Global Lifestyles:

identity and place in contemporary travel journalism

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1. Introduction

Travel writing is a genre that is both highly criticized and very popular at the same time. Underlying the critique of travel writing is often critique of mass tourism but rather than being the death of travel writing, mass tourism has challenged it, making the supposedly serious travel writers seek out new terrain, as well as having sparked new subgenres and new media outlets. Travel writing on the Internet has become widespread and has facilitated the rise of the amateur travel writer, not least through travel blogs. The broad genre of travel narratives is as popular as ever, whether it is in the form of published books, TV-programs, guide books, or travel supplements in newspapers and in glossy magazines.

Travel writing lends itself well to cultural analysis. As products of the tourist industry these narratives offer stories about the world. Through travel narratives in all different forms people encounter the foreign even before they leave their homes. They inform the tourist on where to go and, perhaps more importantly, why one should go there in the first place. In other words they are co-producers of the myths that surround places. But they also say something about home; they create myths about the readers’ place in the world. A popular subgenre of travel writing in which questions of identity are particularly salient is the travel magazine since a defining characteristic of the magazine is closeness to the readers. It is with this in mind that I have chosen the travel magazine as the object of my study. The main material consists of two publications; the Swedish magazine RES and the international magazine Business Traveller Asia/Pacific (in the following referred to as Business Traveller A/P).

To create stories about the world and ones place in it has become more urgent in a time of increasing globalization. I will return later to discussions about various aspects of globalization but what is for sure is that globalization has had an impact on definitions of identity and place. Globalization reshapes and redefines established perceptions of places, one such redefinition being the changing role of the nation and the increasing importance of the region. Identities are also redefined and in a global world travel narratives help their readers to define themselves as cosmopolitan subjects. These stories and identity constructions are of course not neutral or innocent, they are both expressions of and claims to power and privilege. It is this construction of privilege, through definitions of identities and places in which globalization discourses are utilized, that is the object of my analysis.
Narrating a global world

Globalization is a powerful idea that shapes perceptions about the contemporary world and media is central in creating the experience of the world as global. This is of course true of news media that presents the readers and audience with images of faraway places but it is equally true of travel writing that offers the reader a world open to tourism consumption. In her dissertation on Swedish travel narratives about the United States during the first part of the 20th century, Amanda Lagerkvist writes that tourism presents us with an ordered world.\(^1\)

The question is how tourism and travel writing create order in a contemporary global world. In my study of globalization discourses I have chosen to focus on two central topics, one being the question of identities and the other the question of place since these are often central in discussions about the cultural aspects of globalization. Issues of place and identity are also inherently connected. This choice is also based on my interest in the genre of travel writing.

Since my material consists of popular journalism published in so-called lifestyle magazines from 1982 to 2009, I am interested in how the tourist is given an identity as consumer and a member of a cosmopolitan global elite and how different tourist spaces and destinations are used in this identity construction. According to Saskia Sassen, it is impossible to analyze globalization without studying how it is played out in specific places, or in her words how it is localized.\(^2\) Sassen also argues for a focus on places, “whether cities or other types of places” and even though she refers to an analysis of economic structures as opposed to narratives of places, her conclusion is true for my study as well.\(^3\) In my analysis of global places I have also chosen to focus on two more specific localities: the city as a global metropolis and the retreat as a constructed local place for relaxation and harmony.

Travel writing has often been studied as an expression of colonial discourses and as a nostalgic longing for a colonial past. I will instead place it in a context of globalization discourses to see how globalization affects tourist identities and the use of space and place in tourism. How are identities created in a global world, in texts that describe travel experiences? In what respects does it differ from identity constructions in older travel narratives? What kinds of tourist spaces does globalization create? How does it rearrange older tourist spaces? I argue that globalization discourses have an impact on how the so-called implied reader (see

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\(^3\) Sassen, p. 7
chapter three) of travel narratives is constructed but that it also affects identity on a more general, cultural level for example by putting into question traditional divisions of East and West. In order to describe how this is expressed in popular travel narratives I will analyze texts about Asian metropolises. The decision to focus more specifically on East Asia comes from an examination of the material: it is in texts about Asia that the travel writers of my study use globalization discourses the most. It is in the meeting with Asia that these discourses are activated to describe the foreign (and implicitly the self).

In her seminal study of the affinities between travel writing and imperial conquest, Mary-Louise Pratt concludes that the writers of her study constructed European “ways of knowing the world, and being in it”. More than just offering descriptions of various places travel writing provides the reader with an overall grasp of the world. This function is more pronounced in times when there is a general sense of change. The writers of Pratt’s study grappled with a European identity in relation to imperial ambitions while contemporary writers deal with the definition of identities and relations in a supposedly global world order. Scholars of colonialism have explained how much travel writing during the colonial era was a vital part of the imperial project, both explaining and defending imperial ambitions for the European home audience. In contemporary texts, globalization becomes a topic, both explicitly and implicitly. A part of defining globalization is to create a map of a globalized world, in which some places are presented as central regions of globalization while others become peripheral.

With this thesis I am contributing to the understanding of the concept of globalization as it is used in different texts. I would also like to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of travel in contemporary culture, especially what has been called “aspirational elite” travel as an expression of power and privilege. My assumption is that ideas about globalization: cosmopolitan identities, increased connectivity and hybridity, changes how travel and tourism is perceived. Hence, I argue that the concept of globalization, when it is made use of in travel writing, changes some of the typical tropes of the genre, and I therefore use a perspective on globalization discourses to contribute to the study of contemporary travel writing as a popular media genre. Globalization discourses rework older traditions of the genre of travel narratives but it can also reconfirm parts of that tradition. I have found that this is most interesting in articles about Asia, and specifically East and South East Asia. The relation between the West and Asia has differed from that between an imperial West and, for example, Africa or the

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Orient of Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. Asian countries such as China and Japan were never formally colonized by any European power. The relation between the West and Asia is equally ambivalent now. The rise of Asian countries in the world economy has not completely undone the dominance of the US. Some scholars talk about the Pacific Rim as the central region of the contemporary world. This includes Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Japan as well as Western countries such as Australia and the US.

My focus on Asia, and to some extent the relation between Asia and Europe, is intended as a case study, the purpose of which is to further illuminate the concept of globalization by referring to a specific example. One aspect of globalization is the changing relations between East and West, in part connected to the breaking down of traditional distinctions of center and periphery. This change in perceptions together with the economic success of a few Asian countries has intensified a crisis of Europe or the West. However, I do not wish to make an exclusive study of for example the Swedish perception of Asia, which is otherwise a common method of analysis. It is the discourses of globalization and the narratives of travel magazines in general that will remain the center of attention.

Since I am interested in how globalization discourses are used to create power and privilege I will study how globalization can be used as what Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski call an “identity resource”. The identity constructions I am studying are played out on various levels at the same time. I am interested in the creation of individual identities and group identities as well as national and supranational identities. These levels of identity are often fluid and difficult to separate. It is a question of the construction of identity in relation to exotic others, but also the creation of different identities in relation to globalization, as a way to make sense of ones place in a global world. Questions of identity in popular culture is also connected to the concept of lifestyle and ultimately to issues of class. The study is concerned with how an imagined elite identity is created for the ideal reader and not the identity of the actual readers.

It should be made clear that the elite identity offered in high end travel magazines is an imagined elite identity. To travel provides a chance to take a break from ones ordinary, mundane existence and to create an imagined life. Travel magazines, just like advertisement, produces dreams and fantasies. The holidays that they are presenting are not necessarily

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5 Steve Clark and Paul Smethurst, (eds). *Asian crossings: travel writing on China, Japan and Southeast Asia*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008, p. 1  
6 (missing reference)  
something that the readers would be able to afford. It is rather a question of the reader being an armchair traveler as well as a so-called aspirational consumer. In an article in one of the magazines of my study, *Business Traveller A/P*, the writer even uses the expression “aspirational experiences” for the kind of luxury travel that the consumer can only afford once, if ever. (January/February 2009) Since the late 20th century, when the texts and images in travel magazines moved closer to the style of advertisement there is an increased emphasis on the creation of the ideal and on travel as fantasy. In tourism studies the identity of the tourist is often seen as being something outside of the ordinary, everyday life. The individual that leaves his or her home for a tourist destination also leaves his/her ordinary identity to take up a temporary tourist identity.\(^8\) In the context of a lifestyle magazine however the lifestyle and identities that are presented in relation to various tourist destinations are also a part of a more permanent, imagined elite lifestyle.

Through her work on global metropolises Sassen gives a thorough description of the contemporary global economy and its impact on contemporary structures of power and privilege. In my thesis I am interested in the same developments and tendencies but instead of describing the economical and geographical facts I will seek to understand the ideology that attaches to it, through an analysis of the texts that both make use of it and creates and justifies it. All societal structures must be explained and justified through discourses. To the extent that what Sassen, among others, analyze is a new economic and social order it follows that there are changes in the way it is presented, as well as how identities are constructed and inequalities justified. This is similar to Pratt’s claim that colonialism gave rise to a need to define European “ways of knowing the world and being in it.”\(^9\)

Magazines are closer to their readers than other forms of journalism, for example newspaper journalism, even though newspapers are to a larger extent than before mimicking the form of the magazine with increasing space being given to various types of supplements and lifestyle journalism. Magazines are closer in the sense that they engage with the intimate life of the readers. Helping the reader to make sense of their world and of their place in it is one of the main functions of a magazine. Thus it is necessary to have a sense of who the reader is and what the reader is interested in. This closeness to the readers makes magazines an interesting object for a study of how identities are constructed in specific communities.\(^10\)

\(^9\) Pratt, p. 29
As I have mentioned before I am studying the construction of both places and identities. I am interested in how travel journalism constructs travelling subjects but I am also interested in the geographical imagination they create, i.e. how the writers give meaning to various places and how this meaning stands in conjunction to specific identities. Thus, concepts of place and identity are read together to see how a geographical order is constructed to serve imagined identities and lifestyles. I will look at if and how already existing places; nations, regions, cities, are reinterpreted through globalization discourses. The purpose of my dissertation is to describe popular constructions of globalization but in a more general perspective I take an interest in definitions of globalization because these discourses around globalization are expression of contemporary constructions of power and privilege.

Ultimately it is about a story of the self and ones world, as Swedish, European or Western, as belonging to certain privileged groups, at a certain time in history, more than it is about the specific act of travelling although travel plays an essential role in this definition. In texts about travel definitions of privilege are played out in various ways. Travel is a fertile ground for these definitions and negotiations in a global world because it is associated with status, because it involves an encounter with something foreign and exotic, whether the destination is a neighboring city or a place across the world. Travel is a significant part of the contemporary lifestyle project. The magazines were from the start more than just travel magazines in that they also included material on more general topics, and as they became lifestyle magazines the topics broadened to include more general material pertaining to the lifestyle project, such as for example articles on shopping and exercise. RES moved toward this broader project when articles about design hotels, and hotels in general became more central and the locations of the hotels less so. Tourism as such can be described as having a meaning beyond the act of travelling as “a cultural template that structures our ways of viewing and understanding the world, as a whole.”

I am contributing to the study of travel writing with my analysis of a material that has not been widely studied before, contemporary travel magazines (and other forms of popular journalism), and a perspective on globalization discourses which has not traditionally been used to look at these texts. A new perspective is needed to study contemporary texts, because globalization carries its own myths and ideals that are played out and produced in travel

writing, among other genres, and a globalization discourse in travel writing differs to some extent from a traditional colonial discourse.

The choice of studying constructions of places and identities comes from my interest in discourses about globalization. Place is a central concern in globalization theory which I will go further into later, and of course a central part of travel magazines. The main articles of any travel magazine are longer texts with plenty of images describing specific places. The same goes for issues of identity as something widely discussed in relation to discussions about globalization. Place and identity is where the main concerns of globalization theories intersect with the main aspects of the travel magazine. The choice of identity and place as the overarching analytical themes is also relevant because it was the construction of identities and places that changed decisively during the time period of the study. This choice is therefore also formed by how the magazines changed.

To clarify, the main purpose of the study is to analyze how globalization is defined and how globalization discourses are made use of in travel magazines, and in a more general perspective, how this is an expression of privilege. To study this I have chosen to explore a few themes that can be formulated as a set of questions:

What kinds of identities are constructed in the magazines? What identity resources are used to create an identity for the implied reader? How does this change over the time period studied?

How are places constructed and given meaning in the tourism geography of the magazines? How are local and global places created in contrast to each other? How does this change over the time period studied?

The third theme, the case study of the depiction of East and South East Asian destinations is relevant for both of the two themes formulated above.

**Choice of method and material**

My main material consists of two travel magazines; a Swedish travel magazine called *RES (Travel)* and the Asia-Pacific edition of the international magazine *Business Traveller*. The magazine *RES* was started in 1981 under the name of *Resguide (Travel Guide)* by Eva and

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12 In the following, when quotes and article titles from *RES* are written in English it is my own translations.
Magnus Rosenqvist and changed its name to RES in 1994. It is published by Emma Publishing and is currently published with 6 issues per year. Business Traveller was started in the UK in 1976 and has ten editions (including the UK, US, Asia-Pacific, Middle East, China, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Africa and Poland). The Asia-Pacific edition was launched in 1982. This edition was first published in a joint venture between Business Traveller Europe and Interasia Publications Ltd. It is now published by Panacea Publishing. The destinations visited in the Asia/Pacific edition of the magazine are from all over the world while the material center on the Asia-Pacific region. The main focus is on the printed editions of the magazines but the use of web pages will also be taken into consideration, especially in the analysis of RES since the magazine publishes blogs written by readers.

The reason I have chosen to study RES is that it is the first Swedish travel magazine of its kind, and since it has been published for so long it is possible to see the transformation of the magazine over the years. In RES the theme of lifestyle is more explicit than in the magazine Vagabond that has also been in publication since the 80s. RES has had an emphasis on design, and trends to a higher degree than most other travel magazines. In that regards it has differed from what is common in the genre. However, a magazine such as Vagabond has increasingly gone from targeting backpackers to aiming at a more affluent readership, which has made it more similar to RES. In this way, RES is a part of a larger trend toward lifestyle media. RES is then both representative since other magazines are developing in the same direction, while also being different by having more of an emphasis on lifestyle and taste.

Studying Business Traveller A/P, an international trade magazine for the, mostly expat, business community, and RES, a Swedish publication for leisure travel, is interesting because it makes it clear that these in many ways very different types of magazines go through the same transformation and become much more similar in the 00s. The lifestyle format becomes the overriding way of writing about and understanding travel. I specifically chose the Asia/Pacific edition of the magazine because I found that it was in travel writing about this region that the discourses of globalization were often used. I will also make comparisons with a few other magazines, such as Travel+Leisure and the UK edition of Business Traveller, when this is relevant.

I have chosen to study Business Traveller A/P from when the magazine was first published and RES from when the magazine was renamed and first became the kind of travel magazine it is now. Both magazines are studied up until around 2008 and 2009. I will also occasionally make reference to later issues of the magazines that have been available to me. Travel magazines as a genre first appear in the 70s and 80s, with a few notable exceptions.
During the time period of my study the two magazines are transformed into becoming lifestyle magazines. By studying the magazines from when they are first launched in the early 80s and 90s up until the late 00s it is possible to analyze this transformation. The historical comparison makes the contemporary identity stand out by differing from something that preceded it. Through my analysis I describe what the transformation into lifestyle magazines implied for the magazines of my study.

*Business Traveller A/P* has not been as available to me as *RES* has been; I have not had access to all of the years after 98. After this year I have chosen to study every other year and only one longer article per issue. I have also had access to the list of content for these issues. Because of this difference in availability *RES* will inevitably take up more space in the analysis chapters.

The articles chosen for analysis are in part articles about Asian metropolises and in part articles about lifestyle and local places. The articles about Asian cities have been chosen because it is in these articles that issues of globalization are most explicitly played out. In these articles the writers are making use of discourses around globalization. The articles about the local have been chosen because they illustrate the opposite, i.e. they show how the writers express ideas about the traditional and about nature as a necessary contrast to the global metropolis. In choosing the articles for analysis I have gone through the whole material (*RES* from 1994 to 2008 and *Business Traveller A/P* from 1982 to 2009). I have deliberately chosen texts in which the general discourse differs from what postcolonial scholars have described as typical for travel journalism and travel writing, by for example choosing to look at articles about Asian metropolises, rather than texts about rural Africa that might more readily use a colonial discourse.

The focus of the analysis is for the most part on the magazines themselves and not on the writers, even though the writers took a more central position in *RES* around the late 90s and onwards, for example through blogs. In the early years of publication, the writers of *Business Traveller A/P* were sometimes anonymous. The one person that stood out, and more so over time, were the editors of both magazines. Both magazines featured a few high-profile writers. For *Business Traveller A/P* the character that stood out the most was Auberon Waugh, son of the writer Evelyn Waugh. This was especially so during the early 80s when the magazine did not have a very visible editor. *RES* had some writers in the 90s that were also working as foreign correspondents. Many of the writers will however stay anonymous in my study. The few exceptions to this rule are mentioned because their identities are relevant to the study of the magazine.
The magazines usually contain a few longer travel stories in each issue, combined with a large number of shorter texts, for example in the form of personal chronicles or information about new hotels, restaurants, art galleries etc. The longer travel stories, which is my primary material, are around 5-10 pages in total and combine the text with large images. The texts are typically credited to an individual journalist. My analysis is mainly of the texts but a study of travel journalism that did not take into consideration the photographic images would be incomplete since in the contemporary travel magazine the photographs are at least as important as the texts. The first image that meets the reader is the cover image that presents the reader with the world of that particular magazine and issue. Each article is then typically presented by one or two large images that fill up a whole spread. Further into the article it is illustrated by smaller images but it is the first pictures that set the tone of the article. They even precede the text.

Scholars that have studied photography in travel magazines have typically asked how foreign people are depicted by looking at whether the persons in the photographs meet the gaze of the beholder or not, whether they are active or not and the angle used as well as who is depicted in terms of gender, age and skin color. In contrast my study will focus more on the depiction of places and the act of travelling than specific individuals as objects of the photographic gaze.

Since I am interested in the construction of privileges and imagined elite identities I will also look at photographic representations of luxury that are not necessarily connected to a foreign destination as such but are rather images of the good life in general. In their article about elite tourism, Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski comment on the prevalent images of empty beaches as signs of exclusivity. Emptiness, understood foremost as an absence of people, in the magazines of my study is not restricted to tropical beaches. It is rather a commonly used representational practice that will be studied further.

Besides looking closer at the individual texts and the photographic representations I also study the general layout of the magazines such as the typeface, the use of maps and other illustrations, the use of empty space, the logo design of the magazines and the placing of the cover lines. Also of interest is the relation between texts and images in terms of size since this can vary over time. Furthermore, the magazines can be analyzed as material items with a view

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to the quality of the paper, the format of the magazines and not least the increasing glossiness of the covers (a quality that is itself filled with connotations). All of these aspects of the magazines together with the articles construct a sense of the role of travel, places and identity in a global world. Even though it is not the main material for the analysis I will also make use of advertisement published in the magazines. I have found that advertisement often expressed the same ideas as the editorial material of the magazines, but that it did so in a more explicit and direct manner.

In my reading of the longer articles I approach the texts through close reading with a focus on the narrative style of the magazines. Close reading is a method for approaching the texts that is borrowed from the study of literature and the purpose of the method is to find recurrent tropes and themes in the texts but also to study the use of metaphors, the position of the writer and the implied reader. When it comes to the concept of globalization I will study how the word is employed and discussed explicitly by the writers, as it is increasingly in the 1990s, but foremost how it is constructed implicitly through ideas about cosmopolitan elite identities and local/global places.

Since the analysis strives to uncover how globalization is utilized and constructed as a set of discourses, and how these differ from a colonial discourse, it is of course pertinent to make use of methods from critical discourse analysis. Discourse in this context should be understood as "a cluster of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with a particular topic".15 The various discourses expressed in the texts of my study are revealed through the recurrent tropes and metaphors that functions to structure the experience of travel. A basic premise in my use of discourse analysis is that discourses are constantly changing rather than being static. That is why I am questioning the use of a colonial discourse theory in the analysis of material from the late 20th and early 21st century. This will be described further in the subchapter about the study of tourism and travel writing.

Discourse analysis is an umbrella term that contains many different kinds of methods and theories.16 Inherent in much discourse analysis however is an emphasis on power relations and how power is constituted through language. This is of central importance also in my study in which the overarching question is the production of privilege in both magazines. A useful concept borrowed from discourse analysis is interdiscursivity, the relation between different

15 Torun Elsrud, Taking time and making journeys, Lund dissertations in sociology 56, Diss: Lunds universitet, Lund 2004, p. 118
discourses. Travel magazines draw extensively on all sorts of sources, for example on pop culture and history. With their constant interest in trends, magazines are particularly good at picking up on, interpreting and making use of more general discourses that are circulating in a culture at a certain time. The preoccupation with spa and resort tourism is a response to a general cultural trend of taking an interest in the beauty and well-being of the body. As I will analyze in the empirical chapters the magazines also discussed changing gender roles (Business Traveller A/P), the changing relation to Asia and the existence of homogenous global places, among many other cultural trends. In my analysis I will refer to these larger trends that the magazines made use of.

Research on travel magazines

A Swedish study using material that is similar to the magazines I study is Lisa Killander-Braun’s analysis of the popular Swedish travel magazine *Vagabond*. *Vagabond* was initially a magazine targeting backpackers but has with time become more upscale, and hence more similar to *RES*. Killander-Braun studies issues of the magazine from 1998 and from 2001 and is mainly interested in the representation of the local population in Asia, Africa and Latin America in comparison to the representation of people in Australia, Western Europe and the US. Her main perspective is that of postcolonial theory and its analysis of racist representations of the Other. The material and time period studied by Killander-Braun makes her study similar to my own but there are also important differences. In Killander-Braun’s study the focus lies on whether the image of the postcolonial Other is “fair” or not, while in my study I presume that the image provided of foreign cultures is flawed and unfair. Another study with a somewhat similar material, as well as approach, is a study conducted by the anthropologists Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins, published in 1993. The object of their study is the world renowned American magazine *National Geographic* and, just as Killander-Braun, they are interested in how the magazine constructs an image of the foreign but also how this image is interpreted by the readers. Lutz and Collins are foremost interested in the photographic representation of non-Western peoples and how these are interpreted by the readers. In contrast to these two studies I do not work from the assumption that travel writing could provide the reader with an accurate description of the exotic Other.

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17 Killander-Braun 2006
Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski do not study travel magazines but the related genre of inflight magazines. Their perspectives on globalization in the article “Communicating a global reach: Inflight magazines as a globalizing genre in tourism” are of much interest to a study of globalization discourses in travel magazines.\(^\text{18}\) Thurlow and Jaworski have written extensively on tourism and globalization from a sociolinguistic perspective and in 2010 published the book *Tourism discourse: language and global mobility*.\(^\text{19}\) In their analysis of inflight magazines and in their later work on advertisement of elite tourism they look at globalization not just as a discursive construction but also as an identity resource, or as they also refer to it in their study of advertisement: a “sales pitch”. The material for their studies have included postcards, business cards, newspaper travelogues, inflight magazines, advertisement and many other tourism genres. The travel magazine is one genre that they have not studied.

I have chosen not to analyze the actual readers or to do interviews with readers, which is otherwise common in the study of the popular press.\(^\text{20}\) In my reading of the magazines I do not draw conclusions about how the reader might react or appropriate the material. This is not to deny that the readers matter as consumers of the magazine, neither is it to argue that they do not make an active interpretation. Other studies have shown how the readers are able to make critical readings of magazines and needless to say this would also be applicable on my material. However, my study concerns the magazines as cultural texts in themselves. It is quite possible to study this material without investigating the actual readers and their interpretations. One way that I do approach the readers is through the letters pages, especially in *Business Traveler A/P*. The readers that wrote to the magazines formed a particular group of active readers that chose to engage with the magazine in this way. A majority of the readers of course never wrote to the magazine. Furthermore, the letters were selected and sometimes edited by the staff of the magazines. Studying readers’ letters are therefore not a substitute for interviewing actual readers but I will make use of them when I find it appropriate for the analysis.

Studies of magazines have mostly focused on issues of gender, construction of femininity and, in later studies, masculinity and how it might affect the readers, especially for magazines

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\(^\text{18}\) Thurlow and Jaworski 2003  
aimed at a young audience. Examples of such studies are Peter Jackson, Nick Stevenson and Kate Brooks *Making sense of men’s magazines* in which they study the construction of the so-called “new lad” as a specific type of masculinity in the 1990s. Another concern has been the commercial nature of the magazines. Two studies that discuss the role of the magazines in teaching consumerism in post-communist countries are Perry Johansson’s *Chinese women and consumer culture*, discussing the role of women’s magazines in China after the economic reforms of 1979 and Sian Stephenson analyzing women’s magazines in Russia after the fall of the Soviet empire, the latter published in the anthology *Mapping the magazine*.

In the four analysis chapters I will analyze the changes both magazines go through during the roughly thirty years from the late 20th century to the 21st century. I will do so by focusing on identities and places due to the fact that these aspects are central both to globalization theories and discourses, and to the genre of magazines. The issue of how identity is constructed is also a central aspect in the broader genre of lifestyle media. In the fourth analysis chapter I then detail the changing relation to Asia as a specific case study that further highlight the relation between the transformations of the magazines and broader cultural changes. Through my analysis of this material I am able to describe the transformation of travel discourses and representations during this time period while the overarching purpose of this is to describe how the idea of a global world is used to construct contemporary forms of power and privilege.

**Disposition**

In the chapter following the introduction I will concentrate on an initial analysis of the travel magazines *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P*. Firstly, I will go further into the genre of my material and describe the specific style of travel journalism published in magazines and how it compares to other similar media genres concerned with travel and lifestyle. I will then describe the transformation that both magazines have gone through from being more general travel and business travel publications to becoming lifestyle magazines over the course of the late 20th century and how this has affected the style, layout and content of the magazines. In the following chapter I will discuss how the magazines construct imagined identities for the readers and how globalization discourses and ideas of cosmopolitanism are utilized in this construction. The third chapter describes how the magazines constructed local places as places of relaxation and refuge from the global. In this chapter I also describe how nature was used in the construction of the local place, and how common definitions of authenticity in
travel writing were contradicted. I will then go further into the case study, i.e. the image of Asian metropolises as global cities and how this affects older representations of Asian destinations and, on a more general level, the relation between Asia and the West, as an example of changed perceptions of place. In this forth chapter in which I present my analysis I will look specifically at RES as providing a Swedish perception of the Asian metropolis while my reading of Business Traveller A/P in this chapter focus on the relation between the Western business man and Asian females. The analysis in the last chapter comes closest to how travel writing has been studied before (as I will describe in the next subchapter), with the purpose of uncovering the image of a specific region that is constructed in the texts. Here, however it is the depiction of globalization that is central. The last two chapters describe the two opposites of local and global places respectively.

**The study of tourism and travel journalism**

Travel writing has been widely studied but travel journalism has been to a large extent ignored, since studies of travel writing have often looked at literary texts. Media studies on the other hand have also ignored travel narratives and mostly focused on news journalism. Travel journalism has thus been doubly ignored despite the fact that it is a very popular genre. Travel narratives are an ambivalent genre because they are situated between fact and fiction; their images and representations are both based on reality and at the same time rely heavily on the imagination of the travel writer. The emphasis is on entertainment and not information (though this has shifted over the years), but at the same time the magazines emphasize their objectivity and the truthfulness of their accounts (see chapter two). The demand for accuracy is different in travel journalism in comparison to for example news journalism. The claim to truthfulness lies on another level. To use an example that I will return to later in my analysis, the image of Tokyo has for much of the late 20th century been that of extreme economic success, even during the 1990s when the actual economic situation of the city was in decline. The representation of Tokyo is not so much depending on facts about the actual city but on a general image of the city that has been shaped by innumerable travel narratives. Even in Business Traveller A/P where the writers often provided a detailed description of the economic life of a destination, facts about the decline of the Japanese economy was

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repeatedly trivialized by pointing out that the citizens still likes to shop for luxury items. The image of Japan as successful, that was common in the magazines during a time when the Japanese economy was in steady decline, is not false but it is premised on a type of narrative based on the experience of the travel writer, and not on economic figures.

Travel narratives are also ambivalent in that they provide images of the exotic “host country” while they also implicitly say something about the home culture of the writer. Another ambivalent aspect is the relation to change and continuity. It is a genre that relies heavily on history and traditions, not least the history of colonialism which is often revoked in contemporary texts. Because of this it has often been described as a conservative genre but, as I hope to show, its reliance on history and colonial power relations is mixed up with a focus on contemporary events and change.

In their analysis of men’s magazines, Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks argue that magazines are part of a wider social context that provides means of handling social contradictions and unconscious motivations. In the words of the authors, the magazines are not ideological prison houses, but neither are they just fun. Magazines have to be good at picking up trends that matter for their readers. They make use of, while also creating, those cultural identities that are available. They express ideas about class and gender in a playful and indirect manner. When Swedish comedians Fredrik Lindström and Henrik Schyffert decided to make a show about the Swedes and their obsession about interior design they started by reading interior design magazines to study what they wrote about the latest trends and the kind of language they use. This role of the magazines was also commented on in Business Traveller A/P, in an article about Shanghai from September 85, soon after the country had been opened up for business. To describe what the new economic policy has meant for the citizens the writer wrote: “magazine kiosks are a good guide to their preoccupations; there seems to be a lot of interest in disco dancing, make-up and – believe it or not – interior decoration.” The new capitalist interests of the Shanghainese were imagined to be chronicled and encouraged by magazines.

The travel magazine as a specific media genre of travel narratives was established at a certain point in tourism history. Most magazines were first published in the late 20th century. Resguide (that later became RES) and Vagabond began publication in the 80s, as I have mentioned. Condé Nast Traveler was first published in the US in 1986, Travel+Leisure was published in 1971 and Wanderlust in 1993. National Geographic, as the publication of the

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23 Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001, p. 105
National Geographic Society, was initiated in 1888, but the magazine *National Geographic Traveler* was first published in 1984. American *Outside Magazine*, with an emphasis on adventure travel, was launched in 1977. Travel magazines are a product of the tourism industry that developed a few decades after the democratization of travel by mass tourism, when there was a fully established and diversified market for mass tourism. Some magazines had a defined readership from the start, for example the Swedish *Vagabond* that targeted backpackers when it was first published. The general trend in the market for travel magazines is increased specialization. Examples of magazines with a more specific target group are American magazine *Pathfinders Travel Magazine* with an African-American readership, first published in 1997 and Swedish magazine *Äventyr* (*Adventure, first titled Adventurous Families*) first published in 2004 and targeting adventurous travelers with children. Another example is magazines that have a specific emphasis such as British magazine *Food and Travel* from 1997. There are also magazines that focus on a specific geographical region. *Travel+Leisure* has branched out with eight international editions, including *Travel+Leisure China* (2005) and *Travel+Leisure India* (2008).

**Travel writing and the colonial gaze**

A central question in my study of contemporary texts is how globalization discourses affect the use of older texts and colonial discourses. Is it true, as Beverly Ann Simmons concludes in her study of travel magazines, that they still “say the same old things”? There is a strong tradition of studying travel writing in the context of colonialism, not least because the academic study of travel writing (at least in the Anglo-American context) coincided with the emergence of postcolonial studies. The genre has been seen as inscribed with the power relations between an imperial center and its peripheries and as giving expression to colonial discourses and a colonial gaze. Although texts from the colonial era have been the prime object of study, the conclusions that have come out of those studies have also been applied to later texts. Both Ali Behdad and Mary-Louise Pratt end their influential studies of colonial travel writing from the 18th and 19th centuries with brief excursions in the late 20th century to show that nothing has changed. A common thesis is that even though the era of European imperialism is long gone it lives on as a discursive construction. The global world is seen as

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24 Lutz and Collins 1993, p. 17
26 Clark and Smethurst 2008, p. 1
being premised on a history of colonial rule and Western imperialism. Simmons, in her afore
mentioned study, goes so far as to suggest that the tourist lives in a colonial fantasy world that
cancels out contemporary reality.

The word “postcolonialism” points to a critical perspective on colonialism. It is also a
period that comes after colonialism but that is none the less still formed by it. Postcolonial
theories acknowledge the colonial history of tourism, often developed in the tracks of colonial
expansion and exploitation. The global world is in many ways based on a colonial heritage
that continues to structure the relation between different parts of the world. The historical
bond between tourism and colonialism is sometimes manifested in concrete ways. In his study
of tourism at the Taj Mahal, Tim Edensor writes about how the buildings that were
constructed for colonial officials are now used by the tourist industry.27 Furthermore, in poor
countries the tourism industry is often operated and owned by foreign companies, reminiscing
of the colonial era when “the profits always flowed back into the so-called ‘mother
country.’”28

One main argument for postcolonial theory is that colonialism has made a mark not only
on the former colonies but also on Western societies and cultures from which the colonies
were ruled. This is not least visible in travel writing. The magazines of my study made use of
colonialism as a cultural reference among others, and this is especially so in Business
Traveller A/P, as I will describe in my fifth chapter. Even so I have found postcolonial theory
problematic to use on much of the material of my study, as I will explain in the following.

In her 2006 dissertation The global politics of contemporary travel writing, Debbie Lisle
uses postcolonial theory to argue that the travel writing genre is still fraught with the superior
attitudes of colonial travelers. According to Lisle, even those travelers that celebrate a new
cosmopolitan sensitivity to and respect for other cultures are perpetuating colonial power
relations. A well-used concept in the study of travel writing and the perpetuation of colonial
discourses is the colonial gaze, but it can be difficult to find a clear explanation of what such a
gaze implies in the theoretical literature. The colonial gaze is an aspect of the colonial
discourse, a term influenced by Edward Said’s book Orientalism from 1978, and his claim
that colonialism was supported and justified by a discursive construction.29 To use Said’s
thesis in Orientalism to study contemporary tourism and travel writing is problematic in many
ways. Said’s material consists mostly of scholarly and literary texts; he studies travelogues

29 Francis Barker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen, (eds.) Colonial discourse/postcolonial theory, Manchester:
Manchester Univ. Press, 1994, p. 1
but makes no reference to tourism. Furthermore, since 1978, when *Orientalism* was published there has been, in the words of Monica Amor, “extraordinary worldwide political, economic and social realignments”.

As I mentioned before, one of the characteristics of postmodernity and globalization is the breakdown of clear distinctions. This might present another problem for the use of a colonial discourse to study contemporary travel. In Said’s description of the Orientalist discourse one of the main aspects is the absolute separation and distance between us and them, or between the self and the Other, to use postcolonial terminology. In postcolonial theory, the Other is the ultimate opposite of the self. The colonial other is weak, irrational and feminine while the Western self is strong, rational and masculine. The self and the Other are placed in different times, the foreign culture is seen as timeless or stuck in a time that the Western self has left behind. The foreign other is passive while the Western subject is active. The exoticism of the other can be interpreted as deplorable or desirable but the difference remains. The clear distinctions between the self and the Other, West and East, as described by Said have been criticized by scholars that have pointed to the existence of historical nuances in this relation, and the differences between how various groups of non-Europeans were perceived. I have already mentioned that the relation to East Asia differed from that described in Said’s *Orientalism*. The question is how such clear separations are even possible in a global world. Needless to say travel narratives still make distinctions but they may be more ambivalent and problematic in comparison to the colonial discourse described by Said. To read travel and tourism into a context of globalization discourses, would mean a moving away from this widespread use of a colonial context and from some of the assumptions of postcolonial studies.

One risk presented by replacing an analysis of the colonial discourse with a focus on the concept of globalization is that the exposure of power structures and privileges that is central to postcolonial theory disappears. As I have mentioned before, globalization discourses are often used to hide new forms of inequality, for example the inequality associated with the restructuring of the global city. There is also the risk of agency being hidden as globalization is interpreted as something that happens by itself, as an inevitable development that is unstoppable. Ideas about globalization have also been used, for example in the travel writing

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32 Loomba 1998, p. 46
of the journalist Pico Iyer, as a kind of absolution from a problematic history of colonial oppression.\textsuperscript{33} It needs to be pointed out that the critique of the colonial gaze is not an attempt to remove tourism from an analysis of power relations but the contrary, to place it in a context of contemporary relations of power and privilege. My own interest in travel writing began with an interest in postcolonial theories within the study of literature, and I am aware that my analysis is in part indebted to the work of postcolonial scholars.

The consequence of applying the concept of colonial discourses to all contemporary travel writing is that other potential contexts that might be more relevant in trying to explain contemporary tourism and its structures of power remain unexplored. Furthermore, as Richard White and Jane Taylor argue, to use the colonial gaze “as a kind of default model for analyzing all travel writing” undermines the concept.\textsuperscript{34} To analyze popular travel writing in terms of consumerism and lifestyle might be more pertinent than to see it as an expression of colonial desires.

My critique of colonial discourse analysis, and the results it yields, is mostly aimed at the indiscriminate use of these theories. While I find the perspective of colonial discourse analysis of limited use when studying \textit{RES}, it is much more pertinent in an analysis of \textit{Business Traveller A/P} in the magazine’s early years of publication when the identity of the implied reader was heavily depending on a position of superiority over East and South East Asia, in which memories of a colonial era were abundant. On the other hand, \textit{Business Traveller A/P} also put into question the dichotomy of us and them that is central to postcolonial theory since the magazine from the beginning had readers that were not Western expats in Asia. Even though it is impossible to know the ethnicity of the readers, readers with Asian names wrote to the letters’ pages, and sometimes to complain about racism. Despite the decidedly Western perspective expressed in \textit{Business Traveller A/P} in the 80s, the magazine was not a straight forward Western representation of the exotic Other consumed by a Western readership, in the way that \textit{RES} was a Swedish representation of the Other created for a Swedish readership.

When travel writing is analyzed to see whether contemporary texts are still expressions of colonial desire, the analysis is often explicitly involved in questions of ethics. Many studies of travel writing are focused on evaluating whether travel writing is “fair” or not, for example the studies mentioned before by Killander-Braun and Lutz and Collins. According to Lisle,


\textsuperscript{34} White and Taylor 2007
she is “concerned with the absence of both political reflexivity and critical thought in contemporary travel writing.” Likewise, Killander-Braun sets out to discover whether the object of her analysis presents a racist and prejudiced image of the world or not. My purpose is not to see if travel writing is providing the reader with a fair image of the foreign destinations or not. Instead the notion that these texts are written from a privileged perspective and that they give a distorted view of the world is to some extent taken for granted. My analysis is more concerned with how that privilege is created and defended in relation to wider discourses about globalization. This is of course not an attempt to exempt travel writing from discussions about the ethics of cultural production and consumption or to argue that it does not matter. But I think that it is possible to study these texts with other, wider perspectives than whether they provide fair representations or not. Rather than lamenting the critical potential of the genre I acknowledge the fact that travel journalism fits perfectly into the lifestyle concept and the demand of advertisers for editorial content that reflect their products. The question of fairness is still there even if it is not the main question. Travel magazines encourage and celebrate a participation in a global consumer culture which is often elitist, exclusionary and even racist, but in which the categories of self and other might be organized differently than in a colonial discourse. The question is whether the utilization of globalization as an ideal and myth in travel narratives challenge some of the traditional perspectives on foreign peoples and places. To question the colonial discourse paradigm is not to question that travel narratives are expressions of power and privilege. To construct the world discursively is always an expression of as well as a struggle for power, as Said pointed out.

When travel writing is criticized it is often implicit in the critique that the genre should be able to give an accurate image of foreign countries as well as a critical perspective. There is a disappointment that travel writing is not what it could have been. The genre is seen as having the potential of representing the world to the readers in a way that would make the reader better able to understand the foreign, to gain knowledge of the exotic other, but instead it is argued that travel writing is being held hostage by commercialism and colonial discourses. The interesting question here is why the genre is seen as having a democratic potential in the first place, and why it is seen as having a specific responsibility. There is a perceived idea that travel has become shallow and commercialized while before it was about meaningful cultural

35 Lisle 2006, p. 265
meetings, a way to encounter and understand the exotic. This is a debate with a long history but at the same time something that is constantly being brought up again.

Even though my thesis is that when the magazines became lifestyle magazines rather than travel magazines they left the world behind to retreat further into the fantasy world of luxury and relaxation, I do not mean that the magazines provided a fairer image of the world during the early years of publication. At least in RES there was during the early 90s a linguistic and visual style of expression that mimicked that of foreign news reporting or anthropological studies but the travel magazine is just as much of a commercial product intent on presenting destinations as products, as is the lifestyle magazine.

My final objection to using a conventional perspective of colonial discourse analysis to study the texts I have chosen is that such a study would be too much of a repetition of earlier studies, for example Killander-Braun’s study of Vagabond, using a material that is similar to RES. There are other aspects of the magazines that should be the analyzed that has not been so extensively explored before.

**Developments in tourism studies and the question of authenticity**

In conjunction with other processes of globalization, tourism has changed fundamentally during the last part of the 20th century. The tourism industry has become increasingly diversified and there has been an increase in long-haul travel as well as shorter breaks. Tourists have more money but less time to spend. The tourism industry provides more choice but at the same time there is a trend toward more standardization and homogenization, for example in the popularity of package holidays with an emphasis on relaxation. It is worth noting that tourism in the early 21st century also retains forms of mass tourism that characterizes modern tourism, such as packaged tours and cruise ship travel. Tourism has also changed because it is no longer just a movement of people “from the West to the rest”. More and more affluent people from non-Western countries travel. Asia is growing in importance as a destination for tourism. According to Meethan, Western tourism has seen a shift from travels to the Caribbean and Mediterranean to South East Asia and in the 1980s and

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38 Burns and Novelli 2006
39 Meethan 2001, p. 75
1990s East Asia had “the greatest growth in international arrivals of tourism”, the primary reason being the “opening” of China in 1978.\textsuperscript{42}

In much tourism theory there is an implicit assumption that tourism involves the movement of Westerners from the West to “the rest”. In their presentation of postcolonial perspectives in tourism studies, Stefan Jonsson and Josefina Syssner consistently write about Westerners travelling to “poor countries in the South”, even though they do not claim that this is the only form of tourism they do not mention any other type of tourism and how this might differ from a postcolonial perspective.\textsuperscript{43} Writing in the mid-80s, Cohen and Cooper claimed that “the dominant trend in the tourism industry is that citizens from richer, highly developed societies travel to poorer, less developed societies.”\textsuperscript{44} Another common assumption is that these Westerners move from urban areas to rural communities. In \textit{Tourism and social identity}, Peter Burns writes that “consumerism impacts destinations through tourists bringing with them the urban (and urbane?) attitudes of the consumer society than they live in”, presumably assuming that the societies of the hosts are not consumer societies.\textsuperscript{45} Clearly, what are imagined as destinations are not world cities such as Seoul, Tokyo or Shanghai. These tourism destinations, as I will suggest, can challenge the superiority of the tourism, described by many tourism scholars as inherent to tourism.

Tourism has foremost been studied in sociology. However, just like travel writing, tourism as an object of study was largely ignored for a long time because of the traditional focus on work and production in sociology. Dean MacCannell’s book \textit{The Tourist – a new theory of the leisure class}, from 1976, first made tourism a serious object of study.\textsuperscript{46} In \textit{The Tourist}, MacCannell discussed the issue of authenticity, one of the main issues in tourism studies. MacCannell argued that the search for authenticity is a central feature in tourism. Weary of the inauthenticity of modern Western society, the tourist travels to faraway places to seek out the authenticity in the societies of others. The tourist is then especially interested in so called “back regions” as opposed to that which is staged for tourism consumption while the local population is interested in staging displays to keep the tourist at a distance.

MacCannell’s study has been widely influential but also much criticized. Among others,
Erik Cohen criticizes MacCannell’s one-dimensional description of the tourist and argues that there are a variety of different types of tourists. He sets out to describe five different tourists and their relation to what he calls the center of their home culture. Even though Cohen contends that, in disagreement with MacCannell, there are also tourists that do not bother much with authenticity, that are happy with the staged events of the tourist industry, even for Cohen tourists are characterized according to how they relate to the concept of authenticity. As Meethan points out, Cohen doesn’t refute MacCannell’s notion of alienation as the main motivation for tourists.\(^\text{47}\)

A way of criticizing the idea of the alienated tourist would be to point at the variety of the tourist experience. It might be that with the enormous growth of the tourist industry, even Cohen’s five modes of tourism are too few and that tourism should not longer be discussed foremost in terms of how it relates to the quest for authenticity. Furthermore, tourism is no longer just a Western pursuit. It can be expected that the issue of authenticity is viewed upon differently in other cultures. Authenticity is still of central importance in some forms of tourism such as for example adventure tourism and nature tourism, as I have shown in my study of the British magazine *Wanderlust*.\(^\text{48}\) It can have an importance in travel narratives that attempt to separate tourists and travelers and thus argue for the distinction between the inauthentic practices of tourists and authentic travel.

Because of the diversification of the tourist industry it is impossible to talk about the tourist. Different types of tourism make use of and create different types of discourses and it might be possible to talk about a multitude of authenticities. The difference between different types of tourism lies in the way authenticity is constructed and made use of rather than the difference being one between tourists that desire authenticity and those who do not. Furthermore, authenticity is also a more complex concept. According to Meethan, the problem with the authenticity debate is that authenticity and inauthenticity are seen in a simple either/or perspective, as essentialist and exclusive categories while Meethan concludes that authenticity is always constructed.\(^\text{49}\) He points out however that this does not mean that authenticity is less important. As much as it is a viable concept in tourism, it should be studied for how it is used, by whom and to what end.\(^\text{50}\) The idea that all tourism creates alienating,

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\(^\text{47}\) Meethan 2001, p. 12
\(^\text{48}\) Emilia Ljungberg, “Writing the world: the creation of a European identity in travel writing”, unpublished undergraduate thesis at the Department of Comparative Literature, Lund 2007
\(^\text{49}\) Meethan 2001, p. 111
\(^\text{50}\) Meethan 2001, p. 170
inauthentic experiences has been refuted by most scholars but authenticity can still be a central concept in travel narratives and in tourism.\(^51\)

Many of the theories about tourism that were developed in the 1970s and 1980s portrayed tourists as homogenous and passive. Scholars of tourism have started to acknowledge the active participation of tourists in interpreting experiences as opposed to a passive appropriation. Scott Lash and John Urry criticize older conceptions of gullible tourists that are fooled into consuming inauthentic experiences by describing the contemporary tourist as ironic, self-conscious and role distanced.\(^52\) Simultaneously, tourists have become more active as producers of media representations, for example through amateur blogs. The Internet has also made it possible for tourists to be less dependent on travel agencies and more independent in the planning of their travels.

**The travel magazine as lifestyle magazine**

In my study I view travel culture as a part of a broader culture of late modernity. This is in part because of the transformation of the magazines into lifestyle magazines in which travel is understood as one part of a larger lifestyle project. It is difficult to find an exact definition of the phenomenon of lifestyle media but the anthology *Ordinary Lifestyles: Popular media, Consumption and Taste* includes articles about home make-over shows, celebrity cookbooks, teenage magazines and stress management texts. What they all have in common is a focus on self-improvement and the desire for higher social status as well as the construction of identities through consumer products and definitions of taste.\(^53\)

The magazines of my study provide the readers with a specific identity. They present a form of elite travel in which the idea of globalization forms a part. As Arjun Appadurai says, in late modernity identities are increasingly self-reflexive and imagined, and lifestyle media products help the reader to create a desired identity. Magazines such as *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P* offer the reader a variety of what Appadurai calls imagined lives. Travel magazines have, just as actual tourism practices, become increasingly specialized. There are magazines focusing exclusively on a specific destination, or a specific activity such as golf tourism or wine tourism. However, the Swedish magazine *RES*, as well as its internationally known equivalents such as *Condé Nast Traveller*, *Travel and Leisure*, and *National*

\(^{51}\) According to for example Janicke Andersson, “Diskurs”, in Syssner (ed.) 2011, p. 40
\(^{52}\) Dennis R. Judd and Susan S. Fainstein, (eds.), *The tourist city*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, p. 30
\(^{53}\) David Bell and Joanne Hollows, (eds.) *Ordinary lifestyles: popular media, consumption and taste*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 2005
Geographic Traveller, still have a potentially broad and rather vaguely defined readership. These magazines create a niche in other ways than through a specific topic. In Magazine editors talk to writers, Judy Mandell explains how “magazines vary not only by specialty but by attitude. Values and attitudes are one of the central services that a magazine brings to its readers”.\textsuperscript{54} Hence, magazines with the same subject matter differ through the elusive concept of "attitude" which is connected to the concept of lifestyle. “Attitude” in this context can be translated to identity. Magazines differ in what kind of identity they offer the reader. In the early 21\textsuperscript{st} century, when much of the information offered by travel magazines, such as addresses to hotels and restaurants, is available elsewhere, for example online for free, to create an identity is more important. What the travel magazine as lifestyle magazine does is to frame different potential tourist destinations as well as the act of travelling itself through definitions of taste, style and specific attitudes.

Lifestyle magazines in general have the function of presenting to the reader various consumer goods and how they should be used; it places them in a desirable context that gives them cultural value. This was especially true in the early days of mass consumption in Western societies and in societies that in other ways have been exposed to capitalism. In Mapping the magazine, Sian Stephenson describes the role of women's magazines in teaching consumption in post-Communist Russia.\textsuperscript{55} Even though travel magazines are giving increasing space to the display of consumer goods, the main commodity on display is places. The travel magazine presents the reader with different places and how they can be used by the consumer. The travel magazine thus put places into a context and gives them cultural significance as products. It explains how the destinations fit into the desirable identity of the ideal reader, for example as global or local places.

Media products of the tourism industry has for a long time had the function of telling the tourist not only where to go and what to see but also how to behave and how to construct an identity based on the tourist experience. When travel magazines become lifestyle magazines however this identity work becomes more explicit, more elaborate and more clearly depending on consumer choice and definitions of taste.

\textsuperscript{54} Judy Mandell, Magazine editors talk to writers, New York : John Wiley & Sons, c1996, p.63
In travel writing the authority of the writer comes from his or her function as an eye witness.\textsuperscript{56} The travel writer has firsthand knowledge of a destination and therefore has the right to describe it. For travel magazines however, and increasingly over the time period of my study, the information they publish is already accessible elsewhere, for example in guide books, and in the advent of the Internet much of the information is available for free from other sources. The long lists of currencies and airfares that both magazines published in the 90s, sometimes as much as 12 pages of it, are easily found online where it is also better updated. Hence the magazines need to offer something else than mere information. This is one of the reasons why the magazines came to emphasize the importance of lifestyle as well as a reason why their role as aesthetically pleasing objects was increasingly emphasized. In \textit{RES} what was emphasized was often the expertise of the writers. They were often described as having lived in a particular city for a long time. The magazine also created a selling point by claiming to provide something more exclusive that other magazines could. In a presentation of the magazine published by Pressbyrån, the main seller in Sweden, exclusivity is emphasized:

\begin{quote}
If you want to know the cheapest way to get to the Canary Islands then perhaps this 30-year old is not for you. But if you want to know in which obscure cellar in Moskva they serve the best vegetarian food or which Manhattan roof top that is the hottest right now then this is where you should look. \textit{RES} guides you to the destinations beyond the typical package deal-destinations and does so with a limitless enthusiasm for significant details. Because you wouldn’t want to come home from Istanbul having only had the second best cocktail, when you could have had the best.\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

The emphasis is on the exclusive that is not available to others and in the details that makes a difference. Implicitly in the text is an acknowledgment that the magazine cannot provide something new. The places described are not off the beaten track but exclusivity can be provided by what one does at the destination.

**Travel and consumption in lifestyle magazines**

When travel magazines become lifestyle magazines there is an increased emphasis on the


\textsuperscript{57}Pressbyråns tidning , week 41-42 2011
display of consumer goods. In consumerist societies consumption is central because it does more than satisfy needs; it serves as a source of desire, as well as fun, enjoyment and pleasure.\textsuperscript{58} Consumption is established as a central tourist activity, as well as a leisure activity in general that is also used in identity formation. Lifestyle magazines are inherently consumerist. David Chaney describes how the concept of lifestyle is connected to the symbolic value of products. The individual can assert and display his or her lifestyle by "seeking out goods, services or activities that form a certain perceived pattern of associations."\textsuperscript{59} The products are chosen for what they represent. This function of consumer goods is obvious in high-end travel magazines and their presentation of shopping and consumer choice as expressions of identity.

One part of the lifestyle offered in the travel magazines of my study is the desire for products that are not mass-produced. Saskia Sassen describes this desire for so-called bespoke products and services as an aspect of new class formations in a global world. This search for the exclusive and special can be combined with other valuable "signs". In a lifestyle magazine such as RES this desire for the handmade, original and designed is combined with the search for the local, and this can in turn be combined with environmental concerns.

The concept of lifestyle is connected to issues of class and class distinction. According to Sassen the global economy brings about a class realignment that sharpen the distinction between upper and lower classes. The large and stable middle-class that characterizes Fordism looses in importance. Other scholars argue for the existence of a new type of middle-class. In \textit{Ordinary Lifestyles}, Bell and Hollows claim that the rise of lifestyles is connected to a new middle-class group of “taste-makers” and interpreters of style. Patrick Mullins discusses what he calls a “globalized middle-class” that, he writes, has played a central role in establishing a relation between consumerism and tourism. They combine having a disposable income with a predisposition to shop.\textsuperscript{60} This is connected to Thurlow and Jaworski’s claim that globalization is an identity resource, utilized to create a sense of privilege and status. According to Thurlow and Jaworski, the global elite characterize themselves as elite by their global mobility, and hence travel is central in their construction of identity. The ideal reader of the magazines of my study are this new creative, global middle-class that use consumption and style to create an identity as well as a position in society and that is connected to changes brought on by postmodernity and globalization.

\textsuperscript{58} Fainstein and Judd 1999, p. 253  
\textsuperscript{59} David Chaney, \textit{Lifestyles}, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 32  
\textsuperscript{60} Fainstein and Judd 1999, p. 252
Travel becomes a cultural capital central to this new class formation. According to Harvey, cultural capital conceals “the real basis of economic distinction” through culture and taste. It contributes to the reproduction of the established order while the “perpetuation of domination remain hidden”. In that way then the concept of lifestyle, implying a distinction based on taste, can have the same function as discourses of globalization. By creating the illusion of a break with older structures of power, in this case class distinction and colonialism, they can hide their perpetuation. When using globalization discourses in their construction of an elite identity the lifestyle magazines create order in a global world but they also appropriate the globalization concept, by implicitly arguing for a specific definition of what the global world entails. To define globalization becomes a powerful expression of privilege.

Globalization processes also enhance the necessity of creating lifestyles as well as the means to do so. According to Chaney the centrality of lifestyle is connected to modern, urban society, characterized by being "a world of strangers" in which symbolic meaning is constantly reinvented. Hence, globalization gives the concept of lifestyle a new dimension since it puts us even more in the presence of strangers but also because it provides a global consumer culture. Lifestyles can now be put together using products and "signs" from all over the world. There is a global circulation of signs that function as metonyms for the places that they are geographically separated from.

Drawing on the theories of Sassen one might also reach the conclusion that the formation of an imaginary cosmopolitan elite identity serves a purpose in a global economy. Even though Sassen does not go further into questions of identity and cosmopolitanism in Cities in a world economy, she does argue that what she calls the corporate elite has become “denationalized”. International business centers, she writes, “produce what can be thought of as a new subculture” that is necessary for the establishment of a global economic system. This global subculture is necessary because a denationalized elite are not opposed to foreign ownership in their home countries. They lack a sense of loyalty to a nation in their professional roles. Sassen does not develop this argument further to explain how a global elite identity is constructed but it is significant that she emphasize the importance of a specific

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62 Harvey, p. 44
63 Sassen 2006, p. 143
64 Sassen 2006, p. 144
(culturally constructed) group formation as necessary for the development of the global economy.

In contemporary travel narratives there is a need to create definitions on several levels, the most general level being the question of what a new global world entails. There is also a need for a definition of practices of travel, of places and of identities, or lifestyles. To be able to define concepts and perceptions on these different levels is a position of power. The new lifestyle that is made possible by the global economy and is described by Sassen and others is expressed in upmarket travel magazines in which the ideal reader is described as a cosmopolitan connoisseur.

More than being a mere reflection and justification of the lifestyle of the reader or general trends in society, these magazines actively shape a new form of imagined elite identity, teaching the reader how to travel, where to go, what to eat, what to buy and how to behave. I argue that by studying these texts it is possible to describe the popular side of globalization, how globalization as a discursive construction is utilized in these examples of popular culture that might be somewhat overlooked in the theorization of globalization, and how it fits into larger contexts of global consumerism. Travel magazines are a valid object of analysis because of what they can tell us about the construction of imagined elite identities in the late 20th and early 21st century.

**Travel magazines and gender**

The processes of globalization described above have affected gender relations as well. The new groups of immigrants that travel to the global metropolis to work are, to a large extent, women who are employed as “nannies, maids and sex workers”. Furthermore, this is also connected to the lifestyle and consumption patterns of the new middle-classes since the migrants working as domestic servants perform the tasks that were previously done by the middle-class women in the suburbs. There are also changes in the gendering of leisure travel. For example, Mullins claims that South East Asia used to be marketed for specifically male tourism, one aspect being sex tourism, while it is now acknowledged that a “growing number of business and professional women with high incomes” travel as tourists to the region. In the time period I study women travelled increasingly, both as labor migrants and as tourists.

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66 Fainstein and Judd 1999, p. 260
The question is how this has affected discourses around travel that has traditionally positioned the traveler as male. In popular discourses, is the traveler still imagined to be male? Can travel discourses be gender neutral? In those cases in which the travel narrative acknowledges those that provide the tourist with service, what is their gender? If globalization really does break down old categories of East and West, center and periphery then does it also break down the gendered categories of travel?

Furthermore, questions about travel and gender might be specifically pertinent in the study of lifestyle magazines since it is a genre that is traditionally feminine. In their article “Exploring the shopping imaginary: the dreamworld of women’s magazines”, Lorna Stevens and Pauline Maclaran study what they term the ‘shopping imaginary’ in women’s magazines and tie this to a specifically feminine tradition going back to the days of the first department stores that became feminine spaces of consumption. According to Stevens and Maclaran “department stores and women’s magazines offered women a window on a world of goods”. More than just promoting actual consumption women’s magazines offer spaces for imaginary identities based on the acquisition of consumer goods that the readers might never buy. This function of presenting the reader with consumer goods and imaginary lives which has traditionally been associated with the women’s magazine has spread not just, as Stevens and Maclaran write, to the men’s magazines but also to many other genres of popular journalism.

Although the genre of lifestyle magazines has traditionally been feminine, the late 20th century saw changes in this tradition. When before men bought pornographic magazines or special interest magazines “on sports, photography or motoring”, in the 90s the British market carried successful new titles such as Loaded, FHM and Maxim, general interest or lifestyle magazines that targeted men. These magazines include such features as health issues and fashion.

The genre of travel writing in magazines is already a mix of the masculine and feminine. Travel is perceived as masculine, connected to ideas of adventure and freedom. The genre of magazines is on the other hand seen as feminine and so is the domain of leisure. Travel writing is seen as a less serious journalistic genre, compared to for example news reporting. It is typically centered on the personal, and as I will show the inner life of the reporter. As the magazines become lifestyle magazines travelling is in part perceived as a retreat from the stress of work into the private life of the individual and into the sensuous experiences of the body.

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67 Stevens and Maclaran 2005, p. 283
68 Jackson, Stevenson, Brooks 2001, p. 1
In contrast to many other subgenres of magazines travel magazines have no obvious gender; the ideal reader is rather based on loose definitions of class. Even in Business Traveller A/P it is the business man who is clearly gendered, not the traveler as such, and the male gender of the business traveler is already from the start, and increasingly over the years, put into question by the business woman who demands to be acknowledged. On the other hand the business woman also remains an anomaly in the general discourse of the magazines, constantly vying for acknowledgement. While in RES gender is almost invisible, the transformation of Business Traveller A/P has a lot to do with the gendered identity of the traveler since Business Traveller A/P changes from constructing a very masculine business traveler to providing a traveler with a much more ambivalent gender.

After having discussed the study of tourism, travel writing and magazines as well as the relation between earlier studies and my own, I will now go into the theoretical as well as historical background of the concept of globalization.

**Historical background and theoretical concepts**

**The global turn**

Globalization has become one of the most used buzz words world-wide, but rather than having any fixed and stable meaning, globalization is a bundle of highly contested concepts, which makes it both pertinent and fruitful to study. Globalization is an umbrella term that can cover a wide range of more specific developments and tendencies or, as Peter Marcuse sarcastically puts it, everything that has happened since the 1970s.\(^6^9\) There is no fixed definition of what globalization entails, however a few processes that are usually mentioned are the changing role of the nation state, the rise of transnational corporations, increased mobility, and developments in technology facilitating rapid transportation and instantaneous communication. Furthermore, globalization should also be seen as a powerful idea. Robertson writes that "globalisation as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole", the concept of globalization signals the perception of that the world has become integrated. Ulf Hannerz is describing something

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similar when he talks about a "globalization of consciousness". The word globalization refers both to actual processes and to a way of describing the world. It is foremost the idea of globalization, i.e. globalization as a discourse, that is of interest in this study.

In the late 20th century globalization replaced other related words such as internationalism and transnationalism as the paradigmatic word for explaining the interconnectedness of the world. More than that, globalization has become a ubiquitous concept for explaining the contemporary world in its entirety along with a wide range of specific phenomena. In that way globalization has also to some extent replaced postmodernity even though these two concepts can also be understood as being parallel. Complicating a comparison between postmodernity and globalization theory is the fact that they to some extent refer to different areas of study; postmodernity and poststructuralism has foremost been central concepts in the humanities while globalization as a theoretical concept has been developed in the social sciences. However, globalization theory can be said to continue some of the theoretical strands of postmodernity.

Postmodernity brought on a move away from center-periphery models of the world, something which has been further emphasized by globalization theory. Postmodernity also laid the ground for globalization theory by its criticism of the universalizing and homogenizing tendencies of modernity. It emphasizes the local, and the particular context that disappears in modernity. There is furthermore a preoccupation with otherness in postmodernity (which was also silenced by modernity) and that necessarily has a central place in globalization theory with its emphasis on mobility and hybrid cultures.

To understand globalization theory in relation to tourism and travel I will go further into some of the characteristics of postindustrial society that postmodernity and globalization is meant to theorize, starting with the historical background. It is hard to define an exact time for the shift from modern society to a postmodern, or global world. David Harvey writes about the 1970s, or 1972 to be more precise, as the point when the common experience of space and time went through a decisive change, or what he calls a new round of time-space compression. Arjun Appadurai on the other hand stresses 1989 as an important date. Saskia

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72 Dirlik 2006
73 Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p. 32
74 Harvey 1991, p. 46
Sassen also mentions the mid-1970s as the time when new patterns in the world economy became legible. At this time, Japanese and European multinationals began to successfully compete with US companies.

Globalization is often discussed in terms of economical changes. The rise of a new global economy is dependent on the changing role of the US, and to some extent the growth of the Asian economy. The breakdown of Bretton Woods, the international monetary agreement that regulated the exchange rates, in the early 1970s, and the rising debt of the US is a common explanation to the changing world order. The Asian financial crisis at the end of the 1990s stymied the rise of Asia momentarily but with the emergence of China in the world economy this development continued. In the early 21st century, the dominance of the US was threatened by the country’s great indebtedness, which left it dependent on Japan and China. In 2005, China became the second leading owner of dollars after Japan.\textsuperscript{75} However, the declining power of the US and the rise of Asia is not just a question of a move of economic power from the West to the East. According to Sassen the US is still a major military and economic power even though the world is no longer governed by a “US-centered global order”.\textsuperscript{76} She also writes that global firms are less bound to a specific country, they are more global than ever, and this of course makes it less pertinent to discuss the financial power of specific countries.\textsuperscript{77}

When it comes to changes in the economic system, David Harvey also mentions changes in the financial markets and the increased importance of speculation. Speculation has meant that the financial system can be de-linked from actual production. Furthermore, money became increasingly mobile. Changes in the financial system together with a development of communication technology facilitated a deterritorialization of capital. The new global economy created a “sharp concentration of global wealth” as well as new forms of inequality according to Harvey.\textsuperscript{78}

The 1970s is also the time of the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, described as a transition from mass production and mass consumption to flexible accumulation and individualized consumption. Individual consumption created niche markets or so called “lifestyle segments”, something that I will return to later.\textsuperscript{79} Post-Fordism is also characterized by a globalization of production; production is no longer tied to particular places. This is

\textsuperscript{75} Sassen 2006, p. 26
\textsuperscript{76} Sassen 2006, p. 43
\textsuperscript{77} Sassen 2006, p. 44
\textsuperscript{78} Harvey 1991, p. 2
\textsuperscript{79} Meethan 2001, p. 70
matched by what Kevin Meethan refers to as “the expansion of commodity relations on a global scale”, a globalization of consumption.\textsuperscript{80}

A central part of postmodernity that is connected to the shift to post-Fordism is the increased emphasis on culture and aesthetics. In postmodern society forms take precedence over function. This has also been described in terms of a shift to the semiotic and a proliferation of visual images.\textsuperscript{81} But material objects have also become “aestheticized”.\textsuperscript{82} When it comes to products this means that the design component is an increasingly important part of the value of goods. Ideas and images attached to a product becomes the value of the product, the so called brand equity. In general, images and advertising are increasingly important which further facilitates global consumption since images can to some extent travel across cultures. The increasing importance of images together with various forms of mobility has implications for the construction of identities.

These changes have also been discussed in terms of a new economy or an experience economy that is defined by being focused on the production of attractions, temptations, relaxation and experiences, rather than material goods.\textsuperscript{83} Travel is the perfect product in an experience economy since the product of the tourism industry has always to some extent been something as ephemeral as fantasies and dreams. The economic developments defined by the concept of an experience economy are another way in which tourism and leisure has gained a new importance. Tourism is one of the most conspicuous and expansive parts of the experience economy.\textsuperscript{84}

**Mobility and identity in a global world**

Postmodernity implies a break with the clear distinctions of modernity. Again, many of these developments have been further emphasized by globalization. One is the changing perception of leisure and work. Leisure is no longer as clearly marked out from everyday life. John Urry argues that tourism is no longer a special activity, “tourism is no longer a differentiated set of social activities with its own set of rules, times and spaces”.\textsuperscript{85} Neither is traveling in itself an activity that can be easily marked out. The changing patterns of travel and the break down of

\textsuperscript{80} Meethan 2001, p. 71
\textsuperscript{82} Scott and Urry 1994, p. 4
\textsuperscript{83} Tom O’Dell and Peter Billing (eds.), *Experiencescapes: Tourism, Culture, and Economy*, Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, p. 13
\textsuperscript{84} Svante Beckman, “Kultur”, in Josefina Syssner (ed.), *Perspektiv på turism*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2011, p. 138
a separation between work and leisure, home and away, has made some scholars talk about an end of tourism, but it might be better described as a decline of the stability of everyday life than an erasure of tourism.

The experience of encountering other cultures and places that tourism provides is available in more ways than through travel, for example through food and media products such as music, TV and film. The shopping mall and world fairs offer the consumer the world in miniature. In the words of Madan Sarup, it is possible to “experience the world’s geography as simulacrum.” This has three implications of importance to my study of contemporary travel narratives: the world is constantly present in the form of consumer products which contributes to a global consumer culture, the consumer experiences faraway places through these products that are associated with different places but cut off from their origins which means that places travel in the form of products and signs, and finally, through the global spread of consumer goods, the consumers are always tourists which has implications for the construction of a tourist identity.

Travel is in various ways central to contemporary society, whether it is described in terms of postmodernity or globalization. According to Appadurai, from the 1970s there has been a deterritorialization of persons, images and ideas. Dean MacCannell claims that tourism and postcolonial immigration are two fundamental developments that are reshaping society. Both of these movements facilitate the intermingling of cultures. Zygmunt Bauman argues that travel is the defining characteristic of postmodernity and divides humanity into the unfortunate Vagabonds and the affluent Tourists.

The mechanisms of consumer capitalism are creating an increasingly global market place but the experiences of travel that is brought to our home culture is about more than the consumerist pleasures of the shopping mall, it is also creating a crisis. According to David Scott, the experience of alienation and identity crisis, that is associated with travel, is now available in ones own society. Other scholars, Anthony Giddens among them, argue that we are now in the constant presence of the foreign, not least through media products that intersperse the local here and now with images of the far away. The experience of being

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86 (missing ref)
87 Madan Sarup, Identity, culture and the postmodern world, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996, p. 100
88 Appadurai 1996
89 Dean MacCannell, Empty meeting grounds: the tourist papers, London: Routledge, 1992
91 David Scott (missing reference)
92 Anthony Giddens, Runaway world: how globalisation is reshaping our lives, London: Profile, 1999
displaced that used to be felt by a minority is now the experience of everybody, whether we travel or not.

MacCannell refers to refugees as a “permanent framework of post national order.” Even though my study does not concern the experiences of immigrants and exiles as such that specific form of mobility does somehow impact the experience of tourism, understood as the movement of the privileged elite. The movement of the underprivileged is also a factor in the changing perception of place. The presence of third world immigrants in metropolises of the West creates cultural intermingling and hybridity. This means that the exotic Others (in the terminology of postcolonial studies) that many tourists seek out during their travels are already present in the home town of the tourist, thus threatening the dichotomy of home and away.

A basic premise for my work is that the rapid increase in mobility has an effect on the construction of identities in a global world. Arjun Appadurai discusses this by using the concept of "imagined lives". Appadurai argues that globalization is characterized by five dimensions of cultural flows which he calls ethnoscape, mediascape, technoscape, financescape and ideoscape. According to Appadurai these are fluid, irregular landscapes and the relation between them is unstable and unpredictable. Of these scapes, ethnoscape and mediascape are especially of interest to me. Ethnoscapes are landscapes of people, tourists, immigrants, exiles etc. that are moving while mediascapes are media products circulating globally. Mediascapes are image-centered and narrative based “accounts of strips of reality.” They are scripts that can be used for the construction of what Appadurai calls “imagined lives”.

According to Appadurai, in a global world culture is less bounded and tacit and more fluid and politicized. Tradition is put into question and thus identity and belonging are not self-explanatory any more, identity becomes self-conscious. This puts a new emphasis on the importance of imagination for contemporary culture. Appadurai writes: “more persons in more parts of the world consider a wider set of possible lives than they ever did before”. Culture becomes an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation, and mass media has the function of presenting possible lives and ever changing identities. Mediascapes are connected to ethnoscapes when Appadurai argues that both immigrants and tourists create

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93 MacCannell 1992, p. 167
94 Appadurai 1996, p. 33
95 Appadurai 1996, p. 35
96 Appadurai 1996, p. 45
imagined lives, facilitated by their mobility. The magazines of my study are examples of mediascapes that are offering their readers imagined identities and group membership.

During the same time that globalization became a much-used concept, during the 1990s, identity became increasingly popular as an object of study. Identity was increasingly described as being fluid and as a process rather than being static. According to Bauman, while in modernity the problem of identity was “how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable”, in postmodernity the problem is how to “avoid fixation and keep the options open”. Bauman also points out that identity is always a problem when it is discussed: “one thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs”. In relation to globalization, identity has often been studied with a perspective on the identity constructions of the new transient subjects, refugees, emigrants and exiles. However, the relation of mobility and identity construction can also be studied with a perspective on leisure travel. Tourism is a perfect activity for the construction of identity. The tourist can use the destinations encountered to temporarily and playfully try on another identity, while the opportunity to travel as a privileged tourist is itself necessary for the construction of a more permanent identity based on lifestyle.

The changing significance of place

Processes of globalization change our perceptions of place and space. Anthony Giddens talk about time-space distanciation to describe how things and people become disembedded from concrete space and time. David Harvey argues that globalization is a process of time-space compression. Questions of space and place are central in tourism because as Meethan says, tourism is the commodification of space. The product produced by the tourism industry is places, both as material entities and as symbolic space. Hence, for a study of contemporary tourism, it is important to take into consideration the changing significance of place and space.

The definition of the words place and space, and how they differ, is a difficult one. Place is a more concrete concept, common to the everyday usage of language, while space is often used to mean something more abstract. In a discussion of the two concepts in the context of

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98 Hall and du Gay 1996, p. 18
99 Hall and du Gay 1996, p. 19
100 Lash and Urry 1994, p. 13
101 Meethan 2001, p. 168
modernity and postmodernity, Mats Brusman writes that space signify the general, the abstract and homogenous spaces of modernity, while place is about the specific and unique, filled with meaning, that is emphasized in a postmodern critique of the modernist ideal. This postmodern critique argues that a place is constructed when it is filled with people’s meaning-making and by human interaction. Place is therefore connected to the construction of identities, as an interrelated way of creating meaning. Just like identities, places are constantly being constructed and re-constructed. In the context of my study, places are the concrete destinations as they are visited and described by the travel writers while I use space to refer to something more abstract but also something wider and more general. While a place can be constructed in a travel magazine article as being perfect for relaxation, many such places form spaces of relaxation. The spaces of relaxation can have certain properties that are exemplified by the specific places. In my study of place it is the description of places in travel narratives that form the object of study and not the physical places. But even though it is beyond the scope of this study it is important to note that other scholars have pointed to the impact that these narratives can have on the physical aspects of places.

Due to new communication technologies and improved means of transport, physical space is supposed to have lost its grip and become completely conquered. The idea of conquered space is also a useful myth in travel advertisement. In Tourism and social identities, Jennie Germann Molz refer to an advertisement for Boeing, in which the company claims to build faster airplanes, “which means the distance between any two places in the world has never been shorter”. A similar idea was expressed in an advertisement for AT&T, published in Business Traveller A/P in which the copy read: “Travel in a world without borders, time zones or language barriers.”(Feb 94) This myth of easily accessible space has been refuted by a number of scholars pointing to the ambivalence and unevenness of how time and space is perceived. The conquest of space is a privilege. Among others, Bauman has pointed out that it is for "the globally mobile" that "space loses its constraining qualities". Likewise, Doreen Massey contrasts the experience of business men that fly between global cities with the experience of the islanders of Pitcairns for whom mobility has decreased to such an extent that they are unable to visit their neighbors. Massey also points to the significance of race and gender in influencing our experiences of place and our access to mobility.

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102 Mats Brusman, “Plats”, in Josefina Syssner (ed.), Perspektiv på turism och resande, p. 152
104 Burns and Novelli 2006, p. 40
105 Bauman 1998, p. 88
106 Doreen Massey, Space, place and gender, University of Minnesota Press, 1994, p. 169
The experience of space for the privileged tourist is also dependent on the mode of transport and can vary. Jennie Germann Molz has studied the perception of space described by backpackers in their blogs and websites, and concludes that although traveling by jet plane makes the world seem small, around the world travelers also experience space as vast. Plane travel has made older means of transportation such as trains seem slow.\textsuperscript{107} In their online chronicles, the tourists studied by Molz describe their experiences of “a multiplicity of scales”. Molz also emphasize that differences in scale are not given but produced, contingent and relative.

One of the most drastic arguments about how our relation to space has changed was put forward by the French anthropologist Marc Augé, who argued that what he called hypermodernity creates non-places. The main idea in Augé’s concept of non-place is that capitalism in the late 20th century rearranges the structure of places and our experience of them by creating non-places characterized by abstract commerce, individualism and the ephemeral while traditional places are filled with the memory of the past and by human relations.\textsuperscript{108} Augé mentions “hotel chains and squats, holiday clubs and refugee camps” but the typical non-place is the airport. Augé’s theories about non-places have become both widely influential and criticized, among others by John Tomlinson who points to the fact that a place such as the airport might be experienced as a real place by those who work there, and that the definition of a non-place is thus a matter of perspective.\textsuperscript{109}

Augé does in fact acknowledge that the categories of non-place and real place are not completely separate; they never “exist in pure form”. He claims that “the possibility of non-place is never absent from any place” and the possibility of what Augé defines as real places is never fully absent from non-places either. For my study, one of the advantages of Augé’s theories about the non-place is that they serve to highlight the existence and significance of what he calls “transit points and temporary abodes”. He also highlights how non-places are inherently global spaces since they are the same all over the world. In that way they can create a sense of home even in the most exotic places by being “worldwide consumption space”.

Just like identities, places are now to a larger extent consciously created. According to David Harvey, real geography disappears through the eclecticism of postmodern culture in which “different places, times and styles are jumbled together”. He also claims that “the image of places and spaces becomes as open to production and ephemeral use as any

\textsuperscript{107} Jennie Germann Molz, “Sizing up the world”, in Burns and Novelli, 2006
other”. One aspect of this is the construction of places for consumption in the tourism industry. Another aspect is what Appadurai terms “invented home lands”, which is the images that emigrants construct of the places that they have left behind. Despite the obvious differences between these two practices they are both examples of the increasingly constructed nature of place.

One aspect of the construction of places for consumption is the so called branding of places. To compete on a global market places need to be branded just like other products, in order to attract tourism and business. It follows that physical place matters less, and images of place matters more. Places become signs when they are turned into media images that circulate globally, detached from the physical place and in this way place travel. The branding of places is another aspect of the changing perception of places and of geography.

Ideas about places are also constructed in marketing to sell other products. In Destination Branding, Simon Anholt writes that having a place connection is more central for brands and products competing on a global market. He also argues that “many of the symbols which ‘enchant’ commodities are connected with place and travel”. Competitive global brands are not those that claim to come from nowhere, but those that are spread to the whole world from a perceived place of origin. Anholt mentions Coca Cola as one of the most successful examples. Coca Cola, along with other brands with their origins in the US such as McDonalds, Marlboro and Levi’s, would not sell as well as they do internationally had they not been inextricably associated with the powerful myths surrounding the American lifestyle. It follows that the place where a product, such as a soft drink, is produced and consumed matters less than the place that it is perceived to belong to. If a place, or any other product circulating on a global market, is perceived as placeless or global, it has no differentiation to trade on.

The use of places in tourism is ambivalent. Some forms of tourism can be seen to create placelessness, for example the so called sun, sand and sea tourism in which it matter less where in the world these experiences are found. Likewise, Thurlow and Jaworski argue in their study of the advertisement of elite tourism that the destinations advertised are removed from time and space. They are constructed as being placeless, to accommodate for the

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110 Harvey 1991, p. 293  
111 Appadurai 1996, p. 49  
travelers’ desire to flee the world.\textsuperscript{113} This however, according to Thurlow and Jaworski, contradicts the usual practice of tourism in creating places out of spaces. Tourism can create placelessness but it can also promote the specificity of places, and emphasize the uniqueness of a place to differentiate it from others.

In a similar manner, the relation between place and people in travel writing is ambivalent. Traditional ideas of belonging and roots that are supposed to have been erased by the onslaught of modernity become even more saleable in a global, postmodern world, especially in texts about travel. According to Appadurai in a global world, place and people have been separated to a degree that makes the idea of a strong connection between people and place untenable. Travel writing however often makes ample use of the myth of belonging and of the natural link between a people and their geographical location. Lisa Malkki refers to this as "the metaphysics of sedentarism" while Appadurai calls it a “primordialist view of ethnicity”, or “the trope of the tribe”.\textsuperscript{114} The terms refer to the idea that ethnic groups have a natural connection to a specific place. Travel magazines such as RES and Business Traveller A/P make use of ideas about the natural existence of nations, regions and distinct ethnic groups. The existence of nations as seemingly natural entities and the idea of specific national characters is not criticized in travel journalism, it is rather a popular theme. However, travel magazines also celebrate what is perceived as a new global world of borderless mobility and places of mobility such as the airport. In the magazines rather than being a contradiction, both of these ideas are present at the same time.

To be unhindered by space is the privilege of the elite, but the deterritorialized elite is also a myth. Both Bauman and Augé imagine a group of travelling businessmen and women embodying the new globalized world by being constantly on the move between different world cities. Their only stable locale is the internationalized and standardized hotels, conference venues and financial centers.\textsuperscript{115} This desire for placelessness of the elite is refuted by media scholar David Morley who argues that real privilege is to move between the connectedness of the global world and the stability of the local.

Globalization disorganizes and reorganizes space rather than making it obsolete. In a global world, space becomes increasingly fought over, both in terms of actual spaces and images of spaces. In some places public space is transformed into private space, for example in the tourist city where there is an increased focus on retail and entertainment in the city.

\textsuperscript{113} Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski, “Silence is golden: Elitism, linguascaping and 'anti-communication' in luxury tourism”, in \textit{Semiotic landscapes: language, images, space}, \textit{London: Continuum, 2010}

\textsuperscript{114} Morley 2000, p. 39

\textsuperscript{115} Bauman 1998, p. 91
center. The spaces of the privileged become removed from the larger community, for example through gated communities. Space has been brought to the forefront as something fragmented, controversial, mythologized and imagined. Tourism is an important aspect in the creation of place. Branding means that there is an increased need for the nation, region or city to represent itself, and to create itself, in other words to create a sellable identity bound to a specific place.

Global and local places

As many scholars have pointed out the tendencies of globalization processes are contradictory and highly irregular. Kevin Meethan describes how tourism is both an example of globalizing processes, by being a movement of people and capital, and a return to the local, by being a “reassertion of more localized forms of culture”.\textsuperscript{116} Bauman, among others, argues that glocalization might be a better word to describe the current situation. He claims that globalization is an insufficient concept because while the “globals” have full freedom to move, the underprivileged are rather more confined within their locality than less. Appadurai also argues for the importance of the local as well as the global, albeit from a different perspective, when he describes contemporary global culture as the “infinitely varied mutual contest of sameness and difference”.\textsuperscript{117} According to Appadurai, contemporary culture is driven by the tension between global and local.\textsuperscript{118} Yet another scholar using the term glocal is Doreen Massey who points to the interconnectedness of places and that globalization processes always take local expressions.\textsuperscript{119}

In travel narratives the local is sometimes given an enhanced role of as an imagined opposite of the global. A new importance of the local in travel narratives can be compared to the use of history in tourism, which many scholars have commented on. In the 1980s there was a renewed interest in history, especially in the form of heritage. Specific heritage centers where constructed in the UK. David Harvey, among others, claims that tourists’ interest in history was a way to deal with change. In heritage tourism, history is commodified and staged in theme parks and other types of staged displays in a way similar to how the local is constructed.

\textsuperscript{116} Meethan 2001, p. 115
\textsuperscript{117} Appadurai 1996, p. 43
\textsuperscript{118} Appadurai 1996, p. 63
\textsuperscript{119} Doreen Massey, quoted in Mekonnen Tesfahuney and Katarina Schough (eds.), Det globala reseprivilegiet, Lund: Sekel, 2010, p. 84
Both the local and the global takes on new meaning in a globalized world, and both play a central role in tourism. They are of course also ambivalent concepts that have no real borders or set definitions. In the words of Appadurai, locality is relational and contextual rather than scalar and spatial. The local and the global are not exclusive categories; on the contrary they are always mixed with each other. Many places that are experienced as local are in fact fraught with global connections. The local places that are so valued in tourism are of course a part of a global tourism industry and the cities that are being touted as global are experienced as local places for many of their inhabitants (and are occasionally being sold as such, Tokyo for example is often said to be the “city of villages”). Thurlow and Jaworski use the word “multiscaled” to describe how spaces can be both local and global.\textsuperscript{120} To be able to define the fluid concepts of local and the global is also a matter of power and privilege. In the magazines of my study what I define as local and global places both took on new meaning when the magazines became lifestyle magazines.

The Global City

The metropolis represents the quintessential global place and there might be no better place to study for an analysis of contemporary tourism and globalization than the city, especially the new global megacities that Saskia Sassen refers to as command centers in the global economy. The global megalopolis brings together many of the central aspects of globalization, by being the home of the global elite as well as the poorest immigrants. Cities have also experienced a renaissance as tourism destinations which is a process bound up with postmodern aesthetics, gentrification, place branding and a reorganization of the space of the city. Large polyglot cities emerged in the second half of the 19th century and became symbols of modernity. The global cities of today must brand themselves as icons of a global world and travel narratives are highly implicated in this transformation of the city.

Sassen describes how, in the new global economy, megacities gain a new centrality, growing and gaining more economic importance in relation to the nation state. Sassen concludes that the idea that global communication will make density obsolete is wrong. Instead, she writes, “the mobility of capital brings about new forms of locational

\textsuperscript{120}Thurlow, Jaworski and Ylänne 2010, p. 89
concentration.”

Cities have gained a new strategic role as concentrated command points from which the global economy is controlled.

This has brought on a change in the urban form as well as in the social and economic order of cities, and has created a new type of city, the global city. Sassen claims that “the more globalized the economy becomes the higher the concentration of central functions in a few cities”. Likewise, David Harvey concludes that the “need for accurate information and speedy communication has emphasized the role of so-called ‘world cities’.” With the growth of global financial markets that overshadow other economical sectors, cities become central since they can provide the necessary services for the global economy.

The growth of global megalopolises is a recent process that has taken place in the last decades of the 20th century and is dependent on the transformation of capitalist accumulation in the West, and increasingly elsewhere. Shanghai was launched as a global city as late as the 1990s. Up to a quarter of the buildings in the Pudong area of Shanghai were constructed during that time. It is a development however that goes back to the dismantling of industrial centers and the internationalization of finance in the beginning of the 1960s. Cities that have “lost” in the new order are industrial centers of manufacturing, such as Detroit, Manchester and Osaka, while in the early and mid-1980s New York, London and Tokyo experienced an economic boom. In the late 1980s, the development of electronic financial markets in conjunction with the lifting of national barriers to capital flows enhanced the value of finance, further strengthening the role of these command centers.

During the 1980s urban space was revaluated. As a response to the changes in the world economy, the central business districts of the global metropolises grew together with “related high-end shopping, hotel and entertainment districts.” Many cities went through processes of gentrification in which the white middle-class moved back into the city from the suburbs. The increase in rent pushed the working-classes out of the city centers. The architecture of modernity, with its focus on order was criticized and replaced with a postmodern emphasis on historicism and play. This is further enhanced by the need to attract tourists, who are often thought to be attracted to the extraordinary and playful. Global cities are also rearranged to accommodate for global capital in various ways, by providing generous space for business and tourism. The need to attract tourism to urban areas has had a fundamental impact on the

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121 Sassen 2006, p. 33
122 Harvey 2009, p. 295
123 Sassen 2006, p. 16
124 Meethan 2001, p. 133
125 Sassen 2006, p. 3
structure of the city. One example is a new focus on the waterfront as a location for luxury hotels. The core of the tourist city is dedicated to retail and entertainment rather than office space.

The global city constitutes a fertile ground for studying globalization processes since, in Sassen’s words, “the city brings together and makes legible the enormous variety of globalities that are emerging and the many different forms – social, cultural, spatial – they assume.” The new centers of the global economy are highly ambivalent spaces, bringing together the most privileged and the most disadvantaged. Global cities “have emerged as transnational places” with an international property market and many foreign companies. New buildings are created by so called starchitects such as Norman Forster who has drawn the HSBC building in Hong Kong, the international terminal at Beijing International Airport and the Hearst Tower in New York, among others. Hence, these command centers for the new global economy are inherently cosmopolitan, but they are at the same time national show cases functioning as symbols for their countries.

With the focus on an ephemeral economy of finance as opposed to one based on material goods such as for example agriculture or mining, the centers for that economy becomes less obvious and more mobile. Sassen explains how historically the geography of transactions was directed by the location of natural resources, which made Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean key sites. These old centers have now declined and instead global cities that function as centers for finance and service have taken their place. It follows that these contemporary centers are unstable since what they are offering is not something that is by nature tied to a specific place. The global cities of today must be constructed and constantly promoted as such in order to attract and then keep the capital, business and people needed to sustain their position. This is where branding becomes central. To be a global center the metropolis must construct a convincing image of itself as a global center. As an example, Paul Waley writes about the rapid emergence of Tokyo as a “cool cat”, and how this transformation was brought on by the work of what he calls “urban image makers”, an umbrella term for among others architects, city planners, politicians, fashion designers and academics who all have stakes in the representation of the city. These image makers play a crucial role in the construction of the global metropolis.

126 Fainstein and Judd 1999, p. 13
127 Sassen 2006, p. 9
128 Harvey 2009, p. 187
The branding of global cities is problematic. They need to be marketed as the most cosmopolitan and global place with influences from all over the world, while at the same time being specific and ‘local’, so as to differentiate themselves from other cities. As global centers of finance there is no need for them to be authentically local but as exotic destinations they must be able to offer something local/regional too. The global city always runs the risk of being perceived as too generic and thus placeless. An example of this ambivalence is the branding of Hong Kong as Asia’s world city while Tokyo trade in on the idea of the city as consisting of many small villages.

Sassen emphasizes the need for a global city to attract the global elite of highly educated and talented managers of the global economy since the advancement of the global economy is dependent on their skills and innovations.129 This is exemplified in an advertisement for Singapore, published in the magazine Business Traveller A/P in 2009 (see appendix). The advert features three models posing as members of the new global elite with the city filled with opportunities glittering in the background. The main text reads “We couldn’t have done it without you”, and thus emphasizes the point that a metropolis is not a global city without the presence of the global elite. The longer text mentions MICE repeatedly, an acronym for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events, acknowledging the importance of business travelers to Singapore, but there are also smaller pictures presenting leisure activities. The most attractive global cities must offer ample opportunities for both leisure and work. Tourism and leisure activities in general are tied in with the world of business, catering to the same group and using overlapping spaces.

It needs to be pointed out that the branding as well as the rearrangements of the city are highly political and controversial. In her dissertation Amidst Slums and Skyscrapers: The Politics of Walking and the Ideology of Open Space in East Asian Global Cities from 2001, Michelle Huang compares the myth of space in globalization discourses with the reordering of actual urban space due to globalization processes and how this is represented in film and literature.130 Global space is presented as empty and easily accessible space but in the reordering of the global city, space becomes fragmented and restricted for the less privileged inhabitants who are forced to move to the cramped housing of suburban areas, while space is given to skyscrapers and shopping malls.

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129 Sassen 2006, p. 137
The dual presence of business and tourism as part of the spread of global capital has made the space of the city conflicted and narratives about the city are central in this conflict over space. Huang’s claim that globalization discourses hide something is repeated in much of the theoretical literature on globalization. The claim to universality hides the unevenness of globalization processes. In his article about the representation of Tokyo, Waley argues that the “indulgence in metaphors of transience and flux creates an urban landscape that is unsettling, destabilizing, for people whose primary struggle is that of everyday survival.”\(^\text{131}\) He also writes that descriptions of the flexible and dynamic postmodern city hide the everyday life of the city. Tokyo is also a city where “life can be humdrum and dull, despite the architectural baubles and liquid spaces of the urban image makers.”\(^\text{132}\) Globalization discourses carry many myths about space that are contradicted by the lived experience of the underprivileged.

In the global city, not only do the most privileged and the most disadvantaged meet they are also depending on each other. Sassen writes about the emergence of new social forms in which there is a sharp increase in inequality between the global elite and new groups of disadvantaged, but she also describes how the consumption patterns of the high-income earners is dependent on low-income workers by being labor intensive. New forms of consumption prioritize the non-mass produced and “customized production, small runs, specialty items and, fine food dishes”.\(^\text{133}\)

While there is still a large middle-class in these cities it has stopped growing, and as Sassen argues, the difference is not necessarily in numbers but in the fact that this is the expression of a “new economic regime”.\(^\text{134}\) The decisive difference is the demise of mass production and mass consumption that has ushered in new patterns of consumption and new ways to organize production and labor, and ultimately, “new social forms.” Through these new consumption patterns and changes in lifestyle the high-income earners are directly connected to and depending on the low-income earners. Interestingly for a study of globalization, the global cities bring together two very different yet somehow connected cosmopolitanisms, the privileges of the global elite and the mobility of the labor migrants that serve them, sometimes in the intimacy of the homes of the elite. In the global city, as well as at some other types of tourist destinations, Bauman’s Vagabonds and Tourists meet.

\(^{131}\) Paul Waley, ‘Re-scripting the city: Tokyo from ugly duckling to cool cat’, *Japan Forum*, 18:3, 361-380, 2006, p. 373
\(^{132}\) Waley 2006, p. 377
\(^{133}\) Sassen 2006, p. 172
\(^{134}\) Sassen 2006, p. 175
The global city as a center for tourism

Tourism has become one of the world’s largest industries with increasing economic importance, not least for cities. Kevin Meethan describes how tourism has become central to national economies, using the example of the UK where tourism in the late 1990s came to be seen as an important industry. Tourism is often a desired industry because it is an “industry without chimneys”. In many cities that experienced an economic crisis because of the decline in manufacturing and other central industries in the Fordist economy, tourism was seen as an alternative source of revenue. Tourism has had a similar importance in many Asian countries, and has become central to the development of South East Asia. In the case of Singapore, tourism is the most important part of the city state’s economy. Likewise, in some cities, such as Las Vegas and Cancun, tourism has become the most important source of revenue. While these two are extreme cases most cities are involved in the tourism industry. The global city has emerged as a center for tourism which has not been acknowledged in older theories of tourism. Dean MacCannell argues that tourists are the modern day pilgrims, in search of the authenticity that modern society has robbed them of. In his response to MacCannell, Erik Cohen argues that there are fundamental differences between the pilgrim and the tourist. One such difference is how pilgrims and tourists relate to “the center”. According to Cohen, while pilgrims travel to the center of their own religion, tourists travel from the center of their home culture to the periphery, which is the center of some else’s culture. Cohen also argues that there are many different kinds of centers, of which he mentions cultural and political. What Cohen does not take into account is that the center that the traveler moves toward could be a global center, much as the religious centers of the pilgrims are global. The kinds of urban centers of my study, such as Shanghai and Tokyo, are most of all centers in the world economy but also to a varying degree tourist centers. What separates these cities from the centers that Cohen describes are that they can be very remote from the home of the tourist, both geographically and culturally while they are somehow still recognized as centers of sorts, in a global tourism culture. They are what Sassen calls global control centers. Hence, the center of other cultures can be the center of ones own culture as well by virtue of being a global city. These places are still foreign and have the ability to

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135 Fainstein and Judd 1999, p. 246
attract the attention of tourists by being exotic but they are at the same time familiar by being
global centers, not just of finance but also tourism and culture.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the late 20th century saw radical changes in the organization of the global
economy and the organization of space in the global metropolis. In this chapter I have gone
through some of these changes as well as the associated changes in how identity is
constructed and represented. The purpose of this background is to fully situate the two
magazines of my study in a historical and cultural context in which the emergence of lifestyle
media can be understood as an expression of more large-scale transformations. The changing
relation to East and South East Asia that co-insides with the transformation of the magazines
into lifestyle magazines, along with the interconnected changes in the representation of
identities and places can all be related to these larger transformations. The larger cultural and
economical changes are also resources that the magazines can make use of in a way similar to
what Thurlow and Jaworski describe by using the concept identity resource. Ultimately it is a
matter of changes in representations in which the world is represented to the traveler in new
ways.

I have furthermore placed my study in its context of the academic analysis of magazines
and travel writing to explain how my study both builds on and differ from earlier studies on
similar material. The historical developments that have been described in this chapter form
the background for the following four chapters in which the two magazines are studied from a
perspective on identity construction, the construction of places and the relation to East and
South East Asia respectively.
2. From business and travel to lifestyle magazines

During the late 80s (Business Traveller Asia/Pacific) and the 90s (RES) both magazines of my study developed into lifestyle magazines, a transformation that affected style and layout, as well as content. This transformation was at times explicitly discussed in the magazine, both in occasional articles about the history of the magazine and in editorials. When RES changed from being a travel magazine to becoming a lifestyle magazine with travel as a niche, more attention was given to “fashion, art, design and food”.¹³⁸ In terms of layout, the transformation can be described as an increasing stylization of the magazines. In RES, the texts and images were increasingly surrounded by empty white space, which was explicitly described by the editor to be in the style of an art gallery (Feb 03). In both magazines the quality of the photographs was improved and the objects as well as the aesthetic style of the images changed.

The images, as well as the textual content, of the lifestyle magazine are closer to what is conventional in advertisement. In their article about Cosmopolitan as a global magazine, David Machin and Theo van Leeuwen write that the values celebrated by advertising are glamour, success, hedonism, sensuality and sexuality, all of which are present in the travel magazines as well.¹³⁹ When the magazines became lifestyle magazines travel was increasingly understood as the pursuit and realization of these values. As lifestyle magazines RES and Business Traveller A/P also gave more attention to trying to describe an implied reader with a well-defined ideal identity based on consumer choice. The lifestyle that both magazines offered the reader was based on an imaginary global elite identity.

In what follows I will go further into how the magazines changed when they became lifestyle magazines. To do so, I will describe the genre of consumer magazines in general and then more specifically the two magazines of my study. To study how the magazines define themselves and their genre I have chosen to analyze the editorials, in which the editors discussed central issues for the magazine, and the covers, where the magazines were presented visually to attract potential readers. I will also describe how this shift affects the type of travel writing that is published in the magazines and more specifically the style of writing. The overall purpose of this chapter is thus to describe the characteristics of the genre


of travel journalism in the travel magazine, and to outline how this genre changed during the late 20th century and early 00s. I will however start with a brief presentation of each magazine.

**RES**

*RES* is in very broad terms a magazine about leisure travel. In 1994, when *RES* was first launched with its new name, it lacked a more specific profile. It was first during the late 90s that it developed into targeting affluent travelers and the kind of tourism that the magazine presented from the late 90s and onwards can be described as high-end tourism. The magazine wrote increasingly about resorts and spas, a kind of tourism in which the travelers’ relaxation and experience of luxury is central. From the late 90s the magazine also took an interest in design, art and aesthetics that was also reflected in the layout of the magazine. During the 00s, when Johan Lindskog was the editor, the magazine was redesigned a few times, which was discussed in the editorials.

Among the Swedish publications *RES* was for a long time the only magazine that was specifically profiled as a lifestyle magazine with a focus on high-end travel rather than backpacking or package tours. In a comparison with more well-known foreign publications *RES* is closer to a magazine such as American *Condé Nast Traveler* with its focus on resorts and shopping than for example the British *Wanderlust* that put more emphasis on nature and adventure tourism. The magazine’s emphasis on style and design was from around the early 00s expressed visually by the original style of the cover, with the logo decentered and placed to the right while the cover lines were placed in a straight line to the left. The difference between *RES* and other travel magazines such as *Vagabond* and *Allt om Resor* is also marked out with colors. Many of the other titles that have less focus on high-end travel and more focus on families use bright pastels, red color and a broader variety of colors that makes them look more similar to women’s magazines and family magazines. From the late 90s *RES* typically use monochrome colors, and often white, blue or black that makes it more similar to design magazines or other up-market lifestyle titles.

Since 1987 *RES* has been facing competition by the magazine *Vagabond* and for many years those were the only major publications on the Swedish market. Currently the market also carries Swedish language publications *När och Fjärran (From Far and Near)*, *Escape 360* and *Allt om Resor (All about Travel)*, along with a few more specialized publications such as *Golfresan (Golf Travel)* and *Spanienmagasinet (Spain Magazine)*. The market is ever
changing with new publications being launched, the most recent being the magazine *Moderna resor* (*Modern Travel*), that started publication in September 2011, and has a profile similar to that of *RES* by emphasizing the exclusive. These Swedish magazines are also in competition with international magazines that are now sold by Swedish newsagents such as Pressbyrån, for example the American magazines *National Geographic Traveler* and *Travel and Leisure* and the British *Wanderlust*.

In all travel magazines, the journey of the implied reader is set apart in some way from mass tourism. In a magazine such as *Wanderlust* the purpose of a journey is often to get as close to nature as possible and the writers chronicle all the ordeals they have to go through to get to a specific place. The ordeals justify their presence at a destination and bring them closer to the desired authenticity of nature. When William Gray walked up the Inca trail to see Machu Picchu he contrasted his presence with the presence of the tourists who have traveled by bus. He wrote: “My aching feet convinced me that we deserved this privilege”.

Likewise, in an article about Grand Canyon, Andrew Thomas claimed that the “Havasu Canyon reserves its treasures only for the deserving, hiding them in a place where RVs fear to tread.” This significance given to experiences of pain, hardship and risk-taking in the experience of nature is a recurrent theme in some forms of tourism. The anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen and the ethnologist Torun Elsrud both comment on how backpackers emphasize the difference between themselves and other types of tourists by rejecting the comforts that are desired by “regular tourists”. In both *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P* the writers instead emphasized the comfortable and luxurious about travel. Ideal travel was portrayed as being a sensuous rather than arduous experience, and the body was pampered rather than battered. Exclusivity was claimed through ideas about aesthetics and style rather than on the basis of adventurousness and prowess.

If one compares the two oldest Swedish titles, *Vagabond* is closer to the style and content of *Wanderlust* with its emphasis on nature tourism. In her dissertation from 2006 Lisa Killander-Braun describes how *Vagabond* started as a magazine for backpackers with the ambition of showing something beyond what the typical tourist experiences. The magazine wanted to show what Dean MacCannell calls the backstage of tourist destinations, that which is normally hidden from view. With time however *Vagabond* changed its direction to targeting more wealthy tourists and thus became more similar to *RES*. Hence, the distinctions

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141 Thomas Hylland Eriksen 1998, quoted in Syssner (ed.) 2011, p. 60; Elsrud 2004, p. 96
142 Killander-Braun 2006
between the RES and Vagabond have lessened even though Vagabond still does not have the same emphasis on style, design and high-end travel that RES does.

In the editorials the editor often discussed the identity of the magazine, and over the years the definitions of what the magazine was varied. In RES the differences between how editors described the magazine exemplify the ambivalent genre of the travel magazine. Should the travel magazine provide the reader with a pleasant image of the world or should it also depict a reality of violence and poverty? In issue 1, 1996 the editorial was titled “Idyller och infernon”, (“Idylls and infernos”) and the editor, Anders Mathlein, wrote the following as a comment to an article about Rio published in the current issue: “the ambition with the articles and guides in RES is to show the world, to inspire travelers and to guide. Therefore, we cannot show a world that doesn’t exist. If we only wrote about genuinely idyllic places the magazine would be very thin – if there would be a magazine at all”. According to Mathlein, the article about Rio de Janeiro presents the city “as a destination to put high up on the list over places to visit” but it simultaneously depicts “the muddy shantytowns and the violence.” Thus the editor claims that the magazine shows more than the reality of the tourist, the articles depict both the idyllic and the infernal. The editorial also summarizes the three main ambitions of RES; to provide the reader with an image of the world, to inspire tourism and to give practical information about tourist activities, addresses to hotels and such.

Another telling example is the editorial in the January issue of 1999, titled “Prostitution – inget att blunda för”, (“We shouldn’t close our eyes to prostitution”), in which the editor, Anders Falkirk, discussed a photo reportage published in the same issue. The photographs depict prostitutes from a village in Turkey, and the editor discussed whether such images were appropriate in a travel magazine or not. Implicitly, the purpose of the editorial is to justify the publication of the images to readers that might react negatively. Falkirk wrote: “Prostitutes in the travel magazine RES? Is that really necessary? Yes, one might question whether revealing images of this kind are appropriate in a travel magazine. We think so. The purpose of traveling is to encounter a different reality, and on many journeys we encounter situations and living conditions that seem cruel to us. A travel magazine must be able to show this.” Falkirk also wrote that he asked the photographer why he had not sent the photographs to a daily newspaper instead, since “they would have been close to dynamite in the Sunday supplement of a daily news paper. In this text, Falkirk expressed the idea that a travel magazine should present the reader with a “different reality”, however cruel it might be, in a manner similar to news journalism.
In an editorial from 1997, Falkirk expressed a slightly different idea of what RES was when he wrote: “this is where RES enters the picture. With articles, guides and tips we can help you to make your travels more successful. We can make you choose the right destinations, find your way in major cities and inspire you to new ways of travelling. That’s our niche and our passion, to enrich everybody’s travels.” In this text, the function of the magazine was completely defined in terms of tourism as opposed to making the reader knowledgeable about the world.

In a later editorial, Johan Lindskog (who became editor in 2001) even argued that the ambition of the magazine was to give a brighter image of the world as a reaction to violence and war, which stood in opposition to the definition made by Mathlein in 1996, when he claimed that the magazine does not shy away from depicting “the infernos” of the world. In Lindskog’s editorials, travel was repeatedly associated with dreaming and the chances to, through ones dreams, escape a dreary reality. In one of his editorials, Lindskog wrote that the ambition of the magazine was to spur the fantasy of the reader, and “to give you the tools to realize your dreams.” In issue xx he wrote that the loyal readers might appreciate the magazine even more “when the world trembles” because the need for escapism and relaxation increases when “everyone else reports about a dark world”. This shift in how the editor defined the function of the magazine exemplifies a shift in the magazine in general. When RES was transformed into a lifestyle magazine, the main focus shifted from the ambition of making the reader knowledgeable about the world to tourism activities.

The shift in the editorials and their definition of travel can be compared to the shift in the photographic representation of the cover images. The aesthetic style of the covers in the early 00s show a world created by fantasies and dreams about a world of relaxation and beauty, as I will describe further in my analysis of the covers. However, as the examples show there was no clear-cut line in the transformation of the magazine, it is more a question of a shift in the general emphasis, both in the editorials and the cover images. During the time period studied, RES continued to vacillate between the ambition of showing the world in all its grimness and wanting to seduce the tourist with images of a beautiful world. But it is the latter function that takes over during the late 1990s and early 00s.

Business Traveller Asia/Pacific

When Business Traveller Asia/Pacific was first published in April 1982 the magazine cost 12 Hong Kong dollars. In the “Letter from the publisher” the publisher James Thornton explained that the main purpose of the magazine was to help business travelers get the most
out of their travels, it would write about both large cities and smaller destinations, and that it would be independent in relation to advertisers. The relation to the readers is outlined already in this first “Letter from the publisher”. Just like RES, Business Traveller A/P targeted an affluent readership, and a kind of tourism often referred to in the magazine as “exclusive”. As opposed to RES, in the early 80s Business Traveller A/P was rather close to a trade magazine in style and content, with less use of images than a consumer magazine. There was also less emphasis on creating an appealing layout. In October 1988, after a shorter period without an editor, Vijay K. Verghese became editor and the magazine was relaunched with a new style, both in content and layout and physical form. What emerged was a distinctly different publication.

In October 1988 Verghese presented the new style of the magazine in the one-page editorial called Check-in, with the title “Ringing in the new”, in a manner similar to how the very first issue was presented in April 82. He wrote:

A few readers will be in high dudgeon when they open the October issue of Business Traveller. Change is always hard to digest. [...] The essence of our metamorphosis is a shift toward a broader spectrum of upmarket traveller; a trimming of tabulation and fare conundrums best answered by specialised travel agents rather than distracted, overworked journalists; a continued emphasis on issues central to travel in this region; an informative, entertaining, visual style to deliver the goods [...] The pin-striped, briefcase-wielding business traveller continues to be our core raison d’être though our accent now is on the traveller, as reflected in our new masthead. There is no publication on the Asian bookshelf at the moment catering for this dynamic, discriminating and rapidly growing group [...] there is a glaring need for quality travel information. Business Traveller, ultimately, reflects the sophistication of this new breed of Asia/Pacific peripatetic.

In his presentation of the relaunched magazine Verghese emphasized the importance of the reader, the business traveler, as the reason for publishing the magazine, just like publisher James Thornton did in the first issue in 82, while Verghese also stated that the magazine would be targeting a broader group of upmarket travelers.

The editorial from April 92, 10 years after the first issue was published, was titled “A toast to travel” and recounted the early years of the magazine. The theme of the editorial is that the magazine has matured together with the market for business travel. The first editor of the magazine, Ken Mckenzie, writes the following about the readers:
there were many more who simply wanted to ensure that what they paid represented value. They wanted service, comfort, a few frills, but above all, strategic knowledge. The magazine in those days had an atrocious layout, some stories of questionable morality and an over-enthusiastic air-fares expert who came up with tariffs too attractive to be true. [...] But one thing it did have, the essence of which remains today [...] is that it is so clearly targeted at the interests of prime, hardened, serial travellers.

Hence, McKenzie also emphasized the centrality of the readers and their identity as being well-travelled, as the prime characteristic of the readers. The importance of the reader was obvious also in the title of the magazine. By the title the magazine presented itself as being directed at business travelers.

In the editorial in the November issue of 1992 the editor Verghese jokingly discussed what the magazine was: “Is Business Traveller a trade magazine, a travel-accessory manufacturer or a travel agency? …To set the record straight, may I unequivocally state that we are a consumer magazine dedicated to the needs of the frequent traveller. I’m sure this will not deter some gentlemen in Dhaka who continue to fax us demanding we issue them visas for France.” However, despite Verghese’s certainty about what Business Traveller A/P was, the magazine contained a tension between work and leisure and between information and entertainment.

Many of the articles combine information related to business with information about leisure activities and more general information about the destinations, its history and culture. An article about Vietnam in the March issue of 87 for example included both a part called “Doing business” in which the reader was informed about the current business climate of the country, and a part consisting of the usual information about hotels (“Where to stay”), sightseeing (“What to see”), shopping (“Best buys”), restaurants (“Eating out”) and nightlife (“After dark”) in Ho Chi Minh City. In the 80s the information was often arranged under subtitles as in a guidebook.

Business Traveller A/P was a magazine for people who travelled for business but it also covered leisure travel. The traveler was most often referred to as a business traveler even when he or she was travelling for leisure. Sometimes the reader was referred to as a frequent traveler. In an advertisement aimed at potential subscribers the magazine wrote:

Travelling more and enjoying it less? Discover a new world of luxury travel, gourmet dining, fascinating sidetrips and relaxing entertainment. Business Traveller is one magazine that
recognises the need of frequent travellers that are entirely different from tourists, and does something about it. You will benefit from ‘insider’ information that takes you direct to the best food, the right hotels, good bars and genuine shopping bargains. You will learn how to get the absolute most out of any trip you take, without sacrificing any of the convenience and comforts you expect. In short, Business Traveller is an indispensable guide for people who insist on making every minute of every journey count, whether it is for business or for pleasure. (Dec 87)

The ad referred to the implied reader as a frequent traveler, and positions this kind of traveler as the absolute opposite of the tourist. The starting point for the text is the notion that the potential subscriber had a disenchanted relation to travel. Travel became mundane for the frequent traveler and Business Traveller A/P provided the reader with the right kind of information to make travel interesting, luxurious and adventurous again. With the help of Business Traveller A/P, the frequent traveler could make the most out of his or her travels.

The purpose of the magazine was sometimes expressed explicitly in the editorials, especially around the late 80s and later. Just as there needed to be a balance between travel for business and travel for leisure, the magazine strove to maintain a balance between information and entertainment. The balance, and sometimes tension, between these characterized Business Traveller A/P. On a very general level the transformation into a lifestyle magazine can be described as an increased emphasis on leisure and entertainment, even though the intent of informing the business traveler remained a central aspect.

The emphasis on information was visible in the form of long list of currencies, flights, airline and hotel discounts, weather etc. that was included in the magazine. Up until the late 80s there were several pages at the end of the magazine that were solely dedicated to lists. In 1987 Business Traveller A/P carried up to 12 pages with information of this kind. These pages were typically without pictures and with very little editorial text. In both RES, that also included several pages of lists, and Business Traveller A/P the emphasis laid on the practical rather than the esthetic in these pages. Another type of material that was not presented in the form of lists but also aimed at informing the reader was the section called “Aviation” (later called Seat Selector), the purpose of which was to make the reader knowledgeable about the best seats on the aircraft. In a text about Philippines Airlines 747 the anonymous writer went into such detail as to write that “the floor covering is rubber matting – not carpet.” (April 84) This detailed dissection of an airplane was a regular feature for many years.

The readers’ letters showed that the magazine’s focus on detailed information about prices and services was appreciated. Most of the letters are complaints about the services of hotels
and airlines. A typical reader’s letter began: “I wish to report a very unpleasant experience I had when flying with Korean Air on March 16 from Osaka to Seoul. When I checked in at the counter at Osaka airport, I was told that my reservation had been automatically cancelled because I had not reconfirmed it.” (June 86) On the readers’ letters pages (sometimes called traveller forum) there were also frequently replies from representatives of hotels, airlines and restaurants that defended their establishment from the critique of the readers. In December 87 one reader expressed his reliance on the information found in the magazine when he wrote: “I have been a subscriber to Business Traveller for quite some time and have enjoyed reading sections associated with hotel discounts and packages, special flight fares and discounts – in short, timely travel information allowing me to enjoy cheaper stays and flights, very often on airlines that, if I did not have the info from BT then I would be paying full-fare. The same goes with hotels.” (Dec 87) In comparison with RES, the readers’ letters took up a substantial amount of space in Business Traveller A/P, often two to three pages even though the exact amount of pages varied during the years.

One reader complained that the information given about selecting seats on various airplanes was not thorough enough, he would also like to know the “thickness” of the seats on different flights (Readers letter, Oct 93). Another reader wrote: “I would like BT to improve its features for travellers. Articles tend to be on holiday destinations (off-beat ones at that). I prefer information for fliers – seat plans and so on. Covering seat plans airline by airline would keep you in articles for years. It wouldn’t take much organisation either – the airlines all have seat plan brochures which can be reproduced with their permission.” (Reader’s letter July 91) Hence, judging by the readers’ letters many readers found this kind of information provided by the magazine to be useful. Also note that the reader who wanted even more information about seat plans defined himself not as a frequent traveler or business traveler but as a flier.

With the information provided by the magazine the reader could gain control over the industry. In the February issue of 84, one writer claimed: “constructing your own ticket puts you in complete control”. In the first editorial Thornton wrote that the magazine would “play a watchdog role on your behalf.” (April 84) One of the main purposes of the magazine according to the editorial staff was to make the travelers professional life run more smoothly. Already the cover of the very first issue jokingly described the irritation of trying to do business in China during the long lunch break. There was a sense of entitlement in relation to the service and travel industry, the industry that was “there to serve” the business traveler. (Letter from the editor, April 85)
The information provided also aimed at making the readers’ journeys safer. The world that was presented in the pages of *Business Traveller A/P* was a dangerous one where kidnapping and hijackings were possible risks. One writer claimed that “travel is often fraught with difficulties and hidden perils.” (May 83) The business traveler was also threatened by plane crashes, diseases and the dangers associated with the sex trade. An article in the December issue of 82 was titled “Is your pilot an alcoholic?” One of the regular sections was Flying Doctor or Health with texts written by doctors about all sorts of diseases that could befall the reader. The editorial was almost constantly occupied by safety issues. “Security” or “Safety” was another recurrent section title. In the March issue of 85, under the section title “Safety”, there was an article with the title “Flames, smoke and poisonous gas: how safe is your hotel?” Even after the magazine was re-launched in the late 80s, health and safety issues were still a central concern, with recurrent articles about hotel fires. In regards to safety and health the magazine took it upon itself to enlighten the reader. The editor wrote: “it is our business to tell you, as frequent travellers and regular hotel guests, how to prepare for and respond to such emergencies.” (April 85)

As the magazines transformed into lifestyle magazines the long lists and charts that were published at the end of each issue disappeared gradually, even though consumer issues and guide information never completely disappeared. When the lists decreased the pictures instead took up more space, as well as becoming more colorful and elaborate. In *Business Traveller A/P* the change was visible in the use of full-page images to illustrate the articles that became prevalent around the late 80s. In December 1988, the article “Night train to Chiang Mai” was one of the first to be presented with a full-spread picture on the first two pages of the article. Before the late 80s, colorful full-page images were only used in advertising. There was also a change in the type of images used. In the early 80s many of the images had a documentary function, they illustrated the article by showing what it looked like at a destination. Some of them were in black and white. In the lifestyle magazine the use of images is closer to how they are used in advertising, to express sensations such as relaxation and luxury and to evoke the readers’ desire. Much higher emphasis was placed on images that were aesthetically pleasing. Pictures from image banks were used in *Business Traveller A/P* from 1989. I will describe this shift in the use of images when I analyze the covers.

The glossy consumer magazine and other similar genres
Both RES and Business Traveller A/P can best be described as consumer magazines, at least from the late 80s. Before that Business Traveller A/P was a mix of a consumer magazine and a trade magazine. A consumer magazine is a general interest magazine that is produced and sold commercially. These are often referred to as glossy magazines, a name that carries connotations of a certain luxury and exclusiveness, but also of something frivolous. The word glossy refers to the physical appearance of the magazines with their glossy covers and pages but also to the style and content of the magazines. According to Oxford English Dictionary the adjective “glossy” means “having a gloss; smooth and shining […] Also designating photographic and printing paper that is smooth and shiny; hence denoting a magazine etc., printed on such paper, or something that is characteristic of the type of material which is printed in such magazines.”

As the description implies the content of a glossy magazine is associated with its physical appearance. Tactility, including such aspects as the quality of the paper, its thickness, the size of the magazine and its weight, is one of the essential aspects of a magazine. When RES for example became a lifestyle magazine it became smaller in size. The materiality is used to consciously communicate just as much as the texts, images and colors. As opposed to a newspaper, the reader is expected to keep the magazine for a longer time, to touch it, carry it around and maybe display it on a coffee table. The two magazines of my study were aesthetically pleasing objects already during the first years of publication, more so RES than Business Traveller A/P since the latter focus on business rather than leisure. When the magazines became lifestyle magazines their aesthetic value was emphasized, with a more elaborate design and technically perfect photos on the covers.

During the late 20th century, the typical style of the consumer magazine spread to other similar media products. One example of a new type of product that mimicked the consumer magazine is the customer magazine through which a company can communicate directly with their customers instead of merely advertising in a consumer magazine. The customer magazine is sent directly home to the customer (and/or is available in a store) and is free. The most successful costumer magazines are very similar in style, format and content to the consumer magazines and compete with these for advertisement. Newspapers are another example that mimics both the content and the style of the magazine. Newspaper supplements, most notably, have come closer to the aesthetic style of magazines. Most newspapers now come with a weekly magazine on weekends, but they also have extra supplements about such


144 The legendary 2007 September issue of Vogue weighed nearly four pounds (1.8 kilogram), Cineaste; Spring 2010, Vol. 35 Issue 2, p. 88

topics as lifestyle, interior design and travelling. The advertisers’ demand for “editorial that reflects the products being advertised” drives the development of newspaper content that mimics the magazine.\textsuperscript{146} Therefore, advertisement for travel is placed in a specific newspaper supplement about travel. The development of costumer magazines and the increased amount of newspaper material that copy the design, aesthetics and content of magazines means that the typical magazine format has become more ubiquitous.

The spread of the aesthetic style and physical format of the magazine is one example of how the genres of advertising, magazine journalism and newspaper journalism converge. The closeness between newspaper journalism and magazine journalism can also be seen in the written material of travel magazines. The lengthy articles about exotic destinations published in travel magazines sometime border on the newspaper genre of foreign news reporting. During the 90s RES had contributors who were also working as foreign correspondents for major newspapers, such as Agneta Engqvist who was a foreign correspondent for Dagens Industri (Today’s Industry). Although most of the articles in RES were written from the perspective of the tourism industry, in which a geographical place, for example a region, country or city, was presented and evaluated as a consumer product, RES also had the ambition of publishing texts that gave a socio-political and economic context to the various regions visited. RES included articles that can be said to border on the genre of newspaper journalism because of their emphasis on socio-economic perspectives. In the 00s, articles that deviated from the typical tourist perspective were separated from the other articles by being placed in special sections called “brännpunkt (hotspot) Peking”, “rapport” (“report”), or “utblick” (“outlook”). These were however not stable sections, some of them only appeared once, in connection to one specific text. These articles that bordered on newspaper journalism were able to include more problematic aspects of a place, such as violence and social injustice. Business Traveller A/P, with its emphasis on business and economy of course also carried material that had similarities to newspaper journalism as well as weekly newsmagazines such as Newsweek and The Economist.

Two other genres that the travel magazine borrows from are the longer travelogue published in the form of a book, and the guidebook. In a way, the idea of the travel magazine is to combine these two popular genres. The magazine strives to combine the useful factual information of the guidebook (addresses, maps, currencies and other practical information) with the enticing first person narrative of the travel book that tells the story of a traveler’s

\textsuperscript{146} Leslie 2003, p. 22
experience. From the first issue in 1994, *RES* included a small brochure with each issue of the magazine that mimicked the typical format of guidebooks.

It is important for the travel magazine to demarcate itself from other similar genres, for example the guide book. The guidebook connotes a less enticing and more straight-forward way of writing. But most of all the magazines must separate themselves from advertisement. In the section for readers’ letters in *Business Traveller A/P*, glossiness was repeatedly associated with advertisement and hence with a less than truthful and critical perspective on the destinations. In October 92 one reader wrote: “BT is getting a bit too ‘glossy’, a bit too timid, a bit less informative. Somewhere on the continuum between ‘the charming locals will happily cater to your every need’ and ‘the taxi drivers, representative of the entire population over the age of 14, are absolute swine and the only safe place is home under your bed’ lies BT’s proper realm.”

It was important for the magazine to claim its truthfulness and independence. According to the editor, Ken McKenzie, the aim was to give the reader “the ungilded truth, even if it’s unsavoury” (May 82). He then wrote: “In this issue, for example, we tell you what you have already suspected about Peking: That it is a numbingly boring city.” The magazine frequently provided a negative image of the destinations. As an example, Marc Rouen wrote that the city of Ipoh in Indonesia “has the feel of the small town and has little to offer visitors. Streets are line with rows of rather run-down, double-storey Chinese shophouses and, with the tin boom over, the city is likely to stay much the same for the foreseeable future.” (Feb 87) In the editorial of March 86 Steve Fallon wrote that more often than they like “*Business Traveller* is forced to report on the bad side of travel: sassy service on certain airlines; dull, escape-proof airports; inferior food at over-priced restaurants.” By reporting the negative the magazine made a distinction between itself and advertisement. The claim to report the truth was used repeatedly to define what the magazine was.

The distinction between advertisement and the editorial content of the travel magazine is an important one for a genre that is widely suspected for being to close to the industry. *Condé Nast Traveler* has the constant tagline “Truth in Travel”, placed directly under the logo of the magazine. In the August issue of 2009 the editorial was devoted to the issue of honesty. The editor claimed that the magazine adhered to “this most basic journalistic principle – editorial independence”, and that this “has always set the magazine apart”. The main reason that was given for this independence was the money spent by the reader, “making sure that you get the most for what you spend is an important part of the magazine’s editorial mission”. At the bottom of the page, separated from the text, was a box where the truth in travel-credo was
expressed as a statement: “Travel publications often accept free travel and accommodations. *Condé Nast Traveler* does not. We are independent of the travel industry”. *Travel+Leisure* had a similar box at the bottom of editorial page in January 2010, in which the text read “*Travel+Leisure* editors, writers and photographers are the industry’s most reliable sources. While on assignment, they travel incognito whenever possible and do not take press trips or accept free travel of any kind.”

The distinction between the travel magazine and advertisement was also made use of in an editorial written by Verghese in the early 90s in which he wrote: “Drop the brochures and shop for information: information that can make all the difference between the high life and high dudgeon, between tourist and traveller. Independent travel, business or otherwise (which label you an FIT, or Frequent Independent Traveller, much in demand by airlines and hotels), offers benefits and savings to a discerning few.” (May 93) In this short quote useful information was what separated the travel magazine from travel brochures. Information served to lower prices but more essentially it helped the reader to be a traveler rather than a tourist. The claim to tell the truth was therefore also important for the relation between the magazine and its readers. The magazine defended the rights of exclusivity of the frequent traveler.

While the magazines strove to differentiate themselves from brochures, in the transformation into lifestyle magazines they became more similar to brochures and other types of advertisement in the style of writing and the use of images. Just like brochures selling tourist destinations and package tours the lifestyle magazines portrayed places as exotic, beautiful, exciting and alluring. The difference is that travel magazines are not selling a specific tourism product to the readers. They are instead selling ideas and discourses around travel.

Travel magazines are also close in content and style to the inflight magazine, a specific type of customer magazine produced by airlines and made available to the customer on board. One similarity is the use of maps, which is a central feature for both types of magazines. In their article about inflight magazines Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski describe how the magazines promote an image of the airline company as being global, or having a global reach. This is done by using world maps to convey flight routes. The world map is ubiquitous even in the magazines of those airlines that only have a few international flights. Thurlow and Jaworski associate the world maps of airlines, with their entanglement of flight routes, with the colonial maps of the British Empire that where colored pink to mark off the vastness of the colonial possessions. Rather than being strictly informational, the foremost purpose of the
Maps is to give the impression of that the airline connects a globalized world from a central location.

Maps are often included on one of the first pages of the travel magazine. In the early 90s, 
RES had a world map placed on the cover, behind the name of the magazine. It was later moved into the magazine, and functioned as the background image of the content page. In July/August 1997 it was removed and did not reappear until February 2003 but this time it was placed on a page of its own, separated from the list of contents. The world map of RES was not political, i.e. it did not outline specific countries. In RES, on the map of 2003 and onwards, specific destinations that were described in an issue were marked on the map by dots in a manner similar to the maps of flight routes but without a point of origin. Destinations that were covered in longer texts were marked in pink and connected with an arrow while destinations that were only mentioned briefly in the current issue were marked with a black dot on the map. World maps are also included in travel magazines such as Condé Nast Traveler (August 2009), escape! (December 2009) and Travel+Leisure (January 2010), and they also use dots and arrows to point at the destinations covered in the current issue. Business Traveller A/P however, did not use maps to present the destinations covered in an issue during the time period studied.

Just as for the inflight magazines, the world map connotes a global reach for the travel magazine. It conveys the impression that the magazine has a general grasp of the world in its entirety as well as that the whole world is available for travel. When the map was placed on the cover of RES, behind the name of the magazine, it can be interpreted as a representation of the magazines general interest in and knowledge of the world as a whole. It then had a function similar to the world maps and globes used in news programs on TV, and the maps placed behind the logo of some newspapers. When the map moved into the magazine and was connected to specific destinations (through dots and lines) it functioned as information that provided the readers with geographical information while it also presented the destinations covered in the current issue. It also provided a positive image of an unlimited world available for travel (which was repeated in the editorials).

In the travel magazine, visual aspects such as maps are important to communicate what the magazine is. Another such feature of the magazine is the logo. Both Business Traveller A/P and RES changed their logos during the time period of my study. Business Traveller A/P changed the logo in October 88 when the magazine was re-launched and the change of the logo was explicitly discussed in the editorial as a sign of that the magazine put more emphasis on travel, “our accent now is on the traveller, as is reflected in our new masthead”. (Oct 88)
The word “Traveller” was enlarged while the word “Business” became slightly smaller. In February 03 the logo of RES was placed in the right upper hand corner, which is unique for the magazine. In a western context it is counterintuitive to place the logo to the right, off center. The position places more emphasis on the picture because the logo is de-centered but it also draws attention to the logo because of the originality of placing it to the right. In 05, RES changed its logo so that the loop of the R is open to the left. The new style of the logo connoted style and speed, the “s” was made to look more like a road. This logo, which is still in use, is similar to the logo of an airline.

The style of writing: From you to me

The transformations of the magazines were also reflected in the style of the writing. In the early 80s Business Traveller A/P was similar in style to guidebooks, where the main purpose is to convey useful practical information to the reader so that he or she can make use of that information when travelling. In the early 80s, the texts in Business Traveller A/P also typically had the structure of the guide book text that is ordered by multiple headings. An article about Indonesia started with presenting the region of Central Java, and went on to give a brief history of the region that ended with the description of several temples. The writer then moved on to shopping, which was given a subtitle. The subtitles that followed were Getting About, Accommodations, Charge cards and finally Getting there. Throughout the text keywords and names of places and attractions were highlighted in bold. Other typical subtitles for this kind of article were Eating out, Things to do, Sports and recreation and Getting Away.

In later texts the practical information, especially addresses to hotels, was placed at the end of the text in small print, and sometimes this information was distinguished even more from the main text by being placed in a separate box. In RES the practical information was removed entirely from the main text by being placed in a specific section at the back of the magazine. When the practical information was separated from the main text the similarities with the style and structure of guidebooks were lessened and it became possible to emphasize the personal experience of the travel writer by deemphasizing the practical information provided for the reader. In the transformation of the magazines there is a shift in focus from the reader to the writer.

Texts that were written in the style of the guidebook were intent on guiding the reader. An article in Business Traveller A/P about Delhi in the June issue of 89 is a good example of how the magazine used a guidebook style. The article is titled “Delhi a la carte”, and the writer Jug
Suraiya offered a detailed description of what the reader could do while visiting Delhi. The reader was addressed directly as you. Suraiya wrote: “After the meal you might like to cross the road to the **Prince Paan Shop**, Delhi’s premier betel leaf establishment, for a *paan* stuffed with restorative condiments like aniseed, cardamom, cloves and sweetened betel-nut. Or you might like to stroll down Daryagunj Road to Aap Ki Pasand where Sanjay Kapoor will offer you Delhi’s choicest selection of quality teas, to be savoured on the premises or taken away.” (Bold in original) In this text, the writer acted as a guide who accompanied the reader on a possible future journey and gave advice on where to go and what to do. The information provided was detailed, the reader was told, among other things, that a chicken *bharta* cost about Rs120 for two. Names of places, hotels and restaurants were marked in bold. The writer was present in the text, in his comments on the city and the many opportunities it offered, and in his quirky anecdotes, but the text was structured around a list of places as opposed to following Suraiya’s personal travel experience.

The reader was offered different suggestions for what to do on a trip. In an article titled “Nikko weekend”, from May 88 the writer claims that “You could cover both its Lake Chuzenjiko and Kegon-no-Taki Falls, as well as the magnificent Toshugo Shrine, within a day […] An afternoon spent strolling up to lake Chuzenjiko and the Kegon-no-Taki falls is certainly worth a week of self-encounter therapy. The natural wonders on this area are on the eastern shore of the lake, some 4,000 feet above sea level. Mt. Nantai (8,000 feet) rises on the opposite shore.” In this article the writer acted as a guide that provided the reader with plenty of facts.

Belonging to the same style of writing are the imperative sentences that directly encourages the reader to do something specific. In an article about Krabi, John Hoskin wrote: “When in town, look out for Ntong Joke, a scruffy little restaurant down by the wharf which serves probably the best food in Krabi” (Dec 89) Likewise in July 1990, Rich Blumm wrote: “for a glimpse of Kobe of the future take a trip out to Port Island”. This style of writing was focused on the potential experiences of the reader as opposed to what the writer had already experienced during his or her journey. The writer acted as a guide serving the reader or as a personal friend of the reader. Steve Fallon exemplified the latter in an article about Bombay nightlife when he wrote: “You might want to drop into one of the major hotel discos, such as the 1900s at the Taj or the Cellar at the Oberoi, but if you are neither a hotel guest nor a member, you can forget it. (Just between us, the crowds are made up mostly of spoiled little rich kids, yuppies out in packs and off-duty aircrews.)” (August 90) In this article the tone of the text was slightly more personal than when the writer acts as a guide.
In the lifestyle magazine, the experience of the writer is central. In an article in *Business Traveller A/P* from the early 90s the writer started by writing: “Dragged mercilessly from my hotel bed by a 5am alarm call and squinting as the rising sun assaults my bleary eyes on the way to Manila’s domestic airport, I am at this hour distinctly unexcited by the prospect of spending a weekend on a remote Philippine island doing, as I had promised myself, absolutely nothing.” In this example, the article started with what the writer felt as he started the journey that would take him to the destination.

The emphasis on the feelings of the writer became even more ubiquitous in the 00s. The texts also came to center on how the experience of the destination changed the writer. In *Business Traveller A/P* this was most explicit in the section called Great Escapes (which was a part of the magazine from the beginning) in which the writers described how the destinations visited allowed them to relax and experience inner peace. In an article titled “Natural Charm” from July/August 2009 Boboi Costas ended the article by writing “The tower, unchanged by the seasons, stood lonely but proud. It made me feel insignificant in the scheme of things. And in one quiet but sudden moment, I came face to face with my inner being. And what a blissful feeling that was.” Likewise, in an article from September 2009 Joshua Tan wrote: “The same stone-grey hotel courtyard I had seen earlier the previous day was now cool in the misty morning air and resembled a celestial palace bathed in ethereal beauty. It was then that I experienced a tranquillity that the city couldn’t offer. I had found unadulterated peace.” In these articles the journey of the reader had disappeared. The writer was no longer mainly the accompanying guide or friend with inside information but acted instead as the principal traveler. The reader was invited to share the journey only indirectly by reading about the writers experiences. The increased focus on the writers was connected to a general shift from providing information and facts to centering on emotions and impressions.

**The aesthetic style of the covers**

In a travel magazine, the images are at least as important as the text, if not more and as I have mentioned briefly, in the lifestyle magazine images are even more central. Photography has always had a central function in *RES*, not least because of the magazine’s emphasis on quality and on providing something more than the basic facts found in guidebooks. The magazine characterized itself by providing what they defined as quality texts, and images that were more than just illustrations for the articles. During many years in the 90s the magazine had a section called “Resfotografen” (“The Travel Photographer”) which featured several pages of
photographs, often taken by well-known photojournalists. The background color for this section was black and the photography was documentary in style. The section typically featured nature photography or anthropological themes. The March issue of 95 showed Martin Adler’s photographs from Kashmir under the title “Kashmirs bitterluva ansikte” (“The bittersweet face of Kashmir”). In the September issue of the same year the magazine published Anders Ryman’s photographs of rites of passage in different cultures under the title “Livets steg” (“The steps of life”). In Business Traveller A/P photography did not have a central place in the early years of publication, and it was not unusual for photographs to be unaccredited. Many of the articles in the early 80s were illustrated by drawings. When the magazines changed style, the style of the photographs changed as well in profound ways.

One way to study the changes of the magazines is to analyze the cover images together with the overall layout of the cover of both magazines. The cover functions as an advertisement for the magazine which is central for consumer magazines that often sell single copies off the news rack rather than through subscription. Since more effort is put into the cover image that is made to represent the magazine the change in the aesthetic style of the magazines is more visible there.

In the 90s, the covers of RES depicted the world from a tourist perspective. Typical images were exotic animals, beach scenes and other beautiful nature scenes, and exotic peoples in national costumes representing one of the destinations of the specific issue. The style and topic of the covers was not far from that of postcards. In the 00s there were more images of tourists and less of exotic peoples and animals. There were significantly less people on the covers in the 00s, but the cover images still connoted relaxation, fun, sensuality and harmless hedonism. The significant shift lies in the increased emphasis on luxury and exclusivity and in the changed aesthetic style.

The transformation that Business Traveller A/P went through in the late 80s, when Verghese became editor, was visible on the covers. As a blend between a trade and a consumer magazine aimed at the business community, Business Traveller A/P had a slightly different layout in the early years of the 1980s in comparison to the leisure magazines. Formality was expressed through color choice, the leisure travel magazines typically use bold colors or pastels while Business Traveller A/P often had a black or white background for the images. The formality was however undermined by the humorous images on the cover that often showed business men in ridiculous situations. The very first cover in April depicts a business man who is frustrated by the long lunch break in China, exemplified by a bored-
looking Chinese woman in blue Mao dress and braids. The image is rendered humorous by the overly expressive and contrasting facial expressions of the man and the woman.

In the 80s the covers of Business Traveller A/P often lacked an ordered layout. The cover for the June issue of 1987, for example, had a city view against a black background. The image was disorganized, the black background color clashed with the bright yellow squares placed in the middle to present some of the articles. The cover lacked a clear center, the colors did not harmonize and the images were scattered. From the October issue of ’88, when the magazine changed style, the covers became more spacious in layout and the cover lines were concentrated to one side, most often the left side, as they were in RES. The use of drawings became less frequent and the photographs were more styled and colorful. The covers became more ordered in their aesthetic style. There was also an increased glossiness in the paper used.

This shift can be exemplified by the covers of Business Traveller A/P in 1994 that either depicted the glamorous and exotic, for example the July issue that showed a gleaming Los Angeles skyscraper together with some palm trees in warm, red colors, or depicted work related themes with images of business men (and, on the cover of the December issue, a business woman) working or relaxing in connection to work. On the cover of the May issue of 1994 a man reclines in a sun chair while his cell phone and a business paper remains in close proximity to him. On the cover of the December issue, a woman is working by her portable computer in a hotel room. The covers depicting people at work were however not the dominant theme in the 90s.

In terms of the themes of the covers, Business Traveller A/P went through a similar transformation as RES in which there was an increased emphasis on leisure activities. In the early 80s practically all the covers of Business Traveller A/P depicted business men and situations relating to business while the covers from the late 80s and onwards placed much more emphasis on tourism situations, places related to fun, and relaxation. There were also less people on the covers. At the beginning of the 80s the covers often depicted situations, mostly humorous, where the interaction between the people in the image was central. The person or persons depicted often faced the reader. At the end of the 80s the covers that featured tourism scenes and activities started to appear and in the mid 90s the business theme had all but disappeared from the covers. In the late 90s people had largely disappeared from the covers and were replaced by objects, landscapes and city views. In the 90s a popular object on the covers was airplanes that glowed in the sunlight while they flew through the skies or while preparing for take off. In both RES and Business Traveller A/P the color of the
logo was often matched with one of the colors in the picture, on the cover of the September issue of 1992 a red umbrella on the beach is matched by a bright red title.

**Designing the world through the language of global consumerism**

With the transformation of RES into a lifestyle magazine the images were more often bought from global image banks such as Getty Images and Perfect World Images, especially the cover image. The image banks that were often used in *Business Traveller A/P* are APA, Stock House and Image Bank, but the shift to using image banks was less marked than it was in *RES*. During the 90s image banks were used occasionally in *RES* but almost exclusively for older images and images from movies such as *La Dolce Vita*. In the 00s almost all of the cover images were bought from image banks. Hence, to understand the aesthetic convention of the cover image of the lifestyle magazine it is necessary to understand the development of global image banks during the late 20th century.

The cover image has specific characteristics that go well together with the aesthetic style of image banks, as described by David Machin (whose article I will refer to in the following). The cover represents the whole of the specific issue as well as the magazine as such, and not a specific destination. It does not need to be descriptive, more than the images inside of the magazine the cover can convey a mood rather than show an accurate depiction of a specific place. The cover also needs to sell and therefore it has to be more technically perfect with bright colors to catch the attention of potential buyers.

One example from *RES* is the cover of the November issue of 2007 where the photo was bought from Getty Images. The image depicted a sky with different shades of blue and fluffy white clouds. The sky takes up half of the image, under it is a stretch of beach and water. The water meets the sky at the horizon. In the image there is also a beautiful young woman walking toward us and a man paddling away from us in a canoe. The red color of the cloth around the woman’s hips is repeated in the red color of the canoe, and the red color draws attention to them in an image dominated by blue. It is impossible to tell where the image was taken. The cover lines list several destinations that could possibly be the destination depicted (“The best spas in Asia”, “Kenya beach and safari”, “Thailand”).

The man is depicted at a distance from the viewer and turns his back to us while the woman holds her head down. On the content page it said that the image was shot by the

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147 David Machin, “Building the worlds visual language: the increasing global importance of image banks in corporate media”, *Visual communication*, nr 3., p. 316-336, 2004
“award winning, New York based Chris Sanders who has worked with Condé Nast Traveller, among others”, the reader was also told that the photographer “is a very distinguished [framstående] fashion- and advertising photographer”. There was no information about the place depicted in the image. The style of the image is artistic and carefully composed with the contrast between the light blue and intense red colors. The expanse created by the water and the sky that meet at the horizon and seemingly melt into each other connotes infinity (in a way similar to the in RES much coveted infinity pool, which I will return to later) and calm. Both the landscape and the woman express beauty and aesthetic perfection.

Another telling example is the cover of the December issue of 2006, when RES celebrated its 25th anniversary. The picture showed the ocean, the sky and a part of a palm tree that formed an arch over the horizon and covered parts of the sky. The dominant color of the picture was an intense yet light blue, mixed with a shade of green on the palm tree. It is impossible to tell where the picture was taken. In small print on the content page it said that the picture was taken by the Japanese nature photographer Fukuda Yukihiro, and that Yukihiro was a member of Getty Images. It also said that the picture was taken in the South Seas which was one of the destinations covered in the specific issue, but more than anything the object of the picture was the color blue, which in Western cultures connotes relaxation, harmony, comfort, leisure and freedom, but also health, hygiene and cleanliness.

Cleanliness was in general a repeated symbol in RES as a lifestyle magazine, not just expressed through the color blue but also through the organization of layout of the cover that was decidedly less cluttered than the covers of many other magazines, for example Vagabond. Cleanliness and order was also expressed through the white spaces inside of the magazine and through the many images of places emptied of people. It was not just beaches that were empty but also, more surprisingly, restaurants and bars.

In his article about the images found in global image banks David Machin describes the images as technically superb, highly posed and highly designed, a careful coordination of rich, primary colors. These types of images come from the world of advertising but are now being used more widely, not least in magazines. Machin finds one such image in The Guardian, illustrating an article about the war in Afghanistan. The images found in image banks are characterized by not representing the specific object in the photograph; instead their purpose is to “evoke an idea or feeling.” In the 00s many of the cover images in RES were monochromatic; the image is dominated by one color, most commonly blue but also white.

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148 Machin 2004, p. 316
149 Machin 2004, p. 317
and grey are used, and sometimes warm red and yellow hues. The October issue of 08 that focused on environmentally friendly travel was dominated by different shades of green, which of course connoted environmentalism but also relaxation and the restorative impact of nature. Compared to the 90s the cover images from 00s were highly stylized, rich in color and technically perfect. In general the object of the cover images became less clear, and sometimes it is even difficult to see what was depicted. The images used for the cover of RES in the 90s can instead be compared to the aesthetic style of postcards that represent a specific destination by a picturesque landscape or easily recognizable symbols such as an elephant symbolizing Africa or people in national costumes.

To further describe the aesthetics of image banks Machin refers to advertising and branding, and the way products are marketed solely on their sign value, by referring to moods, values and feelings such as friendship, happiness and romance. According to Machin, the images do not bear witness to anything; they emphasize the general and generic rather than the specific. The images are made as generic as possible so that they can be used in as many contexts as possible but also in as many cultures. In other words, they strive to be as global as possible. Machin writes that the images can be unrealistic, they sometimes give away that they are not merely captured but consciously staged or designed (in the words of Machin), for example by color coordination. Most importantly, the truth claim of the picture is not the naturalistic truth but an “emotive, sensory truth.” The purpose of these images is not to offer a depiction of reality but to evoke desire, fantasies and dreams.

Images from image banks, mostly Getty Images, were used increasingly in RES from the late 1990s, and to some extent in Business Traveller A/P. The increasing use of pictures from image banks was connected to the transformation of the magazines into lifestyle magazines. The emphasis on travel as fantasy and escape was expressed through a type of images that portrayed a feeling or a mood rather than a specific place. In both magazines the covers became more ordered and stylized, in Business Traveller A/P around the late 80s and in RES around the late 90s. There were less people in the cover images. Even though the cover images differed from the photos published inside the magazines the photographic style of the magazines in general changed in the same direction as that which I have described now. In RES, after 00, there was also less difference between the image bank pictures and the photographs taken by the magazine’s photographers. Hence the style of image bank photos did not differ much from the photos taken by photographers working for the magazine.

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150 Machin 2004, p. 327
According to Machin, the use of image banks and the type of images they sell represent “fundamental changes in the way photographic images are used”. In the context of my study, the insightful conclusions that Machin draws from the analysis of these images can be used more widely than to study the use of photographs. In a lifestyle magazine the move away from naturalistic depictions, striving towards what was perceived as authenticity, into the designing of a reality that is comfortable, ordered and aesthetically pleasing, is noticeable also in the written descriptions of destinations. I will go further into the implications of this in the chapter about the construction of the local as the opposite of the global metropolis.

The editorials: defining and defending travel

To analyze the editorials of the lifestyle magazine is of central importance to understand how the magazines construct themselves and the implied reader. It is in the editorials that the editor greets the reader, and it is often the first piece of editorial text that the reader finds after having sifted through the initial pages of advertisement. In both Business Traveller A/P and RES, over time the editor became more and more visible in the editorial. In December ‘96 there was a picture of the editor for the first time in RES. The editor then became quite literally the face of the magazine. Interestingly, from December ‘96 to December ’08, the image of the editor of RES becomes increasingly intimate. The image of Johan Lindskog in 08 was a close-up that only showed his face. I will make further use of the editorials in subsequent chapters but here I will provide a brief description of the role of the editorial in the travel magazine, and how this section of the magazine also changed as a part of the magazines’ transformation into lifestyle magazines.

The transformations of the magazines can be connected to two editors specifically; Johan Lindskog who was the editor of RES from 2001 to 2011, and Vijay Verghese who was the editor of Business Traveller A/P after the magazine was relaunched in 1988. Before becoming the editor of RES Lindskog founded the magazine Bon, a lifestyle and fashion magazine that is still published in 2011. He has also been the editor of Plaza magazine, another lifestyle magazine. He is working as a photographer and started Egg AB, an advertizing and branding agency, in early 2011. Verghese was the editor of Business Traveller A/P from October 1988 to February 1994. He worked as an editor and publisher at Interasia Publications Ltd, the publishing company for Business Traveller A/P, from 1988 to 1997. After his time as the editor of Business Traveller A/P, Verghese has worked as a journalist and publisher for numerous other magazines in Asia.
For many years the editorial, or Viewpoint as it was called, in Business Traveller A/P was different in content from the editorials of leisure travel magazines such as RES. There was commonly no attempt to greet the readers or of addressing them in any way. The topic of the editorial was not necessarily connected to any of the main topics of the issue at hand. Rather the editor gave his viewpoint on a topic of interest to the business traveler, most predominantly about airfares. The editorials of Steve Fallon for example, who was editor from June 84 to November 86, were to a high degree centered on the business of various airlines. The editor’s opinions were delivered in a dispassionate and impersonal way, while later editorials presented the personality and to some extent the private life of the editor so as to invite the reader. In the early 80s opinions where expressed as being that of the magazine rather than the editor, for example in sentences such as: “that’s a view that earns Business Traveller’s whole-hearted support”, in Steve Shellum’s editorial about extra fees that the traveler must pay when flying. (May 87)

Vijay K. Verghese, who became the editor in 1988, had a much more explicit presence in the editorial than any of the earlier editors. His texts also had a more informal and humorous tone, he repeatedly referred to himself as “your messiah”. (For example Sept 89) Already in his very first editorial Verghese wrote in a personal tone about his journeys. The editorial in the January issue of 89 started with Verghese writing “The last time I visited Tokyo, it was the winter of the US greenback’s discontent”. In the editorial for the November issue of 91, Verghese told the story of his first international flight, when he flew from India to North Carolina to study. Verghese’s editorials often included a personal story by the editor, about a travel experience of his, comments on current issues of importance to frequent fliers and short presentations of the articles in the issue and the contributing writers. In this Verghese broke the established pattern for editorial texts in Business Traveller A/P but he did however continue the tradition of writing humorous accounts of travelling and of all the mishaps that can befall the traveler, which characterized the magazine in general in the 80s. Verghese’s editorial often included a comical story of the editor’s own travels. The editorial was illustrated by a humorous drawing, by the editor, that can be interpreted as a depiction of the editor himself or the business traveler. The person in Verghese’s drawings was placed in the same weird situations as the business men on the covers of the early 80s. Another typical feature of his editorials is that quite a few of them were on the topic of ticket prices on different airlines.

In the late 80s the editorial was allowed to stretch out over a whole page but there was still no picture of the editor, except when Verghese’s own drawings can be interpreted as depicting
himself. In the British edition of Business Traveller the editor was first shown in a picture in February 2005 when there was a small picture of the editor Tom Otley at the top of the editorial page. In the July issue of the same year there were three small pictures of contributors with short texts about them, but this was discontinued already in the next issue. The short texts presented the contributors’ work experience and said very little about their personal lives, in contrast to the presentations of contributors in RES that presented the contributors as quirky but well-travelled cosmopolitans. In the 00s the picture of the editor in RES was combined with the pictures of three contributors.

The more visible editor of the lifestyle magazines used the editorial to present the magazine and the implied reader, as well as writing about the act of travelling. The editor wrote about what it means to travel and where and how one should travel. These topics were of course covered more or less implicitly in every article but it was in the editorial text that this was discussed most directly. Since the editorial is where the magazine is presented, changes of the magazine were often discussed in the editorial. In RES, when something was changed in the layout of the magazine this was often brought up as a topic in the editorial in order to make the reader aware of the changes and to explain why it had been changed. The editorial could also be used to discuss key words and concepts of the magazine. In RES, examples of words that were repeatedly discussed are “bon vivant” [livsnjutare] and “globalization”.

The editorial of a travel magazine can also serve the function of justifying travel. In Business Traveller A/P, the editorial of July 89, a month after the Tiananmen Square massacre, was titled “Keep the door open”. In the text, Verghese defended both travelling to and investing in China when he wrote: “Closed doors shut out influence, information and opportunity. Condemning a fifth of the world’s population – and its biggest potential market – to enforced isolation would be a tragedy on an even greater scale than Tiananmen. Travel and business help create the sort of bridges that bring people and ideas together.” In an editorial from September 05, in the UK edition of Business Traveller, travelling was encouraged in response to the terrorist attack in London in July the same year. Terrorism was perceived as a threat to the lifestyle espoused in the magazine, as well as to the travel industry, and it was therefore important to keep travelling. The editor Otley wrote: “There’s nothing we can do about that, but we can carry on – collectively, the team here has 13 overseas trips planned in the next four weeks, using public transport to get to and from London’s airports. We hope to see you in transit.” To travel became an act of bravery and a defense against terrorism. The editorial also had an emphasis on a “we” that included both the readers and the editorial
“team” in this bravery. Similar arguments were used by Otley in an editorial published in February 2005, after the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia. An even more explicit defense of tourism was offered in the editorial of the Swedish magazine Vagabond in 2008, in response to a book criticizing the tourism industry. The title of the editorial is “Globalisera mera!” (“Globalize more!”) and the main argument was that knowledgeable tourists can make tourism into a positive force. In a discussion about the cultural as well as environmental issues around travel Verghese, the editor of Business Traveller A/P, used a similar argument when he wrote: “Travel sensibly, inform yourself and don’t pollute.” (December 92)

The editorial is an opportunity to sell the magazine to the reader. In the September issue of 91 the editorial of Business Traveller A/P described why the magazine was better compared to free magazines: “The truth of the matter is, the reason we’re still around is because the majority of you reading this column have PAID for the magazine. This means we need to constantly update stories and whittle our product down to the most helpful essentials in order to be topical, newsy and genuinely informative… In coming months we shall continue to offer you the inside track on travel.” The editorial argued for why the reader should continue to buy the magazine.

Finally, the editorial is also an opportunity to create a community together with the readers. The magazines had different ways of marking closeness and distance to the readers in the editorial and the position they took in relation to the readers varied. In Business Traveller A/P “we” was sometimes used, where “we” referred to all business travelers. When “we” was used in this way, the writers (often the editor) claimed to have the same experiences and lifestyle as the readers, i.e. the editorial staff was also business travelers. In the editorial from March 90 Business Traveller A/P was referred to as “our magazine”. To construct the relation between the readers and the magazine or editorial staff as an equal friendship relation is common in magazines.151

In RES the relation between the readers and the magazine is also described as a friendship. In the December/January issue of 2006/07 the editor Johan Lindskog wrote that the reader could “trust Magnus, and Bobo, and Ulrika, and Peter”, listing the first names of the writers as if the reader was familiar with them. But the magazine could also construct a distance between readers and writers, and refer to the reader as you, and to the editorial team as we. In RES the reader was sometimes invited to look up to the writers as being the true cosmopolitans, and there was a slight distance between the writers and the readers. In the

151 Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001, p. 76
same editorial from 06/07, Lindskog wrote that the editorial staff and writers of RES were “fanatical travelers…RES is a magazine made by true travelers for real bon vivants”, and hence there was a distinction between the reader who enjoyed the good life, including travel, and the writers who had the sought after knowledge of travel. When “we” was used in the editorial of RES it was a more ambivalent “we” than the one used in Business Traveller A/P, a “we” that could include everybody or all travelers.

For RES the web page was another way to create a community with the readers. In his editorial from November 2007, Lindskog encouraged the readers to publish their own photos and travel narratives for other readers to make use of, and in that way he wrote, “we build Sweden’s best travel site together”. Most of all it was through the blogs on the RES web page that the distance between writers and readers was lessened. The readers became writers and the professional writers took on a new style of expression that followed the genre conventions of blogs: personal, direct and with supposed amateurish features and images that contrasted to the stylish layout of the paper version of the magazine. On the web site the readers and the writers are presented together on the page for blogs while they are separated on the introductory page where the readers are organized under the rubric “Reader’s Blogs”. The distance is further lessened through competitions in which the price is a trip followed by the publication of an article written by the winner. Through these competitions what the contestants aspire to, besides travelling, is to become professional travel writers like the writers of RES, and thus the competitions also function as a way to confirm the position of the travel writers as something for the readers to strive for. To further blur the distinction between readers and writers, many of the readers who have blogs are in one way or the other employed by the travel industry; they are for example guides, travel consultants and bed and breakfast-owners, and might be able to use the blog space to gain attention. The amateur photographs and texts of the reader’s blogs contrast to the style of the magazine in general. The blogs of the professional writers are somewhere in between in style.

The blogs on the web page of RES lessened the distance by blurring the distinction between professional writers and readers but it also reinforced the role of the writers as role models for the readers to emulate. Even though the blogs written by the professional writers and those written by readers were sometimes confusingly similar there were ways in which they differed in layout, placement and the style of the writing. In Business Traveller A/P, the relation between the writers and the readers was equal, everybody was a business traveler, while sometimes the magazine was positioned to serve the reader.
The changing genre of the travel magazine

The transformations of *Business Traveller A/P* and *RES*, from travel magazines to lifestyle magazines have many similarities despite the differences between a magazine that aims at a business community and one that caters to consumers of leisure travel. During the time period studied, *Business Traveller A/P* was more formal in layout and content, and had a higher emphasis on information even in the 00s, but in both publications travel became a lifestyle project aimed at relaxation and escape. In their style of writing the magazines moved from being the tourist guide of the reader to being the primary traveler, with an increased focus on the journey of the writer rather than that of the reader. The magazines were still guiding the reader but there was a shift from offering addresses and helpful advice to explicitly presenting a whole lifestyle. To directly address the readers as “you” disappeared from the articles and appeared instead in the editorials were the editor greeted the reader with personal travel anecdotes and presentations of the magazine. The relation to the readers remained central even though the way of addressing and defining them changed.

The change in content was made visible by the increasing use of images and the disappearance of lists and charts. In both magazines this change was discussed using the metaphor of air and space, in *Business Traveller A/P* the magazine was described as having become “brighter, breezier” (January 1993) and in *RES* as mimicking the airiness of the art gallery. (Feb 2003) In the lifestyle magazine the images had less of a documentary function; more than before they expressed the values of the magazine and had the purpose of enticing the reader. The change in visual style was also evident on the covers that become more stylized and ordered. Colors took on a new importance, both in the images that illustrated the articles and on the covers. In *RES* it was on the covers that colors became most central. In the cover photos of *RES*, blue hues were dominant, connoting coolness, relaxation, cleanliness and order, but also red, connoting warmth, excitement and the sensual, were used. In comparison to *RES*, *Business Traveller A/P* kept a more formal style for the covers even though in the late 80s and onwards the magazine featured more images of leisure travel and a more frequent use of bright colors. When the magazine was first launched many covers had a black or white background. Both *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P* increasingly concentrated the cover lines to one side of the cover which provided more space for the image and made the cover less cluttered. As opposed to *RES*, *Business Traveller A/P* did not shrink in size.

As the magazines became lifestyle magazines there was an increased blurring of editorial material and advertising. One example is the prevalence in magazines of so called advertorials
which are adverts that copy the style and layout of editorials. Another example is found in the magazine *escape!* in which the world map (a common feature of travel magazines) is mixed with an advert by SilkAir so that it is difficult to see the difference between the editorial content and the advert. However, the influence of the sphere of advertising goes beyond the different ways in which adverts and editorial content are mixed. It is also a question of editorial content copying the style and aesthetic conventions of advertising so that the world view of the magazine, and the ways of expressing it, becomes the same as that which is expressed in advertising.

In sum the genre of travel magazine journalism goes through substantial changes during the time period studied. This change is visible in the style, layout, covers, the use of images and format of the magazine but also in the editorial discussions about what a travel magazine is. As I have mentioned briefly in this chapter, the reader takes on a new role as a result of this transformation and in the following chapter I will go further into who the implied reader of the lifestyle magazine was.

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152 *escape!* Vol. 2 issue 6 2009, p. 11
3. Constructing an identity: the implied reader as cosmopolitan bon vivant

To establish a relation to the reader is central in magazines. Although the readers were addressed from the beginning in both magazines of my study, as the magazines became lifestyle magazines the relation to the readers were emphasized in new ways. Identities are established through difference, it is impossible to define the readers without defining those that do not belong. In both magazines definitions of class, lifestyle and taste became increasingly central in differentiating the implied readers from other groups of tourists. In this chapter I will analyze how the readers were addressed and how an implied reader was constructed by using these definitions.

Gender is another central aspect of how the magazines defined their readership. Travel magazines differ from many other magazine genres of the popular press in that they often do not have a clearly gendered readership. For men’s magazines and women’s magazines the gender of the readership is obvious but magazines classified under categories such as “family magazines”, “boat magazines”, and “health magazines” also often signal the gender of their intended readership, for example by the use of colors and male or female models on the cover. During the time period studied RES is best described as being aimed at a broad group of middle-class consumers. Business Traveller A/P went through a transformation from clearly targeting an exclusively masculine readership to a more gender neutral approach. Around the turn of the millennium the magazine also exemplifies the changing ways of constructing masculinity. This late 20th century masculinity connected the aspects of gender with the discussion about lifestyle. I will start this chapter with an initial presentation of how the magazines related to the readers. As I have mentioned before it is the implied reader that is of interest and not the actual readers.

The implied reader

The concept of an implied reader comes from literary studies and has been developed most notably by Wolfgang Iser. I use the concept to mean the reader that was created by the magazine and implied in the texts and images. In RES the reader was mentioned in the very

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153 Syssner 2011, p.
first editorial in 1994, but when the magazine changed into being a lifestyle magazine it became increasingly important to define who the implied reader was and, as I will argue, to provide this reader with an ideal cosmopolitan lifestyle. The implied reader in *RES* was, in very general terms, someone who had much interest in travelling and that could be expected to spend time and resources on travel. As readers of a travel magazine they could furthermore be expected to have an interest in defining themselves as travelers, and to create an identity around traveling as a lifestyle project. During the time period studied the identity of the reader was increasingly discussed in the editorials, mostly after Johan Lindskog became editor in April 2001.

The most thorough and detailed discussion about the characteristics of the typical reader was published after *RES* had conducted a reader survey in 2001. The reader was addressed directly and Lindskog wrote “you are a knowledgeable, curious and intelligent bon vivant [livsnjutare] who is constantly seeking new experiences.”\(^{156}\) The reader was further described as having a relatively good economic standing and as being a “picky” consumer. Besides travelling, the reader enjoyed “good wine and food. You like literature and design, you are open to contemporary art as well as ancient culture. You enjoy both nature and urban architecture.” The key word for defining the reader in this editorial was the word livsnjutare (bon vivant), and this was repeated in subsequent editorials.

In the July/August issue of 2001 in *RES* an article, titled “En lång resa”, (“A Long Journey”), commemorated the 20\(^{th}\) anniversary of the magazine while it also contained definitions of the implied reader. The text described how *RES* had evolved from the early 80s, and the writer argued that the magazine had changed in reaction to changes in traveling during the same time period. The writer claimed that the early 80s were “the start of the everyman’s way into the world” and that it was this fact that *RES* (or *Resguide* as the magazine was called back then) could capitalize on. The reader of the magazine in the 80s was implicitly identified as this “everyday man” who was then able to travel. However, the article continued, as the millennium came to a close, travelling was made widely available and the need to differentiate between the everyday men arose. Today, the writer argued, even the mechanics at Volvo and the women who work with the popular women’s magazine *Amelia* are travelers. Thus, the mechanics and the women at *Amelia* became representatives of the everyday man, and implicitly, the reader of *RES* was no longer included in this group. The writer concluded

\(^{156}\) The Swedish word “livsnjutare” has no obvious equivalent in English but in direct translation it means “someone who enjoys the pleasures of life”. I have chosen the word bon vivant, even though the Swedish word carries less of a gastronomic association. Given the importance of exclusivity, taste and class in *RES* another possible translation is connoisseur. Other possibilities are hedonist or epicure.
that when everyone can go anywhere it is important to create a niche in traveling and the ambition of RES was to define that niche with the common lifestyle of the reader and the editorial staff as a guiding principle.

As I mentioned in the first chapter, interaction with the readers was important in Business Traveller A/P from the beginning; the magazine included long letter pages and during the first years the magazine even had longer texts written by readers. The Travel Spy was a regular section that was written by readers. However, this section disappeared after the first years. Instead, the letters pages, were readers complained about services, became the main forum for the readers. In a comment on the letters pages, the editor wrote that one of the main tasks of the magazine was to “provide an independent forum through which travel consumers would be able to express their views on the industry that exists to serve them.” (April 85)

Complaining about inadequate service was encouraged by the editorial staff, and in the early 90s, the magazine asked the readers to write about their “ten biggest travel gripes”. The best letters were included in “the special 10th anniversary issue”. The extensive space devoted to the readers letters created an interactive space that invited the readers to be involved with the magazine.

The reader of Business Traveller A/P was from the beginning explicitly explained to be any frequent traveler who was based in the Asia/Pacific region. Implicitly the magazine had a Western perspective and, in the early years of the 80s, a British perspective. The actual readers were more diverse than the British expatriate community which showed in the Travellers Forum when readers signed their letters with Asian names. To the implied reader, the Asia/Pacific region was familiar since he was assumed to be based there, but it was also foreign. Asia was often depicted as exotic and something that had to be explained for the reader, for example in articles that explained the role of fortune tellers in Asian cultures. (For example the article “Business up as dragons bathe”, about feng shui, from July ‘84)

In the very first editorial of 82 in Business Traveller A/P, written by the publisher the reader was marked out as a “small group” of frequent travelers, who needed information, but they were not defined in any more detail. In the early 80s they were also referred to in editorials as “travel consumers”. Another word that was sometimes used to denote the reader was “travelling executive”, implying that the reader had a high standing in the corporate hierarchy (for example in March 86 and Feb 89). That the readers were frequent travelers was central, and the writers repeatedly emphasized that whenever there was a discussion about how the readers were to be categorized. A text about acronyms in the travel trade, in the April issue of 86, read: “You may be a frequent traveller, but not an industry insider”. In the UK
edition of Business Traveller the reader was, in the early 00s, referred to as a “globetrotter” (Business Traveller UK Sept 03) and “the globetrotting executive” (Business Traveller UK April 01 and Oct 03) in the editorial. In Business Traveller A/P the reader was called a “travelling executive”, in February 89.

In the editorial for the October issue of 86 the editor presented the result of a readers’ survey, in which half of the 1500 respondents were said to “take over six return trips per year.” The reader’s status as a frequent traveler was of course also emphasized in the magazine’s information to advertisers. From the mid-80s the magazine conducted recurrent readers’ surveys to gain detailed information about the readers; their travel patterns, their destinations, their shopping habits as well as their opinions on various airlines and other travel services. After having re-launched the magazine in October 88, a readers’ survey was conducted, and the results were presented in the editorial of the September issue of 89. The editor Vijay Verghese wrote:

To find out where we stood one year on, we mailed questionnaires to 8,000 randomly selected subscribers along with the June issue. Readers sent their responses directly to Hongkong-based research consultants, Frank Small & Associates […] some figures: 87% of the respondents felt the magazine struck the right balance between business travel information and fun; 79% thought the magazine had improved since its relaunch (25% maintaining it had ‘improved vastly’); average reading time per issue was almost 80 minutes though some took as long as five hours and one as much as two to three days to read us ‘cover to cover’. Two percent seemed undecided about their sex (male or female, not frequency) but deductive logic put the mix at 91% male and 9% female. Demands were voiced for round-the-world fares (which are back), currency conversion tables and more budget-travel information. The magazine took a few blasts for its ‘coffee-table’ appeal and apparent lack of interest in ‘the average traveller’. Broadly, however, BT readers, with an impressive amount of travel and room-nights between them, were appreciative of the changes.

This quote exemplified several recurrent themes in the depiction of the implied reader: the magazine was about both business and fun, the majority of readers were men, the emphasis laid on practical information and there was a constant tension between exclusivity and interest in budget travel.

In an advertisement aimed at hotels that might choose to advertise in the magazine, in the April issue of 90, the reader was described at length: “They [the readers] are the very top individual travellers in the region. People who have made travel a way of life. Discerning
individuals who have already arrived at the top. Individuals who fly first or business class. Individuals who take an average of nine pure business trips, three pleasure trips and six joint business and leisure trips a year. Business Traveller subscribers represent the core FIT (fully independent traveller) audience in the region and are an essential target audience for all quality hotels.” The annual readers’ survey often included the income of readers. In his editorial from October 92, Verghese could report that the “average annual personal income was US$82,786”.

Besides keeping the business traveler informed the magazine had a second, more indefinable purpose which had to do with the personal life of the business traveler. The magazine created a community of business travelers while it also created the business traveler as a character with specific experiences, needs and desires. In that way the magazine gave the reader a chance to define him or herself as a business traveler, as opposed to any other kind of traveler such as for example the package deal tourist or the backpacker. The magazine wanted to be something the reader could “identify with on a personal level” (May 82) Likewise, in a text written for potential advertisers the aim of the magazine was to “service the personal travel interests of regular travellers” (Oct 82) In the first editorial, in April 82, Thornton wrote that “despite its title, Business Traveller is aimed at business travellers in a personal, not a corporate, capacity. Your business is your affair.” (April 82) Thus, being a business traveler was in part imagined to be integral to the readers’ personal identity.

For the business traveler who traveled on a regular basis, travel became less exotic. Business Traveller A/P aimed at making the readers’ journeys more exotic but the magazine also paradoxically served to make travelling more mundane. One example of this was the section called Seat selector or Aviation in which the insides of a plane was shown in a blue print-like illustration. The purpose of this section was to inform the reader about the best seats on a particular flight. This way of portraying a plane, as well as the depiction of flying, stand in stark contrast to the fetishizing images of gleaming fuselage that were used on the covers in the 90s. Travel was often described as cumbersome and tiring. The humor pages were often about the trials and tribulations of travel as well as the weird situations the traveler could experience. Travel should be smooth, practical, hassle free and discounted but also pleasant and entertaining. The editorial for December 82 claimed that “the magazine has not only helped our readers cut cost, but also extract more enjoyment from their travel”. In the editorial of October 1983 the editor claimed that the articles in the Breakaway-section could enrich the business man’s travels, a chance to transform his business trip into a “memorable epic.” In his editorial from Oct ’93 Verghese wrote that travel is commonly seen as glamorous while the
well-travelled readers of Business Traveller A/P have a much more realistic perspective on
travel: “As frequent travellers, they have an unsurpassed, first-hand knowledge of the
industry. They are intimately conversant with reality.”

Compared to RES, the implied reader in Business Traveller A/P in the early years of
publication was a more well-defined group of frequent business travelers while RES targeted
anyone travelling for leisure. The implied reader was broadened in Business Traveller A/P
after the magazine was re-launched in 1988, and less emphasis was placed on business. The
reader in RES was instead more defined when the editor started to write about the reader in his
ditorials. In both RES and Business Traveller A/P the readers were defined through elusive
concepts of exclusivity and luxury, but also occasionally in the latter magazine on income.
With its reader’s surveys in which the median income of the readers was announced, Business
Traveller A/P based its assumptions about the readers’ wealth on something more substantial
that what RES did. The main themes that have been touched upon already in this introduction;
the issue of money and the use of exclusivity to separate the implied reader from other
tourists, will be further examined in the following subchapter when I go into how the identity
of the reader was defined in relation to the concept of lifestyle, and how lifestyle related to
class distinction.

Lifestyle and class

The word lifestyle was used in Business Traveller A/P already in the early 80s, before the
magazine became a lifestyle magazine. From June 84 the magazine included a section with
the title “Lifestyle”. However, the texts published under this heading were not similar in
theme to what was later understood as lifestyle. In one article the subject was the outrageous
claims made by travelling celebrities. Other articles in the same section dealt with the topic of
fortune telling. In other words it is unclear what lifestyle meant, other than that it was
something set apart from the world of serious business. The word lifestyle was used already in
the 80s, but it was in no way the all-encompassing and central concept it later became. In the
UK edition of Business Traveller, lifestyle was also used as a section title or as a category of
content on the content page, already in the 90s (Business Traveller UK, ’95, from October).
What it referred to was again unclear, but it usually included articles about leisure activities,
dining, hotels and wine, and in the December issue of 95 (Business Traveller UK) there was a
text about time zones under the category of lifestyle.
In *Business Traveller A/P*, just as in *RES*, it was not until later that lifestyle gained the status of a constantly repeated and referred to buzz word, both in editorial content and in advertisement. The ubiquity of the word “lifestyle” in the 00s was exemplified in an “Advertisement feature” published in *Business Traveller A/P* in September 2009. The ad presented a new hotel in Hong Kong and the word lifestyle was mentioned four times; the hotel itself is a “luxury lifestyle hotel”, the hotel is “led by US lifestyle guru Colin Cowie”, the guests can enjoy “a selection of business and lifestyle magazines”, as well as a “host of gourmet dining and lifestyle options” including various restaurants and bars. Again, lifestyle was used in a way that made the exact meaning of the word unclear. However, in this ad from the late 00s it was clear that lifestyle symbolized luxury, exclusivity and design; those other words that are repeated in the ad. Lifestyle was also a matter of consumer choice and of having a plethora of goods or experiences to choose from. The guests at the hotel could choose from a variety of food outlets (European fine dining, Japanese-infused buffet, modern Cantonese...), and presumably based their choice on their lifestyle.

The concept of “lifestyle” was repeatedly used in the editorials in *RES*, and other texts that discussed the identity of the reader. “Lifestyle” was explicitly associated with personal taste and consumer choices, but it was also implicitly a matter of financial means and class. In an editorial in the 00s Lindskog claimed that the typical reader is some one who has a good economic standing, and as the writer pointed out in the text titled “En lång resa”, (“A Long Journey”), the reader was not someone who worked as a mechanic for Volvo. During the 00s, the editorials also discussed the issue of money and financial means. In the September issue of 2004, Lindskog wrote about spending while on vacation and concluded that carefree spending was a part of being on holiday. The traveler temporarily leaves not only his or her own living conditions, but also his or her financial situation. Traveling could be an exciting but ultimately harmless play with social status in which a reckless, but paradoxically also contained, spending was encouraged.

In her article *Branding Cities: A Social History of the Urban Lifestyle Magazine*, Miriam Greenberg charts the development of American lifestyle magazines. She writes that these first appeared in the post-World War II period and that they were intimately connected to the emergence of the middle-classes,

> [f]orced to compete against TV for advertising, facilitated by new publishing technologies, and taking advantage of the new consumer research methods … the magazine industry as a whole was shifting away from mass marketed general-interest magazines and toward niche-marketed lifestyle
titles that could deliver a more specific market for advertisers…Early on, this restructured industry identified the new educated middle-class niche growing in metropolitan regions across the country, as well as a breed of visionary writers and entrepreneurial publishers who could represent this class and attract advertisers and investors seeking to tap its market potential.

Thus, Greenberg argues that the emergence of the lifestyle magazine as a genre was dependent on this desire to better reach this new group of educated middle-class readers, and that this was intimately connected to the need to attract advertisers. Discussing the concept of lifestyle, Greenberg argues that while lifestyle goes beyond traditional definitions of class it is at the same time intimately connected to the middle-class.

Scholars taking an interest in the concept of lifestyle are in disagreement on the relation between the lifestyle concept, which has a relatively new prominence, and the much older notion of class distinction. In their article “Language style and lifestyle”, David Machin and Theo van Leeuwen argue that lifestyle has surpassed class distinctions in the definition of identity when they write “with the decline of traditional types of social groupings such as age and class, lifestyle has become the dominant source of social identity.” However, Pierre Bourdieu argues, in his book Distinction, that consumer choices (which are central to definitions of lifestyle) are bound up with class distinctions. Machin and van Leeuwen uses the word “social style” as an umbrella term for “stable categories such as class, gender and age”, and argue that lifestyle is a combination of individual and social style. Lifestyle challenge but does not completely supplant class distinction. In Ordinary lifestyles, David Bell and Joanne Hollows argue that the growing importance of lifestyle is not at all “a move beyond class”. To the contrary it is “an attempt to gain authority by new middle-classes whose cultural capital affords them considerable ‘riches’ in this area of life”.

**The ephemeral nature of lifestyle**

A central difference between class distinction and lifestyle that Machin and van Leeuwen describe is the more ephemeral nature of the latter. Just like fashion fads and trends in consumption, lifestyle identities are unstable. Lifestyle identities are something that has to be created (and constantly re-created) by the individual and this means that identity construction becomes more deliberate and “reflexive”. Lifestyle media plays a role in constantly

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157 Machin and van Leeuwen 2005, p. 583
158 Bell and Hollows 2005, p. 8
monitoring and teaching lifestyles. When the two magazines of my study became lifestyle magazines, there was an increasing interest in trying to pin down the implied reader. Both the identity of the writers, and that of the readers, was brought to the forefront in a new way.

The existence of lifestyle media relies on an anxious consumer. Bell and Hollows separate between two different middle-class positions; the new petite bourgeoisie, who are the “natural audience for lifestyle media” because of their anxiety about identity and taste, and the new middle-class who “take their lifestyles more seriously than their careers” and that are “the new taste-makers” and interpreters of style. Applying this separation to magazines, one could argue that the writers were representatives of the new middle-class while the readers were positioned as the new petite bourgeoisie, the anxious consumers who looked to the magazines for guidance on how to construct a desired lifestyle.

In the previous chapter I mentioned that the writers of RES were sometimes positioned as the real travelers that the readers could learn from. In May 2001, the editorial page of RES was remade so that in addition to showing a picture of the editor it also contained pictures and short presentations of three ”co-workers” that had contributed to the issue, such as writers, photographers and illustrators. The co-workers were invariably presented as creative cosmopolitans and successful, albeit somewhat quirky, media workers. The presentations typically included descriptions of what they had worked with and what major cities they had visited or lived in. On the content page of December 2006 the co-worker Bobo Karlsson was presented in the following way:

Bobo Karlsson has been writing for RES since the beginning and reports most of all from the metropolises of America, since he lived in New York during the entire 80s. There he wrote two books that gained cult status – one about the big apple, New York, New York, and Drömmen om Kalifornien [“The dream of California”]. In the latest years we have read his city portraits from Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Chicago, Salvador, Saõ Paulo, Amsterdam – and in this issue he returns to Bangkok. During 2007 he will report from at least two other metropolises.

By being visible in this way, the “co-workers” of RES functioned as well-traveled role-models and guides who, through the articles, provided a chance for the reader to emulate their lifestyle, if only temporarily. The highlighting of the personality of the writers increased with the use of blogs on the webpage of RES, since the blogs combined the information about new bars, restaurants, art events etc., that could be found in the printed magazine, with details

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159 Bell and Hollows 2005, p. 7
about the writer’s everyday, personal life. Through the blogs the reader was invited to come closer to the writers and their private lives in metropolises around the world.

Both magazines of my study referred extensively to ideas about exclusivity, both in their presentation of the magazine and in the definition of the implied reader. The concept of lifestyle was important here because it symbolized exclusivity. Lifestyle was related to class distinction but by remaining an elusive concept it allowed the readers to discuss exclusivity without mentioning class. As opposed to class, lifestyle was something that could be chosen by the reader and taught by the writers of the magazines. Class was also implicitly present in the discussions about luxury.

**Lifestyle and luxury**

The relation between the construction of the implied reader of *RES* and discussions about the concepts of money and taste was evident in the many editorials that discussed luxury. In an editorial from 1997 (that was recycled in 2000), Anders Falkirk discussed what luxury is and whether it should be seen as deplorable or not. He concluded by writing “personally, I think the world would be boring without luxury. I love to read about exclusive design hotels such as the Mondrian Hotel in Los Angeles or fashionable dandy boutiques such as Squire in London, even if I can’t afford it in real life.” In another editorial Lindskog argued that traveling was a luxury and hence the magazine should be luxurious. In an article in the May issue of 2000, the writers described how travelers can take part of luxury tourism to a cut-rate price. The article started with a justification: “Luxury. You don’t have to feel bad about enjoying it. Or dreaming about enjoying it.” (May 2000) As the two quotes above exemplifies, when luxury was discussed in the texts in *RES* it was both in order to define what luxury was, and to legitimize it as a desirable pursuit.

An interest in luxury, affordable or not, was one aspect of how the implied reader was constructed as a cosmopolitan bon vivant, capable of recognizing and enjoying the pleasures of life. But the texts about luxury was also where the implied reader was established as an aspirational consumer, exemplified by Falkirk’s editorial in which he described the pleasure of reading about luxury that he could not afford. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "aspirational" originates in marketing where it is taken to mean something that is "representative of or associated with a sophisticated, stylish, or otherwise attractive lifestyle to
which consumers might aspire.\textsuperscript{160} I use it in my analysis to discuss those instances in the texts where a consumer product or experience was presented as having a meaning beyond that which was available through purchasing the product or experience. As in the example referred to above when Falkirk wrote about dandy boutiques and exclusive hotels, the reader was invited to take an interest in it and to be informed about it whether the product was affordable or not. Like in advertisement the reader was invited to take an interest in the lifestyle associated with the product, but in the magazines, since the symbols attached to the product became more central than the product itself to consume the symbols (through reading the magazine) were enough to access the lifestyle.

The construction of the reader as an aspirational consumer in \textit{RES} was explicit in the presentation of so called design hotels, in a section called “Transit”. Transit consisted of a few pages of short texts that were placed directly after the editorial. The section was a part of the magazine since the start but, as the rest of the magazine, changed in content. During the 00s, Transit came to focus increasingly on the presentation of new hotels. These most often fell under the category of design or boutique hotels, a concept that emerged during the late 90s, and that will be discussed in more detail further into this chapter. Here, it is sufficient to note that the hotels that featured in Transit were almost exclusively so called high-end hotels. The fact that a stay at one of these hotels might be too expensive for the reader was often acknowledged in the text, sometimes with the suggestion that the reader at least visit the hotel bar. Thus, the purpose of presenting these hotels was not solely to inform the reader on where to stay. Instead the hotels functioned as markers of taste and style. In \textit{RES}, traveling facilitated a middle-class fantasy of upward mobility and luxury, both attainable and imagined, which was often connected to consumption.

Luxury was not an unproblematic indulgence. It was legitimated by being something that the traveler deserved. The reader was encouraged to indulge during a vacation but this had to be deserved by ones working life. This is in line with the recurrent discussion on spending as an exciting but harmless liminal activity (referred to above). Luxury had to be mediated and controlled by good taste, which is evident in many of the texts about hotels. When commenting on the luxury hotel Burj al-Arab in Dubai the writer expressed contempt over the conspicuous luxury of the interior design. It is contemptuous because it was a display of wealth that lacks “style”. This can be compared to the many design hotels where the luxurious interior was defined as stylish and therefore desirable. In \textit{RES}, the implied reader was affluent

\textsuperscript{160} \url{www.oed.com}, accessed 28-5-2011
enough to travel and enjoy pleasures such as fine wine, fashion and design, but wealth and luxury had to constantly be legitimized by good taste, lest it bordered on the vulgar.

The implied reader of RES could be described as quite a narrow character, excluding such groups as the typical package holiday tourists and back-packers. At the same time, the implied reader was always kept elusive enough so that a larger group of potential readers were able to identify with the description. Since the identity of the reader was based on the character of the aspirational consumer it was enough to desire a certain lifestyle in order to identify oneself as the implied reader. Adhering to a specific set of values around taste and lifestyle was more central than to be sufficiently affluent to access the products and services described in the magazine.

It is worth pointing out that the readers were not necessarily reading the magazine in order to gain useful information for their future trips. Armchair traveling is central to the genre of travel writing, and especially so when it comes to up-market magazines which present the readers with destinations that many of them might not afford, or that they would only be able to afford once. The reader is an aspirational consumer and armchair traveler, as much as an actual traveler. Furthermore, in the lifestyle magazine there is an increased focus on aspirations, as opposed to (but not necessarily excluding) actual purchases and travel. An article in Business Traveller A/P from 09 even used the words aspirational travel (Jan/Feb).

Just as it was in RES the issue of money and wealth was dealt with in an ambivalent manner in Business Traveller A/P. The implied reader was said to be affluent and interested in luxury but there was also a constant attention to bargains and cost-cutting. The hotel recommendations often described high-end hotels rather than mid-range or budget hotels. In the late 80s there was a recurrent section called “Shopping” and in the January issue of ’88 the Shopping section advised the reader on “luxury cars from Japan.” Later, the magazine also included a section about investments. Yet, the reader was clearly not imagined to be a high-flyer for whom money was not an issue. In an article about Manila the reader argues that there are “few things closer to a business man’s heart than his expenses” (June 86)

The position of the implied reader of Business Traveller A/P and his relation to money can be compared to the position of Business Class on an airplane, in between the luxury of First class and Economy. Business Class was first developed by many airlines in the late 70s and early 80s,161 around the same time that the British and Asia/Pacific editions of Business Traveller were launched. As I have mentioned before, the airline industry was of constant

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interest to the writers of the magazine throughout the period of study, and the magazine wrote repeatedly about the different classes available for travelers. To fly first class was often described as an unnecessary luxury, for example in an article from June 86. The images illustrating the article showed a man dressed as a baby, being bottle-fed champagne and given spoonfuls of caviar. The humorous images associated First Class with a vulgar and extreme taste for luxury. On the other hand, the cover story of the May issue of 87, about economy class, was titled “Cheap Thrills: how economy class compares” and the cover featured an image of business travelers packed as sardines on an airplane. Despite the constant attention to cost cutting, and the sometime mundane view of travelling provided in Business Traveller A/P, the magazine, just like RES, offered images of luxury and a life in luxury for the traveler.

**Design hotels as identity markers**

If the negotiation over definitions of luxury, taste and class, that was central to the identity construction in RES and Business Traveller A/P, was tied to a specific place it was the design or boutique hotel and therefore the concept needs to be further delineated. The notion of design hotels entered RES in the late 1990s, and was from then on given increasing importance and space in the magazine. In Business Traveller A/P the concept was referred to already in an article from December 88, when a “designer-resort village” was mentioned. The boutique hotel made its way into Business Traveller A/P in the early 90s. The design/boutique hotel was however, in the 80s and 90s, not discussed at any length and did not have the central role in Business Traveller A/P that it did in RES. In Business Traveller A/P, the boutique hotels were sometimes criticized for putting style over content, but the overall cultural significance of the boutique hotel, closely connected to the concept of lifestyle, was not questioned.

In RES a boutique hotel was first mentioned in an article from January 1996, in which Anders Falkirk visited Philippe Starck’s hotel in Miami. The hotel was deplored by the writer who found its white walls ridiculous. However, it was mentioned again in December 1996, in a short text that presented the concept and in this text it was no longer deplored but instead seen as desirable. The phenomenon was then explained more thoroughly in an article in June 1997, titled “Inte bara ett hotell”, (“Not just a hotel”). In the text the writer went back to the beginning of the railway when, he claimed, it seemed as if “the same person that designed the

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162 In my material these kinds of hotels are called both boutique and design hotels with no significant difference between the two concepts, and hence I use these names interchangeably. I discuss this further in chapter 4.
railway station also designed the railway hotel” and, the writer claimed, sometimes you have to order up a newspaper to your room in order to know which country you are in. The design hotel was then presented as the opposite of this conformity and standardization. The boring standardization, the writer continued, was finally challenged when the generation born in the 1940s entered the job market. They were “the world’s most educated generation”, and found work in media, music, TV, film and design. Thus the design hotel was, in this first longer article describing the phenomenon, associated with what is commonly called the creative classes, with the educated upper middle-class and their perceptions of good taste.

From 2001 and onwards, RES dedicated a large part of the section called Transit to presentations of new design hotels from all over the world, however mostly in Western locations. In the 00s, the design hotel got its own section called “roomservice”. The design hotel thus became demarcated as a central feature of the magazine, and an important aspect of RES as a lifestyle magazine. In a text from December 2001 this type of hotels were even called “lifestyle hotels”. The hotels that were presented were often newly established and their establishment was described as constituting a fundamental change for the better. In the July/August issue of 2001, a design hotel in Wales was presented in the article “Ur fickan på John Malkovich”, (“Out of John Malkovich's pocket”): “A few years ago, Cosmo Fry and Lulu Andersson checked into a middle range hotel in Nottingham. They were completely shocked: the service was bad, the interior design was ugly and the bathrooms were dirty. During that night in an uncomfortable bed, the idea was born of a stylish design hotel that didn’t cost a fortune”. The style of the new hotel was described as “tasteful kitsch.”

Design hotels gained a central position in RES because they easily combined travel with the concept of lifestyle and definitions of taste. This was evident in an article about how fashion brands such as Armani and Missoni were establishing new hotels. In the article titled “A fashionable vacation” the writer concluded that “today fashion is not just about how we dress but also about how we live” (86, 07) and, he wrote, the fashion houses would like to “provide an entire exclusive lifestyle” available for purchase. In his book Distinction, Bourdieu emphasizes how taste is a taught cultural competence, or what he calls a taught “code”. In the words of Thurlow and Jaworski, we are “taught not only how to desire but also what to desire.” The travel magazines of my study put much emphasis on defining taste, and in RES the design hotel was central to this task. This was evident in the first longer text published on the subject from June 1997, quoted above, which worked as an introductory

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Thurlow and Jaworski 2006, p. 127
presentation of what a design hotel is. The educational purpose of the text was implicit in the title, “Inte bara ett hotell” (“Not just a hotel”) and a large portion of the article was dedicated to explaining why the design hotels were different from hotels in general.

In the subsequent texts about design hotels this separation was based on sometimes very subtle distinctions and elusive ideas about originality, with taste as the central concept. At Blakes Hotel in London the color of the room that the writer stayed in was “beige on beige”, but, the writer claimed, it was a distinct nuance of beige. The design hotel was also defined by elusive characteristics such as “having a soul” and being “smart”. The initial article from June 97 provided the reader with a few characteristics of the design hotel that were later repeated in the presentation of new design hotels in the section called “roomservice”. In the presentation of new design hotels definitions of taste were repeated. The initial article also established the group of people that were associated with the hotels. The educated, creative upper middle-class was both the owners, designers and the potential clientele of the design hotels. By associating the hotels with a particular group of people, to read about, visit or even stay at a design hotel, becomes a way to associate one self with that group.

In Ordinary lifestyles, Ruth Holliday writes that in lifestyle media the home is central in the creation of a desired lifestyle.\textsuperscript{164} It might be that the design hotel comes to serve the same function in the lifestyle magazine with travel as a niche, because articles about the interior design of the permanent home would be out of place. In fact, the hotel as a living space is even more suitable for the constant play with identities and tastes than a real home because it can be chosen and rejected as easily and often as one changes clothes. It is more convenient to check into a new hotel than it is to put up new wall-paper. The hotel is by definition a temporary home.

The initial article presenting the phenomenon of the design hotel, “Inte bara ett hotell”, (“Not just a hotel”), also introduced the opposition between luxury and taste that was a recurrent discussion in RES. The writer argued that “designer phantoms such as Philippe Starck and Anouska Hempel have replaced luxury with taste” and that the new generation of media workers referred to above “were less interested in the traditional luxury hotels”. The design hotel was the opposite of both traditional luxury, standardization and the vulgar opulence of for example Burj al-Arab. As I have mentioned, the relation between taste and luxury in RES, as well as in Business Traveller A/P, was ambivalent. The word luxury was often used to describe something desirable and exclusive, as in the editorials referred to

\textsuperscript{164} Bell and Hollows 2005, p.
above, but it could also be deplorable and seen as connoting vulgarity. Luxury needed to be controlled by taste, as it was in the design hotels. The tension between luxury and taste, played out in articles about hotels, was also a part of a more general ambivalence about money, taste and luxury that was evident in the many editorials in which these concepts were discussed and negotiated. Through the presentations of design hotels the writers could discuss definitions of taste but despite being embodied by the design hotel taste remained something highly elusive and ambivalent that needed constantly to be redefined. In an editorial in the 00s minimalism of the design hotel was even made fun of, although this mockery did not mark the end of the concept in RES.

In defining an identity for the reader the magazine also marked out a distinction between the implied reader, and the writers, and those other groups that were excluded. When the implied reader of RES was identified as being modern, sophisticated, interested in design and “intelligent travel”, other groups that were not included were implicitly outlined. Many scholars have commented on the tourist-traveler dichotomy that remains prevalent in travel writing. The travel writer draws legitimacy from the claim that he or she is an authentic traveler and not a tourist, as well as inviting the reader to imagine that he or she is not a mere tourist. James Buzard has described how this dichotomy is a reaction to the onslaught of mass tourism that makes travel accessible for larger groups of people, and is essentially based on class distinction. Buzard places the origins of this distinction in the 19th century and the writings of William Wordsworth among others. The tourist-traveler dichotomy was evident as well in RES and Business Traveller A/P, even though it was less central than in other publications, and this also had to do with the centrality of exclusivity and lifestyle.

In RES one of the groups that were excluded from the definition of the implied reader was the often referred to but never completely identified mass tourists. In December 2006, Lindskog wrote in his editorial that “RES is not a magazine for the large masses. It is a magazine for the bon vivant that breaks new ground under the banner of curiosity.” In this way he defined the reader of RES as different from the masses without having described the masses in any detail.

The tourist-traveler dichotomy was however not as prevalent in RES as it is in many other travel magazines, such as for example the British magazine Wanderlust. Wanderlust is also aimed at middle class-travelers but focuses more on adventure and nature tourism. In Wanderlust it is central to separate the implied reader from the tourist. Many articles promise

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165 James Buzard, The beaten track: European tourism, literature and the ways to culture, 1800-1918, Oxford: Claredon, 1993
to take the reader away from the trails of mass tourism and let them experience the authentic destination. In no. 75 (45) the introduction to an article about China reads: “Simon Lewis reveals how you can visit [China] without meeting the masses.” The authentic experience that tourists should be kept away from is most often associated with nature. In RES, definitions of taste, defined through texts about hotels, interior design, architecture, fashion and art, were far more central to a desired identity than definitions of real travelers, natural places and the true wilderness. The idea of authenticity that was prevalent also in RES took on another meaning than it did in Wanderlust. As I will show later in my chapter on the construction of place, the typical use of authenticity in tourist texts was challenged in RES, specifically in connection to nature.

In Business Traveller A/P the implied reader was repeatedly described as independent, for example on the cover of October 83, one of the cover lines said “Breakaways: selective leisure ideas for the independent traveller.” There was occasionally a reference to package tourists as an unwanted group, and the business traveler was positioned as the opposite of the tourist even in articles were the writer made no explicit judgment about the status of different travelers. To define the implied reader as a business traveler marked a decisive difference between the implied reader and the unwanted tourist since the business traveler was more easily definable than the more amivalent concept of the independent traveler, and as I have mentioned before, the reader was referred to as being a business traveler even in texts that were about leisure travel rather than business trips.

Whether the implied reader was characterized as a business traveler or an independent traveler, package tourism represented the non-exclusive and something lower in standard, for example in an article about hotels in Sri Lanka where the writer claimed that at the “northern end of Bentota Beach are the package tourist hotels, which treats their guests accordingly.” (April 84) The independent traveler on the other hand was closely associated with exclusivity. In Dec 88, Bali was said to be “catering to the individual and discerning traveller.” In both magazines the implied reader was differentiated from other groups of travelers that were often defined as tourists. The implied reader was repeatedly described as independent, as opposed to the dependent tourist, but in contrast to a magazine such as Wanderlust and the writers studied by Buzard, the difference was not foremost based on ideas about the authentic but rather on exclusivity, and in Business Traveller A/P, high-class.

The cosmopolitan elite

In both *RES* and *Business Traveller* A/P the implied reader was imagined to be a member of the global elite of privileged and discerning travelers for whom the world was readily available. From 82 to 92 the cover of *Business Traveller Asia/Pacific* had the tag line “the international travel magazine” while the UK edition of *Business Traveller* had the tagline, “…because the world is your office”. The reader was referred to as a globetrotter or “globetrotting executive”. (*Business Traveller* UK ‘03) In both the magazines of my study the reader was often described as a “savvy” and “independent” traveler. The implied reader was imagined to be someone who was well travelled and knowledgeable about the world, a cosmopolitan.

Cosmopolitanism has been a matter of heated debates in the humanities and social sciences for a while, and many such discussions revolve around a definition of who the cosmopolitan is. Ulf Hannerz argues that underprivileged groups of immigrants are not cosmopolitans since their vulnerable position makes them inclined to avoid confrontation with the foreign. According to Hannerz, typical cosmopolitans are instead “members of translational occupational cultures” such as diplomats and academics.\(^\text{167}\) Zygmunt Bauman, in *Globalization* and the anthropologist Marc Augé, in *Non-places: an anthropology of supermodernity* likewise mention the privileged classes as the embodiments of globalization and cosmopolitanism. They both emphasize that globalization (even if Augé, writing in the early 90s, doesn’t use the word) affects everybody, the elite and the poor, albeit in diametrically different ways.

Both Bauman and Augé imagine the elite as inhabitants of a global space that is defined by being homogenous and emptied of particularities. The emptiness of global spaces is a central aspect of the theories about so called non-places developed by the anthropologist Marc Augé. According to Augé, places such as airports and supermarkets are non-places, crucial to what he calls supermodernity.\(^\text{168}\) The non-place is defined as being the opposite of traditional places which are “defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity”.\(^\text{169}\) Instead of being permeated by the memory of the past and by stable human relations non-places are

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\(^\text{168}\) Tomlinson 1999, p. 109

\(^\text{169}\) Augé 1995, p. 77
characterized by abstract commerce, solitary individuality and the ephemeral. Transit zones such as high speed trains are non-places that are inhabited by “the eternal passengers” who fleetingly observe the locals as they are passing by.\textsuperscript{170} Augé includes both shantytowns and refugee camps in his description of the non-place but his foremost example is the transit lounge at Roissy 1, and the prime inhabitant of this non-place is the business man. The business man readily gives up his particular identity to inhabit the non-place of the airport. He enjoys “the passive joys of identity-loss, and the more active pleasure of role-playing.”\textsuperscript{171}

In \textit{Globalization}, Zygmunt Bauman uses the business traveler as the truly global inhabitant of international non-places (even though he does not use the word non-place). Bauman argues that there is a deep divide between the underprivileged “locals” and the elite of “globals” that has managed to become completely extraterritorial. Bauman quotes Agnes Heller’s description of a traveling business woman who is equally “at home” in any of the international hotels she frequents, “she stays in the same Hilton hotel, eats the same tuna sandwich for lunch, or, if she wishes, eats Chinese food in Paris and French food in Hong Kong”.\textsuperscript{172} For the business woman, Heller writes, these places are “not foreign places, nor are they homes.”\textsuperscript{173} In a fashion similar to Augé, Bauman describes the local, or “the near”, as familiar and known, characterized by the routine of daily contact. That which is “far” on the other hand represents the unknown which is uncanny and evokes no loyalty. It takes courage to venture into “the far away” and effort to learn how to navigate in it. Bauman argues that the elite of today experience no difference between “here” and “there”.

The placelessness of international travel that Augé imagines and the global elite’s ability to navigate international spaces described by Bauman can also be used as an identity resource in the travel magazine. In an article published in \textit{RES} in the February issue of 1998 the writer, Jan Gradvall, imagined the airport as an empty space, similar to the non-place described by Augé but experienced by the writer as pleasurable. At the airport, Gradvall wrote, people are “liberated from their nationalities and professional identities and are for a few hours transformed into being mere travelers.” At the airport everyone is a traveler and the travelers are all equal “before the big black Departures Board”. The traveler is liberated from his or her personal identity, “No one knows where you are, who you are. No one can reach you. Instead you can just wonder around, psychologically weightless, in this vacuum landscape. A life in transit.” Gradvall imagined that the airport, as global space, facilitated a temporary and

\textsuperscript{170} Augé quoted in Tomlinson 1999, p. 111
\textsuperscript{171} Augé 1995, p. 103
\textsuperscript{172} Bauman 1998, p. 90
\textsuperscript{173} Agnes Heller, “Where are we at home?”, Thesis Eleven, 41, 1995, quoted in Bauman 1998, p. 91
playful destruction of identity that is inherent to the experience of being a traveler. Thus, in Gradvall’s article, Bauman’s and Augé’s theories of a detached elite cosmopolitanism were interpreted into a popular context.

Gradvall’s article expressed the dream of becoming the detached cosmopolitan, equally at home anywhere in the world. In RES this was however presented to the reader as a temporary fantasy that the traveler indulges in during a short period of time. The constantly travelling cosmopolitan was instead more fully embodied by the men and women who contributed to the magazine. As I have mentioned before, they were presented to the reader on the editorial page and the short presentations of them often emphasized their role as world travelers. The travel journalist or photographer was enviable as someone who could make a living of travel, they were the experts that could inform the reader on where and how to travel. Through reading the magazine, the reader could copy the lifestyle of the journalist by making use of his or her expertise, the travelling knowledge that they had, and in that manner acquire some of their status as cosmopolitans without making their lifestyle their own more than as a fantasy. The distinction between the professional writers, and photographers, and the readers was only sidestepped in the reader’s blogs of the web page allowing the readers to be travelers and writers.

In both magazines the implied reader was constructed by using popular versions of the elite cosmopolitans that are imagined by scholars such as Augé and Bauman, in Business Traveller A/P, and the UK edition, by explicitly defining the reader as a globetrotting executive. The business traveler, and the bon vivant of RES, were however not the deterritorialized travelers described by the scholars, since the local was just as central in the identity construction. I will return to this in the next chapter on the construction of places. In the following section I will discuss the gender of the implied reader. As I have mentioned before, in RES the implied reader was never explicitly gendered. However, in Business Traveller A/P gender played a significant role, which I will describe in the following subchapter.

**Men in suits: the gendered business traveler**

The business traveler of Business Traveller A/P was a man, which was defined explicitly when the traveler was referred to as “the businessman” or “he”, but also in pictures and illustrations that often depicted the traveler and implied reader as a man in a suit but very rarely as a woman. The business travelers on the cover are almost exclusively men. A
majority of them were white although Asian men were occasionally depicted. Problems with racism was sometimes discussed is the reader’s letters and in the January and April issues of 1985 racism was one of the topics of the editorial, but in general the business man in the early 80s was a white man.

The fact that the implied reader was a man was expressed more implicitly by the many articles in the early 80s about commercial sex. The business traveler was clearly defined as a wealthy heterosexual man who was a potential consumer in the Asian sex industry. On the cover of the September issue of 82, one of the cover lines said “Your inflight fantasy fulfilled” over an illustration depicting a man with suit and briefcase being dragged into a massage parlor by a woman in bikini. The allure of the sex industry was somewhat contradicted by another article in the September issue that encouraged the business traveler to safeguard his marriage by bringing his wife with him on the next business trip, titled “Why not take your wife with you”. In both articles however it was taken for granted that the traveler was a man.

Women play important parts in the world of Business Traveller A/P in the early years even if they were rarely depicted as business travelers themselves. One such part was played by the flight attendant, who in the early years of the magazine was more often referred to as the stewardess or even the air hostess. Articles about flight attendants, always implicitly female, revolved around their attractiveness and the potential of romance between the business man and the flight attendant. Around the late 80s however articles on the topic also discussed their difficult work situation, such as the problem of sexual harassment by costumers, even though the myth of the flight attendant as a pampering temptress never faded completely.

In the February issue of 85 an article titled “Romance – like time – flies” expressed nostalgia over the air stewardess as sex symbol. In the March issue of ‘89 the plight of the flight attendants was made the cover story. In this later article the tone had changed considerably and the perspective was firmly on the sexist behavior of the passengers. In the illustrations accompanying the article the male passenger was depicted as a lecherous gorilla

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174 In her book Femininity in flight: a history of flight attendants, Kathleen M Barry describes the differences between the titles air hostess, stewardess and flight attendant. Both air hostess and stewardess are feminine titles, while the word flight attendant, increasingly used from the 1970s, is gender neutral. To advocate the use of the word flight attendant was a feminist strategy to gain respect for the occupation. In the context of Business Traveller A/P the word air hostess carried additional connotations due to the prevalence of so called hostess clubs in Asia. By calling the flight attendants air hostesses their occupation is implicitly associated with the women working in hostess clubs.

in a suit. The article incited a heated debate on the letters pages. The flight attendants were a recurrent topic in general in the readers’ letters. The fantasy of the seductive air hostess was again the topic of debate in November 1991, in an article titled “Coffee, tea or me?” that was illustrated by the image of a sultry Asian woman in a figure-hugging qipao attending to an enchanted looking Western man. The image very clearly makes reference to the myth of the geisha and the sensual mystique of the East. Just as the business traveler was almost exclusively a man the flight attendant was almost always a woman. Other similar but less central roles played by women were secretaries, as well as other types of service staff such as hotel staff and waitresses. Another recurring role was the sex worker and, much less often, the wife.

Women business travelers were acknowledged already in 1982 but remained throughout the time period studied a special group as well as a problematic minority. In 82 and 83 there were a few longer articles about the discrimination faced by travelling business women. In the July/August issue of 82 one article was titled “Perils of the solo woman traveller”, and described such perils as being mistaken for a prostitute by hotel staff. In the December issue Julia Wilkinson wrote a longer article with the title “Watch out! There’s a woman onboard”, in which the writer criticized the sexism encountered by business women travelling in Asia. The articles of course did not criticize the magazine in which they were published. In 2002 the magazine still published articles about the problems of business women. In the January issue Margie T Logarta brought up issues that were similar to the ones discussed in 82 in an article titled “Girl power”. In the UK edition of Business Traveller an article titled “The female factor: special treatment or equality? Over 40 per cent of business travellers are women, but how well are we being served?” under the section title “Women special” was published in February 2006.

The first article in which the traveler depicted in an image was a woman, without the gender of the traveler being the topic of the article, was published in the April issue of 83. The topic of the article was computers that could be used while travelling. The illustration to the article showed a business woman working although the beginning of the article defined the traveler as male. The August issue of 88 was the first to depict a business woman on the cover. In the August issue of ’93, the whole editorial discussed how the travel industry recognizes women travelers. As I mentioned above, articles or editorials that discussed the situation of women business travelers were a recurring feature of Business Traveller A/P. These texts all have in common a problematizing stance to the issue. Women business travelers became more visible in the magazine after the change of style at the end of the 80s.
There were increasingly articles on the problems women encountered as travelers and as business professionals, but there were also increasingly articles in which the presence of women was not problematic. However, in the late 90s the business traveler was still predominantly a business man, often referred to as “he” but very seldom called “she”. In the 00s, *Business Traveller* UK often used the more neutral word “businessperson”.

Women were also seldom acknowledged in advertisements. One noticeable exception was an ad for Qantas published in June 82. The full-page image was an ad for the Qantas’ Business Class and showed a Western woman sitting alone in an airplane seat enjoying a glass of wine, in contrast to the many ads that showed women accompanied by men. The woman in the ad is well-dressed in a long skirt, turtle neck sweater, jacket and snake skin vest. She looks affluent and as opposed to many other women in advertising she is not smiling invitingly even though she meets the gaze of the onlooker. Advertisement in *Business Traveller A/P* during the time period studied otherwise depicted pampered business men, whether it was for airlines or hotels. Many of the ads also used the word “business men” rather than the gender neutral “business travellers”. One example is an ad for The Marco Polo Singapore included in the November issue of 84, in which the copy read “there is a special promise for business men in the legendary island nation. The Marco Polo Singapore.” The accompanying image shows two Western men and a woman sitting down while they enjoy the attentive service of two Asian women. An ad for a hotel called The Ansett, in Perth, had a cover line that read “These days, a businessman deserves all the benefits he can get.” (Oct 85) The well-deserving business man in the ads for hotels and airlines was often in the company of an Asian woman offering service or waiting attentively to give service.

In other words, *Business Traveller A/P* made use of a static list of roles where the business traveler was almost exclusively a man, and the female roles included the air stewardess and other service workers, the wife, the house wife, sex workers (such as hostesses, strippers, go-go dancers, prostitutes and masseuses), and occasionally the business woman whose presence in hotels and airplanes was fraught with difficulties. The sex worker was almost without exception an East or South East Asian woman. White sex workers, when they were acknowledged in the articles, were often dismissed as being too expensive. The male business traveler who was the implied reader of the magazine had a special relationship to Asian women, which was expressed most clearly on the cover of the November issue of 82, where the image of a young Filipina woman who is pointing at the reader was accompanied by a cover line saying: “What Filipinas really think of you.” The article discussed at length the issues of romantic relations between Western men and Filipina women.
Female writers wrote about prostitution as well. In the October issue of 88, the writer Michele Trewick advised the presumably male reader on how to entertain business partners in Seoul. In a comment about kisaeng (“hostess”) houses she wrote: “Also take into account tips for your hostesses which can be anything up to 60,000 won or more. If you want some more romance after the dinner is finished then you’ll once again have to dip into your wallet to the tune of anything between 30,000 to 100,000 won.” In the late 80s, as women travelers were increasingly acknowledged, a few articles tried to reverse the roles and position the business woman as a consumer in the sex industry. In an article from Oct 88, Shelagh Marray argued that “a single woman in Bangkok needn’t hole up in her hotel at night like a miserable outcast”. In the article she visited male strip clubs in the red-light districts.

The gender issue was also a recurrent topic of heated debate in the letters pages. Female readers wrote in to complain about the use of sexist images in the magazine, while some male readers wrote to defend the magazine. In November 85, one reader wrote:

The feminist and women’s lib nuts are on the attack against Business Traveller (letters from Tina Liamzon in the June issue, Katherine Dunlop in July and Barbara Crossette in August). We have a lot of problems with these dingbats in America. The best, and oldest, bar in New York City used to be McSorley’s Old Ale House on East 7th Street near Greenwich Village. For over a century it was a quiet haven and an ideal place to waste an afternoon […] It was ‘men only’ until the crazies couldn’t stand it and made the city force the owners to admit the ‘fair sex.’ Now, McSorley’s is just another noisy dive.

Implicitly the reader compared the former men’s only bar with the magazine which he imagined to be a similar enclosed male domain threatened by the demands of women to be included.

After the re-launch of the magazine in 88, a few readers complained about the new style of the magazine which they defined as being feminine. One reader that was unhappy about the transformation of the magazine in the late 80s expressed a clearly gendered perspective when he wrote:

It [the magazine] wrote about going ‘further into the scene’; about places beyond those where common, gawking tourists go; about how and where to get good deals and try different experiences. Suddenly I find a completely new format. The whole staff seem to be women. The articles are uninspiring, inoffensive and bland. Your magazine has become boring. I
appreciate that more females are travelling, but surely there are enough publications to satisfy their needs. Please forget about the poseurs. Stop writing about the president’s suite at $1,000 a night. We can see that in Women’s Weekly. Please put some guts back into Business Traveller.

Just as in the before mentioned quote the writer saw Business Traveller A/P as a distinctly male domain that should be separated from the feminine domain represented by a women’s general interest magazine. Interestingly, the writer of this reader’s letter associated the kind of aspirational travel (“The president’s suite at $1,000 a night”) that is common in the lifestyle magazine, with femininity.

The Asia-Pacific that was presented in Business Traveller A/P during the first years of publication was almost exclusively male and highly privileged. The world offered to the readers was also an adventurous world, with a distinct colonial flavor. One of the main writers in the early years of the magazine was Auberon Waugh. He was the only writer who was shown in pictures or drawn illustrations and in that way he was more visible than the editor, he also had his own section. Waugh’s role in the magazine was to symbolize the carefree and knowledgeable playboy, who wrote provocative and controversial articles, including many about the Asian sex trade. In the very first issue of the magazine, in 1982, Waugh had written a long article about smoking opium in Asia, in which he described the experience of taking opium as central to being in Asia. The article played on the image of Asia as exotic and dangerous, with pleasures unknown to the West, a well-known trope in colonial representations. There was of course a measure of humor in his articles and they were often presented on the content pages as “provocative”, but they were not clearly ironic.

Over the time period of my study business women were increasingly acknowledged in Business Traveller A/P but a more decisive change was the transformation of the type of masculinity portrayed by the magazine. As I have argued, in the 80s the gendered identity of the implied reader was that of a white heterosexual masculinity based on the reader’s privileged status as a business traveler, sometimes referred to as an executive and hence imagined to be high up in the corporate hierarchy. In relation to Asia, sexual experiences with Asian females were central. Asia was repeatedly described as an adventurous playground.

The masculine identity that was later presented was one more compatible with the magazine’s emphasis on lifestyle. Research on men’s magazines has described the changing gender identity in these magazines and the arrival of “the modern man” around the late 20th
century, a change that is tied to the concept of lifestyle.\footnote{Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks 2001, p.} The modern man was a concept used by men’s lifestyle titles such as *GQ* (*Gentlemen’s Quarterly*) and *Esquire*, that were “self-conscious style magazines for men.”\footnote{Tim Edwards, *Men in the mirror: men’s fashion, masculinity and consumer society*, London: Cassell, 1997, p.} These titles, both launched in the UK in the late 80s and early 90s as English versions of long-running American magazines, differed from what had been available before by offering their male readership content on fashion and design. The implied reader in *Business Traveller A/P* went through a similar transformation in which style, fashion and so called “grooming”, i.e. male beauty care, was redefined as legitimate pursuits for the business man.

In the lifestyle magazine to take care of ones body was no longer solely a preoccupation for the business woman. In the UK edition of *Business Traveller* from June 01, in an article about spas, the main image was of a business man in a bathrobe enjoying his cappuccino. In *Business Traveller* UK in 05 the magazine had a Grooming section, informing men on how to take care of their hair and skin, in which Eve Cameron told the male readers “don’t just shave: exfoliate, moisturize and protect”. (July-August 05) The image of the business man who took care of his skin and indulged his senses at a spa stand in stark contrast to the image published in the April issue of 82, of Auberon Waugh as the colonial playboy smoking opium in Asia.

Another aspect of the magazines’ transformation into lifestyle magazines was an increased attention on how to use consumer goods as status markers. Perhaps this was most clearly expressed in the UK edition of *Business Traveller* in which the “consultant psychiatrist Dr Raj Persaud” taught the reader how to express style and status by displaying the right consumer goods. A “Tanner Krolle suitcase (retail price £1,700)” for example, suited someone “who wants to suggest quiet confidence, timeless style and an in-depth knowledge of modern European art and culture.” (Feb 01, *Business Traveller*, UK edition) Other goods that were analyzed by Dr Persaud for what they could express in terms of status and personal identity were briefcases, pens and shoes. In this section of the magazine the business travelers needed to construct themselves through expensive and therefore exclusive consumer goods was made into an explicit and repeated concern.

When comparing the articles published in *Business Traveller A/P* from the early 80s to those of the late 00s, there might seem to have been an obvious shift in the gendering of the magazine. In the October issue of 82 the magazine published a cover story about dangerous “trouble-spots” in Asia that the reader might be interested in if he was “too young for the Korean war and too old for Vietnam”. The article was illustrated by photos of a man dressed
as a soldier, and also had a drawing showing a map with a tank, fighter planes and soldiers on it, easily associated with images in newspapers. This article stands in stark contrast to a series of articles that the magazine published in 09, under the section title “Personal styling”. In the May issue the article in the series was about “the art of entertaining”, titled “Even Martha Stewart would agree”. The article started with a quote from Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* and was illustrated by colorful photos of dinner tables, food and a bouquet of bright pink flowers. The article about dangerous places in Asia, from 82, very obviously addressed a male reader that could have had experiences of war. The article about entertaining from 09 mentioned both a potential host and a hostess, although the only woman quoted spoke of her experiences as the wife of a business man while the men quoted were experts, a managing director and a general manager. It is less clear who the article addressed. However, this change in style and topic does not have to be interpreted as an obvious shift from a masculine identity to a feminine.

Instead of interpreting the transformation of the magazine into a lifestyle magazine as a feminization of the magazine, as one of the readers quoted above clearly did, it can be interpreted in the context of changing ideals of masculinity. Despite an increased visibility it is obvious that women remained a problematic minority in *Business Traveller A/P*, exemplified by the recurrent articles about women travelers and their specific issues. The problems discussed in these articles remained largely the same over a period of almost thirty years. The business man however could go from being a corporate soldier to a modern man enjoying a spa retreat. During the time period of the study, the world of white, male heterosexual privilege in *Business Traveller A/P* was redefined in crucial ways but it remained largely intact all the same.

**Identity beyond tourism**

The lifestyle magazine provides information about more than how to behave as a tourist and how to evaluate destinations. Both *Business Traveller A/P* and *RES* provided the reader with something than went beyond the act of travel and vacationing. The magazines defined what was desirable and, on a very general level, how to understand ones place in the world. The lifestyle magazine offers the reader a whole identity. This is evident in *Business Traveller A/P* when the editor claimed that the magazine wanted the readers to identify with the magazine “on a personal level” and not as business travelers. (May 82) The reader was invited to
imagine him or herself as a member of a global elite culture in which travel was a central, albeit not the only, component.

In RES the need to explicitly define who the reader is arose as a part of the transformation of the magazine into a lifestyle magazine, around the late 90s and early 00s. Business Traveller A/P went through a similar transformation during the 90s. This was also when identity was formed by other concepts than just the act of travelling, such as design, consumption and taste, concepts that are central to the lifestyle magazine. In RES, the orientation toward a general lifestyle project was expressed, among other things, in the attention given to the design hotels that were presented as expressions of a particular taste rather than a particular place. In Business Traveller A/P the increased attention to lifestyle was evident on the content page of the magazine in one of the issues of the 00s where the lifestyle section featured more articles than the two sections titled “Destinations” and “Special report” taken together.

As lifestyle magazines identity was constructed around notions of taste, and taste was constantly negotiated and redefined which means that the identity of the implied reader was elusive. In RES, the design hotel offered an embodiment of a disciplined style where luxury was justified by taste so as never to become vulgar. Design hotels were also embodiments of a form of elite cosmopolitanism, which I will go further into in the following chapter. The elusiveness of taste was an expression of a desire for exclusivity and privilege: only the contributors to the lifestyle magazine could provide the reader with a correct interpretation of taste.

Furthermore, travel in this context should not only be understood as actual journeys across geographical space, but also as the idea of being in constant transit whether one is physically moving or not. The iconic status that was given to the design hotel, and what they were made to represent, is connected to the character of the bon vivant, the discerning traveler who is knowledgeable and curious. The implied reader was invited to take on the identity of the elite traveler temporarily, for example by experiencing the liberation of leaving ones national and personal identity behind at the international airport as in Gradvall’s article. The real cosmopolitans were the people working for the magazine whom the reader could emulate. In Business Traveller A/P the reader was instead imagined as the competent and discerning cosmopolitan on par with the magazine’s contributors.

The implied reader of RES was an elusive character that can be loosely defined as belonging to an aspirational middle-class. The identity of the implied reader was kept elusive in that it was an imagined identity based on aspirations rather than actual social status, the
reader was invited to imagine him or herself as an elite cosmopolitan. It is significant that the writers in both *Business Traveller A/P* and *RES*, to some extent, depart from the typical dichotomy of tourist-traveler that has been described as an essential part of travel writing.\(^{177}\) Package tourists were occasionally mentioned as an unwanted group but the writers in both magazines were largely content with being tourists. Status was not necessarily based on being an adventurous traveler.

Distinction from the masses was still essential but was found through exclusive consumption practices rather than through adventures and ordeals. In *RES* the reader was defined by the word “livsnjutare”, (bon vivant), and in *Business Traveller A/P* the implied reader was defined by words such as “exclusive” and “discerning”. The magazines presented the readers with those definitions of style and taste that were central to the identity of the implied reader. In contrast to many magazines of the popular press, the implied reader in *RES* had no specific gender and here there is a decisive difference between *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P*. The business traveler in *Business Traveller A/P* was, especially in the 80s, very clearly defined as a man. Instead of the magazine becoming feminized the changes in the gendering of the magazine implied that the identity of the business man transformed into a consumer of lifestyle products, the ideal consumer for the advertisers of the magazine. Just like men’s style magazines, *Business Traveller A/P* presented an aspirational and narcissistic masculinity.\(^{178}\) When they transformed into lifestyle magazines, *RES* and *Business Traveller A/P* constructed implied readers that were to a large extent similar. The bon vivant of *RES* and the discerning business person of *Business Traveller A/P* are similar in style in a way that earlier constructions of identity were not.

In the following chapter I will develop some of the themes mentioned here, such as the definitions of authenticity, in relation to the construction of places, and more specifically the construction of the local as the antithesis of the global.

\(^{177}\) Buzard 1993; Syssner 2011

\(^{178}\) Edwards 1997, p. 82
4. The construction of local places in travel magazines

Definitions of places are one of the foremost products of a travel magazine. As I have mentioned before the longer articles about specific destinations are the central material in the magazines, and their centrality is often marked by their placement in the middle of the magazines. In the longer articles the reader can follow the journey of a specific journalist who is often visible in the text, for example by presenting his or her own experiences. The article describes the place at length; the sights, sounds and smells of the place, as well as the types of tourism activities available. In other words, these articles provide lengthy definitions of places. Places are generally seen as stable entities that the journalist can experience and describe. In travel magazines the world consists of exotic places that are both accessible and knowable.

According to Amanda Lagerkvist who has written about the Swedish travel narratives about the US in the mid-20th century, one of the central functions of modern tourism is “to represent the world as something coherent” and to “incorporate fragments into a homogenous experience.” The rigid conventions that govern the representations of places, in RES and Business Traveller A/P as in other tourism products, have the function of presenting the fragments of an unstable and chaotic world into knowable entities for tourism consumption. I will start this chapter by describing the conventions for how places are defined in the travel magazine before I go further into the role of local places in the magazines of my study and how the importance of the local is related to discourses on globalization.

The presentations of places often rely heavily on wider cultural traditions that influence the way travel writers describe places, going beyond the specific genre of travel writing. David Harvey uses the term “geographical imagination” to describe how our perception of the world is influenced by cultural products such as films and novels, ensuring that we have a mental picture even of places that we have never visited. Travel magazines typically makes much use of pop cultural and historical references, countless articles about Middle Eastern destinations have a title that includes something about “the thousand and one nights”, giving connotations of the mysterious East. Furthermore, in a travel magazine places are presented as potential tourism destinations and thus the perception of places are connected to conventions of the tourism industry. The representations of places in a travel magazine are shaped and

defined by these traditions and conventions that pertain both to wider cultural patterns and to the specific genre of the travel magazine.

One convention belonging to the travel magazine genre is the establishment of a “sales pitch” in every article. The sales pitch expresses the essence of how the writer perceives a place. This is often expressed explicitly in the first lines of the text, comparable to the first lines of a newspaper article that provides the reader with the most important facts. A typical sales pitch is to claim that a place embodies an interesting blend of tradition and modernity, for example the claim that Singapore seduces the tourist with a blend of “high-tech and tai-chi”. (“Travel guide of the month”, RES November 2006) The sales pitch can be, and often is, discussed and negotiated in the text but at the end of the text the writer reaches a conclusion on how to frame the destination. Every destination is then defined by using a few characteristics. Each article in a travel magazine presents a place by drawing on, negotiating and sometimes challenging conventional ideas about it. When traditional ideas about a place are occasionally challenged, it is in order to establish new ones and not to question whether a place can be described in such a reductionist way.

The “sales pitch” of an article is often connected to what type of tourism that can take place at the destination in question. The categories of tourism, sometimes referred to as “scapes” in the tourism literature, do of course blend into each other in just about every text but there is usually one that dominates each article, which limit and frame the representation of a place. An article about a ski resort could include descriptions of nature and the cultural life of the place, but the activity of skiing will be central. Places are categorized on the basis of their function as tourism products. Going back to Lagerkvist’s claim that tourism presents the world as coherent this use of tourism categories also means that a tourist map is established in which the world is divided along the lines of leisure activities, i.e. some places are understood as places of relaxation, others as places for adventure sports etc.

The reliance on the idea of clearly definable and stable places that much travel writing is structured on is to some extent threatened by the notion of globalization processes since one of the crucial aspects of the globalization discourse is that places are about to lose their particular characteristics. Globalization is sometimes thought to create a borderless world that is foremost defined by mobility. The threat of homogenization was occasionally referred to in the magazines, for example in the editorial of Business Traveller A/P in June ’90 in which global conglomerates were seen as causing blandness and standardization. With the advent of discourses that emphasize change and mobility, places are perceived as being less stable. However, the idea of homogenization as a possible threat can lead in the opposite direction.
Many scholars have argued that stable definitions of place and an emphasis on the local could gain new importance as a reaction to what is perceived as the negative effects of globalization. Faced with the anxieties of an unstable, constantly shifting world there is a need to return to something fixed, traditional and local. The ethnologist Jonas Frykman writes that, as a response to globalization discourses, the local can gain importance over the national. The local becomes the foremost counterforce and antithesis of globalization. When the nation is challenged by globalization processes the local emerges as a potent symbol of authenticity that has been preserved over time. Frykman writes that regions are perceived as having “personality, life and a ‘soul’” which the nation state lacks. Regions are also seen as being more “genuine, original and ancient” than the nation.

The appreciation of the local, traditional and the organic bond between culture and nature is of course much older than those globalization discourses that became popular around the late 20th century. The traditional has for a long time been imagined as the precious opposite of the onslaught of modernity. This dichotomy can in turn be traced to the age-old distinctions between urban life and the idyllic rural setting. The distinction was given a new interpretation in the travel magazines when the traditional was placed as the opposite of the global. The construction of the global world builds on earlier depictions of modernity but also differs from them, as I will describe in my analysis of the global metropolis. The stress of the global was mentioned in an article by Boboi Costas, published in Business Traveller A/P in July/August 2009 in which the writer travelled to an island in the Philippines that offered “total absolution from global warming guilt.” Bohol, the writer claimed, “known for its coral and limestone assets, earns the respect of responsible travellers in this age of carbon footprint consciousness.” (Although exactly why the island would have this function remains unclear.)

For travel writing, globalization holds out the promise of a world that is more accessible and knowable for the traveler while it simultaneously contains the threat of homogenization. Travel magazines such as RES and Business Traveller A/P tried to trade on general cultural discourses of globalization, for example by constructing the implied reader as a well-travelled cosmopolitan, while they simultaneously continued to rely on the idea of places as clearly defined entities and on established geographical imaginations. Notions of place are malleable resources that the writers could invest with new meaning, as well as conventional perceptions. I argue that the travel magazines of my study constructed local and global places in response to globalization discourses that both challenged and confirmed established notions of places.

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The local and the global balanced each other off, and were of equal importance in the global world of the travel magazines. The global place was the international metropolis, where the traveler could experience the thrill of constant development, excitement, connection and movement, while the local place was the harmonious village or remote retreat that provided stability and escape from the chaos and demands of the global.

By being the opposite of the global the local place in my analysis provided for the traveler that security and relaxation that is traditionally associated with the local. Even though they were presented as local in the magazines these places were of course also to a high degree global by being a product of the global tourism industry. The local place as it was presented in RES and Business Traveller A/P when they became lifestyle magazines was also an imagined place just as the abstract places that were sometimes presented on the covers, described in chapter 2. Their central function in the magazines was to be an antithesis to the global.

To be able to retreat from a globalized world is described as the ultimate privilege by the media scholar David Morley in his book Home Territories from 2000. In contrast to Bauman and Augé’s descriptions of how the global elite enjoys their privileged access to the homogenous environments of globalization, Morley argues that true privilege in a globalized society is not that of having constant access to advanced communication technology but to be able to temporarily access places that are void of such connectivity. Morley writes: “The ultimate issue is not who moves or is still, but who has control – both over their connectivity, and over their capacity to withdraw and disconnect. It matters little whether the choice is exercised in favour of staying still or in favour of movement.”182 In the travel magazines of my study local places were presented as temporary retreats from the negative aspects of the global whether that was a stressful job or feelings of guilt over global warming. Local places are often associated with history and tradition, but also with an almost organic bond between a place and its inhabitants. This bond ensures authenticity, as I will describe in the following, but as I will also argue, the definitions of the authentic that are typical of the travel writing genre were renegotiated in RES and Business Traveller A/P.

The ecological adaptation argument

As I mentioned above, the writers of travel magazines perceive of places as both specific and stable entities that are easily describable. Furthermore, the travel writers of RES often

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emphasized the connection between the places visited and the inhabitants of those places which means that human cultures were also imagined to be stable. Repeatedly, writers claimed to find and being able to describe clearly demarcated national characters. In an article about Turkey the writer claimed that “wherever you are in Turkey, you’ll be treated with friendliness. The Turkish are very attentive, friendly and generous towards strangers.” (Issue 6) Thus, behavior was explained in terms of national characteristics which were in turn imagined to be bound to a place.

Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins, writing about the American magazine *National Geographic*, refer to what they call the “ecological adaptation argument” to describe the perceived connection between cultures and natural environments. In an article in *RES*, titled “Den ädla vilden och den tillfälliga turisten” (“The noble savage and the temporary tourist”), the writer used the similar concept of “climatological determinism”. Both terms refer to the belief that “humans adapt physiologically, socially and morally to the climate in which they reside”. (*RES*) In an article in *RES* about Tibet and the history of the Tibetan people Zac O’Yeah reasoned about why people first came to settle in Tibet. His conclusion was that “they must have liked the barren landscape, and the landscape must have had an impact on them”, thus making an inescapable connection between the people and the landscape. (Feb ‘03)

O’Yeah’s quote also shows that time is essential in this connection between place and people. Travel writing in general takes a keen interest in the past, and the past can function as a guarantor of authenticity. In O’Yeah’s article the Tibetans belonged to the landscape in which they settled several thousand years ago because over time it had come to affect them and their culture. The same idea was expressed in a text about China, titled “Det stora språnget, del II”, (“The great leap, part II”), published in 1995, in which Chinese allegiance to strong leaders was explained by the natural circumstances of the country. To tame the big rivers the Chinese had to organize themselves in large groups. “Behavior”, in the words of the writers of the article, Göran Leijonhufvud and Agneta Engkvist, was in the text explicitly connected to Chinese nature and to the Chinese landscape.

In an article about Rome, published in *RES* in 1996, the inhabitants were tied to a place not through their behavior but through their facial features. The writer took great delight in seeing what she perceived as a typical Italian man in a café: “with his curly, black hair, robust chin and straight features he is an example on how history is still alive, he could have been a

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184 This is reminiscent of older ideas of the relation between nature and human culture, for example the historian Karl Wittfogel’s theories on the authoritarian nature of what he calls “hydraulic civilizations”, i.e. societies that rely on large-scale irrigation, from Wittfogel's *Oriental Despotism, 1957*
The writer also claimed that in Rome “the artists of romanticism looked for models among the butcher’s assistants and the whores. Here, they found facial features that have been preserved since the time of the Roman Empire.” The man who looked just like a Roman emperor made the place authentic by being a sign of the past and at the same time something specific of that place which enhanced the writer’s experience of travel.

As I have mentioned, the “sales pitch” of an article is often the combination of old and new, traditional and modern. Modernity as well as globalization was imagined to be residing in the city. But even in a city that is perceived as being a global metropolis, signs of the traditional are sometimes emphasized, for example in Tokyo where the traveler can discover a village mentality among the high rises. Bangkok is sometimes also described as “a collection of villages”, for example in Business Traveller A/P in October 00. Most places should have a kernel of the old that the traveler could discover. If the writer found no such kernel then the destination was often seen as lacking in differentiation. The RES December issue of 2003 contained a text about Dubai in which the writer commented on the constructed nature of the country. The journalist wrote that Dubai had a hyper international atmosphere and claimed that the specific “Arabic peculiarity isn’t given much space in these air conditioned lobby milieus.” This absence of obvious national or cultural characteristics was clearly perceived as a lack by the writer. A similar perspective was expressed in an article about Peshawar in Pakistan, published in Business Traveller A/P in November ‘91. The writer appreciated the modern face of Peshawar but the city should not be too modern and clean: “This is all very well but where’s the exotic, flavoursome Peshawar of your fantasies? Where are the sights, the smells? Fortunately, the disenchantment you probably will feel at this point is misplaced.” The writer reassured the reader that Peshawar really was an exotic fantasy.

As I have detailed now, the local is traditionally in travel writing desired for being filled with those specific characteristics that makes them the very opposite of global non-places deplored by Marc Augé. It is where the traveler goes to escape the inauthenticity, homogenization and stress of the global metropolis. But local places can also be valued for being placeless, i.e. being emptied of specific characteristics. The local places without the specific characteristics traditionally associated with places were not the bland non-places of Augé’s supermodernity, but places that gave the traveler a chance to escape the world.

The desire for placelessness in articles about resorts and boutique hotels
Destinations that lacked the characteristics of places were central in *RES* in connection to two different phenomena that became increasingly conspicuous in the magazine during the 00s: resort tourism and the design hotel. The design hotel is a type of hotel that was first used in 1984 to describe the Manhattan hotel *Morgans*. The design hotel was first characterized by being smaller and more independent than chain hotels, but was later defined foremost by avant-garde design. I use the terms boutique and design hotels to designate the same type of hotel, since they were used interchangeably in the articles I study. *RES* started writing about resorts as holiday destinations in the late 90s. What I am discussing under the umbrella term “resorts” are often what was called spa resorts and spa hotels in the articles I study. The spa resorts as a form of tourism are similar to what cultural geographer Katarina Mattson discusses as all-inclusive tourism in which everything the tourist needs is provided within the same hotel space. At the all-inclusive the tourist has often paid in advance for food and drinks. However, the destinations presented in the articles of my study were more up-market than the all-inclusive discussed by Mattson, and did not necessarily confine the guest to the hotel.

In many articles the resort signified the specific and local but in some of the articles about resorts they were placeless, they belonged to a type of tourism in which the specific geographical place was less central. In those articles the tourism product was less a specific place than an experience, more specifically the experience of relaxation. The placelessness of the exclusive resort did not imply a globalized place like the global metropolis did (as I will detail in the next chapter), but rather a space that had no defined locality. Destinations where the place itself is not the attraction are of course not a new phenomenon. Types of tourism such as sun-sand-and-sea tourism are one typical example. In a *RES* article about islands from December 2005, the writer exemplified this when he claimed that “when we think about islands we basically imagine the same thing regardless of whether they are located outside the coast of Thailand or in the Pacific”, thus imagining the exotic island as having no specific place.

Places could have an importance in resort tourism by the many imported goods that were available at a resort, and the value that these products were being assigned in the articles. When Zac O’Yeah traveled to Mauritius he marveled over the many items that were made available for the guest, and he wrote: "If you don’t like Lavazza that can be exchanged for

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186 Katarina Mattson, “Semesterutopier”, in Tesfahuney and Schough 2010, p. 79
Kenyan or Brazilian coffee, or vanilla tea, cinnamon tea, oolong or yatawat tea.” Likewise, in an article in *RES* about the hotel Burj al-Arab in Dubai the writer claimed that the hotel included “Brazilian granite, Irish linen and marble from Carrara.” These goods signified the ultimate luxury, proving that the hotel offered only the best of everything no matter where in the world it came from. The places connected to the products were not important other than in their capacity to signify remote places.

It could also be a sign of luxury in itself that the resort was separated from any place. In an article about the phenomenon of resorts, “Frihet från val – vår tids semesterdröm?” (“Freedom from choice – the dream vacation of today?”), in the March issue of 1999, the writer Per Svensson claimed that “You don’t go to a resort to see the world. You go to a resort so that you, at least for a few days, don’t have to see it”. Ultimate luxury was to escape the world by being separated from all places. The idea that placelessness was a central part of the product in resort tourism was a recurrent theme in articles about resorts, spa-tourism and all-inclusive hotels. The desire for placelessness was a desire to flee the world, the same desire that was expressed in the editorials in which travel was described as escape, dream or fantasy, as well as the editorial, mentioned above, in which Johan Lindskog wrote that the function of *RES* was to offer the reader bright images in a dark world.

To escape the world in a resort was associated with an elite lifestyle and thus this also functioned as an identity resource that helped to define the implied reader. In “Frihet från val”, (“Freedom from choice”), Svensson wrote that popularity of resorts could be the consequence of “the stressed careerist’s need for a break from decision making”. He also wrote that “a significant difference between the hippie colonies of earlier decades [and the resorts of today] is that here the intention is not to quit your career but to confirm it. Only those who are extremely sought after can be expected to have an extreme need to be unreachable.” By going to a resort the traveler confirmed his or her privileged position in a stressful global world by temporarily escaping it.

In *Business Traveler A/P*, travelling was from the beginning, and to a higher degree than in *RES*, connected on work. In the first editorial the publisher wrote that the magazine would present both cities and resorts. The latter were also from the beginning presented as “breakaways”, and were often short leisure trips in connection to business trips, hence to leave the city was to take a break from work. In October 84 there was an article with the title “Where to drop out when you burn out”, in which Tony Wheeler, of Lonely Planet publications, offered advice on “where burnt-out businessmen can take a sabbatical from the stress and strain.” Wheeler claimed to use his knowledge about the kind of travel done by
backpackers and hitch-hikers to advice the business traveler on where to temporarily “drop out”. The article was illustrated by an exhausted business traveler who laid in a deck chair on the beach, and in another image directly on the sand, still wearing his suit and tie. Just as in Per Svensson’s article for RES from March 99, the article emphasized the break as a temporary retreat from work, a necessity for the stressed business man. I have also already mentioned that the implied reader of Business Traveller A/P was referred to as a business traveler even when the texts presented leisure travel.

This definition of the guest of the resort as the stressed Westerner, with a high-powered job where he or she is constantly connected, is in line with Morley’s assertion that true privilege in a globalized society is not that of having constant access to advanced communication technology but to be able to temporarily access places that are void of such connectivity. In the placeless resort temporary placelessness and disconnectedness was a status symbol that confirmed ones central position in a global world.

The many design hotels presented in RES provided a similar play with notions of place and placelessness as the resort did. The design hotels were paradoxically associated with something local and specific, while they were at the same time expressions of a globalization of taste. In the first longer article about design hotels, “More than just a hotel”, Rosenqvist claimed that “luxury does not sell anymore”. He continued:

the new generation of businessmen is tired of luxury. They are tired of luxury restaurants, where the food tastes the same in Paris, London, Frankfurt, Seattle or Hong Kong. Or hotel rooms that are vulgar and identical. They want hotels with a personal touch and atmosphere – and restaurants frequented by locals and not just credit card tigers. Hotel owners and restaurateurs have come to understand this. Under the motto ‘luxury yes, but it has to be fun’ they are rebuilding and renovating. (“Inte bara ett hotell”/“Not just a hotel”)

Already in this first article the design hotel was presented as an antidote to the blandness of the international spaces of the global elite. The design hotel was instead characterized by the specific and local.

At the same time, design hotels were associated with a specific style that they had in common no matter where in the world they were located, and which was foremost characterized by minimalism. Furthermore, just like the resort could combine products from all over the world the design hotel could be a mix of place markers. In the June issue of ‘97, the section Transit included a short text on Anouska Hempel’s hotel in Bayswater, London,
where the theme of the hotel was “east meets west”. The hotel “combines the calm of the East and Oriental simplicity with Italian minimalism and the latest technology”. Again, more or less physical places such as “the East”, the Orient and Italy were used for the specific connotations they carried on a global market.

The ethnologist Maria Christersdotter has written about the planning of an exclusive hotel in the Swedish city of Malmö in which she clarifies the connection between boutique hotels and the lifestyle of global elites. The article analyzes the planning of a hotel designed by the world renowned architect Frank Gehry, and how this hotel comes to symbolize the transformation of Malmö into a trendy and dynamic postindustrial city. In discussing the dichotomy global/local Christersdotter writes that the hotel is “an intertwining of local and global processes”. It is locally grounded by being of both political and economical importance for the city but it is foremost global because, as Christersdotter writes, instead of being intended as a place for the local citizens “it is really meant to be a hotel that belongs to another, more global, category.” She then defines this global category as “a certain cosmopolitan elite culture; a minor, privileged, global group for which the world is small.”

Instead of Gehry, many of the hotels mentioned in RES were designed by Phillipe Starck whose name carries the same connotations of a cosmopolitan, postmodern style. In the articles the design hotels were often said to contain some local connection that was incorporated into the global context that the hotel embodied on several levels. The hotels were global places in a simple sense because they were places of transit for travelers, but as Christersdotter shows the design hotels are also global by being articulations of a cosmopolitan elite culture, both because they are meant to attract a cosmopolitan elite clientele and because they are displays of global design and definitions of taste. The fascination for design hotels in RES can thus be understood as a desire for the “cosmopolitan elite culture” mentioned by Christersdotter.

According to Morley, in the previously quoted passage, a central characteristic of the global elite was that they move freely, they have access to connectivity but can also “withdraw and disconnect” if they choose. In his discussion about privilege and “deterritorialization” Morley quotes Tomlinson who points out that it is the underprivileged, for example in inner city areas, who are exposed to the “most turbulent transformations” brought on by globalization processes “while it is the affluent who can afford to retire to the

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188 It might seem evident that a hotel is not built to meet the needs of the locals, however the hotel in question was also supposed to be an arena for local art etc., see Christersdotter 2005

189 Morley 2000, p. 199
rural backwaters of a preserved and stable locality.” He also quotes Massey and her analysis of “middle-class hi-tech male scientists” whose working lives are defined by mobility and connectivity, but who balance this with “strong commitment to a very settled form of residential localism”. They “retreat to a home ‘in a cottage in an ‘Olde Worlde’ English village, whose symbolic essence … is stability and localism.” Privilege is to be able to choose between accessing the global world, whether that is communication technologies or the global metropolis, and to withdraw from it through ones home in a stable local place or temporarily in a remote resort. I argue that the resorts presented in the travel magazines served the same function as the stable localities that Tomlinson and Massey describe, even though the former only offered a temporary respite from the global. Even the design hotels had that function when they were said to offer something other than the blandness of the global chain hotels.

In RES and Business Traveller A/P, both global places, such as bustling metropolitan cities and the tasteful design hotels, and local places, such as the serene spa retreat and the harmonic village connected to the traditional and the past, were important for the construction of the ideal reader as a privileged cosmopolitan. Notions of local and global were used as identity resources in the definition of privilege. In the following subchapter I will go further into definitions of how resorts could also be defined as local places rather than placeless. The main argument presented in the following is that the construction of place in these articles differed from what is conventional in travel writing.

**The construction of the local in resort and spa tourism**

When articles about resorts emphasized the particular place of the destination, the writers constructed it as authentic by grounding it in history and tradition, but curiously the constructed nature of the authentically local could be made explicit. To exemplify this I will discuss a longer article about Asian spa resorts, titled “Searching for the Asian spa”, that was published in RES in November 2007. In the history of tourism, spas have been popular destinations through centuries. The idea of the health benefits of bathing was popularized in

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191 Andersson 2011, p. 46
the 19th century, but spas also enjoyed a new popularity in the early 2000s, as a part of a larger discourse around wellness.  

In his article in RES, the writer, Gary Despy, stressed how the local place of the spa hotels was constructed, without perceiving the construction of place as problematic. This had a significant impact on how authenticity was created. I understand the “authentic” in travel journalism to be that which is traditionally perceived as authentic within the genre; often something connected to the past (or timeless), the local and nature. I will use the term designed authenticity to describe the unproblematic juxtaposition of that which is perceived as constructed and that which is perceived as authentic in a conventional sense. The word design in this context is used to signify something which is purposefully constructed to be aesthetically pleasing.

The article presented eleven different spas located in different parts of Southeast Asia. The specific countries of the various resorts were placed in the background while the local and traditional came to play a central role. One spa in Thailand was described as being “designed to look like a Thai village” and a resort in Malaysia was likewise “designed to look like an idyllic and traditional Malayan village”. Place was thus an important marker in the texts but the actual geographical location was substituted by an imagined place, Thailand as a physical location was less important than the created Thai village that provided the guest with an experience of local life.

It was in writing about The Amadari Hotel on Bali that the writer took the construction of a local place farthest. Despy wrote that when the resort was built the ambition was to “construct it as an isolated traditional Balinese village”. To achieve this “fertile soil was bought from local farmers that were guaranteed to be allowed to farm the land in order to keep or maybe even improve their living conditions, while it simultaneously gives the guests of the resort a chance to live in the midst of an authentic agricultural landscape”. Here, as in the article in general, rather than being problematic the constructed nature of a place was instead emphasized as being part of the luxury, just as the imported goods from all over the world were signs of luxury. The traditional Asian villages that the spa resorts were made to imitate were described as being simultaneously constructed and authentic. The farmers were both farmers and part of a product for tourist consumption. It is this juxtaposition that I refer to as designed authenticity.

192 Tom O’Dell, Spas: the cultural economy of hospitality, magic and the senses, Lund: Nordic Academic Press, p. 10
The paradox inherent in the concept of a designed authenticity as it is presented in the article, and in RES in general, did not involve a postmodern, ironic reading in which the tourist showed an awareness of the fakery of a tourist site but chose to see it as kitsch, as some scholars of tourism have described. Here, there was a complete harmony between the designed luxury and the natural and authentic, indeed they enhanced each other, and they were both exclusive. The purpose of designed authenticity was to signify luxury. For example the Four Seasons Resort on Bali was “constructed out of several traditional Balinese villages”, the hotel had “borrowed from Balinese tradition and design” but it also provided such luxuries as “polished marble” and “golden taps”.

Designed authenticity combined the authenticity of the local place with both luxury and comfort. In an article about the Mai Chau Valley, in Business Traveller A/P, Margie T Logarta exemplified the juxtaposition of the comfortable and the traditional and authentic, characteristic of village life, when she wrote that she had
come to an age where I value my creature comforts (internet included) even while relishing an opportunity to experience a new place. Fortunately, the Mai Chau Lodge, a venture between two established operators, Buffalo Tours of Vietnam and Jetwing of Sri Lanka, has enhanced the accommodation options without compromising ‘the sense of place’ factor. The staff are locals; the menu makes use of fresh produce from the surrounding farms, and the rooms are enlivened by the vibrant textiles woven and dyed by the women folk. (Jan/Feb 2010)

The traditional, as well as the mix of traditional and modern, was often mentioned in Business Traveller A/P in the 80s, one hotel for example had “traditional Thai artefacts” on display (Jan 84). The difference between the texts in the early 80s and the texts of the lifestyle magazine lays in how this combination of traditional and modern was interpreted. Before the magazines became lifestyle magazines it was not given any specific importance, and did not have the connection to luxury it was later given. As a contrast to this article, an article from November 2009 that was also a presentation of a hotel in Thailand made much more of the juxtaposition of luxury and tradition. The article is titled “Luxury makes a comeback”, and the architect of the hotel (even though the word hotel was not used) “promoted a synergy of luxury and local traditions to complement The Reserve’s secluded location along Phulay Bay. The architectural details – reflecting the ancient Lanna culture – landscape, interiors and accessories (oversized beds, pillow, chairs, baths and doorways) all fuse to create a sense of

193 Lash and Urry 1994
comfort and welcome to put the most harried executive at ease.” In the article from 84, the Thai artefacts were only mentioned in passing, as something the reader might find interesting. They were on display as something clearly separated from what else the hotel had to offer. In the article from 09 on the other hand, what was defined as reflections of traditional Thai culture pervaded the whole hotel. The connection between luxury and traditional culture was made explicit, and it was furthermore this connection that made it possible for the stressed “executive” to relax. It is also typical that the local culture, despite being of importance for the guest’s relaxation, was present as a mere reflection in the style of the interior design.

While designed authenticity becomes prevalent in RES in the 00s, these ideas of a juxtaposition of the traditional and the luxurious was noticeable in Business Traveller A/P from the late 80s. In an article about a Japanese ryokan from the late 80s the writer express that combination of the comfortable and authentic that came to be so coveted in the lifestyle magazine, when she claimed that the ryokan had “the modern luxuries of airconditioning and private bathrooms, tastefully intermixed with antique Japanese furniture, prints and laquerwork artefacts.” (Feb 89)

Returning to Despy’s article about Asian spa resorts in RES in 2007, there was also a juxtaposition of the construction of the authentically local and signs of global connectivity. Just as in other texts about resorts and spa hotels they were said to offer luxuries from all over the world. The Pimalai Resort and Spa, the hotel that was designed to look like a traditional village, served croissants for breakfast. One hotel was described as a “hypermodern boutique hotel”. Here, just as there was no conflict between the designed and natural, there was no conflict between the local and the global; they were both used as resources of equal importance for the presentation of the spa hotels. To Morley’s assertion that true privilege is to freely choose ones location and to move between the stability of the local and the excitement of the global, I add that for the producers of lifestyle media this privilege also included being able to construct, define and balance the dichotomous concepts of local and global, in the same way as they constructed definitions of taste and luxury.

**The use of nature in the construction of the local**

Another aspect of designed authenticity is the use of nature. Nature plays a central part in the construction of the local. Nature stands as a symbol of the authentic and original, and as I wrote in my initial discussion about how place is constructed, people are seen as more authentic if they have long-standing ties with nature and a specific landscape. Nature can
represent stability in a world of change and mobility. In the construction of resorts as local places in the magazines of my study, nature also played an important role as a harmonic and beautiful backdrop. A beautiful and passive natural environment was a necessity for the traveler to relax. The relation between the traveler and nature could take on characteristics that were almost erotic. Most importantly, as I will show, nature in RES was something that could be designed without loosing its authenticity. I will continue my analysis of “Searching for the Asian spa” to go further into the role of nature in the designing of authenticity.

In Gary Despy’s article about Asian spas, nature was ever present and ever beautiful. The closeness of the hotels to nature was emphasized in the beginning of every presentation of a spa hotel. The Pimalai Resort and Spa was harbored between coconut palm trees and tropical rainforest, and on the Pangkor Laut Resort the exotic villas were crawling into the jungle. Closest to nature was the guest who stayed in the Le Mayeur-suite at the Tugu Hotel and Spa in Indonesia, since the suite was “floating on a natural lotus pond”.

Furthermore, it was a nature that was foremost aesthetically pleasing and exclusive, described with expressions such as “strikingly beautiful”, “a lush growth of vegetation”, “untouched beaches”, “emerald green water”, and “verdant tropical gardens”. Besides describing how the hotels were placed in beautiful natural surroundings Despy also wrote that the hotels were placed on secluded locations. The other guests were never mentioned, and the service staff was rarely visible. At the Evason Hideaway in Hua Hin, the writer caught a glimpse of the hotel manager but this was mentioned in the text because the manager was barefoot, a detail that further emphasized the naturalness of the hotel. Nature was also present through the naturalness of the products available. At the Evason Hideaway, the treatments were focused on “skin food” which means that only edible products were used on the skin. The naturalness of the treatments was often emphasized in the articles about spa hotels, for example by writing that “local herbs, and other natural products.” (Business Traveller A/P, Jan/Feb 02).

In the images that accompanied Despy’s article there were human artifacts in all pictures but one. In some of the images, nature was only present through a palm tree placed in the background while in others human artifacts, for example houses or huts, were made to harmonize perfectly with nature, so that they were rendered almost invisible albeit always present. In these images the human artifacts and the natural surroundings were indistinguishable features of an aesthetic harmony. The images in the spa article were invariably emptied of people, in all but one in which a person rowing a boat was visible in the middle of a big lake.
The notion of a simplicity and naturalness that is designed was most clearly expressed in the short presentation of a resort called the Sila Evasion Hideaway & Spa Samui where the “basic design philosophy is to enhance the natural surroundings rather than change or destroy them”. This philosophy is also expressed through the concept of “barefoot luxury”. What the spa hotels offered was an experience of the simple and natural that was at the same time very exclusive. The Balé, an “ultramodern boutique resort” on Bali was designed with a focus on minimalism; “the villas are a mix of Balinese thatched roof, solid dark wood and sharp lines, of both the traditional and the modern”. Likewise, the Phu Chaisai resort had been “cleverly built using natural materials such as dirt floor, bamboo walls and leaf roof. Using these simple means they have still managed to create a feeling of quality and luxury.” Just as with the urban design hotels, where luxury was justified by taste, in the spa resorts, luxury was justified by being associated with the natural, simple and traditional.

Nature was thus essential but it was a nature that was both highly controlled and perceived as highly natural at the same time. At the spa hotels, nature was designed to be more natural, not changed but enhanced (as in the example of Sila Evasion Hideaway & Spa Samui, quoted above), in order to fully accommodate for the travelers. The ideal of a discreetly altered nature was also described in an article in Business Traveller A/P in January/February 2002 in which the Tamarind Retreat on Kho Samui was “developed in such a way as to keep the tranquility of the natural surroundings remarkably intact. Trees, palms and flowering shrubs have been subtly manicured, while huge granite boulders, humped like an elephant’s back, have been left as features in the landscape…my house, for instance, was partly built into natural rock.” In the same article the writer also described nature as a part of the spa treatment when he wrote: “what makes it all so enjoyable, however, are the superb natural surroundings in which you feel pampered.” Likewise, in his description of the Pangkor Laut resort, Despy wrote that “it is not difficult to relax both physically and spiritually in these tropical surroundings.” Thus, nature catered to the guests of the spa hotels just like the hotel staff. Nature should be experienced as wild and untouched, while it was simultaneously wholly in the service of the visitors. The idea of nature as pampering also functioned as a way of hiding the hotel staff that was responsible for the actual pampering. As much as possible, the traveler should be alone with nature.

Gary Despy’s description of the Pangkor Laut resort in RES from 2007 can be contrasted to an article in Business Traveller A/P from 86, about the same hotel. When Marc Rouen visited the Pangkor Laut Resort for the August issue of 86 he wrote:
only six hectares have been developed for the Pangkor Laut Resort; the rest is a backdrop of thick jungle. The 92 twin-bed cabins have solid roofs disguised with nipa thatch and are scattered among the palm trees just a few yards from little Royal Bay. The front row of the two lines of single- and two-storey structures offers the best views, numbers 205-212 (nearest to the squash and tennis courts) are the quietest [...] Meals are taken in the open-sided Palm Grove café, where brass ceiling fans augment the sea breezes that rustle the ferns. Western and local (mainly Chinese) dishes are served, with entrées averaging M$12. Package guests may want to supplement the canteen-style buffets with some à la carte dishes, especially at breakfast.

Rouen’s description was detailed and focused on providing the reader with useful facts to help the reader become an informed consumer. Just like the images accompanying the text the function of the text was documentary; it tried to give the reader an accurate image of what the destination was like and what could be expected, including prices. The resort was described as beautiful but also as useful. Rouen wrote that “apart from its tranquillity, Pangkor Laut’s biggest draw is its sports facilities. There are six tennis courts, two squash courts, a swimming pool, a gymnasium with basic equipment, sauna and Jacuzzi. Use of all these facilities is free, and squash racquets can be hired for M$5 an hour.” The emphasis on the practical expressed in the article in Business Traveller A/P from 86 was lacking completely in the article in RES about spas from 2007, in which the Pangkor Laut was one of the hotels described.

It should be noted that the spa article was in some ways atypical of RES since it was written by a foreign journalist, Gary Despy, and then translated. The style of the article was more in line with the linguistic style of advertisement than what was common in RES at the time. However, the relation to nature that was expressed in the article was similar with that expressed in RES in general. One example is an article from June/July of 2008 in which the well-known Swedish journalist Alexandra Pascalidou traveled to Yunnan, China, to encounter “China as it used to be”. Nature was once again central; in this article it was the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, a pond and the Lijang River that should attract the gaze of the visitor.

According to Åsa Thelander who has written about how nature is portrayed in advertisements for package holidays, mountains represent untamed nature, and for the interviewees of her study, mountains and rocks indicate what Thelander calls accessible wild nature. Accessible wild nature, in Thelander’s study, is where the tourist can be (almost) alone with nature and where it is possible to get very close to nature.

In Pascalidou’s article, just as in the article about Asian spa hotels, nature was in absolute harmony with the built environment. In the midst of “the enchanted nature” laid the fairy tale-like Hotel Banyan Tree Lijang. At the hotel the writer found “stone and wood in pleasant union, creating a rustic luxury” while all the comforts of modernity were “discretely present”. The hotel incorporated the view of the mountain, indeed the view was a part of the interior design of the hotel; the rustic luxury was defined as involving “curved Chinese rooftops, glass windows towards the bamboo garden in one direction and the mountains in the other, an enormous bathtub in black stone.” (“Vid drakens fot”/“At the foot of the dragon”) Thus, nature and the built environment merged. In Thurlow and Jaworski’s article about elite tourism they refer to a tourism advertisement in which the copy reads “there is a place were [...] luxury blends perfectly with nature”. 

In Business Traveller A/P the idea of hotels and resorts in harmony with nature was first used in advertising. In 93 and 94 a resort called The Datei described itself as “A resort so in harmony with nature that even the trees aren’t disturbed” (advertisement, Oct 93) In August 94 the same resort used the tagline “Life in the wilderness” in an advertisement illustrated with an image of the resort surrounded by trees. An early example from an article was published in the June issue of 90 when a writer claimed that “The blend of architecture and nature induces an instant tranquility, making visitors feel they are floating across the highly polished tiles of the lobby after descending, dazed from their cars”, in his description of the Triton Hotel on Sri Lanka. While nature was often described as wild and untouched it should also be controlled by design just like the luxury of the design hotels was controlled by taste.

In RES the notion of the local as more authentic, and the specific role of nature, was combined with the growing concern for environmental damage. A restaurant or hotel that was using local products and that was built in a local style was valued for being both authentic and environmentally friendly. An association was thus made between the genuine that the local and natural represents and the ecological, and environmentalism was connected to the aesthetic harmony of nature and culture, expressed for example in Despy’s article about spa hotels. In her interviews with package holiday tourists, Åsa Thelander found that environmental damage was seldom an issue for them. She also writes that drought, which some of the tourists commented on, is seen as an aesthetic problem that makes the surroundings look less green. The tourists never reflected on the fact that their travels might be a part of the environmental impact that can result in droughts. Environmental damage was

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195 Thurlow and Jaworski 2010
instead discussed in relation to the presence of garbage on the holiday destination. In other words, impacts on the environment that are not conspicuous are easily forgotten. Returning to Despy’s article from 2007 again, the owners of the Sila Evason Hideaway were said to offer “innovative and enriching experiences in a sustainable environment”. This was connected to their “design philosophy”, mentioned above, which was based on the idea that they enhanced nature, instead of changing or destroying it. This was the only part of Despy’s article in which sustainability was mentioned in the text, but the idea was implicitly present in the description of other hotels as well when concepts such as simplicity, naturalness, and closeness to the local were emphasized. Aesthetic harmony between human artifacts and nature was interpreted as being sustainable. In this way environmentalism was interpreted as a matter of aesthetics.

A concern for environmental pollution went well with the ideal of exclusivity. In May 89 a writer in Business Traveller A/P claimed that “At present Phuket delicately balances remarkable natural beauty and the man-made comforts with which to enjoy it. But if there is much more building the scales will be tipped irretrievably on the side of environmental pollution”. In this quote pollution was connected to the proliferation of buildings, which symbolizes the onslaught of a large-scale tourism industry. The writer was not striving to be alone with nature; “man-made comforts” were desired but it needed to be controlled and limited. The delicate balance between the beauty of nature and comfort was typical for the kind of tourism depicted in Business Traveller A/P and RES, although as the quote shows this was a problematic and sensitive ideal.

Luxury tourism was imagined to merge with the local surroundings in a way that the vulgarity of mass tourism was unable to. In an article about the Amandari resort on Bali the writer claimed that the resort:

is not the Bali of Kuta Beach, more paralytic than paradisiac, that has led many critics to wonder whether the island’s position as a major crossroad will one day bury its unique culture beneath a pile of beercans and fast-food wrappers. If one conceives of a resort that draws so faithfully on local design precepts that its relationship with its surroundings is almost organic, it would be difficult to surpass Amandari, a sybaritic new retreat set in Ubud’s gently sloping rice country some 20km from the sea. Modelled by Australian architect Peter Muller on a traditional Balinese village and using similar materials and construction techniques, Amandari […] is as much a community – albeit a privileged one – as a hotel. Accommodation is in 30 walled pavilions whose
thatched roofs are indistinguishable from those that early risers see floating on the morning mists above the nearby rice terraces. (Dec 89)

The writer put emphasis on the design features of the resort and the cherished combination of “the palatial and the simple”, that was repeated in later texts about resorts, as I have described above. The writer also used the word organic to define the relation between the resort and the local, a word connoting naturalness. However, the word “almost” marked out the difference that after all existed between the exclusive resort and the nearby village. The exclusivity of the resort was established in the beginning of the article in which the guest is given a bottle of Möet. In contrast, mass tourism was imagined to be destroying both the environment and the culture of Bali. The beer cans and fast-food wrappers, as physical waste, are bad for the environment but their presence on Bali was also a cultural affront.

A similar claim that upmarket tourism is better for the destination was made in an article about spa hotels in Business Traveller A/P in ’02 (mentioned above). The writer argued that Kho Samui had become a destination for the “spa set”, challenging the island’s reputation as a place for backpackers. Being a spa tourist thus became an identity, separate from other types of tourism. While backpackers partied in the sun, drank beer and lied lazily on the beach the spa set drank herbal tea and did yoga. The writer’s argument that spa tourism was better was supported by the natural setting of the island, which together with Thailand’s heritage of massage, according to the writer was perfect for spa tourism. This argument was also supported by the writer’s recurrent emphasis on the naturalness of spa tourism, in contrast the interests of the backpackers that implicitly did not fit into the islands nature or history.

Returning to the article about Amandari from 89, this article was more similar in style to what later becomes the dominant style of writing about luxury resorts. What differs was the reminder of the high price: “there’s nothing imaginary about the check-out bill that awaits you…” The writer also reported on some practical problems, such as sliding doors that did not fit and Indonesian milk that seemed unsuitable for making cappuccino.

The intermingling of nature and design was expressed in Business Traveller A/P in March 89 in a text about the Amanpuri resort hotel in Thailand.196 The hotel was the first of the designed resort hotels that got much coverage in Business Traveller A/P and the writer was quite critical about the concept and asked if it was worth it. He concluded however that the architecture and style of the hotel justified the room rate. The resort was:

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196 Amanpuri and Amandari are both owned by the company Amanresorts, www.amanresorts.com, accessed 5-11-2011
one of the finest modern interpretations of traditional Thai style to be seen anywhere – in design motifs (tiered roofs, curving eaves, almost exclusive use of woods) and design concept […] The architect’s work has been complemented by the builder’s respect for nature. They have constructed around a venerable coconut grove, keeping as many of the old trees as possible. The work was probably a pain in the neck to accomplish, but the end result is the most unobtrusive encroachment of man upon a superb natural setting. (March 89)

Again, the resort enhanced nature rather than destroyed it (to borrow the expression used by Despy in his article from 2007), and nature became an integral part of the construction. The writer devoted much space to the design features of the hotel. However, compared to later texts on resort hotels this still had an emphasis on the practical and on providing the reader with useful information about prices and amenities.

The resorts and spa hotels were often depicted as empty spaces. Thurlow and Jaworski write about the use of emptiness in advertisement for high-end tourism destinations, and claim that this is an expression of colonial desires to gain mastery over the territory. An empty beach evokes the colonial fantasy of appropriating virgin lands. However, in the magazines of my study emptiness was recurrent, not just in the images of beaches and resorts but also in bars and restaurants. In my material, emptiness thus had a wider significance than that of colonial exploration and appropriation. The empty bars in the metropolis, such as the terrace at the luxury hotel Mandarin Oriental in Barcelona, on the cover of RES March/April 2011, symbolized the ultimate in luxury and style, the orderly and stylized.

The construction of the local

What I have described by using the term designed authenticity is a specific juxtaposition of the local, seen as authentic, natural, original, stable, traditional and harmonious, and the designed, symbolizing luxury, exclusivity, style and comfort. This was evident in Business Traveller A/P already in the late 80s and in RES during the 00s. The unproblematic re-styling of the natural was intimately connected to the genre of the lifestyle magazine. Instead of being conceived as inauthentic, a designed nature was perceived as enhanced rather than contrived.

I argue that it is possible to draw a parallel between David Machin’s theories about image banks and their impact on the use of photography, mentioned in the discussion about the aesthetic style of the cover images, and the kinds of representations evidenced in the articles about resort hotels and other similar destinations. The construction of authenticity in the
lifestyle magazine differs from how authenticity has traditionally been constructed in travel writing and tourism. In a designed authenticity the desire for authenticity no longer refers to a naturalistic truth but a reality that is malleable and consciously constructed, just like the photographic style of the cover images and photos in image banks. Designed authenticity strives to evoke a desire for relaxation and harmony in the reader. Implicitly, the emphasis on harmony in the articles about local places refers to the same desire for cleanliness and order that the cover images express through the dominance of blue color. The clutter of the global world was countered by the uncluttered spaces that filled the pages of the magazines; the images of tranquil infinity pools and the empty bars of the design hotels evoked dreams of order and beauty as an escape from chaos. The spaces one could escape to were exclusive and the escape temporary (or, as it probably were for many of the readers, unattainable as anything else than a fantasy). When it comes to the spa resorts they also functioned as a retreat from the world because of the increased focus on the body. The spa resort as a locally grounded place became foremost a sensuous place, to be experienced through the senses of the body.

The use of designed authenticity was of course also a result of the magazines’ dependency on advertisers and the increased blurring between editorial content and advertising. Designed authenticity, just like the aesthetic style of the covers, was one example of how the editorial material of the magazines increasingly used the language, both visual and verbal, of advertising.

Around the same time as the magazines became lifestyle magazines, new discourses entered and demanded attention, such as environmentalism and feminism, both debated in the readers’ letters in Business Traveller A/P. An article titled “The greening of Asia”, published in August 91 was one of the first in Business Traveller A/P in which environmentalism was the main theme of the text. In the February issue of 90 there was a reader’s letter in Business Traveller A/P complaining about the magazine’s uncritical attitude to tourism development. The reader asked: “Do travel writers believe in protecting the environment or are they too busy promoting the interests of hotel chains and businessmen? Each issue of your magazine suggests the latter.” Environmental damage became an issue also in RES, and in October 2008 the magazine had a green issue solely devoted to environmentalism. This new topic challenged the lifestyle of the Cold War business man constructed in Business Traveller A/P, and the leisurely life of the bon vivant of RES.

With this in mind, designed authenticity was also an answer to the discourse of environmentalism and incorporated that discourse into definitions of place coming from
advertising. Environmentalism became interpreted as the harmonious connection between the
built environment and nature, and this harmony was reserved for high-end tourism while
environmental pollution was associated with the excesses of a vulgar mass tourism. The idea
that high-end tourism with an emphasis on the visual harmony brought on by design was
better than mass tourism was mostly implicit but it was also occasionally discussed explicitly.

The need to escape was defined with reference to the demands of the global world. The
local became a place in which the traveler could escape the pressures of the global. While the
texts often expressed a traditional perspective on the ties between nature and culture and
between a people and the place they inhabit, there were also destinations that were valued for
being placeless, such as the retreat and the design hotel. Some places were problematic in
their lack of the specific, such as Dubai, that was deemed uninteresting because it was not
Arabic enough for the writer. It also became more clear that places served different needs
related to the traveler, the resort became a specific place that catered to the implied reader’s
need to relax, in opposition to the global place.

The primordial perspective stands as the opposite of designed authenticity, as a claim to
the stability of places and the bond between culture and nature. The designed authenticity is
connected with the transformation of the magazines into lifestyle publications, although the
ideal of primordialism never disappeared. In the lifestyle magazine, primordialism was still
used but was not the only way to deal with anxieties connected to globalization and the threat
of homogenization. The opposite, a place that was lacking in history and specific
characteristics, as some of the resorts were described as, could also be used to escape the
negative aspects of globalization. The use of a designed authenticity was a markedly different
approach to authenticity as it has been understood in travel magazines, and in travel writing in
general. What remained constant however was the role of the local place, however it was
constructed, as an antidote to the global, cosmopolitan and chaotic city.
5. The East and South East Asian city as global metropolis

While in the magazines local places were associated with tradition, stability, nature and harmonious village life, global places were large cities defined by mobility and change. The necessary antipode of the harmonious local place was the bustling global place, the representation of which I will study in the following. However, first I shall define what globalization meant in RES and Business Traveller. On a very general level, much of what the magazines wrote about could be defined as relating to questions of globalization, especially since tourism itself is one of the ubiquitous aspects of globalization. However, the material can be narrowed down to texts that explicitly discuss globalization, and those in which globalization became a central theme. Some articles in RES discussed themes that can be said to fit very well into broader definitions of globalization. In the ‘90s there was a lengthy article about Latin America and the political and economic development of the continent. However, this political context was not related to globalization and the concept was not mentioned at all in the text. In the March issue of RES in 1994 there was an article about Asian immigrants in Paris that likewise could be said to deal with one of the central issues of globalization, but that did not mention the concept. The same can of course be said about Business Traveller since the overall theme of the magazine is international trade.

In Business Traveller globalization was mentioned occasionally in the ‘90s but very rarely discussed at any length. An article in the March issue of ’93 mentioned globalization in a text about the airline business titled “Is bigger better”. The aim of the article was to explain how globalization tendencies in the airline industry would affect the reader. Globalization was interpreted as an economic force while the cultural aspects were only mentioned when the writer, Nancy Cockerell, wrote: “the confusing ownership structure of airlines is already starting to make it difficult for travellers to choose between airlines according to their traditional national identities. Will Qantas be less Australian now that British Airways is an important minority shareholder?” Global culture was referred to in passing in the editorial in the June issue of ’93, in a discussion about terrorism: “Terrorism is an ugly word anywhere but one increasingly dominating the global vocabulary”. Globalization became the topic for the first time at length in the editorial of June ‘90. The editorial was titled “Is it a small world?” and Verghese started with the question of cultural homogenization, claiming that the “more adventurous will fret as the world turns into a giant, homogenized hamburger”, before

he discussed the ever popular topic of airlines. Just like the before mentioned texts this text had a clear emphasis on transnational companies and what implications globalization might have for the consumer. Verghese wrote: “Global. That’s the buzzword these days. Go global. The war cry of neo-buccaneer think-biggers, the notion would appeal to one’s imagination were it not for the fact that the implications, not all positive, were destined for one’s wallet.”

Globalization was most often associated with bigger companies and a world market, more often than it was interpreted as an aspect of the cultural sphere. The texts that mentioned globalization typically focused on how it would affect the reader economically, and it was not seen as wholly positive. Verghese also commented on how airline mergers affected flight routes: “The new B747-400 flies delighted passengers nonstop halfway around the world but, in the hands of super-carriers, it will encourage the atrophy of intermediate-point services. Why? Simply because there is far more money in directly connecting large, high-yield markets than in operating milk runs […] Globalization can bring the world together. It can also make things annoyingly distant.”

I have chosen to focus on texts in which globalization discourses are thematized and made use of by the writers, because of my interest in globalization as a discursive construction and as an identity resource. With this criterion, the texts that are chosen for analysis are almost exclusively texts about South East and East Asian destinations. In RES, the only conspicuous exceptions from this rule are a few articles on the American dominance of the world market, represented by Coca-Cola bottles and the global brand of McDonalds, and a few articles about Dubai. Both RES and Business Traveller published articles about metropolises such as New York, London and Paris but the notion of globalization was not discussed in these texts. My overall focus is on articles about East Asia and South East Asia, since these clearly marked a perceived shift in international relations. This shift was also discussed explicitly in the texts, in both magazines, which I will explain further.

Among East Asian countries, the primary object of the writers’ fantasies of globalization in RES was Japan, with China (and Hong Kong) as a good second. The image of China was also influenced by the political system and political aspects such as human rights violations, even though this did not take a prominent place in the texts. The third area of interest was Thailand, and this image was highly dependent on Thailand’s position as a tourist destination with a large number of Swedish arrivals each year. Other countries that figured less prominently in the texts, but that were incorporated into similar discourses, were Vietnam and South Korea, and to an even lesser degree India. The geographical areas covered in RES are thus more correctly identified as Southeast Asia (which includes Malaysia, Thailand and
Vietnam, among others) and East Asia (which includes Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan, among others). However, to simplify I will continue to write South/East Asia to refer to the two regions. Since the analysis is not aimed at surveying the Swedish or Western image of South/East Asia as such, texts about South/East Asian countries that do not relate to globalization discourses have not been chosen for analysis.

In *Business Traveller A/P* the Japanese had a special place by being a dominant partner in world trade. The insider’s guide for the December issue of ‘83 was devoted to Japan and Tokyo and the writer stated that “since the world is now on the threshold of a technological age which the Japanese – through their skills, team efforts and diligence – seem quite likely to dominate, it would seem vital that we make a special effort to understand them.” The magazine also wrote much about Singapore (described as “the world’s most modern city”, in March ‘97). China, and to a less extent Vietnam and Thailand, were covered as emerging markets.

When the writers of *RES* and *Business Traveller* travelled to South/East Asia in the mid-1990s it was in many ways a transformed, and transforming, region that they encountered. The latter part of the 20th century saw some major shifts in many East Asian countries. Tokyo had been rebuilt into a global city within three decades, from the late 1960s to the early 1990s. In the late 1970s China started its open door policy, which opened up the country’s economy. Shanghai was re-launched as a global city. In April 1990 the Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng announced that Shanghai was destined to become “the symbolic vision of China’s future role in the global economy and a material site for accumulating capital”. Around 1997 the continent was hit by a financial crisis, sometimes referred to as the Asian Financial Crisis or Meltdown, that affected Asia particularly and that was triggered by the bursting economic bubble in Thailand.

*Business Traveller A/P* was imagined in the magazine to have come of age at the same time as parts of Asia became economic tigers and consequently the Asian metropolis became a global phenomenon in the late 20th century. This was also the time when a business class on airplanes was established, which helped to further establish the business traveler as a distinct identity. One development that was charted at length by the magazine was the rise of China. In the ‘80s, China had recently opened up to business with the West but it was still seen as

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backwards and difficult to navigate for the traveler and businessperson. An article from May ‘84 warned that the traveler that chose an organized tour to Canton could expect a “steady diet of revolution, martyrs’ monuments and over-optimistic development. In June ‘84 the magazine reported that in Peking “Mao suits are still in, pollution is still out”. The writer, Mark Minter, went on to write that “despite its gleaming new Western-style hotels and the English signs at the airport warning passengers to ‘Keep Right on the Walkway,’ it is basically a Communist outpost ‘unpolluted,’ as the hierarchy likes to say, by Western influences.” Likewise, in the March issue of ‘88 there was an article about Shanghai that dwelled on the many problems facing the city, both from the perspective of the business man and that of the tourist. Both when it comes to business and tourism Shanghai, and China as a whole, was still in the late ‘80s described as being way behind the West.

It was only later around the early ‘90s that Asian destinations become touted as really trendy and cool, and sometimes too successful from a Western perspective. In June ‘93 one writer praised the transformation of Beijing:

“China was a gruelling hardship post, on par with Abyssinia or Upper Volta. What a difference a decade makes. Beijing has become almost cosmopolitan, and quite liveable in its physical comforts, with a wide choice of good hotels, restaurants of many cuisines, English-language publications and international television via satellite. Where once shopping was restricted to cavernous government stores, now all consumer goods are available in this materialistic city, from local silks and crafts to brand-name cosmetics and cameras.”

Globalization was also in RES most of all a question of economic development, especially in the texts about South/East Asian countries. The economic crisis in the late ‘90s did not play a central role in the image of the affected countries given by RES, they were invariably seen as examples of economic success. The reality of economical crisis was only occasionally mentioned and then often refuted. In a short text about Tokyo the journalist wrote: “For over a decade Tokyo (and Japan) has been plagued by a recession that never ends. According to the news that is. Wrong! Go out on the streets, enter the shops, see what’s being bought, look out at the structures that are being constructed, and discover that this is not a city that is falling a part.” (Travel guide of the month, Feb ‘03) A similar perspective was expressed in Business Traveller A/P in September ‘00, in an article about Nagoya, when the writer claimed that “visitors expecting to find stark evidence of the recession instead find themselves caught up in a shopping frenzy”. The image of Japan as hard working and prosperous was often salvaged
from a reality of economic recession by the writers making reference to shopping. In other words, the perception of South/East Asian economic success did not necessarily reflect any real economic currents.

At the same time however, changing perceptions of South/East Asia were even in *RES* dependent on actual market relations, manifested for example by the changing images of South/East Asian consumer products and the associations that were made in connection to them. In the anthology *Destination Branding*, Simon Anholt writes that Japanese products have moved from being perceived as “shoddy” to being trendy and he concludes that this is the best example of what he calls a “brand turnaround”. He argues that “Japan has now become enviably synonymous with advanced technology, manufacturing quality, competitive pricing, even style and status.” He also includes Japan in his list of “megabrand countries” together with America, Italy and France. The changed image of Japanese products affects the image of the country given in travel writing as well, which I will return to later.

Hong Kong was also described through its economic success. In the March issue of *RES* in 1994 the foreign correspondent Agneta Engqvist wrote about Hong Kong and chronicled how the city was preparing for the Chinese takeover that took place three years later. While writing for *RES* in the 1990s, Engqvist was also employed as a foreign correspondent for *Dagens Industri* (*Today’s Industry*). Overall the article, titled “Nedräkning”, (“Countdown”), was a positive depiction of East Asian economic success. Engqvist was impressed by the rapid development and wrote that “the tempo, the dynamism and the new skyscrapers [in Hong Kong] are the highest and the boldest.” (March ‘94) The inhabitants of Hong Kong were ambitious entrepreneurs and were characterized by their lack of envy toward the success of others. In sum, Hong Kong was described as a city that represents the future.

This positive interpretation was repeated in many of the articles but the economic boom could also be interpreted as negative. South/East Asian capitalism was in various ways described as being faulty and lacking. The most conspicuous sign of the economic transitions in South/East Asian countries such as China and Japan was the construction of buildings, and it was used repeatedly in the articles as a metaphor of a development that was very rapid, even too rapid in many cases. This, in turn, was interpreted as a South/East Asian lack of nostalgia which implied that old buildings were torn down because tradition was valued less than economic success. In an article about Vietnam, the writer quoted a man who was unhappy about the development, and who said that “all the skyscrapers, office spaces and luxury hotels

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200 Anholt 2004, p. 35
that has cropped up…The exclusive boutiques. It has happened fast. Very fast…people haven’t adjusted to the economic changes…Vietnam is becoming Americanized…my countrymen cannot understand that the old can be beautiful.” Likewise, in an article about Shanghai, the journalist posed the question whether Shanghai “has lost its soul in its struggle to regain the position as the region’s most cosmopolitan city.” (Oct ‘03) Another article about Shanghai, from March ’95, was given the title “Ingen plats för nostalgi”, (“No place for nostalgia”).

In Business Traveller A/P the difference of Asian capitalism was expressed in an article about Taiwan:

From its overtaxed infrastructure to its obsession with conspicuous consumption, the city of Taipei reels with the extremes and contradictions of its own overnight success. Fortunes are made and lost with a phone call, popular trends and culture come and go with dizzying speed and businesses open and close so fast it’s hard to keep track of the constantly mutating skyline. Here is Asia’s most vibrant boombown – an unabashedly nouveaux riche, platinum-Rolex-meets-polyester-suit kind of place. After decades of hard work and frugality, Taiwan is enjoying the fruits of its labours and a new era of consumerism is in full swing. (Aug ‘92)

Despite the many differences between the magazines of my study, their relation to East and South East Asia had many similarities. As is evident from this quote Business Traveller A/P also wrote about Asian capitalism as uncontrolled and too rapid, as well as symbolized by conspicuous consumerism and the construction of buildings, in particular skyscrapers. In the following sections I will explore the construction of the Asian metropolis as an ambivalent place evoking fascination, condemnation and fear. I will also write about the writers’ relation to Asians as consumers. I have then chosen to divide my analysis into one part that studies a specifically Swedish perspective on Asia, and one part that goes further into the relation to Asia expressed in Business Traveller A/P.

**Skyscrapers and traffic as symbols of wild capitalism**

In RES, skyscrapers took on significance as symbols of an emerging Asia. The construction of Asian skyscrapers was repeatedly interpreted through metaphors that connote aggressiveness and a lack of control. In an article published in 1995, Shanghai was described as growing “wildly”. Likewise, in an article about Beijing (called Peking), published in 1996, the writers
claimed that the construction of office buildings and housing in the city was “furious”. Other words describing the construction boom was “raging” (“July/August 1996”) and “anarchistic” (Beijing, September 1996). A metaphor similar to that of the wild city was the metaphor of the organic city. In an article by Anders Rydell, Seoul was a “gigantic, soaking wet octopus” that the travel writer could not control. (May ‘07) In Business Traveller A/P, Bangkok was also described in almost organic terms when Darryl Pollard started an article by writing: “Sprawling, steaming, booming Bangkok” (Dec ‘87)

Skyscrapers have long been a symbol of modernity and of American world cities such as New York and Chicago. The building type was made possible by the industrial revolution and was the quintessential building of the 20th century. Eric Höweler, the author of Skyscrapers: Vertical Now, writes that skyscrapers are more than merely tall buildings. Skyscrapers are expressions of the aspiration to link earth and sky. Besides modernity they also symbolize progress and economic development, and they are closely associated with capitalism and international business. They are also expensive which means that the construction of skyscrapers is a sign of wealth and the concentration of finances. The skyscraper is the “visual logos” of global capitalism. Höweler also claims that “the skyscraper of today is no longer exclusively a North American phenomenon – the Asian skyscraper has, in some ways, outdone its predecessor”.

Furthermore, skyscrapers are inherently global because they demand specialized expertise which cannot be found locally in Asia. Many Asian skyscrapers constructed in the early 21st century are the work of mainly Western so called starchitects, such as Sir Norman Foster. Skyscrapers are thus a highly visible symbol of globalization in many different ways while local conditions and traditions are often incorporated into their aesthetics. The Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, constructed in 1998, translates the geometry and profile of a traditional Islamic minaret into a contemporary office building. According to Höweler, the Petronas Towers signaled a shift in the construction of skyscrapers from North America to Asia, it was declared the tallest building in the world when it was built and “placed Kuala Lumpur in the global collective consciousness”. In a similar manner the Jin Mao Tower in Shanghai, constructed in 1994 to 1998, declared the emergence of China as a superpower. Tall buildings as a symbol of economic success are described also in Business Traveller A/P: “you just need to take a glance at Bangkok’s skyline. Ten years ago the 22-storey Dusit Thani Hotel was the city’s only real highrise building; today there are soaring office blocks,

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201 Janet Ng, Paradigm city; space, culture and capitalism in Hong Kong, Albany: SUNY Press, 2009, p. 141
condominiums, department stores and luxury hotels in whichever direction you look.” (Dec ‘87)

In RES, the symbolic presence of skyscrapers and the representation of South/East Asian capitalism as uncontrollable were conveyed visually, as well as in writing. The most common image that accompanied the articles about the South/East Asian metropolis was an aerial image depicting a panoramic view of the city centre. Pictures such as these were used on the first pages of the article and were often allowed to cover a whole spread, so that the urban sprawl stretched out over the pages and was depicted in all its vastness. Images further into the article could be a mix between depictions of the typical and exotic, and the global. An image of a Buddhist monk in Bangkok or a sumo wrestler in Tokyo could be placed next to the image of a gleaming white shopping mall. The initial image however, the one that sets the tone for the article, was exclusively the panoramic city photo. Sometimes the reader got closer to the city so that the chaos of traffic, mixed with the huge crowds, was clearly visible and in one article about Bangkok the reader was even placed on street level in the initial image, which was a blurry photo showing two pairs of legs and the wheel of a car (Oct ’97). The aerial shot emphasized vastness while the street view connoted chaos, but no matter how close or how faraway the city got to the viewer the general impression conveyed was that of vastness, chaos and constant movement.

Besides the conspicuous skyscrapers, transportation and traffic became recurrent objects when the photographic gaze of RES loomed over the new global metropolis, for example traffic jam on a nightly street in Taipei or a sea of bicycles in Shanghai. An article titled “Bangkok Express” was illustrated by an image of a speedy skytrain (Dec ‘06). The train is placed in the centre of the image, located over a congested highway, and towering over it is a gleaming complex of glass skyscrapers that reflects the sky. The threatening placelessness of globalization inherent in the many pictures of highways and traffic jams could be lessened by making sure that there was a clearly visible symbol of the exotic included in the image, most often a street sign with non-Western characters.

Most images of the global metropolis displayed specificities that make it possible to identify the destination. An article from December/January 2000-2001 called “Kokpunkt Bangkok” (“Boiling Bangkok”) was illustrated by an image of Yawaraj Road in the Chinatown of Bangkok, that covered the whole spread. The picture is panoramic but is

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202 Because of the different emphasis of the two magazines the writers of RES took slightly more interest in the so called signature buildings while in Business Traveller A/P the writers also commented on the construction of new office blocks
nonetheless so close to the street that the reader can identify signs both in Chinese and in Thai, as well as details such as bar signs and street vendors. The reader was presented with a distancing bird’s-eye view but one that also expressed presence in a particular place. However, a few of the images were constructed to display placelessness. The truly placeless was exemplified by an article about Tokyo illustrated by the typical panoramic spread depicting the city (June ‘99). However, the city was shot at such distance that very few individual buildings were identifiable and there were no landmark buildings in sight. The title of the article, “96 timmar i Tokyo” (“96 hours in Tokyo”), was in small print and discreetly placed in the upper right corner, which was unusual. More that illustrating Tokyo the image depicted an anonymous Metropolis. The impression of placelessness was further enhanced by the fact that the image is in grainy black and white. The image of the skytrain in Bangkok, mentioned above, was another example of placeless images. Even though the reader came much closer to the city in this image, in comparison to the image of Tokyo, there are no visible place markers. In the centre of the image, painted on the side of the skytrain, are the faces of a young man and woman with Western features. These two images are however exceptions. Other images that illustrated the articles about South/East Asia exemplified the balance that must be upheld between the fascination for the non-places of global modernity and the need to present something local, specific and exotic.

In Business Traveller A/P the writers assigned much symbolic power to traffic and traffic jams. Traffic was an annoying but necessary consequence of development. In September ‘93 one writer wrote: “Glance down Jakarta’s traffic-snarled Jalan MH Thamrin towards the high-rise concrete office towers springing up, and you get a sense of the city’s increasing prosperity.” Another writer drew parallels between the traffic and the economic success of Taiwan: “Motorcycles roar down sidewalks, cars belligerently cut each other up and no one pays any heed to signs or signals. Aggressive and undisciplined, Taipei’s point-and-go traffic is like the socio-economic beat of Taiwan itself – a suitable metaphor for the forces driving the island’s economic miracle.” (May ‘93) Chaos was emphasized in the editorial of March ‘93: “Bangkok has grown. Despite the hurly-burly of coups, riots and more coups, it has grown so fast over the past few years that any casual visitor to the city can be forgiven for losing his bearings in the ubiquitous concrete. Huge unfinished raised highways snake around town to link who knows what with who knows where and buildings continue to sprout.”

Traffic could also be interpreted as expressing the energy and entrepreneurial spirit of Asia: “You only have to step out of your hotel into the rush of Hondas and Suzukis that engulfs Saigon’s streets from morning to night to fathom that 17 years of socialism have not
dampened Saigon’s energy one iota. Give it 10 more years and those little *motos* will have metamorphosed into Toyotas.” (Jan ‘93) Traffic congestion was a metaphor but it was also an actual consequence of economic success. Susan Vumback Low started her article about Bangkok with a traffic scene and then wrote that “The city’s traffic jams are legend and this is a scene anyone will witness innumerable times, yet one that is indicative of the state of Thailand as a whole. Although the country has undergone the sort of rapid industrialization that’s the envy of many a developing country, there are numerous aspects of Thai society – education and social, for example – that hark back to a pre-industrial age.” (May ‘95).

Traffic jams also symbolized a specific dilemma for the Asian tigers that had to transform their economies in order to keep growing. In the June issue of that year Mark Roberti wrote that “It is perhaps the horrific traffic in Seoul that is the best metaphor for the country’s dilemma: prosperity has brought its inevitable problems. Most Seoul residents spend an hour or two each morning, Monday through Saturday, crawling into the downtown area from the huge blocks of flats that line the roads on the outskirts of town. The same economic prosperity that has brought traffic to a standstill brought an economic slowdown in the beginning of the Nineties.” Traffic jams were a symbol as well as a literal reality, of economic success and dynamism, but it also symbolized the chaotic, like it did in *RES*, and the disorganized, lacking nature of non-Western capitalism that was impressive but also too rapid and uncontrolled. Finally, traffic could also be a symbol of the blend of modern and traditional. In Bangkok traffic combined the very modern “shiny new BMWs and Mercedes” and the chaotic represented by “the three-wheeled tuk-tuks and the overcrowded buses”. (May ‘95)

Just as in *RES* the East and South East Asian metropolis was repeatedly described as both dynamic and chaotic. About Seoul the writer claimed that: “Foreign eyes are as awed by Seoul’s potent chemistry to produce, consume and grow as they are repelled by its chaotic aspects: the grimy back alleys, shabby housing, traffic nightmares, pollution and, above all, the crowds […] As an Asian city, it invites comparison with regional capitals such as Tokyo, whose heart ticks with quartz-timed precision and order.” (March ‘85)

**Alert entrepreneurs and money crazed citizens in the construction of the global metropolis**

In her 2001 dissertation on the myths of globalization in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo, Tsung-Yi Michelle Huang emphasizes how the Asian global metropolis is a conscious construction brought about by the governing elite in order to attract global
capital. According to Huang, due to the reorganizing of space that follows on the arrival of global capital in these cities, ordinary citizens have been forced to move away from the city centers, into the cramped housing of the suburbs. Huang claims that the workings of global capital destabilize and restrict the life space of ordinary citizens, thus colliding with the myth of globalization with its promise of vast vistas of open space and unrestricted mobility. It also collides with two central myths in RES, the idea of South/East Asian capitalism as wild and organic and the idea of the capitalist fervor of the average citizen as the driving force behind the growing metropolis.

The idea that global capitalism in South/East Asia is fuelled by the money crazed citizens who, in their wild chase for business success, display a complete lack of nostalgia neglected the struggle over space between the average citizens and the governing elite within South/East Asian societies. But it also hid the travel writers’ complicity in the reorganization of space. The destruction of age-old housing in the city centers of the South/East Asian metropolises and the construction of skyscrapers did not only cater to the needs of international business men but also to that of tourists. The writers were thus in fact lamenting a process that was in part carried out for their own benefit. In Concrete Reveries, Mark Kingwell argues that the chaos in the construction boom of Shanghai is created by the, often Western, architects. While insisting on representing the South/East Asian construction boom as anarchistic and the cities as organic the writers of RES neglected the fact that this development was the consequence of a highly conscious effort of the governing elite to launch their cities as global metropolises.

To disregard the perspective of the inhabitants was also a way of appropriating the cities by positioning oneself as the true interpreter of the place; only the travel writer could experience the metropolis correctly and appreciate the correct balance between tradition and modernity. Furthermore, it turned the cities into a spectacle for visual consumption because the nostalgia of the travel writers was focused on the disappearing sight of the old buildings and not on their everyday function as housing. Only one article titled “Byggplats Peking” (“Construction Site Peking”), written by Göran Leijonhufvud, acknowledged the perspective of the ordinary citizens in the reordering of the city. In the first part of the text Leijonhufvud focused on the typical visual perspective by quoting two Chinese architects that deplored the destruction of the old city center from an aesthetic point of view, but he also wrote about the

203 Huang 2001, p.
204 Mark Kingwell, Concrete Reveries: Consciousness and the City, Toronto: Viking, 2008, p.
experience of the inhabitants who, he wrote, would be uncomfortable living in a suburban high-rise. This short article was however an exception.

According to the writers of RES, the deplorable lack of nostalgia was expressed both on a societal level and on an individual. The inhabitants’ participation in economic change was another way in which Asian capitalism was perceived as problematic. Asians were described as being fixated with making money. There was a certain ambiguity here since some writers argued that the economy was driven by the ambitious inhabitants while others argued that it was the economic boom that had had a profound impact on the individuals. Under the rubric “Korrespondenten” (“The Correspondent”), Göran Leijonhufvud wrote a one page-article about Taiwan, titled “Var och en sin egen chef” (“Each and everyone is his own boss”), (May ‘96). Leijonhufvud claimed that in Taiwan the housing speculation was “feverish” and the middle class was “rapidly growing”. The feverish economy was reflected in the Taiwanese when the writer claimed that in Taiwan everyone wanted to be his or her own boss. The writer exemplified this claim with Wei-Hsin, a middle aged family man who was working for one of Taiwan’s cable TV-channels. When the writer met him he was overly exited and the reason for this was the crisis between China and Taiwan. The crisis had put Taiwan in the spotlight and Wei-Hsin was using the opportunity to make money by acting as a “fixer” for foreign journalists. According to the writer, this was due to Wei-Hsin’s constant occupation with business opportunities. Wei-Hsin saw “dollar signs in every situation” which, Leijonhufvud continued, was a spirit that “seeps through the whole island”. Taiwan was thus described as a place where every individual, as well as society as a whole, was fixated with money. However, the writer refrained from expressing any explicit moral indignation over this.

Similar for both Leijonhufvud’s article about Taiwan and Agneta Engqvist’s articles about Hong Kong (mentioned above), was the claim that a feverish capitalism was saturating the societies of Hong Kong and Taiwan and that the individual inhabitants embodied this rapid and problematic capitalism. In the article about Taiwan, Wei-Hsin was described as almost extremely business minded, but the writer made it clear that he was only a telling example in a country where everybody strove to have their own business. Likewise in the articles about Hong Kong, to be business minded became a common Chinese characteristic. This was also expressed in an article about Bangkok in which the writer marveled over the “Asian eagerness” that was displayed by a woman he encountered. He wrote; “it might be a stereotypical image, but the strong Asian drive really shines through in her.”(Oct ‘97)

The image of Taipei as wild was expressed in Business Traveller A/P as well in an article from May 93: ”In fact, much of Taipei’s interest is in laissez-faire economics and wild west
atmosphere rather than its 'sights'. It is this frantic, go-for-broke spirit in the way the
Taiwanese do business, eat and drink and even drive their cars that makes Taipei so
fascinating.” In both magazines the writers vacillated between a positive description of the
South/East Asians as alert entrepreneurs and describing South/East Asians as being too eager
for an economic development that was too rapid. These two opposing views could be present
in the same article.

The notion of Asians as efficient entrepreneurs was sometimes associated with crowds.
The image of Tokyo was ambivalent on this account; the city was described as being both
chaotic and extremely organized, and sometimes these two images were juxtaposed in the
same article. Lindskog wrote that “crowds in Tokyo are a collective dance. It is a movement
that is beyond the will of the individual. No one pushes. Everyone walks fast, just as fast. No
one is running […] Despite the fact that everyone is moving in different directions they all
have a common goal – efficiency”. (June ‘99) In this passage the movement of the Japanese
was associated with the writer’s arguments about the economic production – the economic
success was described as a consequence of this Japanese efficiency.

The description of crowds in travel writing is interesting in the context of economic
production as well as in the context of a Western image of Asia, since crowds can be assigned
very different meanings. In economically unsuccessful countries crowds can be interpreted as
chaotic and disorganized while in successful ones they are a sign of efficiency and a dynamic
movement forward. As the above mentioned article about Tokyo shows, the extreme
crowds could signify both a lack of individuality and the economic strength of the countries.
The crowds in Tokyo could be interpreted as an example of the rigidity of Japanese society. In
addition, crowds were used as a sign of the enormity and chaos of the largest metropolitan
area in the world, but also as an image of success; just as the economic production, the crowds
never stopped moving towards a common goal.

The image of the anonymous South/East Asian masses and individuals without
individuality is well-known in Western representations of Asia. In RES this notion was
preserved while it was also reinterpreted. The crowds were a sign of masses moving toward a
common goal that was held higher than the individual. Lindskog’s article about the well-
orchestrated crowds in the Tokyo subway, where no one pushes, is a good example of this

205 I have observed this in my analysis of the Swedish family magazine Allers from 1914 in which the travel
writer Holger Rosenberg described a world tour. In Asian countries the masses symbolized the chaos, dirt and
incomprehension of the mysterious East, while when Rosenberg reached New York the masses symbolized a
dynamic movement forward. A colonial “fear of society in the mass” and “the monstrous aggregation of human
beings … both swarming Orientals and working-class hordes” is noted by John Barrell, quoted in Loomba 1998,
p. 118
interpretation. At the same time, the goal that the crowds were moving towards was economic progress and this also presupposed a degree of individuality and individual achievement. In Engqvist’s articles about Hong Kong, the Chinese displayed an almost extreme individualism. The image of entrepreneurial individualism and masses was united in the idea of South/East Asian efficiency, for example expressed in an article by Mårten Blomkvist from the January/February issue of '97, when the crowds in Hong Kong were filled with office workers who were hurrying off with their beepers and cell phones. Thus, the South/East Asian masses of the late 20th and the early 21st century were filled with business minded individuals who were constantly working, both for their own personal benefit and for the greater good of the economy. In Lindskog’s article, as well as in other texts, it was clear that this was a cause of anxiety for the European observer, evoking fears of not being able to keep up.

Blomkvist’s article from January/February 1997, with the title “Var verkligen Noel Coward här” (“Was Noel Coward really here?”), was based on the notion that the economic boom would change or had changed the relations between East and West. The article centered on the so-called British Handover, the transfer of sovereignty that took place in July 1997, and how this would affect Hong Kong. Blomkvist jokingly interrogated into his own nostalgic feelings about the British Empire, and visited various places that functioned as reminders of British rule, such as “The Noon Day Gun” and a police museum. He concluded that these had become mere relics. Again, the theme was that Asians lacked nostalgia but in this article, this lack was more explicitly used to interpret the relation between East and West, because of the focus on colonialism. The writer claimed that “the British belong to the history of Hong Kong and history is not a main interest here.”, implicitly evoking the fear of being left behind.

As I mentioned, Blomkvist also chose to use the image of the entrepreneurial South/East Asian, and again the image of the Asian masses was used to reinforce the idea of the business minded inhabitants; “the streets of Hong Kong are oceans of white shirts, worn by efficient Asians that all look like they just stepped out of a skyscraper and are now hurrying off for a short lunch. Beepers and cell phones – many of them are carrying both – are making a constant noise.” With this efficiency the East Asians were not only leaving the era of European colonialism behind, they were also creating their own claims for superiority. Blomkvist wrote: “there have been speculations about whether China should keep Hong Kong as some sort of colony. Some one has pointed out that it would mean that the world would get a colonial power that is less developed than the colony. In some areas this seems already to be true when it comes to Great Britain and Hong Kong.” The changing relations between Hong Kong and the British (which of course also represented Europe as a whole), was due to three
aspects: the hand-over of the crown colony to China that symbolized even the nominal end of the colonial era, the lack of colonial nostalgia on the part of the East Asians, and their economic success.

Although this representation of the East as a place of reckless capitalism might be seen as specific to late 20th century travel narratives or at least not predating the development of a capitalist economic system in the East, it is possible to point to early colonial discourses as a precedent. When commenting about the early colonial discourse about India and, more generally, the Islamic East, Ania Loomba writes that the Western image of this region differed fundamentally from that of for example the Americas. While the Americas were constructed as primitive, “the East” was constructed as degenerate and barbaric. The wealth of the Ottoman and Mughal territories inspired an envious “account of Oriental greed”. In relation to the East, the Europeans created “an alternative version of savagery understood not as a lack of civilisation but as an excess of it, as decadence rather than primitivism.”

The Asian consumers

The economic success of South/East Asian countries was presented as a cause of concern for Europeans, mostly in RES. This success was foremost symbolized by skyscrapers and hurried business men but the travel writers’ anxieties could also be directed at consumer goods and consumer patterns. In an article from RES in 2008, the changed relation between Europe and South/East Asia was made clear by the telling headline of the text; “Designed in China”, the implicit contrast being of course the familiar label “Made in China”, which carries strong associations of cheap products. The writer encouraged the reader to “forget markets with fake goods, dvd-sellers and cheap knickknacks. Come along on a tour of connoisseur shopping through the charming design district of Shanghai.”(March ‘08) Even though in the article South/East Asians were producers as well as consumers, the objects produced were not office buildings but consumer goods such as clothes, and it was the fact that these goods were no longer characterized by being mass produced and cheap that marked the difference according to the journalist. The word “design” connoted originality and, the journalist wrote, in the design shops one should not try to haggle. Haggling would often be met by “a smile and a ‘sorry, this is of top quality.’”

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206 Loomba 1998, p. 95
In an article about Tokyo from June 1999, Johan Lindskog commented on the consumer patterns of the Japanese customers. Lindskog, who described Tokyo as the future, marveled over the intensity and commercialism of the city in which “everything is being sold, all of the time. Tokyo never takes a break.” The intensity and production of Tokyo was the cause of inferiority for the European writer. He wrote “suddenly it is I who am old, conservative, left behind. My money has no value. My knowledge is not sought after. I am merely a relic from a world that they don’t care about. Nobody wants me. They just look at me and then they return to their lives, their production, their superiority. It is a very unfamiliar experience for a middle-class European.” (June ‘99) The Japanese were superior also in their consumption. Lindskog quoted a friend who said that “the American chains have difficulties in Japan. They can’t keep up.” His friend continued: “young Japan gets tired fast and demands something new. McDonald’s have a problem because they have a rigid concept on a market that demands constant change. […] The giant has been forced down on its knees and they [McDonald’s] have hired special chefs to cook up the most imaginative hamburgers, one after the other. Everything to satisfy the most demanding market in the world.” Hence, one of the most typical symbols of Western capitalism, McDonald’s, had had to change their concept to cater for the Japanese market. Furthermore, it was the Japanese market that had come to symbolize the constant craving for novelties that characterizes capitalist consumption.

India was also described as being transformed by a globalized consumer culture. In an article from October 1998, the journalist Jan Gradvall argued for a perspective on Indians as arbiters of consumer trends. His explicit argument was that when Westerners appropriated Indian culture through trends, Indian culture became more equal to Western culture. In the article “Tandoori Power – India, India, everywhere India”, he argued that the late 1990s focus on India as trendy differed from the appropriations of India by Western culture in the late 60s/early 70s. The types of tourists that went to India then were interested in “meditation and Hindu non-materialism”. According to the writer, this type of tourism gave a prejudiced image of India as “a poor, backwards country where the true traveler (not the tourist!) could go to meditate”. The new types of Westerners that were interested in India as a trendy country were interested in such things as “music, fashion, make-up, literature, fabrics, interior design”. Gradvall wrote that the trendy India travelers of today “step out into the Indian throng to – shop and have fun” and through this India would increasingly be perceived as “one of the most modern and creative countries in the world.” The article is interesting because of the emphasis put on consumption and the explicit argument that the appropriation of pop cultural trends will create a greater understanding of a foreign culture. It also made a
clear definition of who the reader should identify with, i.e. the trendy tourist as opposed to the prejudiced hippie, or “true traveler”.

A sense of equality and similarity could also be evoked by an Asian participation in tourist activities. In December 2007, Johan Lindskog wrote about a design hotel on Koh Samui, Thailand that provided an interesting intermingling of places. Lindskog wrote that the style of the hotel that was owned by a Thai was more reminiscent of New York than of Kho Samui which gave him “mixed emotions”. For Lindskog, the presence of a design hotel on the beach of a Thai island evoked a discussion about authenticity and place in tourism but it also evoked questions about the relation between Europe and Asia. For Lindskog, The Library, as the hotel was called, was in one way highly inauthentic. It was designed in a style reminiscent of a Western metropolis, a style which failed to fulfill the expectations the tourist had on Koh Samui, while it was also associated with the homogenization of globalization. However, Lindskog also thought the hotel was more authentic than traditional tourist representations of Thailand. Lindskog claimed that symbols of Thailand such as Singha beer and bamboo were inauthentic exactly because they had become tourism symbols and was therefore interpreted as stereotypical clichés.

According to Lindskog, hotels such as The Library represented a new world order in which Asia was the future. Thus, even though the hotel stood out then, it was more than a mere anomaly – it was a vision of a future in the making. Lindskog wrote “this is modern Asia, where the international and hypermodern is interpreted by a Thai who is sick and tired of Singha and bamboo. He wants white concrete and vodka tonic.” Furthermore, it was not only the owner who represented a new hypermodern Asia. The guests at the hotel were “mostly Asians themselves, on week-end holidays from Hong Kong and Singapore” who were relaxing by the pool and “reading magazines through their Tom Ford-glasses”. Lindskog concluded by writing: “It is a new world order and this is what it looks like.” The Asians at the hotel, both the owner and the guests, were identified as equals by Lindskog because of their participation in tourism and by their adherence to a specific style. It was debated in the article but in the end Lindskog decided that white concrete, vodka tonic and Tom Ford was more “international and hypermodern” than specifically Western.

As I have mentioned, the economic boom, often exemplified by the construction of large buildings, could be a cause of distress for the writers that worried over a faulty Asian capitalism, while it could also be perceived as positive. Consumption was likewise dealt with in an ambivalent manner. It could be used as a positive point of identification in which Europeans and Asians were perceived as equals through a shared culture of consumption.
However consumption could also be problematic, which was exemplified most explicitly in an article in the June issue of 2007. The text started with the story of a Swedish couple on holiday in Kuala Lumpur who visited a Dior-store in order to purchase a pair of shoes. However, they were unable to attract the attention of the shop attendants because a large group of Japanese tourists had entered the store at the same time. The Swedes described their discomfort when they discovered that they were considered second rate customers due to the fact that they are Europeans. The title of the article was “Europa – lyxens sweatshop” (“Europe – the sweatshop of luxury”), and the writer claimed that in the ‘00s European luxury goods were produced in Europe but increasingly consumed in Asia. He wrote that due to the economic boom there was a growing market for luxury items in Asia and the outmost sign of wealth for the newly rich Asians was European products and brands such as Versace, Gucci and Dior.

The ideas expressed in the article are also interesting from a perspective on the connection between brands and places that is offered in the anthology Destination Branding. The luxury articles have a special value because they are European. They are connected to a particular “Europeanness” that connotes style and affluence. Thus, brands such as Dior, Gucci and Versace are highly place-bound, but when the products are bought in Asia they are appropriated in a foreign context, and separated from their place of origins. Hence, for the writer in RES Europeans have lost their grip on a Europeanness that can be bought and sold freely, and even changed ever so slightly to fit the tastes of Asian consumers. What bothered the writer was the fact that Asians were outdoing Europeans at consumption, the act of buying, but also that what they were able to buy was something that was associated with a European identity of superiority. The continuing value of Europe as a brand that signals wealth and high quality meant that in the global consumer culture depicted in the article an elusive Europeanness was stronger than the actual spending power of Europeans. When the writer claimed that Europe was the “sweatshop of luxury” he was not imagining actual sweatshops with exploited workers producing material goods, but a sweatshop producing signs of luxury.

The South/East Asian metropolis as a global future

The themes of production and consumption both incorporated another dominant theme in the texts about economically successful South/East Asian countries, which was the description of these countries as the future. Countries such as Japan and China were expected to become
even more dominant economically, as well as becoming more influential when it came to popular culture and consumption. In a short text about Tokyo from *RES*, February 2003 the journalist wrote that “Tokyo is a laboratory, a constantly on-going experiment that will show us where the future is heading.” The notion of South/East Asia as the future evoked just as much ambivalence as the before mentioned themes. In a text about art galleries in various cities around the world, in *RES*, the writer described Tokyo as a “utopian futuristic (bad) dream.”(Transit, March ‘02) By putting the word “bad” within brackets, the writer made it an open question whether the notion of Tokyo as the future was positive or negative.

In connection to the notion that South/East Asia represented a global future, one of the recurrent metaphors was youth. South/East Asian cultures were seen as being younger than Western cultures. The depiction of both South/East Asia and South/East Asians as young, clashed with an older tradition in European representations of the continent in which it has rather been described as old because of its ancient civilizations.207 In the May issue of *RES* 2007, Anders Rydell traveled to South Korea and Seoul which he described as “the world’s most modern city.” In Seoul, Rydell claimed “the shops never close”, and the inhabitants of South Korea were avid Internet users. According to Rydell, the intensity of the commerce and use of communication technology were signs of modernity, and both were associated with youth.

Just as Tokyo, Seoul was described as being chaotic and overwhelming. It was a “gigantic octopus” that refused to form a natural center. The vastness of the city was intimately connected to technology. The city swept away the writer on “a digital wave…beyond time and space” and the air was “red and yellow as if it were electrified”. The chaos and the overwhelming nature of Seoul was jokingly compared to older images of Asia, in a manner similar to how Gradvall compared an older and newer way to appropriate India. Rydell wrote that Seoul was where the world-weary cynics and seekers of the digital generation went, just as Western seekers went to India before, and when before one could escape the world in a Chinese opium den, the traveler could now disappear into the digital confusion of Seoul and perish from media overexposure. The writer was playing with well entrenched ideas of South/East Asia as a chaotic and dangerous place where the Western traveler was engulfed. The difference was that now this was the result of technology.

The dominant role of technology in Seoul was associated with the young but it was when the writer described Sunchin, a part of Seoul, that age became central. In Sunchin, the streets

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were “bathing in pink youth”. Neighborhoods such as Sunchin were “playgrounds for millions of young South Koreans” and represented “the very young, glossy soul of Seoul.” The youth of Seoul was also implicitly connected to femininity. The foremost symbol of Sunchin was the teenage girls that giggled and flirted with the writer. The giggles of the girls became a symbol for the whole city when Rydell wrote: “Seoul giggles – constantly.” This use of youth as a metaphor occurred as well in Lindskog’s article about Japan from 1999. He wrote: “Youth culture in Japan is very young. The entirety of modern Japan is a young phenomenon […] Tokyo is a very childish city”. In addition, Lindskog also used the image of the giggling city, in connection to youth and flirting, when he wrote that Tokyo was a city that giggled and flirted. The recurring metaphor of flirting, with its associations of innocent, playful sexuality, established a sexual relation between the cities and the writers, and in relation to the male travelling journalists (Anders Rydell and Johan Lindskog) Tokyo and Seoul were implicitly (and in the case of Rydell also explicitly) coded as feminine.

In his book about the image of Japan in American popular culture, Ian Littlewood writes at length about the conventional image of the Japanese woman, and about the geisha as being the most iconic representation of Japanese femininity. As so many other exotic and faraway locations, especially in the Pacific, Japan is repeatedly though of as a land of licentious sexual freedom for the (male) Western traveler to indulge in. Japanese women are accordingly imagined to be sexually available. However, as Littlewood explains, in the representations of Japan this dream of the sexually liberated natives is combined with the more specific fantasies attached to the geisha as the epitome of servile, diminutive and dependent femininity. The geisha is imagined to be a woman highly skilled in the art of love but she is also somewhat paradoxically imagined to be a naïve, shy and innocent child. Her childlike features, her short stature and delicate limbs, are emphasized in relation to the decidedly more robust Western man. In Littlewoods analysis the geisha as a dependent child-woman, is more than just a sexual fantasy, she is also the embodiment of Japan, and the fantasy of possessing the geisha is also a desire to possess Japan.

Lindskog’s assertion that Japan was a childish and flirty city and Rydell’s encounter with the flirty teenagers in Seoul could easily be placed within this historical context of Western depictions of Japanese (and more generally Asian) femininity. In Rydell’s text the giggling girls embodied the giggling city, and their combination of childishness and sexuality was emphasized in the description of Sunchin as a pink “playground” in which the most popular playful activity was dating. The Asian Lolita as a modern-day geisha was also present in Japan but Lindskog gave it a much more negative interpretation by contrasting a sexist Japan
where young women were made up “as little girls, but wearing the clothes of a prostitute”, with a Sweden where, he claimed, men readily do house chores. Likewise, in another article about Tokyo the writer, Johanna Swanberg, claimed that the childish style of Tokyo should not be interpreted as a sign of innocence. She wrote: “The city might be sweetified [sic], but it really is not sweet. There is nothing innocent about Tokyo” (RES Sept ‘06)

According to Littlewood, the subservient and desirable geisha faded into the background as Japan became more powerful. The lack of superiority, felt by the European writers in relation to South/East Asian metropolises, could be an explanation to why the image of the flirty and available Asian girls was not more common in RES, and why for Lindskog, among other writers, the sexual display of Asian women was deplorable rather than desirable. In general, the writers in RES rejected the possibilities of pleasure inherent in the eroticized symbol of the Asian Lolita and geisha. In RES young age was so persistently associated with superiority, for example manifested by a technological knowhow and trendiness that the South/East Asian teenagers possessed and the European writers lacked. Young age, both that of the individuals and of the countries, was more often associated with this superiority than with sexual availability or dependency. Ultimately, youth represented the future.

**Swedish writers in the South/East Asian metropolis: analysis of RES**

In the construction of a cosmopolitan traveler, nationality was downplayed and supposedly emptied of meaning. In RES, nationality was rarely mentioned, but at the same time the home culture of the writers was of course always the implicit norm against which they measured the foreign. This home could be defined as Sweden, Europe or the West, and the identity of the writers could shift between being Swedish and being European or Western, depending on the context. When the origins of the writers were mentioned explicitly, the Swedish identity carried slightly different connotations than the broader European identity, and could be used to make the felt contrasts between the West and Asia clearer.

In Agneta Engqvist’s article about Hong Kong from 1994, titled “Nedräkning” (“Countdown”), the nationality of the writer (and the readers) was mentioned and given a specific meaning. Despite the title of the article, the main theme of the text was not put on the transfer of sovereignty of Hong Kong, but on the contrast between the rich and the poor. Hong Kong was, according to the writer, a city full of contradictions. Some of the high-rise buildings that were “shimmering in white and gold” made even Manhattan look dirty and old-fashioned, but they stood in contrast to the extremely dirty slums. However, the writer
explained, few other than Swedes reacted strongly to this extreme polarization of rich and poor, “the Chinese themselves see the opportunities. The city is teeming with millionaires and billionaires.” Even though Sweden was not mentioned more than in the previously cited quote, it continued to be present as a comparison when Engqvist went on to write that in Hong Kong “there is no social security, but neither are there any significant taxes.” Hong Kong became the opposite of the writer’s country of origin, where the negative aspects of capitalism were supposedly cushioned by the political system and by the solidarity felt by the inhabitants. The Chinese were instead impressed by “the three M’s: money, Mercedes and mobile phones.” The moral aspects of the writer’s arguments were obvious and Sweden’s role as a land of social justice and equality was emphasized in comparison to the glaring inequality of Hong Kong.

This juxtaposition of Asian injustice and Swedish sentiments of equality could also regard gender roles. In his article about Tokyo from June 1999, Johan Lindskog exposed what he saw as clear differences in gender equality through conversations between himself, his girlfriend and Yumiko, a young Japanese woman. Lindskog wrote: “Yumiko is confounded over the fact that a man knows how to use a vacuum cleaner. At first she thinks that Anika [the writer’s girlfriend] is lying. But Anika tells her that I iron as well. And do the dishes. And the laundry. Yumiko looks at us with bewildered eyes. She can’t believe it’s true. Really? Then she looks at me. – But what about you? Your pride?” In Tokyo, there were also young women dressed up as little girls “but wearing the clothes of a prostitute.” According to Lindskog, this “Lolita porn-style”, which he found deploring, was the dominant fashion trend in Japan.

The specifically Swedish perspective that was sometimes mentioned explicitly in RES can be compared to what Amanda Lagerkvist describes as the Linnaean gaze. In her 2005 dissertation Amerikafantasier, Lagerkvist studies Swedish images of the US from 1945 to 1963, and describes various versions of a specifically Swedish gaze in travel writing. One such gaze is the Linnaean gaze, the gaze of the natural scientist who experiences the foreign with distance and rationality. According to Lagerkvist, the Linnaean gaze constitutes a Swedish tradition of constructing an elevated and neutral position that stands outside the world.208 This specific gaze is also a claim to innocence in that it is supposedly purely scientific and therefore lacks any imperial ambitions. For the Swedish Linnaean gaze, this

208 Lagerkvist, 2005, p. 105
separation of imperialism and scientific pursuits is strengthened by the fact that Sweden was largely unsuccessful in colonizing the non-European world.

The perspective of the writers in RES was far from the scientific rationality associated with the Linnaean gaze, but what they shared with this gaze were the claims to innocence connected to a specific Swedish identity. In RES, the writers could withdraw from their Europeanness in order to claim a more innocent Swedish position when this was desired. Engqvist wrote that Hong Kong was the city that proved Kipling wrong, East and West can meet but, she continued, she was sometimes “the target of Chinese coolness or peevishness”, despite the fact that she “has nothing to do with the British manner of superiority.”(May ‘94) Her own position might not be one of elevated neutrality but one of innocence and social righteousness.

A similar position was claimed by Mårten Blomkvist in his article about Hong Kong (referred to above), published in January/February 1997. Writing only a few months before the so-called British handover, the transfer of sovereignty, of Hong Kong to China, which took place on the 1st of July that year, this was naturally the theme of the article. Blomkvist jokingly interrogated into his own feelings about the demise of the British Empire, which implicitly represented European superiority in general. Blomkvist could take a European viewpoint and construct a European “we” in relation to the “them” of Hong Kong. He wrote for example “In Europe we have a tendency to regard houses as being fairly stable. We think that it’s a complex business to build them, contemplate it carefully before we get to it, and imagine that the result will stand for decennia to come”. In Hong Kong, the writer explained, this was not the case. He is also writing from the perspective of a European in his constant evoking of the British Empire, one who was uncertain about whether or not he could express nostalgic sentiments about the era of colonialism. The colonial world that was rapidly disappearing was somehow familiar in contrast to the new global Hong Kong of booming capitalism and gleaming skyscrapers.

Simultaneously, he was not British and could therefore afford to effortlessly distance himself from the Empire when needed. Just as for Engqvist, the innocent nature of the Swedish gaze allowed Blomkvist to withdraw from any problematic aspects of a European heritage of colonialism by emphasizing that this was more specifically a British heritage. Hence, when the nationality of the writers in RES was mentioned explicitly, as a position of innocence, it was often used to mark a clearer distance to both colonial history and contemporary inequalities of South/East Asia than what could be done with a European identity. The representation of South/East Asian capitalism, consumer patterns and the
construction of skyscrapers in RES was of course an image of South/East Asia that was infused with European and Swedish anxieties and desires. It was thus in equal measures an image of Europe and Sweden that was constructed.

Colonial nostalgia and commercial sex in the businessman’s South/East Asia: analysis of Business Traveller Asia/Pacific

As I have mentioned briefly in the chapter on identity, in its early years of publication Business Traveller A/P gave much attention to prostitution and other types of commercial sex. I have chosen to place the further analysis of this topic in this chapter on the depiction of South/East Asia because the relation between the business man and the Asian sex worker was central to the magazine’s image of South/East Asia. This is central because it was connected to perceptions on Asian femininity but also to nostalgic longings for a colonial Asian past, which I will go further into later in this chapter.

Even though in the ‘80s the sex trade was practically always mentioned in the longer articles about a destination, it was often dismissed in Western locations such as Poland, Berlin, Frankfurt and London while it was given much more attention and approval in Asian destinations, in particular Bangkok and Manila. The prostitutes of London were dismissed as “either very expensive or very sordid” (Jan ‘85) The sex trade in Asian cities was sometimes the exclusive object of an article. A writer calling himself O.D. Carruthers compared the scenes in Bangkok and Manila in an article titled “A bar crawlers manifesto”, where he provided the reader with a detailed guide to the red-light districts of Manila and Bangkok. (Nov ‘83) He wrote, among other things, that “prices for drinks and the companion to go with them are reversed in Manila from Bangkok; drinks are cheap and ladies – comparatively speaking – are not.” The sex trade was also given attention in articles that were not about a specific destination but on situations such as how to avoid embarrassment when bringing a paid companion to ones hotel, and the safety issues of doing so.

Articles about the South/East Asian sex trade were often aimed at providing both a titillating view of the exotic and erotic delights of the East as well as a practical guide. An article in the February issue of 1985, under the section title “Leisure”, was titled “It takes a seasoned approach now to by ‘spring’ in Japan”, and informed the reader on how to take part in the Japanese sex trade by detailing the different establishments, the prices to be expected and useful phone numbers. Likewise, an article in the July issue of 1983, again written by
O.D. Carruthers, was titled “The best rub in Bangkok” and was a detailed guide to the massage parlors of the Thai capital. For the November issue of ‘84 the cover story is a lengthy comparison between the services offered in Bangkok and Singapore. In the early ‘80s the sex trade was often described in the same meticulous and detailed way that the writers described hotels and airports, listing the various services provided and the prices. In one article about Singapore the writer even included the “billy boys”, transvestite prostitutes. Besides this brief mention of transvestite sex workers though, the prostitute was always a South/East Asian woman.

The magazine’s interest in the sex trade was not without controversy. During the 80s and 90s it was repeatedly discussed in the readers’ letters, sometimes criticized and questioned and sometimes applauded by the readers. A female reader wrote: “As a recent female tourist to Bangkok I was quite offended by the blatant promotion by legitimate magazines such as Business Traveller and the Thai government of prostitution for foreign businessmen and male tourists […] As a businessperson, I will also never purchase another one of your magazines.” (Oct ‘83) Another reader claimed that if the magazine were to refrain from reporting on the sex trade it would “result in a massive flow of subscription cancellations.” (Aug ‘85) The reader Graham U. Johnson from Manila claimed: “after hours’ information is both interesting and, I am sure, often useful.” (Oct ‘85) One reader, Clifford Hocking from Melbourne, suggested that a “fleshpots” section “would be an enjoyable feature occasionally – where the action is and the tourist traps to avoid”. (Sept ‘86) Even though the sex trade was not as popular a topic as the so called travel gripes, i.e. complaints about the service of airlines and hotels, it was discussed repeatedly throughout the ‘80s.

Even in the late ‘80s, after the re-launch, when there were fewer articles about commercial sex, there were complaints from readers about the references to the sex trade. In the January issue of ‘89 a Ferdinand Mauser from Japan complained that the magazine was underestimating the target audience. He wrote:

You wrongly assume that the typical business traveller is under 35 years, oversexed and under-educated. That image is an insult when applied to most travellers I see and regularly talk to on business and first class pacific flights. Most of us are middle-aged and older, well educated family men. Contrary to what you may think, we are not preoccupied with whoring around and fast living […] Pictures of red light districts as leadings to your article, quotes with the word Sodom, as in your October issue, are sorry indeed.
In the March issue of the same year another traveler wrote to the magazine to defend the publication of articles mentioning the sex trade and describing these articles as being “light and entertaining”.

In the ‘90s, many of the articles, especially those about nightlife in Bangkok or Manila, explicitly took a distance to red-light districts. An article in the October issue of ‘92 was titled “Stalled at the red lights?” and the writer started by writing: “believe it or not, Bangkok nights aren’t solely devoted to the flesh.” Despite this explicit aim to present something other than Patpong the article was illustrated by a large, red-tinted picture of a bikini clad “Patpong bar girl” blowing a kiss at the reader. Further into the article was a smaller picture of two scantily clad dancers on a stage. Likewise, an article about Manila claimed that the city’s nightlife offered more than the famed red-light district of Ermita, but the writer still began the text with the girlie bars. The article was also illustrated by a large, red-tinted picture of four women in bikinis dancing on a stage. Most of the articles that intended to inform the reader about alternatives to the red-light districts were illustrated by pictures of go go-dancers.

Even in the late ‘80s and in the ‘90s the magazine still published texts about the sex trade, massage parlors were occasionally mentioned in the destination reports, but it did not command the space it did before the relaunch of the magazine in 1988. A titillating article about prostitutes in Taipei hotels, from July ‘90 claimed that “Taiwanese women are renowned for their charms, and those who ply them for a living abound in Taipei’s busy hotels.” The sex trade could also be mentioned in passing. In an article about Vietnam the writer presented a destination by writing: “Halong Bay is definitely a daytime place, though karaoke bars and other nightspots are lively during summer months. There’s even a glittery massage parlour behind one of the main hotels.” (Feb ‘93) Information about prostitution was often mentioned briefly toward the end of the longer articles, which hints at discretion. In an article about Shanghai the writer ended by writing: “Shanghai’s cruisers are notably more glamorously attired than the average local women. Many approach prospective clients by asking for a dance.” (Aug ‘91) In Dec ‘96, the writer ended an article about Kaohsiung, Taiwan, by writing: “few streets seem to be without barbers' shops. For those not in the know, if the windows are open to view and people are getting their hair cut within, it's a hairdresser's. Otherwise, and the tell-tale sign is a particularly festive barber's pole, you're in for a less conventional close shave.” The tone was humorous and noncommittal. It was up to the reader whether the information was meant to target potential clients or those who strove to avoid it, or if it was perhaps just meant to entertain. In an article from March 2002 about Saigon however, prostitution was removed from any association with entertainment and
harmless fun when it was placed under the title “Safety” and mentioned together with drug pushers and drug users.

At the end of the ‘80s there were also a few nostalgic articles about the demise of the sex trade. In the April issue of ‘89, John Hoskin wrote nostalgically about Wanchai, the infamous bar district of Hong Kong, in an article titled “Goodbye Susie Wong”. He wrote: “The true Wanchai was never a physical entity; it was an atmosphere, a flavour, a sense of seediness.” In the ‘90s however the sex trade was increasingly berated and criticized. Toward the mid- to late ‘90s the information about massage parlors and escort services that were a common part of destination reports before had all but disappeared. The disappearance of the sex industry from the pages of Business Traveller A/P was connected to the general change of identity in the magazine.

**Casual colonial nostalgia**

From the early ‘80s, when Business Traveller A/P began publication, at the end of the Cold War period, to the end of the 00s Asia, as well as the rest of the world, changed in fundamental ways. In the early ‘80s, Hong Kong was still a British colony, the Soviet Union and the East bloc existed, the Philippines were ruled by Ferdinand Marcos and China had just opened up to business with the West. Japan had yet to be plagued by major economic crisis. It was still possible to presume that the business traveler was a man. There was no discussion about environmentalism and the impact of jet travel, and globalization was never mentioned. Even though one of the writers contends that the British Empire was “defunct”, the world view of Business Traveller A/P in the early years was very much formed by a culture associated with the colonial elite and with colonial privilege. South/East Asia was a region where this could be played out.

In the early ‘80s, nostalgia for colonial times was prevalent in Business Traveller A/P. Hong Kong was repeatedly referred to as the Colony (June ‘82). Colonialism was sometimes referred to in a casual and humorous manner, as in an article with the title “Who were Asia’s best colonisers?” (December ‘82) The colonial era was imagined as a time of adventure. The colonial adventurer was best embodied by the writer Donald Wise who chronicled many of his adventurous travels in colonial Asia. In the June issue of 1983 he wrote about his memories of travelling on the Malayan Railway during the Malayan Emergency, the conflict between the colonial authorities and the Communist guerrilla in Malaysia. In the July issue of the same year he “captures the spirit of adventurous travel as he recalls his epic journey
through the historic Suez Canal.” In the November issue of ‘83 he “recalls long gone days of the Raj, when dreams were sweet but reality often harsher.” The article, titled “Privileged days when a chap didn’t have to dress himself”, started with the experience of being dressed by a servant. The travel writer was sometimes walking in the footsteps of the colonial elite, travelling to destinations they had established. In an article about Malaysia the writer claimed that breaking away from KL “is nothing new – people here have been doing it for over a century […] it was the British who built the hill stations in Malaysia more than a century ago.” (August ‘84) This is comparable to what Tim Edensor writes in *Tourism at the Taj*, about how the same buildings that were constructed for colonial officials are now used by the tourist industry.\(^{209}\)

The character of the business traveler is a distant relative to the postimperial English gentleman abroad that Holland and Huggan find in their analysis of British postwar travel writers such as Eric Newby. The postimperial gentleman is nostalgic about Empire but expresses it through self-deprecating humor and amateurism. By using parody it becomes possible to relive the glories of imperialism. Holland and Huggan writes: “Reading at times almost like an inventory of Orientalist myths, the narrative is suffused with affectionate memories of Britain’s civilizing mission in the East.”\(^{210}\) The writers of *Business Traveller A/P* have their causal and romanticizing perspective on colonialism in common with the postimperial gentleman. Another British character that is more pertinent to compare with however is James Bond. According to geographer James Dittmer, James Bond embodies a British Cold War fantasy, in which the demise of the empire is ignored, and the presence of Britain in exotic non-Western places continues to be essential. Dittmer even points out that “when Bond is undercover he often travels as a sales man, the conceit being that British businessmen overseas are so natural, so expected, that he can go anywhere in the world and not seem unusual.”\(^{211}\) In *Business Traveller A/P* the Cold War identity of the business traveler was comfortable, providing meaning to the role of the business traveler in the world and his relation to others.

There was a constant presence of what might be best described as casual colonial nostalgia in the magazine. Colonialism and the colonial era did not occupy a central place in the articles but it was repeatedly mentioned and very rarely in a negative sense. Colonialism

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served as a frame of reference and, in its capacity of a long-gone historical era, as something perceived as authentic in the same manner as the traditional and the local. In an article about Ipoh the writer expressed a nostalgic attitude to the town’s colonial past:

But for a feeling of old Ipoh, take a taxi to the playing field, where local cricketers sweat on Sunday outside the Ipoh Club. Along one side is the rickety FMS bar and restaurant (2 Jalan Sultan Idris Shah; tel: 540591), the only part of the old FMS (Federal Malay States) hotel still open. Bills still bear the road’s old name – Jalan Brewster – and shortly after opening time at 10am staff assume Westerners want beer or whisky. The place is rich with atmosphere; swing half-doors open onto the street and air conditioning has not replaced the wall fans.

As the quote exemplifies, casual colonial nostalgia was not a political statement in support of colonial administration, it was rather an attitude of longing attached to symbols of a British presence in Asia.

Colonialism was also a style, often architectural, that the writers, as well as the readers, could comment on favorably. Another way to connect to the historical was to make reference to a well-known writer that was associated both with adventurous travel and with a specific historical period. The most referred to writer in Business Traveller A/P was Joseph Conrad. In an article about going by boat on the Chao Phya, the writer made ample use of Joseph Conrad as a link to the past. (Nov ‘88) He even stayed at the luxurious Joseph Conrad suite at the Oriental. “I didn’t come face to face with the ghost of Joseph Conrad at the Oriental, but I did feel some of his excitement as his ship edged its way up-river and he saw Bangkok for the first time.”

There were also places that conjured memories of the colonial era, often destinations in India. Articles about hill stations almost always mentioned the days of the Raj. In an article about Bombay the writer, Malavika Sanghvi, claimed that “you can revel in nostalgia – in the days of the Raj – at places like the Yacht Club, the Gateway of India or the Victoria Terminus.” (May ‘85) An article about Tasman, in the September issue of ‘93, was titled “Colonial Chic” but it was an article about Vietnam in the same issue that took the reminiscence of colonialism furthest by being titled “Forever France”. (Sept ‘93) An article about Malaysia, where the ambience of two hotels in the highlands “captures a bygone age”, was titled “The Raj revisited”. (Feb ‘90) An article about resorts in Sarawak was titled “The last White Rajah” (June ‘89)
Another way of referring to colonial history was to use old names that were no longer in use. Sri Lanka was repeatedly referred to as “Serendip” and the word Raj was repeatedly used in articles about India, both in texts in which the writer expressed nostalgia about colonial history. In the ‘80s there was a discussion on the letters pages about which names should be used, Peking or Beijing and Bombay or Mumbai. The magazine defended the use of the Westernized version while a few years later the indigenized names were used widely. In September ‘85 a writer used the name Canton, while the city was called Guangzhou in ‘87. In the September issue of ‘88, in an article about Guangzhou the writer put Canton in parenthesis. In response to a reader that asked why the magazine still used the name Peking, the editor answered that “Peking has been the accepted English name of the Chinese capital for centuries […] When Chinese speakers start saying ‘Washington’ and ‘Paris’ in conversation instead of ‘Huashengdun’ and ‘Bali’, we will consider using Beijing” (Aug ‘95).

The colonial past could also represent more innocent and cleaner times. In an article about environmental issues the writer claimed that “The Asia of the late 20th century, however, is not that of Kipling, Conrad or Maugham. That haze above the city is less heat and dust than diesel fumes … the rivers are not pungent with rotting vegetation but choking from chemical pollution.” (Aug ‘91) Colonialism was often referred to as a part of Asian history. In an article about Penang from December ‘88 the writer made a passing reference to colonial history when he wrote: “Tourists still bask on Penang’s Batu Ferringhi beach, but the island where Captain Francis Light founded a British trading post in 1786 is working hard to re-establish itself as a commercial centre after being long overshadowed by Singapore.” In this quote colonialism was not given any specific meaning or role to play in the text but was mentioned as merely a historical fact that placed the tourist destination in a historical frame that the writer and the readers understood. In an article from August ‘00, about Cebu in the Philippines, the colonial history overshadowed any previous history when the writer said: “Start where things began is the obvious advice. In Cebu, this means the spot on the shore that Miguel Lopez de Legazpi decided would be an ideal springboard from which to launch Spain’s colonisation”. European colonization was the beginning despite the fact that the writer had previously in the same text mentioned how Cebu was a significant pre-colonial center.

The writers could compare themselves with a colonial adventurer or explorer even when they were not explicitly walking in the footsteps of the earlier travelers. In an article about the Kinabalu, the highest peak in Southeast Asia, the writer, Jane Hepburn, wrote: “Times have changed considerably since the early explorers were guided to the summit by local Kadazan people, who also carried up basket-loads of chicken to sacrifice to the spirits of their dead. Sir
Hugh Low, a British colonial officer who made the first recorded climb in 1851, found getting to the mountain through dense jungle from the coast harder than the climb itself. [...] On the whole, we had an easier time of it than Sir Hugh.” (March ‘88) The colonial traveler became a reference that the contemporary writer could make use of in order to situate herself in a history of travel but she did not compare herself with the colonial official, and he was not mentioned again in the text. The colonial history of travelling in the region was not in any way the theme of the article, but merely something the writer made a casual reference to. This text also exemplifies that women writers could make reference to male colonial explorers just as easily as their male counterparts.

In the January/February issue of 2010 Margie T Logarta used colonial history in a similar way when she wrote “During the colonial times, word-of-mouth praise lured French soldiers from their distant outposts in Dien Bien Phu to the area for some well-earned R&R [...] Following in their footsteps in later years were those intrepid backpackers, the Lonely Planet generation, who kept the spirit of adventure alive, enjoying homestays in the traditional wooden stilt houses and spending their days trekking or biking through the countryside.” Tourism was imagined as following in the footsteps of colonial travel. The casual reference to “colonial times” further trivializes colonialism by neglecting the realities of anticolonial warfare otherwise associated with Dien Bien Phu.

Occasionally the colonial reference was the main theme of the text, as exemplified by a text about an Indian hill station in which the writer dwelled on the remnants of the Empire. She visited a graveyard and wrote: “As I pass by, I wonder idly who remembers them, resting on the hillside above Ooty Lake.” (Sept ‘88) (also Hotel in Ooty, Sept ‘89) A reference to colonial travelers as predecessors could also be more mundane. In an article about the expatriate community in KL, from Nov ‘87 the writer described how life for the expats used to mimic that of older colonial elites: “expatriates had lived much in the style of the British estate managers or colonial officials. The men's bar at the old Selangor Club was the focus on social life (women were forbidden to enter it).” The articles in Business Traveller A/P used colonial history in a casual manner but it was in an advertisement that these ideas could be expressed more directly. In an advertisement for Airlanka the copy read: “Admit it. Deep in your soul there’s a pompous colonial just dying to put on a safari suit and pith helmet and bark orders at the hired help” (Business Traveller UK edition April ‘99)

The relation between the business traveler and Asian women as it was constructed in the editorial material of Business Traveller A/P, in texts and images, was mirrored in the advertisement for Thai Airways and Korean Air. In the ‘80s both companies made reference
to the myth of Asian hospitality as something rooted in a specifically national character. Thai and Korean women were depicted as the bearers of an ancient, yet also somewhat paradoxically national, culture that was essential to the modern flagship carriers. This was shown in the advertisements by a combination of traditional and modern. In an advertisement for Thai Airways published in *Business Traveller A/P* in October ‘85, a large picture shows an elderly woman and a child in a traditional Thai setting wearing traditional clothes. The woman is teaching the girl how to do the Thai greeting, Wai. In a much smaller picture a young woman is showing the same gesture. The copy reads:

> Centuries old traditions are still handed down from generation to generation in Thailand. A perfect example is the Thai greeting of Wai. It is made with hands clasped together, head bowed as if in prayer, indicating respect and a willingness to serve others. Passengers of Thai are greeted with this same graceful gesture as they are welcomed on board. And it is this natural aptitude for hospitality which has made Thai’s Royal Orchid Service the envy of every other airline.

The ads for Korean Air used the same combination of the traditional and the modern, and the same claim that traditional, and implicitly natural, characteristics of the nation’s women were essential to the service on board. The images depicted women wearing traditional clothes and occupied with traditional chores. The traditional Korean woman of the adverts is meticulous, graceful and skilful, warm if perhaps a little bit shy (Aug. ‘85), and so are the female flight attendants that are sometimes shown in the images. In both the advertisements for Thai Airways and Korean Air it was the picture of traditional life that was emphasized by being much larger than the image of the modern equivalent. The ads tried to establish a close connection between the national spirit, the women as embodiments of tradition and the flag carriers as the modern day keepers of a national spirit.

It is also worth mentioning an advertisement by Royal Brunei that expressed the same idea of a traditional hospitality embodied by the young women working for the airline. The large image of the ad shows an air hostess servicing a male passenger. The text read: “She may only be 23 years of age, but her training began centuries ago”. The copy also mentioned “a rich heritage of gentle caring manners”, typical of the Bruneian culture. (*Business Traveller* UK, Feb ‘95)

Flight attendants, portrayed as young, attractive yet motherly and attentive women serving male customers, are the most common theme in airline advertising, but it is only in the ads for Asian companies that this close connection is made between women, tradition and service.
Even though it is never explicitly present in the text, the claim that Asian culture is naturally hospitable and courteous implies a Western culture in which there is no such tradition or in which such a tradition has been lost. The opposite of the Asian airhostess is the Western woman, representing western society. These ads in which Asian women continued the traditions of their cultures also communicated that the companies retained their traditions and hence their connection to specific national characteristics despite being global businesses.

The casual colonial nostalgia expressed by the writers of Business Traveller A/P should also be connected to the relation between the male business traveler and South/East Asian women, or rather the myth of South/East Asian femininity that I described in the subchapter on gender, since prostitution described in the magazine was very much a part of the myth of the exotic and erotic East, and intimately associated with the colonial era. The sex trade was linked with the myth of Asia as wild, associated for example with the image of Shanghai as the Paris of the Orient. In the article “On a Shanghai High”, the writer made extensive use of the myth of Shanghai, and the city was itself a prostitute: “In its glorious decades before the second world war, Shanghai was the ‘Paris of the East’, ‘The Whore of Asia’, the richest, wildest, most decadent of the five China Coast Treaty Ports. Every sin, every delightful pleasure of the East was here: opium dens, brothels, casinos, jai alai stadiums, grey-hound and horse tracks.” (July ‘94) The sinfulness laid in the sheer plenitude of pleasures.

In the image of the beautiful and diminutive Asian woman several Western ideas about the Orient are reflected. She is the serviceable air stewardess who embodies traditional Asian culture, i.e. she is inherently apt at giving service and, more implicitly, inherently subservient, trained throughout the centuries. At the other opposite stands the bar girl and go-go dancer who embodies the chaotic Asia, belonging to that same Asia where Auberon Waugh smoked opium. These two characters can be interpreted as being less of opposites and more of two sides of the same sexually available Asian woman, while also serving the function of marking out the difference of Asia.

**Conclusion of the case study**

East and South East Asia played a crucial role for both magazines albeit in somewhat different ways and for different reasons. In RES, South/East Asia was already in the early ‘90s the region where a new global world came into play. During the late ‘90s and early ‘00s South/East Asia also came to symbolize the style and consumerism that was held high in RES as a lifestyle magazine. Japan came to be the very symbol of a global Metropolis, in the
geographical imagination of RES seemingly bypassing Western cities as the center of the global world. Asia as a new global leader was treated as a cause for much fascination but at the same time as a threat. The writers strove to create a global consumerist identity while they also expressed feelings of inferiority as Europeans. A superior European or Swedish identity was made use of when the writers criticized the rapid, chaotic and coldhearted Asian capitalism. South/East Asia thus embodied the threat of globalization as a lack of control.

In Business Traveller A/P the role of Asia was drastically transformed during the time period of the study. From the wild and exotic Asia where the business traveler could indulge in forbidden pleasures, for example in the British colony of Hong Kong, Asia came instead to symbolize economic development, as it did in RES. This is significant for Business Traveller A/P in a more general sense since it was so fundamentally connected to the identity of the implied reader. It was in the relation to South/East Asian females that the business traveler was defined as a privileged white man. Even if the servile Asian woman, the air stewardess or the go-go dancer, never disappeared completely she lost her central position in the world of Business Traveller A/P. The writers of Business Traveller A/P where on location when previously “closed” communist countries where opened up for business. The destination that changes the most in Business Traveller A/P is China that goes from Mao uniforms to being the trendiest in around two decades.
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