada and France. One respondent from the interview claimed having witnessed the effect of sea level change in Pacific Islands in Fiji where “the sea is slowly eroding the coastline” (Nikki 2009). Hence, as the impacts of global warming are widespread compared to more localized environmental issues, it constitutes, as far as climate change can truly exist, a real opportunity for raising travellers’ environmental awareness throughout the world. Therefore, the uneven geography of leisure mobility can be a limiting factor in raising travellers’ environmental awareness. However, this will depend on the scarce, widespread and global aspect of the environmental issue.

Second, the uneven geography of leisure mobility betrays the issue of “backpacker enclaves” (Cohen 2004, p43) in the formation of travellers’ environmental awareness. As independent travellers seek a relaxed, tolerant and socially permissive atmosphere (Westerhausen & MacBeth 2003), this tends to produce places where there is a concentration of backpacker-related services and a congregation of predominantly young people with time on their hands looking for fun. This leads to the formation of enclosed spaces demarcating themselves not just spatially but also socially with the host culture (Richards & Wilson 2004). For instance, in surveyed travel websites, a traveller from the United Kingdom was describing his surprise to meet so many international travellers like him in Koh Phangan in southern Thailand. Renaming the island “the new Ibiza”, Jeff (2009) explains how he met international travellers from Canada, Ireland, Australia and the United-Kingdom, and relates his late nights at the annual “Full Moon Party” created by the very presence of backpackers. Jeff’s case thus illustrates how the round-the-world travel experiences can contain travellers in a bubble, in that very few of them encounter local people in non-commercial settings. This unfortunately hampers any potential environmental awareness-raising through interactions with locals.

Moreover, such concentration of backpackers in space and time can have negative environmental impacts, including in terms of the environmental capacity of beaches for instance. Although, is 'drifting' but ending up 'following the crowds' necessarily negative for round-the-world travellers in terms of environmental-awareness raising? Richards and Wilson (2004, p261) argued that enclaves are "quintessential refuelling stations" where travellers can accommodate with modern facilities (take a hot shower, buy an imported beer and use the Internet), but also a place to meet fellow travellers. A study from the ATLAS Backpacker Research Programme about 'global nomads' showed that "the most important source of information 'on the road' is fellow backpackers" (Richards & Wilson 2004, p261). This fact was also acknowledged by questionnaire respondents of this research, who considered sharing experiences with fellow travellers the second most important reason for raising their environmental awareness. Nevertheless, travellers 'shielding' from the society may remain important as their hypermobility increases their number of destinations but decreases the time spent at each destination. Some of the surveyed travellers visited more than four countries a month for instance. Such fast "mobile consumerism" (Wang 2006, p72) hampers the possibility for in-depth exchanges of ideas with both mobile and immobile individuals about potential environmental issues. Therefore, although similarities within travellers' itineraries can bring effective exchanges of ideas about their experiences, travellers' hypermobility tends to shield them from the host society as well as their fellow travellers, limiting quality encounters in these increasingly deterritorialized "locales" (Hall 2005a, p25).

Virtual travel

Leisure mobility and its associated virtual movements such as through the Internet also constitute a source of commitment regarding the environment for the online-audience. As detailed in the results, round-the-world travellers related to a variety of environmental issues during their trip. With sometimes more than fifty visitors a day, travel websites containing posts related to the environment constitute an opportunity for raising the environmental awareness of the online audience, such as friends and family. In addition, some travellers use their online space to encourage people to travel responsibly regarding the environment. For instance, some web authors detail a series of actions travellers should take in order to preserve the environment they are visiting, such as keeping their trash until they find a proper location for it. However, travel website narratives are neither neutral, nor evenly accessible.

First, travel website narratives are rarely neutral which may bias the online audience's perception about the environment observed 'out there'. Most travellers content themselves with simply describing the places of environmental beauty they visited, sometimes picturing them as vacant, pristine places that are waiting to be enjoyed. This leaves the reader with the idea of a safe, accessible environment that *has* to be consumed as a travelling experience. Moreover, some bias regarding the interpretation of a place can arise as most travellers do not stay in the same place for a long period of time. For instance, the explanation of the same deforestation issue in Borneo was interpreted in two different ways by two different travellers from the same country. However, the first traveller stayed for two months in a rehabilitation centre for orang-utans while the second was only on the island for a couple of days. This highlights the important subjectivity of virtual leisure mobility which in turns affects the environmental awareness-raising of the online audience.

Second, those who have access to virtual travel are usually people from developing countries. Most networked computers are concentrated in North America and Europe in contrast with the developing countries which clearly suffer from the "digital divide" (Brashow *et al.*). Hence, as the "bulk of world's population", and the majority of its travel destinations remain outside global information and communication technology networks (Milne & Atlejevic 2001, p385), virtual leisure mobility and environmental awareness-raising remain oriented towards a selected audience of Westerns. Moreover, this restriction also highlights an uneven geography of access to *virtual* leisure mobility induced by limited access to financial resources and information and communication technologies from poor countries. Comparatively to 'backpackers enclaves' previously mentioned, this keeps round-the-world travellers into virtual enclaves this time.

Therefore, leisure mobility plays an important role in the formation of environmental citizenship. However, while physical and virtual travel is performed at different scales ranging from the local to the global, uneven access to the financial resources necessary to cover costs of both physical and virtual travel may lead to the formation of a biased global environmental citizenship.

Flexibility of scales of environmental citizenship formation

The local scale is central to the formation of environmental citizenship. Environmental awareness-raising is bound to specific places or “locales” (Hall 2005a, p25) which frame the setting for new experiences created by social encounters. The environmental issue observed may be very limited in space, but the acknowledgment (even limited) of its widespread nature and potential global impacts allow ‘wanderers’ to extend their sense of care beyond the local. In the case of deforestation for instance, witnessing extensive logging in the Borneo rainforest is sufficient for travellers to extend the same sense of care to another place they will visit later on such as the Amazonian rainforest. When acknowledged, its negative impacts in terms of carbon dioxide and global warming make travellers conscious of the global consequence of the local (even regional sometimes) environmental degradation they observe ‘first hand’. Such extension of care beyond the local is more evident in the case of issues associated with global warming. As its effects are global, an important number of environmental issues can be observed along the itineraries of round-the-world travellers (arguably, sea rise in Pacific Islands, glacier melting in France and Canada, and ice sheet melting in the Antarctic for instance), reminding them the scope and significance of the issue. Therefore, round-the-world travel has the potential to adjust travellers’ environmental citizenship from the local to the global. Nevertheless, environmental citizenship formation depends on travellers’ ability to acknowledge the scale of flexibility of environmental issues observed on the way.

Asymmetrical formation of environmental citizenship

Uneven geography of both physical and virtual leisure mobility betrays the asymmetrical topology⁵ of global environmental citizenship formation. Indeed, as illustrated during this research, the spatial formation of global environmental citizenship is constituted by heterogeneous sets of relations. In physical spaces, round-the-world travellers engage in both host-visitor and host-host interactions. Encounters with both mobile and immobile individuals are important as these actually foster the environmental awareness-raising process of ‘wanderer’ round-the-world travellers. Within virtual spaces, environmentally-committed

⁵ Topology refers not to surfaces but to ‘relations’ and to the interactions between these relations, enabling geographers to go below the surface in order to study processes of spatial emergence (Murdoch 2006). The concept is used here to analyse the complex spatial interactions taking place within round-the-world travellers’ network involving both mobile and immobile individuals.

travellers share their environmental concerns with the online audience which, in turn develop in turn their environmental awareness. This heterogeneous set of relations forms a network where both mobile and immobile individuals are involved. However these networks present an asymmetrical topology due to uneven access to the financial resources necessary to cover costs of both physical and virtual travel. That is, immobile individuals can neither travel physically to discover other environments and their potential associated issues; nor travel virtually to interact with the online audience and acknowledge the existence of a particular environment in danger. While immobile individuals have almost unlimited access to all these spaces and can easily raise their environmental awareness. Such asymmetrical topological configuration of global environmental citizenship formation may lead to uneven conceptions of the 'global environment' and its associated risks, reinforcing an 'environmental awareness divide' between developing and developed countries. This also reaffirms Bowden's (2003, p360) critique of global citizenship when he argues that its advocates fail to take into account non- Western values, and to be in a position to claim to be a global citizen is a privilege which is reserved for the "modern, affluent global *bourgeoisie*".

Leisure mobility as an expression of global environmental citizenship

Leisure mobility embodies a variety of forms of commitment regarding the environment. These are expressed by environmental actions undertaken by travellers during their journey and within their online spaces. As results showed, these vary depending on travellers' responsibilities regarding the environmental 'common good' and awareness of potential environmental risks. This actually reaffirms Molz's (2005) assertion that round-the-world travellers enact citizenship along an axis of risks, rights and responsibilities. Among the hazards faced by round-the-world travellers, respondents included shared environmental risks such as global warming. Travellers also entitle the right to be mobile and to consume other places and environments. In exchange for such entitlements, round-the-world travellers recognized being subject to certain duties; including an obligation to travel in a sustainable manner, to act in the interest of the society they were visiting, and for some to educate about the environmental state of the world through their travel website. On the basis of these three parameters two main forms of environmental citizenship operating in both virtual and physical spaces of leisure mobility could be identified in this case.

Physical spaces

On the one hand, there are the *non-committed* citizens. These are the majority of round-the-world travellers who present a sense of environmental awareness and responsibilities but only take limited actions in favour of the environment. They see transport (even those with a high carbon footprint such as planes) as essential for travelling great distances. They acknowledge environmental responsibility, but are only 'willing' to use alternative modes of transports. The actions taken on the way also reflect the Western approach to environmental protection, but are limited in scope as these well-intentioned travellers do not take particularly restrictive actions that would compromise their plans. Within their interactions with locals, these travellers do not reflect any commitment for "multicultural and even multi-faith approaches" to environmental actions (Smith and Pangsapa 2008, p263). Moreover, they usually feel the environment is divided between rich, clean developed countries where they come from, and poor, dirty developing countries which they are only passing through. In this way, they may never address the complexity of environmental issues observed on the way.

At the extremity of this category lie travellers who do not have any particular environmental awareness and sometimes no sense of responsibility at all. They will never change their travel behaviour for 'the cause'. On the contrary, they feel the important efforts to raise money, and the risks they took before leaving (by quitting their jobs for instance) give them the right to enjoy their trip and simply have fun. They do not see the need to care about the environment and "try to change things on the way" (Wes 2009). Such travel behaviour tends to lead to what Wang (2006, p72) call a "consumer citizenship", that is a democratized right to consume extraordinary experiences that are accessible to travel, which do not consider the potential environmental impacts of travel *per se*.

On the other hand, there are the *committed citizens*. These are travellers with strong environmental awareness and sense of responsibility, who are ready to significantly change their travel behaviour. They use alternative modes of travel, and view public transport such as trains positively. However, in some cases, very strong environmental awareness may lead to some forms of 'ecological redemption', where travellers feel they have the duty to engage in slow, sometimes dangerous travel such as hitchhiking to keep their carbon footprint low. Others will promote forms of what some scholars such as Nelson (2003) have called 'environmental colonialism'. In this regard, the case of Iain is illustrative. As he felt he had

the duty to 'teach' locals about the environment to offset his carbon footprint, he started to lecture small classes about how to be "good environmental citizens" (Iain 2009). However, rather than being context-specific, the actions he was encouraging were clearly diverted from Western societies' daily actions of 'good' environmental citizenship. He was teaching locals how to sort garbage, but most of the time waste collection schemes did not exist in the area. No one would reuse sorted items and the effort made was useless. Without embedding their actions within the places they are visiting, travellers may miss the opportunity to bring about lasting changes for the community and its environment.

Virtual spaces

Consequently, environmentally committed travellers also express their environmental citizenship through their websites. This online space is used because they feel they have the duty to share environmental issues observed along the way with the online audience. Indeed, one quarter of respondents from the questionnaire survey stated having used their travel website to share environmental concerns. However, neither these, nor those from the 75 surveyed websites engaged in any substantial debate with the online audience about environmental issues they observed. Hence, this lack of interactivity highlights a limitation in the use of online space as an expression of commitment regarding the environment. As web users usually enter these spaces following a logic of invited and interpersonal surveillance (Molz 2006a), they may interact with travellers to tell them where to go and what to do, but do not necessarily care about distant environmental issues occurring far from their home, especially when they feel these cannot affect them directly.

Scales of environmental citizenship performance

Most travellers enact environmental citizenship throughout their journey. Non-committed travellers usually undertake punctual and localised actions in order to travel in a 'sustainable way'. However, extending their environmental citizenship beyond the local scale usually implies restrictions that would compromise their freedom to travel. On the contrary, committed travellers undertake environmental actions they performed beyond the local. As they are ready to change significantly their travel behaviour, they engage in slow, low carbon

emission travel by journeying around-the-world by train or even hitchhiking. Thus, round-the-world travelling embodies various forms of global environmental citizenship operating from the local to the global. However, as environmental actions undertaken most of the time reflect a Westernized approach to environmental protection, traveller's environmental citizenship does not take into account the potentialities of a "multicultural approach" (Smith & Pangsapa 2008, p263) to environmental actions often necessary in complex, often contested environments such as those encountered by round-the-world travellers in developing countries.

6. CONCLUSION

Considering the need for new forms of citizenship in order to respond to increasingly globalised environmental issues, this paper is focused on bridging the gap within the exploration of the role played by leisure mobility in the formation of a frequently contested global environmental citizenship. To do so, this research conceptualized the social practice within a broader context of mobility, bringing a new perspective on the means of assessing the environmental impacts of tourism. Moreover, using both quantitative and qualitative methods from human geography proved to be useful for mapping both physical and virtual travel. Such an approach led to an integrative study of both tangible and intangible aspects of leisure mobility, and generated support for the idea that new forms of environmental citizenship operating at a global scale can emerge from leisure mobility.

Round-the-world travel embodies both a source *and* expression of commitment regarding the environment, which evokes an ‘environmental-eye’ in travellers in two different ways. First, round-the-world travellers consider their trip to bring about environmental awareness as they witness ‘first hand’ environmental degradation. The environmental issues observed are diverse (from local water shortage issues to global climate change issues) and widespread in many different geographical areas of the world (including both natural and urban environments). Many travellers share their experiences using communication and information technology such as the internet in order to share their travel experiences to online audiences; including their friends and family. In turn, this constitutes a source of commitment for virtual travellers. “Locales” (Hall 2005a, p25) are central to the formation of environmental citizenship, because environmental awareness-raising is bound to specific places and the people encountered, but extending their awareness to the global depends on travellers’ ability to acknowledge the scale of flexibility of environmental issues observed along the way. Nevertheless, increased mobility gives the opportunity for hypermobile elites to engage with more places but decreases the quality of their engagement with these ‘locales’. For some this may lead to a form of “consumer citizenship” (Wang 2006, p72) which entitles travellers to simply consume places without necessarily interacting with the host society. Besides, the uneven geography of leisure mobility keeps travellers in both physical and virtual enclaves where host-visitor interactions are limited, yet this is a key feature in the environmental awareness-raising for most round-the-world travellers. In this context of heterogeneous sets of

relations betrayed by uneven access to financial resources necessary to cover the costs of leisure mobility, asymmetrical formations of global environmental citizenship may emerge; thereby reinforcing an 'environmental awareness divide' between mobile and immobile individuals. Therefore, this research supports Bowen's (2003, p360) critique which argues that to be in a position to claim global citizenship is a privilege which is reserved for the "modern, affluent global *bourgeoisie*".

Second, round-the-world travellers perform various forms of environmental citizenship when they travel, as most of them are entitled the right to be mobile but in exchange recognise being subject to certain duties, including travelling in an environmentally friendly manner. In this regard, Molz's (2005) model is applicable in this case, as travellers are enacting environmental citizenship also along an axis of risks, right and responsibilities. The forms of environmental citizenship vary depending on travellers' commitment to the environment, and are performed through a variety of actions, ranging from recycling for 'uncommitted' citizens, to avoid flying for 'committed' citizens. The latter also express a virtual form of environmental citizenship through their travel websites, although such forms of engagement usually lack interactive debates concerning environmental issues. Uncommitted citizens perform limited environmental actions as extending them would imply restrictions compromising their freedom to travel. On the contrary, committed travellers take environmental actions beyond the local level, as they are ready to significantly change their travel behaviour. However, environmental citizenship performed by round-the-world travellers mostly reflects a Westernized approach to environmental protection, and thus fail to recognize the potentialities of a "multicultural approach" to environmental actions (Smith & Pangsapa 2008, p263). In short, the uneven geography of leisure mobility divides the 'environmental eye' between mobile and immobile individuals in both physical and virtual travel spaces.

Finally, the author still favourably considers addressing the nature, possibilities and limits of global environmental citizenship as a way to promote sustainability. Subsequently, more discussion is encouraged regarding the sometimes-conflicting interests of long-distance tourists and environmental activists by demonstrating how travel and tourism can bring about more beneficial and lasting changes in ideas and attitudes vis-à-vis environmental protection. Although, as Ingold (2000, p227) said, "[o]ur perception of the environment as a whole is forged [...] in the passage from place to place, and in histories of movement and changing

horizons on the way". Therefore, future studies should also investigate the role of leisure mobility in promoting global environmental awareness over a larger period of time, for instance by evaluating the changes of travellers' perception of the environment after different trips performed at different periods, or taking into account travellers' environmental citizenship in their post-trip life.

Appendix 1 – Ethical Approval

Subject: Online Submission of Application for Ethical Approval
From: ssh1@kcl.ac.uk <ssh1@kcl.ac.uk>
Date: 29/06/2009 12:30
To: "Dujardin, Sebastien" <sebastien.dujardin@kcl.ac.uk>
Cc: [Lorimer, Jamie](#)

Dear Sebastien DUJARDIN,

KCL/08-09_761 Does round-the-world travel affect environmental awareness? Tourism and the formation of global citizenship

I am pleased to inform you that full approval for your project has been granted by the GGS Research Ethics Panel. Any specific conditions of approval are laid out at the end of this email which should be followed in addition to the standard terms and conditions of approval:

- Ethical approval is granted for a period of one year from the date of this email. You will not receive a reminder that your approval is about to lapse so it is your responsibility to apply for an extension prior to the project lapsing if you need one (see below for instructions).
- You should report any untoward events or unforeseen ethical problems arising from the project to the panel Chairman within a week of the occurrence. Information about the panel may be accessed at:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/ethics/applicants/ssh1/panels/>.
- If you wish to change your project or request an extension of approval you will need to submit a new application with an attachment indicating the changes you want to make (a proforma document to help you with this is available at:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/ethics/applicants/modifications.html>).
- All research should be conducted in accordance with the King's College London Guidelines on Good Practice in Academic Research available at: [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/attachments/good practice May 08 FINAL.pdf](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/college/policyzone/attachments/good%20practice%20May%2008%20FINAL.pdf).

If you require signed confirmation of your approval please forward this email to ssh1@kcl.ac.uk indicating why it is required and the address you would like it to be sent to.

Please would you also note that we may, for the purposes of audit, contact you from time to time to ascertain the status of your research.

We wish you every success with this work.

With best wishes

Yours Sincerely,
GGS Reviewer

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