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Gratitude to all. This is our work.

**MIGRANTS & LIFESTYLE IN PERMACULTURE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN
PORTUGAL: PROFILE OF THREE CASE STUDIES**

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: Lifestyle Migrations, Rural Idyll, Counterurbanisation, Permaculture, Sustainable Communities.

This investigation aims to reveal the case of the foreign migrants that come to Portugal with the goal to live a lifestyle more in tune with the basic ethics and principles of permaculture and the case of the Portuguese migrants that often leave the big cities in search for a more natural and sustainable life in the countryside. These movements of people and ideas sometimes gives birth to intentional or non-intentional communities that work, change, built and experience the land, the spaces and the interpersonal relationships of the context they're in. Who are these people? Do they fit in the "lifestyle migrations" concept? What is permaculture? What ideas do they bring if they do bring something? Why Portugal? And what is the place of this kind of migration in the Portuguese migratory context? These are some of the questions that we will discuss on this investigation with a methodological basis of semi-structured interviews and fieldwork observation of three different case studies: Vale da Sarvinda, Vale da Lama and Várzea da Gonçalves.

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: “*Lifestyle Migrations*”, “Rural Idílico”, Contraurbanização, Permacultura, Comunidades Sustentáveis.

Esta investigação pretende dar a conhecer tanto o caso dos migrantes estrangeiros que vêm para Portugal comprar terra com vista a viver um estilo de vida mais em conformidade com os princípios e as éticas de base da permacultura, bem como o caso dos migrantes nacionais que muitas vezes deixam as grandes cidades à procura de uma vida mais natural e sustentável no campo. Estes movimentos de pessoas e de ideias por vezes dão origem a comunidades intencionais ou não e que trabalham, alteram, constroem, experienciam a terra, os espaços e as relações interpessoais do contexto em que se inserem. Quem são estas pessoas? Podemos dizer que elas se integram num movimento de “*lifestyle migrations*”? Que ideias trazem se é que trazem algo? O que é a permacultura? Porquê Portugal? E qual o lugar deste tipo de migração no contexto migratório Português? São apenas algumas das perguntas que iremos abordar ao longo desta investigação com base metodológica entrevistas semi-estruturadas e observação no terreno tendo como casos de estudo três projectos distintos: o Vale da Sarvinda, o Vale da Lama e a Várzea da Gonçalves.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PDC – Permaculture Design Course

PND – Programa Novas Descobertas (New Discoveries Programme)

PRODER – Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural (Rural Development Programme)

UN – United Nations Organization

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UK – United Kingdom

VdG – Várzea da Gonçala

VdL – Vale da Lama

VdS – Vale da Sarvinda

INTRODUCTION

The starting point for this research came along from the possibility of combining two apparently different subjects: permaculture and the migrations studies. One can ask “why this connection between permaculture and migrations?” Because they’re two subjects I’m very interested in learning more about them and, since I had to do a study on migrations, I thought about connecting it to the permaculture approach that has been spreading quite strongly in the last couple of years, even becoming a “fashionable” theme nowadays, although still many people have never heard about it.

From an academic background in Political Science and International Relations, what we find interesting in permaculture (and not only in permaculture but also in the Transition Initiatives¹) is that it offers new and more possibilities of thinking, designing and re-designing ourselves and the world around us in a continuum way, trying to respect the people and the planet.

When we first started visiting these kind of projects more or less three years ago, reading about it and meeting people who had a pretty different lifestyle from our own and from what one assumed to be the “normal lifestyle” everyone had, we truly felt our mind becoming wider because what these people do is to jump out of the ordinary boundaries in search of what they consider to be a better life. We’re not talking about idyllic scenarios; we’re talking about real persons who have their ups and downs, their own needs and difficulties, as we will observe.

In order to survive we all need to suppress our basic needs, but what does it mean to have a better life? Does it mean to have a well paid-job? Does it mean to have a nice house in the capital? Does it mean to have a fast car? Does it mean to have money to buy good quality food? Or does it mean something else? Maybe you will earn well but you aren’t happy in what you do, maybe you have the perfect house but

¹ The Transition Initiatives can be a town, village, city, school, neighbourhood initiating a community-led process to respond to the global challenges of climate change, economic hardship and cheap energy towards a more resilient, sustainable and local community. The Transition Initiatives are part of the Transition Network, available at <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/support/what-transition-initiative>

you don't feel at home, maybe you have a big car but you don't share it with anyone, maybe the money won't be enough to have access to real quality food... As Sardinha says, defining "*the good life*" is subjective (Sardinha, n/l, p.3). We would like to explore the paths of the people who question "what does it mean to have a good life for me?" And here is where the idea of "lifestyle migrations" (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Benson, 2015; Sardinha, n/l) comes into picture because now, in the 21st Century, although we still have many migration situations ahead, like war and natural disaster refugees and others, we are assisting to a new kind of migrant that doesn't leave his or her home country just for the (justified) purpose of searching for better material conditions of life that, for several reasons, were not available in the home country, but we now have migrants that, in their search for a better lifestyle, don't seek only the material conditions for their wellbeing. In most cases they already had those conditions before. They're in search for something else, hard to define globally, usually choosing a place more in connection with nature to try to find this "something else" constructed from pre-existent perception and information. Interestingly Portugal seems like a good destination for that purpose. That's why we will try to understand if this kind of migrants in permaculture sustainable communities in Portugal can be integrated in this concept of lifestyle migrations.

In order to answer this initial question for the investigation, we will need to understand who are these people that constitute these permaculture projects or communities in Portugal: are they only "young people"? Are they all Portuguese? If not, where do they come from? What is their social background? Why permaculture? And what is Permaculture? And what does permaculture means to them?

In the academic literature, the concept of lifestyle migration is usually defined as relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for several reasons, signify for the migrant a better quality of life (Benson, 2015; Torkington, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Ethnographic accounts have noticed a narrative of "escape" permeating migrants accounts of the decision to migrate, further emphasised by their negative presentations of life before migrating and using language like "*making a fresh start*" and "*a new beginning*" (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010). Since this is not an easy concept to define, we can try to

understand lifestyle migrations by what it's not, that is, the economic kind of migration more common in the Portuguese immigration framework (Pires, 2003; Machado, 2002). According to UNESCO, the dominant forms of migration can be distinguished by motives (economic, family reunion, refugees) or legal status (irregular migration, controlled migration, free migration) of those concerned². But can we consider these migrants in permaculture sustainable communities as belonging to this "lifestyle migration" concept? That's what we're going to analyse. Also, we would like to contextualize this specific kind of migration into the framework of the migrations movements towards Portugal, trying to understand if this is a common or a residual type.

In terms of limitations to the present investigation we point out the time limitation that did not allowed us to stay longer in the fieldwork in the communities so that we could develop a deeper understanding of their dynamics; the technical problems we had with two interviews that forced us to remake the questions through email and this cost us the lack of one of them, since only one of the interviewees answered on time; the fact that we wrote this work in English, but we chose to do it since it seem to us that we could reach, in this way, not only the foreign people that we have talked through out this investigation but also in the attempt to reach more people's attention to this particular subject and, the fact that this theme is of particular interest for the investigator, might also constitute an involvement limitation to the present dissertation.

The rural idyll is one of the three types of lifestyle migration proposed by Benson & O'Reilly (2009), where rural locations are imagined to offer lifestyle migrants a sense of going back in time, of going back to the land and to the simple life as well as a sense of community spirit (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). In this movement there's the "back-to-the-land" kind of migrants who are mainly countercultural people who relocate to the rural in order to combine agricultural smallholding with a degree of self-sufficiency in what some authors have called "*low impact development*" (Halfacree, 2014). While facing mundane complications, the quest for a simpler way of

² Available at <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/migrant/>

life “*simply is not as simple as they had first imagined*” (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015, p.16). Since this notion of lifestyle migration, and more specifically the type in search of the rural idyll still hasn’t been the focus of deeper research as pointed out by the authors (Benson & O’Reilly, 2015; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009) we would like to make our own small personal contribution to it.

The dissertation is divided in six chapters. In the first chapter an introductory migrations theoretical framework is made with reference to *lifestyle migration*, *counterurbanisation*, the rural idyll and is followed by a theoretical second chapter about permaculture that talks about the ethics and principles, the permaculture movement in Portugal and tries to answer the question: what is permaculture? In the third chapter is the methodology; in the fourth chapter a small presentation of the three case studies: Vale da Sarvinda, Vale da Lama and Várzea da Gonçala. In the fifth chapter is the analysis of the interviews and in the last chapter a brief reflexion about migrations and permaculture.

CHAPTER I: MIGRATIONS THEORETICAL FRAME

As Castles (2005) says, international migrations are an important way of social change in the contemporary world. The economic, social, demographic and political changes that occur within certain societies make people to migrate and this migrations help producing new changes in the origin country and in the welcoming country. There are few countries today that are not both countries of emigration and immigration and Portugal is not an exception. Since its long history of European expansion with a main role in the colonial migrations and later after 1945, the social and political conditions forced thousands of Portuguese people to migrate mostly to Central Europe and South America. Since the political change in 1974 and with the adhesion to the European Union, Portugal has become an immigrant's country together with the rest of the South Europe. In 2000 was recorded that 21.000 Portuguese left the country, but 12.600 returned and 18.000 immigrants entered the country from lusophone Africa, Brazil and the European Union (Castles, 2005). The majority of the immigration towards Portugal is a more economical kind of migration, that is, in search for better economical and life conditions since, usually, in the origin countries there are high levels of unemployment. The origin countries are not only from previous Portuguese colonies, like Angola, Brazil, Guinea, Cape-Verde (Pires, 2003; Machado, 20002), but also from China, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Ukraine (Rocha-Trindade, 2009; Pires, 2003; Ávila & Alves, 1993). More recently, the country has been elected as a privileged destiny for the middle and middle-high classes Northern-Europeans, mainly from the UK, that choose the Algarve region as their favourite destination for good weather, leisure and to enjoy their retirement (Torkington, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). If this kind of migration in permaculture sustainable communities in Portugal fits in any of these theoretical frameworks, that's something we will try to understand.

In less than 50 years some parts of Europe were transformed from a rural and artisanal society to an urban, technic and industrialized society. Thanks to the technical and scientific progress mankind sees a world ahead like their ancestors would never dream of: the abundant one. Never before in History a human community has been

able to provide minimum security and minimum supply possession to most of its members: food, hygiene, comfort, health, knowledge and leisure (Pelt, 1991). More recently, in Portugal, due to the economical crisis some of these immigrants left the country and a significant number of Portuguese, particularly young and educated, migrated abroad creating a phenomenon usually called “brain-drain” (Araújo & Ferreira, 2013; Pires, 2003).

Considering the object of this study, the migrants in permaculture communities in Portugal, we will try to understand their motivations. Do these people migrate for environmental reasons and, therefore, can we consider them as “environmental refugees” or “environmental migrants” (Black et al, 2011)? Do they migrate because of social and political issues (Castles, 2005)? Or can we consider them as lifestyle migrants (Benson & O’Reilly, 2015; Torkington, 2010; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009)?

Nevertheless the considerations of Pelt (1991) about marginal tendencies, the author is quite sceptical and doesn’t believe that in the West the dream of returning to rural societies will ever happen, unless there is any global cataclysm. Even saying that the nostalgia of the past is an impasse for the biologist or the historian and an impossible project for the sociologist, we ask: is this movement a return to the past like Pelt says, or is it more a step towards the future taking in account traditional knowledge and the past experience?

Some authors developed the term *lifestyle migration* in order to better understand these contemporary migrations in search of a better lifestyle and that’s what we are going to analyse in the next section of this chapter.

1. Lifestyle Migration

According to Benson and O’Reilly (2009) for the past few years, the term “lifestyle migration” has been used to refer to an increasing number of people who took the decision to migrate based on their belief that there is a more fulfilling way of life available to them elsewhere. And although this is a growing phenomenon, it’s

implications for the authors are still little understood for both societies and individuals (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009).

Lifestyle migration is mainly motivated for the search of a "better quality" of life (as one could say for all kind of migrations), being the choice of living abroad often conceptualized as an escape from the consumer-orientated lifestyles and in this type of migration there's some difficulty in defining the boundaries between migration and tourism, being the main difference that tourism is a temporary situation planning to return to the home country within a specific time period, whereas lifestyle migrants might not have such plans (Korpela, 2010; Torkington, 2010). However, it's important to stress out the limitations of a concept that has broadly been developed in an inductive way, especially through qualitative and ethnographic research, which makes it rather difficult to conceptualize empirically (Benson & O'Reilly, 2015). Also, if it aims for something more in terms of conceptualization, it needs to reinforce its connections with migration studies and the research on urban and rural development (Benson, 2015).

As perceived for some authors (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009), lifestyle migrants are individuals relatively affluent of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for several reasons, signify for the migrant a better quality of life. Ethnographic researches have noticed a narrative of "escape" as a motivation to the decision to migrate, further emphasised by their negative presentations of life before migrating and using language like "making a fresh start" and "a new beginning" (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010). Interestingly this notion of "escape" was already pointed out by Pelt in 1991 (Pelt, 1991). But what are these people escaping from? It's clear for some authors that "escape" and "utopia" are themes that deserve further investigation through both historical and cultural analysis (Benson & Olsbaldiston, 2015). And what does it mean to have a better life? Is there a universal answer for that question?

The authors proposed three different types (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009): the residential tourist, the bourgeois bohemian and the rural idyll seeker. Very shortly, the first type refers to coastal lifestyle where people search for leisure, good weather, relaxation (Torkington, 2010), escape and "*tourism as a way of life*" (Benson & O'Reilly,

2009, p.5) and it's mainly retired Northern-European people who seek the South of Europe in search for these conditions (Torkington, 2010; Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). The second type, the bourgeois bohemian, is characterized by migrants who are looking for alternative lifestyles in spaces with bohemian ideals or certain spiritual, artistic or creative aspirations, as explored by Korpela (Korpela, 2010). But the "rural idyll" type we will explore it a little bit more deeply since we believe it's the closest framework for our permaculture lifestyle migrants.

2. Counterurbanisation and the rural idyll

"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived"

Henry David Thoreau *in Walden*

Counterurbanisation is a relatively recent concept within the international academic literature and it has been considered as a chaotic concept (Sexto, 2009). Usually defined as the physical movement of people out of cities and metropolitan areas towards more rural areas and it has in fact represented, for the last four decades, the net migration of people to more rural areas in a more permanent relocation (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Halfacree, 2014; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Castanheiro, 2012). In fact the most-documented motivation mentioned in the *counterurbanisation* literature is the rural idyll or the pull of the countryside as a way of life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). As noticed by Halfacree, there used to be a socio-spatial opposition between urban and rural, being the urban connoted with changeability and speed, while the rural reproduced stasis, but this is no longer an accurate representation (Halfacree, 2014). As said by Gonçalo Ribeiro Telles, Landscape Architect and one of the first Portuguese politicians to call attention to ecological problems, *"The man of the future, who is arising everywhere, is a man who is going to combine the city and the countryside"* (Saldanha, 2013, 1:03). It's interesting to notice that these descriptions regarding this kind of migration can be applied both

to the Foreign coming to Portugal as to the Portuguese people who moved to the permaculture communities. But can we consider these migrants in the permaculture projects in Portugal as inserted in this *counterurbanisation* concept and in search of the rural idyll?

The rural idyll is one of the three types of lifestyle migration proposed by Benson & O'Reilly (2009), where rural locations are imagined to offer lifestyle migrants a sense of going back in time, of going back to the land and to the simple life, as well as a sense of community spirit. While facing mundane complications, the quest for a simpler way of life "*simply is not as simple as they had first imagined*" (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015, p.16). This is a phenomenon that is growing, although the everyday life of migrants in these rural retreats is relatively understudied, as pointed by the authors. We hope that our investigation will make a contribution in the area.

This is not a new type of movement in the Western societies since we could find it already in the Classical Antiquity, more specifically in the Roman Empire, as later in the Renaissance and in the Enlightenment, even existing a literary manifestation called *Aurea Mediocritas*. In all these periods, we verify that the individuals reject the city life and search in an idyllic or utopian way the simplicity of the life in connection with nature.

In fact Sardinha mentioned in his paper that Central Portugal has become a popular location for foreign permaculturists who find in these areas ideal locations to pursue their chosen lifestyles (Sardinha, n/l). The movement into the rural makes them counter-urban from a rural perspective and in this movement there's the "back-to-the-land" kind of migrants who are mainly countercultural people who relocate to the rural in order to combine agricultural smallholding with a degree of self-sufficiency in what some authors have called "*low impact development*" (Halfacree, 2014). These movements are not only concerned with the physical destination but also with the search for a sense of community (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015). For Halfacree this lifestyle is very centred around practical ethics that focus on humans and non-humans relationships within a land-working network (Halfacree, 2014). Perhaps these "practical ethics" that the author talks about are the same different values that people are orientating their lives towards instead of the goal of economic growth as proposed

by Inglehart's "post-materialism" (Giddens, 1995) and this can be deeper explored by the permaculture ethics.

CHAPTER II: PERMACULTURE

2.1. What is Permaculture?

“Permaculture is revolution disguised as organic gardening”

(Ingram et al, 2014, p.283)

Permaculture has been broadly defined as a design system for creating sustainable human environments as the design of community or agricultural systems through the mimic process of ecological systems, being one of its central themes the design of ecological landscapes that produce food (Ingram et al., 2014). Bill Mollison and David Holmgren created the Permaculture concept in the 1970's and it appeared as a way of answering both to the first petrol crisis and the destruction of ecosystems due to the excess of intensive agriculture. The word permaculture was born from the contraction of two words: *“permanent”* with *“agriculture”*. By that, it created the possibility to grow a new concept of culture, which later evolved to a notion of permanent agriculture, something achieved in great measure due to the domain of agriculture that satisfies one of the most important basic needs of mankind. On one way, permaculture is a philosophy of life and, on the other way, it's a tool, logic of structure's organization that aims sustainability and sees the world as a whole, a system integrated and inter-dependent (Soares, 2010).

The permaculture goal goes through the creation of wealth without causing damages. In order to fulfil this aim it sees Nature as a complex network in which the human being cooperates with other life forms in order to produce sustainable and harmonious energy systems. The approach is local: emergency of *“bottom-up”* solutions produced through the observation and reflexion of the natural and cultural global patterns (Purdue et al, 1997). By stimulating local interdependency, it gets away from centralized role models of production and consumption that require high levels of energy, institutions and technology (Blais, s/d).

Although permaculture is a conceptual frame for sustainable development with roots in ecological science and in systems of thought, the diffusion of its own roots within several cultures and different contexts shows its potential to collaborate, in an active way, to the evolution of a popular culture of sustainability through the adoption of very practical and empowered solutions (Holmgren, 2007).

For some, permaculture is defined as a “*revolution disguised as organic gardening*” (Ingram, Maye, Kirwan, Curry & Kubinakova, 2014, p.283) that give us the impression of a misleading effect - that it has, as its maximum goal, a global revolution or an attempt to “change the world”. Although, one might also see it as a total clearness and consciousness of the state of today’s world, trying through small gestures at a local scale every day, to make a small symbolic evolution, so as it’s said by Fukuoka, the Japanese Farmer and Philosopher celebrated for his natural farming and for the inspiration it gave to permaculture, “*I believe that a revolution can start from this straw only. At first sight, this rice straw may seem light and insignificant. To me this revolution is quite real*” (Fukuoka, 2001, p.5). At the bottom, this “quiet revolution” deals with the permaculture path itself and with the walker who runs it, knowing that this path does not show absolute trues but the feeling of, in the moment, this is the wiser path to take. As Holmgren (2007) says, in the attempt to live an ethic life, one should not ignore the teachings of the great thinkers of the scientific Enlightenment nor the ones from today. However, in the long transition to a sustainable culture of low energetic consumerism we should try to understand a wider set of values and concepts beyond those who were left to us by our most recent cultural history.

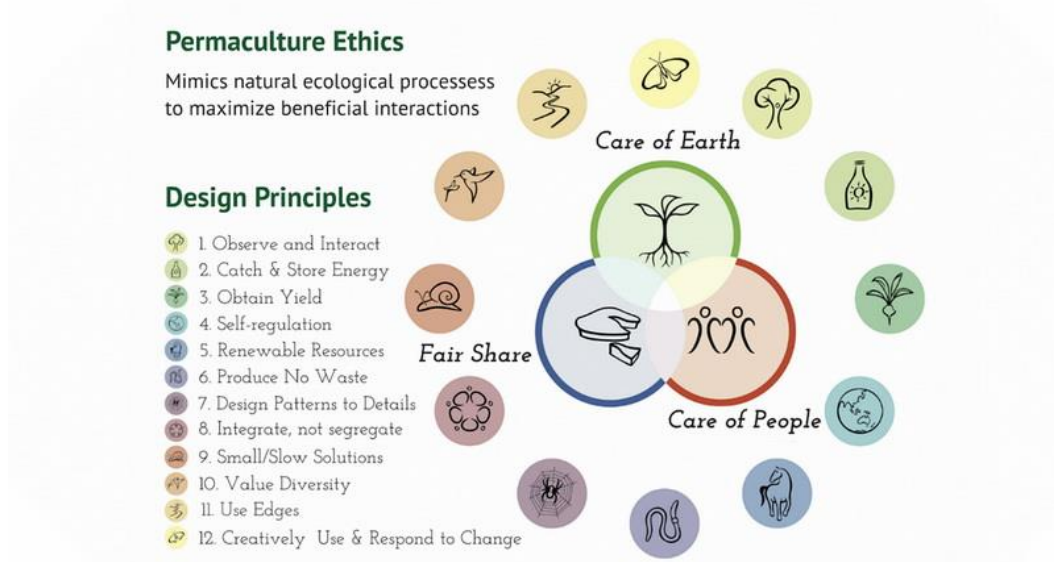
We can conclude in this sense, as a definition-base of the concept, that permaculture can be understood as “*...landscapes designed consciously that mimic the patterns and the relations found in nature. People, their buildings and the shapes by which they organize themselves are fundamental to permaculture*” (Holmgren, 2007, p.3). Permaculture has been defined broadly as a design system for creating sustainable human environments with a central theme, that is, the design of ecological landscapes that produce food. As the emphasis is on design principles it does not prescribe a specific method of food production, but it’s often referred to as agro-

ecological farming and associated with perennial plants, agroforestry, organic systems, forest gardening and polyculture (Ingram, Maye, Kirwan, Curry & Kubinakova, 2014). But permaculture is not restrained to the more natural aspect; it has a strong and complementary social side (Piedade & Cipriano (Ed.), 2016).

2.2. Ethics and Principles of Permaculture

Historically permaculture focus is in Nature as a source and as a field of application of principles and design. These principles are being applied to other domains connected with physical and energetic resources, as in human organization (often called invisible structures in the teaching of permaculture). Accordingly, to the “permaculture flower” (Image 1) the way of evolution begins with ethics and principles that suggest that these domains become closer, initially at personal and local levels, and then evolving to collective and global levels (Holmgren, 2007).

Image 1 – The Permaculture Flower of Permaculture Ethics and Principles



Source: Available at <http://www.biljni-preparati.com/permakultura-permaculture/>

The basic ethics of permaculture were not settled in the beginning of literature about the subject and since the development of the Permaculture Design Course (PDC), three maximums have evolved:

- a) Take care of the Earth (soil, forests and water);
- b) Take care of the People (take care of oneself, family and community);
- c) Redistribute surplus (to put boundaries on consumption and fair share).

According to Holmgren, these ethics were elaborated from investigations made about community ethics, evidence of cultures that have existed in equilibrium with their environment for larger periods of time in comparison to more recent civilisations, which doesn't mean at all that we should ignore the great teachings of modernity (Holmgren, 2007). In fact, in the "Permaculture Bible" there are chapters about the use of machines and other products of the development of technology (Mollison, 1979). It's relevant to say that there's not an order in the enunciation of these three main ethics, as for some authors to take care of the people comes before taking care of the earth (Morrow, 2006). Shortly, the twelve basic principles of permaculture are:

- 1 – Observe and Interact – *"Beauty is in the mind of the beholder"*;
- 2 - Catch and Store Energy – *"Make hay while the sun shines"*;
- 3 – Obtain a Yield – *"You can't work on an empty stomach"*;
- 4 – Apply self-regulation and accept feedback – *"The sins of the fathers are visited on the children of the seventh generation"*;
- 5 – Use and value renewable resources and services – *"Let nature take its course"*;
- 6 – Produce no waste – *"Waste not, want not"*;
- 7 – Design from patterns to details – *"Can't see the forest for the trees"*;
- 8 – Integrate rather than segregate – *"Many hands make light work"*;
- 9 – Use small and slow solutions – *"Slow and steady wins the race"*;
- 10 – Use and value diversity – *"Don't put all your eggs in one basket"*;
- 11 – Use edges and value the marginal – *"Don't think you're on the right track just because it's a well-beaten path"*;

12 – Creatively use and respond to change – *“Vision is not seeing things as they are but as they will be”* (Wolfe, 2014).

The exercise of responsibility besides replacing despair by hope also supports several values defended by permaculture. Just as an Internet package when is blocked, permaculture does not fight against the source of blockage. Instead, it goes around it (Blais, n/l). Permaculturists try to reduce their work hours focusing the consumption in a tiny way. Because they organize themselves in small groups and communities, they can answer to change quicker than big institutions or governments. Therefore, they are much more effective in starting social changes (Blais, n/l; Piedade & Cipriano (Ed.), 2016). However, we may say that this kind of consciousness about consumption is not exclusive of permaculturists.

2.3. The Permaculture Movement in Portugal

When and how has the permaculture movement started in Portugal? Is it a restrict phenomenon? Is it a growing movement? Are there any boom years? These are some of the questions we would like to analyse in this chapter.

Schumacher in his work defended that *“small is beautiful”* (Schumacher, 1980). What did he meant by that? For the author, and also for Bill Mollison, small is wise not only because it's less likely that small scale operations damage the environment as much as big scale operations, but also because of the limited characteristic of the human knowledge that is more based on experience than on reason. There is the point that man organized in small unities will give better caring to their own piece of land and other natural resources than in anonymous societies or huge administrations. In these communities the “small” factor is present. Small in size, people and structures. Small, comparing to cities or countries (Shumacher, 1980; Mollison, 1979).

Accordingly to Nogueira (2015), on her thesis about sustainable communities in Portugal, she adopted the term made by Robert and Diane Gilman in 1991 of *“sustainable communities”* defined as *“a complete human scale full-featured settlement, where the human activities are harmlessly integrated into the natural*

world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future” (Gilman & Gilman, 1991 in Nogueira, 2015, p.27). It’s appropriate to use this term to define our case studies because of the definition by itself and also because the author already used it for two of our three case studies: Vale da Sarvinda and Vale da Lama. Why the term “sustainable communities” instead of the more popular one of “ecovillages” (Gesota, 2008; Dawson, 2006)? In order not to diminish the concept with the “eco” prefix that refers more to the ecological and environmentalist aspects, the term sustainable communities is a more holistic definition that approaches sustainability as a whole and not just as a specific one (Nogueira, 2015). Besides that, we decided to add the term permaculture designating them as *permaculture sustainable communities*, emphasizing this way the permaculture dimension.

The structure, or the number of habitants, of the sustainable communities in Portugal is largely small with 1 to 5 members. Then there are the middle-size projects with 11 to 15 members and more than that is considered to be a large-scale community (Nogueira, 2015). In our sample we can say that we have an example of each one of these models. One could say that Várzea da Gonçala is a small dimension project since at the moment it has 6 resident people; Vale da Lama is a middle-size project with no more than 15 people living and working there in a more permanent basis, and then Vale da Sarvinda is the large scale one since it has around 30 people working there at the moment, although are no more than 5 people are living permanently there.

The permaculture movement has been rising in Portugal for the last couple of years and it counted with 31 registered projects in November 2014 in *Rede Convergir*, the online platform that we used as our main source of database. It’s important to notice that we now know that there are more projects subscribed in the platform and even the website has changed it’s design and organization so one cannot forget that these processes are in continuous evolution. Also some of the projects here mentioned may have finished.

Image 2 – Map of Portugal with the Permaculture Projects registered in Rede Convergir in October 2014



Source: Self-elaboration.

When looking at the map (Image 2) we observe that there's a general geographical dispersion of the projects in the Portuguese territory. Nevertheless, we can identify three small areas of project's concentration: one in the Centre North, one in the region of Lisboa and Vale do Tejo and the other one in Algarve. These data are in accordance with Nogueira's thesis (Nogueira, 2015). Our case studies are signaled with a different colour (orange) and we can see that Vale da Sarvinda is localized in the Central region while Vale da Lama and Várzea da Gonçala are in the South of the country in the Algarve region.

In terms of a temporal analysis we can see that the first project we have mapped started in 2005 and the last one in 2014 (Table 1) but it's important to notice that this is due to the fact that we used a filter of "Permaculture" on *Rede Convergir* that selected some projects and excluded others since it has several options of filters. In this exclusion was Tamera, the most well known German community of the Portuguese public also because it is one of the oldest – 1995.

Table 1 – Project's birth by year from 2005 to 2014

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Projects	1	-	1	3	2	4	5	9	2	2

Source: Self-elaboration. Data base from *Rede Convergir*.

According to the table above 2012 was the Boom year since 2005. Just in 2012, 9 projects started in Portugal but this growing tendency had been evolving since 2010 and it stabilized after 2012. Is it possible that this evolution is in any way related with the periods of economic crisis? In the present investigation we don't have the necessary data to answer this but this is certainly an interesting question for further research.

The English permaculture community is usually described as a group of people operating on the margins of conventional food production with few or no recognition at all from the conventional agriculture community and with no relevance to the agricultural policy. It doesn't receive any government funding and it has very few links with, or representation within, the conventional agricultural system (Ingram et al., 2014). Knowing that permaculture was originally born in Australia, however one of the countries the most welcoming to it was the UK, we interpret this previous statement because permaculture do not exists inside the conventional agricultural system, so being represented as an alternative one that has its own rules, practices and principles. But is it the same in Portugal? This would be something interesting for further research.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

In terms of methodology we chose to apply a qualitative approach that seems to us like the more suitable for this specific investigation. Qualitative research can include different methods like ethnography and participant observation (Delamont, 2004). We aim to do a qualitative study of ethnographic kind of the three above-mentioned sustainable communities with details of directly observed empirical material such as quotations from the people we interviewed, descriptions, functioning and organization, as well as including an important comparative dimension within and between the communities. This comparative analysis within the communities is essentially made by the comparison between the different interviews while the comparison between the three communities is based on the reflexion of the interviews and on the investigator's observations made on the field.

First of all a list was made of all the permaculture projects registered in *Rede Convergir*, the online platform where several permaculture projects, transition initiatives, educational and cultural projects are registered; in the webpage one can read "to map all the sustainable and inspirational projects"³. At the time, October 2014, we counted a total of 31 registered projects but this number has now changed since the website is constantly being updated. Then we searched for those who were either founded by foreign people or that showed indices of foreign people living there, such as by the name of the project (e.g. The Hive), or if the name of the person in charge of the project was a foreign name, or both (consult index 3). For these cases we marked on the table on the column of "Foreign Community" as "Maybe". From the 31 we registered 12 projects as possibly being foreign communities.

Why three case studies? It was never our intention to do a quantitative study that required a big sample, but precisely to do a qualitative one in more detail that, due to time limitations, could not include more than two or three case studies. In fact, initially we intended to choose two case studies for our investigation, but then we contacted five projects, through email, from those 12 pre-selected. The five projects

³ Available at <http://www.redeconvergir.net/>

we first sent the email were Quinta da Junceda Eco-living Project, Comunidade Equilibrium, Vale da Sarvinda, Várzea da Gonçala and Quinta do Vale da Lama. From those five, we received three positive answers from Vale da Lama, Vale da Sarvinda and Várzea da Gonçala. We decided to keep these three because all of them have quite different structural characteristics: differences in terms of the dimension of the project, goals, geographical location, nationalities and social profile of the people who live there. These different characteristics will allow us a closer approach to the diversity of situations, that is, of permaculture sustainable communities, that the three experiences allow. The choice of these particular projects might certainly not be representative of the migration movement in permaculture communities as a whole, but these three case studies can help to provide a closer approach to the diversity of situations evolved within the permaculture movement and that might reflect aspects and traces of other migrants in these portraits.

Twenty-four semi-structured interviews were made. The interviews were made to the founders of the projects and also to some of the workers and volunteers living there at the moment. Besides the founders, the investigator did not choose all the other interviews but it was the participant's initiative to share their motivation and experience that chose to participate based on the "convenience sampling method" of *"grabbing whoever is available"* (Bernard, 2002 in Gesota, 2008 pp. 9). In this sense, 12 people were interviewed at Vale da Sarvinda, 9 at Vale da Lama and 4 at Várzea da Gonçala in a total of 25 interviews. From these 25, 10 were made to foreign people being 7 foreign people who are truly committed with the project, what Nogueira calls Nuclear Members and Active Partners, therefore this excludes the volunteers (Nogueira, 2015). Unfortunately, one of the foreign interviews is imperceptible due to technical problems so we will analyse only six.

The guideline of the interviews (see index 1) allowed room to include new questions if they came up during the interviews. This guideline is very important since it's divided in 7 large analytical indicators with some key issues essential to the analysis that will allow us to be able to answer to our initial investigation question. These analytical indicators are:

- **The lifestyle at the project:** main advantages and disadvantages of living and/or working in the project (Nogueira, 2015), notions of happiness and fulfilment (Gesota, 2008), community living (Nogueira, 2015; Soares, 2012; Mollison, 1979);
- **Permaculture:** what is permaculture and its role in the world today? (Chapman & Brown, 2014; Holmgren, 2007; Mollison, 1979);
- **The lifestyle before:** education and background (Nogueira, 2015; Gesota, 2008);
- **Connection with the home country:** why Portugal? (Torkington, 2010; Sardinha, n/l), travels and transportation (Hopkins, 2008);
- **Connection with the local population** (Fountain & Hall, 2002);
- **Nature and food connection:** diet and connection to nature (Halfacree, 2014; Giddens, 1995; Pelt, 1991), food connection (Fukuoka, 2001);
- **Cultural habits** - clothes & habits: TV, reading and computer (Nogueira, 2015; Hopkins, 2008), learning experiences and future dreams.

Table 2 – The Seven Indicators of the Interview’s Guideline

Lifestyle at the project	Permaculture	The lifestyle before	Connection with the home country	Connection with the local population	Diet and food connection	Cultural habits
Main advantages & disadvantages	What is Permaculture and its role in the world today?	Education and the life before	Why Portugal?	Connection with the local population	Diet and connection to nature	Clothes & habits: TV, reading, computer
Notions of happiness & fulfilment			Travels & transports		Food connection	Learning experiences & future dreams
Community living						

Source: Self-elaboration.

Since that, in our bibliographic research, we were not able to found a specific setline of the main indicators that define an individual or a group as “lifestyle

migrants”, we made a compilation of the several aspects often pointed out by the investigators as a way of possibly defining lifestyle migrations:

- **Temporary, seasonal or full-time migration** (Torkington, 2010; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009; O’Reilly and Benson, 2009);
- **Migration from the North of Europe to the South of Europe** (Torkington, 2010; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Benson & O’Reilly, 2015);
- **Reasons most often presented:**
 - **Search of a better “lifestyle” or a more fulfilling “way of life” for oneself** (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Torkington, 2010; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009; O’Reilly & Benson, 2009) **and also for the children** (Oliver & O’Reilly, 2010; Mathews et al., 2000);
 - **Seeking (self-) authenticity** (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Benson & O’Reilly, 2015), a meaningful way of life often described in terms of authenticity, implying simplicity, purity and originality (O’Reilly & Benson, 2009; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009);
 - **The mobility will provide a new beginning, a “fresh new start”** (Oliver & O’Reilly, 2010);
 - **Seeking a sense of community** (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015);
 - **Seeking self-realisation** (Oliver & O’Reilly, 2010; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009) interconnected with fulfilment and personal development.

In fact, all these motives are inter connected between each other and reflect a quest not for economical reasons or financial security that often describe the migratory movements (Torkington, 2010), but a quest for the constructed idealisation of particular destinations as idylls strongly related to the subjectivities of the migrants. Such subjectivities are formed by the personal biography, material conditions and internal/external constraints of the individuals in a particular point of time (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015). Therefore, we will compare our foreign interview’s answers with the indicators collected in order to try to understand if we can include in the framework of lifestyle migrations our migrants from three permaculture sustainable communities in Portugal.

During the interviews some things were changed from the initial script according to the development of the same interviews and so that we could fully understand what the interviewee meant. As a way of respecting everyone we asked all the interviewees if they wished to be anonymous. Only one interviewee asked to be anonymous. Since visual records can be an important complement to the fieldwork, taking pictures revealed to be a useful tool in the direct observation and also as visual representation of the relationship between the residents to their context and environment (Campos, 2011; Gesota, 2008).

The analysis of the interviews can be considered to be the central focus of the present investigation in trying to answer our initial question: can we consider the migrants living in permaculture sustainable communities as *lifestyle migrants*? This is the central question that will be the guiding focus of our investigation. In order to understand this, we will try to understand what is the place of this kind of migration in the Portuguese migratory context.

One of the methods was direct observation using participatory form. In the field, the researchers have the possibility to grasp how the world looks like for the people who live there, to discover what they believe in, what they do at work and leisure time, what makes them laugh and cry. The term “participation” does not usually mean real participation: it’s important to participate enough to be able to write consciously about the nature of what has been observed but it does not mean to do what those being observed do, but to interact with them while people do it (Delamont, 2004). In this sense the investigator “lived” one week in each of the three case studies making three weeks of participant observation in total and we believe that this personal experience, where the investigator had the possibility to see with her own eyes the way these people live, it’s the best possible contribution for this investigation. In classic ethnographic field research, participant observation can only be properly made staying usually one year or more (Gesota, 2008) but since this is not something viable due to the lack of time, this leads to some limitations in the observation. However, it was done a limited amount of participant observation during those three weeks where the investigator participated in the events, helped in the garden, in the kitchen, in the weekly meetings, in the gatherings. These participations

provided the opportunity to form interactions outside the interview times, as well as a global understanding of the communities dynamic as a whole.

CHAPTER IV: PERMACULTURE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN PORTUGAL

“We live in a post-industrial world and have an immense amount of sophisticated information and technology which enables us to exchange information while living in a village situation. Permaculture is a basic technique for such an evolution and like all biological, holistic systems it’s within the reach of everyman”

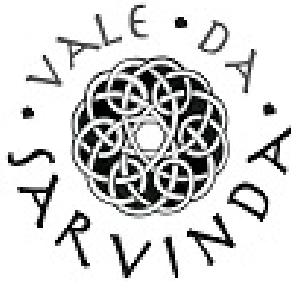
Bill Mollison (Mollison, 1974, p.143)

4.1. Presentation of the three case studies

As explained in the methodology, in our analysis we have three different projects. Different in terms of time so to have older and younger projects, projects initiated by nationals and other by foreigners. Interestingly we have one project started by Portuguese people in Vale da Sarvinda, one project initiated by foreign people in Várzea da Gonçala and another one – Vale da Lama - created by a couple where she is Portuguese and he is American. In this sense, we believe we have a good representation of variety. Also we tried to choose projects located in different parts of the country, but as some did not answered to our contact and due to logistic reasons, we present one in Centre North in Castelo-Branco and the other two in the Algarve, which made it easier the access. We will make a short presentation of each one of the projects and make a small history of the place mainly based on what the people told us in order to better contextualize the present circumstances.

4.1.1. Vale da Sarvinda

Image 3 & 4 – Sarvinda’s logo (left) and Morning Gathering in Vale da Sarvinda (right)



Source: <http://www.redeconvergir.net/iniciativas/vale-da-sarvinda-131>. Photo taken by the author.

Location: Vila Velha de Rodão, district of Castelo Branco, Portugal in the area of the Natural Park of the International Tejo.

Founded in: 2011

Dimension: 180 ha

Members: 30

Mission: To create wealth through agricultural systems of production, touristic activities, food and energy, in a biological and biodynamic way and respecting the principles of permaculture.

Website: <http://www.valedasarvinda.pt/>

Vale da Sarvinda is a 180 hectares of land located in the region of Castelo Branco, Centre North of Portugal. Physically it's a new project with only two years of existence and still building its infrastructures. It's an idea brought up by a Portuguese. Frederico Abreu has been working on this idea for more than 5 years with the aim to

create a completely self-sufficient community that fixes people to the land or a “state inside the state”.

The project is partially located in the natural reserve of *Parque Natural do Tejo Internacional* and applied to European funds such as PRODER (*Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural*). Since the project is still in a very young stage of its development and, as stated by the interviewees, the gardens and the agricultural parts still aren't fully developed because they're still building the houses and the basic infrastructures for the camping and for the houses they live in. At Sarvinda the diet is exclusively vegetarian.

It's an interior region of the country that historically has suffered with the migration of people towards the bigger cities in the coastal line and with the abandonment of the land by the local populations. Consequently came the desertification process. Also with the economical crisis of the last couple of years, the levels of unemployment have risen. As Sardinha points out in his study of lifestyle migrants in Central Portugal, since the 60's Portuguese interior regions haven't been able to secure the economic sustainability with the depopulation, either in direction of the coastal belt with two primary cities of Lisboa and Porto, or migrating for other countries such as France, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, among others (Sardinha, n/l).

At the time we were there, there were no more than 4 people living in, not counting with the volunteers, who come and go. Working people more or less 30, according to Frederico. But we have the information that same people have left the project in the meanwhile and probably others might have joined it. Vale da Sarvinda plans to have several agricultural projects and the tourism project with the camping. People in Vale da Sarvinda are organized by sun and moon cycles. People start working with the sunrise, which changes in summer and winter, and take their days off and payments according to the moon cycle.

4.1.2. Quinta do Vale da Lama

Image 5 & 6 – Logo (left) and the Eco-Resort Seen from the Outside (right)



Source: <http://www.redeconvergir.net/iniciativas/quinta-do-vale-da-lama>. Photo taken by the author.

Location: Odiáxere, Lagos in the Algarve, Portugal.

Founded in: 2011

Dimension: 43 ha

Members: 11

Mission: Quinta do Vale da Lama provides farm based experiences which empower individuals of all ages and backgrounds to create positive social and ecological impact by living in a regenerative way.

Website: <http://www.valedalama.net/en/about-us/vision-and-mission/>

Quinta do Vale da Lama is a 43 hectares project close to Odiáxere, Lagos. It initially started as a summer camp for children with *Projecto Novas Descobertas (PND)* in 1994 and still goes on. It has a luxury eco-resort recently finished for purposes of income revenues. The community itself, which is now called Lama Village, emerged as a necessity of the workers and volunteers to have a place to stay and sleep. In the words of an interviewee, it's not an intentional community "*this is a very specific*

community in a way that it was not an intentional community of people proposing something (...) This was more a way of the owners to have the workers here, offering food and shelter and some money in exchange of work” (VdL-20).

In this case we have the owner’s family, Nita and Walt, she is Portuguese and he’s American, with two children with both nationalities. They’re planning to build their own house so that they can move and live in the land, but they still don’t live there. Geographically this is a deserted area in the touristic Algarve. After the fires in Monchique where they first had the PND, Walt and Nita initially bought a parcel of the land and then through the years they acquired other parcels surrounding until they completed the 43 hectares the farm has today.

At VdL they are able to produce more or less 50% of the food they consume in terms of vegetables essentially. The diet is mainly vegetarian. Soaps are recycled from old oils and bread is made every week. At Lama Village everyday people sign in in the daily tasks board, either washing the dishes, cooking or cleaning, in order the community daily tasks can be shared among all. It’s a very animated place that organizes several courses (like the PDC), workshops, open days, pizza nights and events in general, also because it has quite good infrastructures that allow all that.

4.1.3. Várzea da Gonçalves

Image 7 & 8 – Tree House for the Children (left) and the Garden (right)



Source: Photos taken by the author.

Location: Ribeira da Cerca, Aljezur in Algarve, Portugal.

Founded in: 2007

Dimension: 8 ha

Members: 4

Mission: To create a low-maintenance, self-sustaining smallholding, based on trees and vegetables, poultry and pigs for food-production, in a system that is constantly evolving and improving the soil.

Website: <http://www.varzeavivapermaculture.com/>

Várzea da Gonçalves is the smallest project in our study in terms of land use, 8 hectares, but it doesn't make it any less interesting. A British couple bought the land 8 years ago and here they raise their daughter who now speaks both fluent English and Portuguese. Geographically it's very interesting that the Várzea is located in a larger valley with a river flowing in the middle, making the soil fertile and water abundant. The history of the place is that the people that lived there before kind of neglected taking care of the land and the river, which is something that Gonçalo Ribeiro Telles

has been alerting to (Saldanha, 2013, 18:52), many trees were cut down until one day the river flooded. People went away and the place was abandoned for many years until some German people first returned to the land and then this British couple.

This was the only project we found, in our small sample of three case studies, habited exclusively by non-Portuguese. There's the original couple, Chris and Christine with their daughter, an English couple with their two boys and another family. She's Deutsch and he's Israelite with their two daughters. The volunteers there, at the moment, were also foreign from the United States and Israel. Várzea is a very quiet place of difficult access if you don't have a car, since it's 7km away from Aljezur, the nearest village.

The diet in the Várzea is mainly vegetarian but not exclusively. Besides the garden, the farm also has animals like chickens and a pig. When we were there, there was an ecological farming course going on. Besides renting the houses they also organize several courses, workshops and events. The place is abundant in children. In fact, from the three projects, it's the one with more children, either living or studying since they run there an alternative education system called *Borboleta*.

CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS

We will try to make a short analysis of the 25 interviews gathered in the three case studies. Firstly, we will analyse the interviews made to the founders of the projects and then, to have a general overview, we will analyse all the interviews at once, making no distinction between the three projects. Usually in these kind of sustainable communities there're volunteers that help in the daily tasks like gardening, cooking, building, repairing, taking care of the animals and cleaning in exchange of food, accommodation and the learning opportunities. Usually they're mainly young people aged 20 to 30, from what we have seen. From the three projects we visited, only in Vale da Lama you have to pay 25€ per week to volunteer as a way to cover the expenses, but this is not very common and in the other two projects you don't need to pay anything to volunteer. Since the volunteer experience was not the main focus of our research, we only made three interviews with the volunteers, so that we could also have a little bit of their perspective.

5.1 Analysis of the Interviews made to the Founders

For the founders of the projects we chose to make some different questions in order to try to understand how was born the idea of the project, what are its main goals and its biggest difficulties.

In Vale da Sarvinda there's mainly one person who had the idea for the project and that then talked to other people to build it. In the other two projects of our investigation, Vale da Lama and Várzea da Gonçalves, they both started with a couple. In Vale da Lama we only interviewed one of the owners, Walt, and in Várzea da Gonçalves we interviewed both Chris and Christine, but unfortunately the recorder had a technical problem and the information we have is essentially based on the answers made afterwards through email to Christine because only she answered on time.

a) Frederico from Vale da Sarvinda

First we will analyse the interview made to Frederico from Vale da Sarvinda.

The first question we made was when did the project of VdS begun and which are its main goals to which he answered that he initially had the idea in 2005 but it became real in the land only in 2013. His main goal is to create an independent project in terms of energy, food and income, besides other smaller goals in social areas, research and development. So basically the main goal of Sarvinda is to be self-sufficient. Placed on a field of 180 hectares where half of it it's a protected Park. Some parts of the land were bought and others are rented. At the moment, Sarvinda is being financed by PRODER (Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural), which is an European Union financial instrument of support to agricultural projects.

At the moment VdS has 25 contracted people working there. In terms of lifestyle for Frederico, at the moment it's a lifestyle very focused on work because of the deadlines they have to accomplish. At VdS they follow the moon and the sun calendar *"we start working when the sun rises and usually we do 8 hours of work"* (VdS-8) and one of the goals is to have a *"tendentiously vegetarian diet (...) not so much because of the animal question but because of the health question in a medium-long term"* (VdS-8), although most of the people working there are not vegetarian, as in the other two projects.

Table 3 – Vegetarian People in Vale da Sarvinda

Vale da Sarvinda	Yes	No	Total
Vegetarian	3	9	12

Source: Self-elaboration.

Table 4 – Vegetarian People and Smokers in the Three Projects

	Yes	No	Total
Smokes	15	8	23 (2 N/I)
Vegetarian	7	18	25

Source: Self-elaboration.

Still, in terms of lifestyle, Frederico, says that everyone shares the toilets, the showers, the kitchen, the living room, the Internet and that it's equal for all.

We asked him when did he met permaculture and he said that it arrived to him in a very natural way; what it does basically is synthesize several different techniques that existed already, but for Frederico (and in VdS in general) permaculture isn't the central focus. It's seen more like a methodology that together with other methodologies, such as natural agriculture and biodynamic, can be used to achieve Sarvinda's goals. In Frederico's opinion permaculture in Portugal lives a lot of *clichés*:

“For me permaculture lives a lot of clichés and closed concepts and, especially in Portugal, not the sympathetic community but the opinion maker community. I think it has very orthodox concepts of what is the threshold of permaculture” (VdS-8)

Besides this, Frederico did the PDC. In general, among the persons who do have something to say about it, people in Vale da Sarvinda depreciates permaculture:

“The permaculture thing has always annoyed me. All the meetings that I had with permaculture people annoyed me” (VdS-7)

Or just thinks it's exactly the same as traditional agriculture:

“Permaculture for me is equal to the traditional agriculture. The only thing that changes is that in traditional agriculture people plant... All the potatoes in one side, the

onions on the other, the garlic on another side, the lettuce in another and so on. And here people mix all that according to the things that go along with each other” (VdS-10)

Which is something different when Frederico, the founder, says that:

“(…) for me the big goal of permaculture, biodynamic agriculture and even biological agriculture done in a certain way it’s to understand the practice, it’s to understand how to get there” (VdS-8)

So more than being aligned with the ethics and principles of permaculture, Sarvinda is a practical exercise of trying to understand what to do in order to produce its own food.

“If we had to produce what we eat what would we do? And the Sarvinda exercise it’s a practical exercise in that sense” (VdS-8)

We could say that more than an exercise it’s a very ambitious project since it aims to be completely self-sufficient and to replicate itself in other “Sarvindas” even being used the expression of a “state inside the state” (Nogueira, 2015). When asked about the main difficulties of the project Frederico answered people as simultaneously the best and the worst thing in the world:

“(…) the challenge of people and the community challenge is the biggest challenge” (VdS-8)

In another level the knowledge *“because when you come to a project like this you don’t know anything”* and the resources, especially the economical ones.

“We have the PRODER and we have a strategy but it’s not enough (...) and it’s the fact why you see permaculture projects to function as elastics: they go, go, go but when they’re set free it comes back with a lot of strength and usually it’s because of the economical structures behind keeping these projects” (VdS-8)

About the organizational structure Sarvinda started with 20 associated investors that don’t actually live there. So there’s a group that is the genesis of the administrative part, which is not the same on the field. On the land there’s a group that decides about people, like who to contract and *“they decide in an equal way, one man one vote”* (VdS-8).

In Frederico’s words, there’s space for everyone who lives and works there to participate and give their personal opinion and we saw this. Every morning before going to work people gather in a circle where some basic work indications are given, new people are welcomed, people who leave have their goodbye and everyone can share something, but most people does not say much and from the people we have talked to, especially the local ones, there’s not a big trust in these kind of processes. Although there’s this open space for opinion and sharing there’s not much confidence from some of the people in this methods. Some people there see Frederico as the “boss” and themselves as the employees. So they behave like that and they just follow orders. Even though, there’s the space to talk in a different format, it seems like not everyone is ready to do that.

Images 9 & 10 – Morning Gathering and Grey Waters System in Sarvinda



Source: Photos taken by the author.

In terms of his lifestyle, before going to Sarvinda in 2013 Frederico had several lives, like everyone else. Basically he started studying at University but he didn't finish his graduation and he started a career in the big distribution area. He was involved with people management in sport shops, he had his own company and in the meanwhile he lost all his money. He sold everything to pay his debts and that's when he started thinking about Sarvinda's project. Quite interestingly Frederico was the only person who told us that he was happier before going to Sarvinda because, although this is his life-project, the amount of work and responsibility that he now has makes him feel unhappy compared to the life he had before. Frederico, like many other people in Sarvinda, used to live in Lisboa.

Table 5 – Cities of Origin of the Portuguese Interviewees at Vale da Sarvinda

Metropolitan Area of Lisboa	Metropolitan Area of Porto	District of Castelo Branco
4	1	4

Source: Self-elaboration.

The travels to Lisbon depend a lot on the needs of the project and of the work, sometimes he goes every week, sometimes once a month and usually by car, although for Frederico the best transportation in Lisboa is the bicycle. His parents, both retired, used to see the project with suspicion but now they are more conformed to it and even supporters of the idea.

For him, permaculture has something new to add to the way of man living in society and in its way of relating to nature, since the values defended by permaculture are the ones we need.

“I think the values that permaculture defends are values that synthetize a lot what we need. In the individual level I think it's pretty easy to implement, in the collective level I think it's the big challenge (...) there are no doubts about the values.

The doubt is how to get there, which is the best way? The best way is the one that works” (VdS-8)

Frederico had some problems with the foreign volunteers, especially after the Boom Festival because no drugs are allowed in Sarvinda and some people did not respect that but nothing serious, he says. In Frederico’s perspective the local population was very welcoming to the project, which contradicts with one of the local’s opinion:

“(…) Although when people arrive, but not only to VdS, there’s always something people say... Drugged people and stuff” (VdS-9)

In terms of some habits the answers were as it follows on the table:

Table 6 – Frederico’s Connection with Nature and Cultural Habits

	Change diet	Change relation with Nature	Watch TV	Read	Follow the news
Frederico	Yes	No	No	Yes	No

Source: Self-elaboration.

In Fred’s opinion there’s a community living in Sarvinda since people share the basic resources:

“Community living, yes, since we share the basic resources” (VdS-8).

b) Walt from Vale da Lama

The next interview we are going to analyse is the one made to Walt from Vale da Lama.

The first question we made him was about when was born the idea to create VdL and which are the main goals of the project to which he answered that he didn't exactly created it; it was more like a process formed in three phases of land acquisition. His dad used to advise him about the importance of the land "*land is land but land on the water is an investment*" (VdL-21) so he bought the land in 2000. In the beginning it was just a farm investment with the possibility to move to the land and since his wife, Nita, runs summer camps with the *Projecto Novas Descobertas* (New Discoveries Project) since 1993, they realised it wasn't viable to run a summer camp and then the place was empty the rest of the year. Then they thought about doing some farming "*(...) we want to feed ourselves*" (VdL-21).

And, as part of it, to teach kids where does their food come from. At the same time they started building a house for tourism with the purpose of becoming the main financial source for economic sustainability of the project. After they joined the Woofing⁴ dynamic they started having many volunteers coming and wanting to help. Around 2007 they organized their first PDC.

"(...) That's when we started really to get, ok, get our hands dirty on the farming" (VdL-21)

In 2001 they decided to build a house for the staff and volunteers and turn the first house into an agro-tourism establishment, as it was initially thought. From this house where the staff and the volunteers now live and that they call "Lama Village" was born a non-intentional community:

⁴ WWOOF is a network of national organizations that connect people who want to live and learn on organic farms and smallholding. Volunteers help in exchange for food, accommodation and the opportunity to learn about organic lifestyles. More information at <http://woofinternational.org/>

“Well this is a very specific community in a way that it was not an intentional community of people proposing something and let’s all join and do this happen... This was more a way of the owners to have the workers here and offering house and food and some money in exchange of work” (VdL-20)

We asked Walt “why Portugal?” and he immediately answered with a smile “well, you know, Portuguese wife had a lot to do with it...!” which could just be his answer but they could have stayed in America. In fact they met there but then Walt continues his answer saying that he felt in love with the country when he first visited it in 1988 and the important feeling that in Portugal they could raise their children without fear:

“Raising children without fear! That was a big thing. You know metal detectors in schools in Toronto where we were living and here in Portugal it was so much more... I don’t know, the culture appealed to me much more as a place to raise our kids” (VdL-21)

Questioned about how many people work in VdL at the moment, he said about ten in everyday job, about five official internships and then the volunteers that change a lot in numbers.

Besides permaculture, we hear a lot about land regeneration and holistic management. Therefore, we decided to include this question to our interviewed about what are we talking about when we mention land regeneration and holistic management. In Walt’s opinion, permaculture is more a design methodology and a very good one that, based on its ethical foundation of earth care, people care and fair share, has the principle of accepting feedback and do small things that you learn, rather than going big. The holistic management kind of enforces this:

“(Holistic management) is the framework for making sure that you assume whatever theory you have could well be wrong and probably is wrong and you try things and you get feedback and you adjust always. So one is more for design and the other is more for management” (VdS-21)

According to Alan Savory, holistic management is a system of planning and decision-making in the context of the ecological restoration of grasslands worldwide where managers implement the planning to manage livestock mimicking the predator/prey relationships in which these environments evolved⁵.

Walt has the PDC and when asked about the main difficulties of the project he mentioned three: one is the key line scale of permanence such as the climate first, geography then and land form because the climate is something you cannot control and it's particularly hard because of the challenge of desertification that in Walt words:

“(...) It's literally very visible, you can see it from Google Earth: sand, the land is drying up because of climate and global climate change” (VdL-21)

Enhanced by the human migration to the big cities, it only turns the problem even more difficult.

“(...) So you have these little villages with all these old people in black and all the young people were brain drained. They are all gone and this is a trend that it's advancing” (VdL-21)

So the land desertification together with the process of depopulation is a vicious cycle (Saldanha, 2013, 39:00), because one intensifies the other and vice-versa. This is one of the biggest problems in Portugal at the moment, especially in the interior

⁵ More information at <http://savory.global/>

of the country, but not only, because in this particular case we're talking about coastal land. In fact, according to the UN, desertification nowadays affects more than 1/3 of the earth surface and more than 1/5 of the world's population, making it one of the most serious challenges we face globally, as marked by the Earth Summit in 1992 (Roxo, 2010). Besides that, this is still a concept that is misunderstood by the Portuguese population that mixes it up with the depopulation phenomenon. Also one of the main consequences of desertification is the abandonment of the land (Roxo, 2010; Firmino, 1999). There's a decrease in the quality of life, so people migrate and usually they migrate to the cities reinforcing the problems of overpopulation and non-controlled growth of the cities, increasing unemployment as well as pollution and criminality. This scenario of desertification and depopulation is exactly what happened both in Vale da Sarvinda and Vale da Lama. In Várzea da Gonçalves it's a different story. So it would be interesting to study, in the future, if these permaculture communities and these organic farmers migrants can contribute to stop and maybe reverse this vicious cycle of degradation and abandon creating new possible scenarios.

Still mentioning the biggest challenges of the project, Walt criticized the posture of some of the people that pass through the farm.

"(...) These travelling light kind of woofers or permacultures that we've had here, they show up with a bag pack and not much and they stay for weeks, and months (...) Many of them took a plain to get to this part of the world and they bring a computer and they want internet and fuel to go to town and get the things that we can't produce for ourselves... At the same time a lot of them want to live without money... They are refugees from something" (VdL-21)

Walt says that they don't understand that money is something that we still need to survive. This is a very interesting perspective from someone that observes these people from quite close and has this perspective that some of these people, these "light travellers", are refugees. Not the typical refugees in terms of running from armed conflicts or natural disasters, but refugees from something and this opens a lot of

possibilities since one can run away from an exterior situation like a war or one can be trying to run away from one self (Pelt, 1991). And as Walt explains a lot of them are:

“(...) Well-educated people that had jobs and careers. They just didn’t liked the urban hyper industrialized lifestyle they were living and they left it and now they want to live closer to the land but they also want to live moneyless (...) So, our culture here, we have very few people that really have a practical understanding that you come to a place like this that has conditions you know, truly liveable nice conditions you know... It takes money to make it work and no... We can’t all work in education or on the ground taking care of plants” (VdL-21)

This previous statement is in accordance to Bill Mollison’s idea:

“(...) Not all of us are, can, or need to be gardeners and farmers. However everyone has skills and strengths to offer and may form or join ecology parties or local action groups to change the politics of our local and state governments, to demand the use of public lands on behalf of landless people” (Mollison, 1979: 143)

Even saying that there’s kind of an unconscious hypocrisy of not recognising they’re ignoring something that is still necessary. But this is a quite complex subject because even though we agree with Walt’s opinion, we believe that in these people’s perspectives, money was something that was sold to them as the solution for all problems: ‘if you study hard and work hard you’ll get a good job and you will have money and so you’ll be happy’ and that should be your goal in life and some of these people followed that same recipe and they didn’t get what they expected. Therefore, one of the first reactions is to question this “recipe” and question money itself.

Something else quite interesting that Walt said is that tourism is the only viable way for these projects in terms of economical sustainability.

“ (...) These little farms in Portugal the only hope they have for regeneration in a sustainable way, the economic base, the earth, the natural resources the only hope they have... They have to combine tourism with agriculture” (VdL-21)

And in fact, in our three case studies, they all combine in different ways tourism with agriculture, or agro-tourism, or are planning to do it (like in Sarvinda where they're building a camping zone). In Vale da Lama they have an eco-resort, which is like a luxury eco-resort for people to stay and also for hosting retreats and workshops; in Várzea da Gonçala they have a couple of houses that they either rent for short period of time, like holidays or for larger periods like the British family that is living there for almost a year now. So in fact in the case studies that we have analysed, this combination of tourism with agriculture is, if not the main source, one of the main sources of economic income for the financial sustainability of these projects.

When asked about the importance of people growing their own food, Walt answered that yes, he thinks it's very important since in North-America people usually eat packaged food and don't think about where it comes from.

“I'm a product of North-American culture where we eat 100% packaged everything and don't think about where our food comes from and there's a tremendous problem of society obesity” (VdL-21)

Growing your own food in this sense is a way of connecting with nature and with what sustains you.

“(...) It's a deep move towards living a life that is more truly aligned with my roots, what actually sustains me and I think that (...) growing our own food is the best way to experience that farm to table right from the ground with these little intermediate in the process as possible to sustaining yourself, it's the healthiest way to live!” (VdL-21)

About travelling home he says he still travels often because of business and family. Walt comes from a family of entrepreneurs and for him the language is not a barrier since everybody speaks some English and he tries to speak Portuguese.

“Portuguese wife of course made it a lot easier for me to integrate and... Portugal, especially the Algarve in the European context is one of the places most amenable to foreign” (VdL-21)

When asked if he thinks permaculture has something new to add to the way of man living in society and in its way of relating to nature, Walt basically answered he doesn't now. It's hard to say since for him permaculture it's an open framework that can accommodate other things like holistic management and it's perfectly compatible with other religions or philosophies *“(permaculture) it's compatible either you're a Buddhist or a Catholic” (VdL-21)*. It gives tools that enable anybody to *“know how you can build, design first of all your place, your space, your life on that foundation” (VdL-21)*

About the connection with the local population Walt thinks that Vale da Lama is *“pretty well integrated into the local context” (VdL-21)* since there're local people working in the farm, they trade with the locals, through the PND they're connected with a lot of families since they run summer camps for almost 10 years, they do frequent events, learning opportunities, workshops and they do search for that connection although some other interviewees mentioned that that connection could be stronger and more frequent:

“Speaking from my vision of the project, there's a hole, I would love to see a lot more engagement from the locals from Lagos and Portimão, both on a social level like

coming to events, but also on a professional level like networking and having sales” (VdL-16).

Walt also mentioned something interesting about the relationship between the local farmers that are used to do traditional farming and the young farmers that do permaculture.

“Even though permaculture brings some new tools and some new methods for doing things in agriculture, there are always differences and there’s that tension between, you know... Sr. Paulo has his way of producing a vegetable garden and these permacultures bring some new ideas but we synthesize and we find a hybrid” (VdL-21)

And we did observe a true respect between Sr. Paulo that here represents the local farmer and Ricardo, the responsible for permaculture in garden.

Walt usually doesn’t watch TV, reads a lot and he likes to know what is going on in the world.

In terms of his connection with the food or how much of it does he grow or help grow, he says that *“it’s probably half-half Walt and Nita”*. They’re self-sufficient in eggs, vegetables and fruits:

“(…) At least all of the fresh food, all of the vegetables and the fruits taken together it’s fair to say that most of that is produced internally on the farm” (VdL-21)

What they don’t have, they trade locally and with neighbours. The rest of the farm is probably doing a little more than fifty-fifty *“but moving to complete food self-reliance that’s our goal for the farm circle” (VdL-21).*

c) Christine from Várzea da Gonçalves

The next interview we're going to analyse is the one made to Christine, from Várzea da Gonçalves. We had some technical difficulties with the recorder for this interview so we had to re-ask the questions through email since it wasn't viable to go to the project again.

As Chris and Christine told us, it was never their intention to do the Várzea project as it is at the moment. When they bought the land 11 years ago, they initially had in mind to run it as it had previously been, as a guesthouse. Then a Portuguese/Argentinian couple went there to look for a house to live in exchange of making a garden. This eventually led to having volunteer workers in the garden that then led to the discovery of permaculture, that is now the basis of the ethics and principles applied in the project.

Why Portugal? Christine says she never felt at home in the UK and that she wanted to migrate. Chris, her partner, had been in Portugal before and suggested it so they came together and they stayed. Christine says she feels comfortable with Portuguese people as a whole, the climate is pleasant, the landscape and the culture are both interesting.

In terms of the life before coming to Portugal, Christine says that back in the UK none of them was growing their own food and life wasn't unpleasant. She used to teach Interior Architecture at college and she met Chris one year before they came to Portugal.

"In the UK, neither of us was growing our own food" (VdG-24)

When asked if she feels happy and fulfilled, she answered yes, especially because she's now building her own house and that is something very important for her, also because she's not the most enthusiast person about living in community and she likes to keep her own space and that's what she does most of the time.

“Personally, I am not over-enthused about living in community and keep to my own space most of the time. However, it is not unpleasant” (VdG-24)

In fact, this is the main aspect that Christine mentioned when asked about the difficulties of living in the Várzea. For her, it’s difficult to live as a member of a small community with people she wouldn’t always choose to have as company. Working with egocentric people on the same job is something quite difficult for her since she has no interest in being among those people:

“When there’re too many egocentric people working on the same job, I have no interest in being among them” (VdG-24).

Another difficulty is the language. For Christine the Portuguese language is in fact a barrier that she struggles with. Before leaving the UK she had never really heard other languages apart from English. Also the fact that this is an exclusively foreign community with little contact with Portuguese people, at least inside the community, doesn’t make it easier.

“Yes, I struggle with it. Up until I moved to Portugal, in my mid 40’s, I had never really heard any other language spoken apart from English, so was totally unfamiliar with different sounds – this hasn’t made it easier” (VdG-24)

Christine has the PDC and for her permaculture is a way of living with nature, not destroying it. In fact she is a bit bored of the word but at least it works as an overall terms that offers a guideline for people and she’s glad she has discovered it.

“I get fed up with hearing the word, as it really is a mixture of indigenous ways but at least as an umbrella term it gives people a guideline to research the term. I am certainly glad I discovered it” (VdG-24)

In terms of connection to the food, personally she doesn't eat much from the garden. She has her own little vegetable garden, but she says she's not really a cultivator but more a constructor.

“As I don't work in the garden here because of reasons previously stated, I don't eat much from it (...) I'm more a constructor and communities need people with different interests – no good having a huge productive garden and no shelter in which to eat the produce!” (VdG-24)

In terms of connection with the home country, she goes as little as possible and only to see her older children. She usually flies once every three years. When asked if she imagines herself staying in Portugal, she answered that certainly yes for the immediate future. Her eight years old daughter was born in Portugal, attends the local school and has many Portuguese friends so she doesn't want to move her away. Also Christine feels more at home in Portugal than in the UK since there's more that she can relate to. Morocco would be her other alternative as a place to live.

“Certainly for the immediate future. My daughter (8 years old) was born here and attends the local school, is fluent in Portuguese and has many Portuguese friends, so I would not want to move her away from Portugal. I think of it more a home than I do the UK, there is a lot more here that I can relate to” (VdG-24)

Christine doesn't watch TV and she doesn't follow any news. She prefers to live with respect for immediate surrounding issues that she can help to resolve. When

asked if she feels like living in community she just answered that community is not really her thing:

“Community... Not really my thing!” (VdG-24).

5.2 Analysis by question to both Portuguese and Foreigners

a) Main advantages and disadvantages of living and/or working in the communities

In the first question about how people find out about the project, there's a clear majority in the Portuguese sample that found it out in their search for work, mainly because of Vale da Sarvinda that, volunteers apart, employs everyone. The other source of information is Internet through websites like *Transição e Permacultura*, or *Rede Convergir*, or something more open like a research on Google in one case of the foreign sample. In both groups, Portuguese and non-Portuguese, most of the people lives or works in these projects since no more than one or two years.

When asked about the main advantages and disadvantages of living and/or working in these projects, most of the Portuguese mentioned the social life or the environment among people *“team spirit” (VdL-17)*, *“to know a lot of people” (VdS-2)*, *“being able to live and work and have your friends, your community and the children in the same context, it's a big advantage for the lifestyle” (VdL-15)*. The foreigners mainly pointed out to live in community.

The second aspect more often pointed out by the Portuguese was the possibility to work outside and the environment in terms of clean air, access to water and no pollution *“it's a privilege to do this work in agriculture with a lot of water” (VdL-18)*, *“to live in the nature, to work the land” (VdS-9)*, *“to work mainly outside in a job I like” (VdL-12)*, *“contact with nature without having the city noise and city pollution”*

(VdS-11) while for the foreigners, healthy food was the second aspect – *“the ability to grow fresh food”* (VdG-22).

After these, things like the possibility to live and work in the same place, the contact with nature, the support with the children, to be able to learn more about permaculture and agriculture, the freedom, the awareness of environmental issues and the friendships were the other aspects mentioned as advantages for both groups.

In terms of disadvantages, there's a predominance of the no, there're no disadvantages. However, some persons complained about different things like the intensity of the life, the overlap between work and personal life stressed out by both Portuguese and Foreigners. The solitude of the place, far away from the family, the lack of certain comforts like electricity at night, the conflicts between people, the amount of responsibility and the difficulties in communication are mentioned disadvantages. One Portuguese pointed out his difficulty in speaking English and one Foreigner mentioned the fact that he still doesn't speak Portuguese, but he's learning the language, so that he can communicate better. About the people that said that there are no disadvantages, does this mean that for them they have the perfect life, the one they have always imagined? Or does it mean something else? We can think of three possible explanations for this: either they don't feel comfortable enough with the interviewer to talk about it; either they were afraid to talk about this topic since some of them are working in these places and depending on their salaries at the end of the month, or they just truly believe that there are no disadvantages compared to the life before. It's a sensitive topic and we did not force people to talk about, considering that a “no” was one of the possible options.

Table 7 – Main Advantages and Disadvantages of Living/Working in these Sustainable Communities

Advantages	Disadvantages
Social life	No disadvantages
The environment between people	Intensity of work and lifestyle
To live and work in the same context	No separation of work from personal life
To work outside	Isolation
Clean air, water, no pollution	Far away from family
Support with children	Lack of certain comforts
To live in community	The amount of responsibility
Healthy food “the ability to grow fresh food”	Language as a barrier
Contact with Nature	The advantages are the disadvantages at the same time
Freedom	A lot of people in the Summer
Learn about permaculture and agriculture	You give a lot of responsibility but it’s not your project
Friendships	

Source: Self-elaboration.

It’s interesting to notice that, apart from the two people that said that the advantages are the disadvantages at the same time, the only aspect that we see repeated in both rows is related to living and working in the same context. This is simultaneous seen as an advantage; since it means no distance to go to work, no time in the traffic, go home to eat and the support with the children for those who have them. However, when the need to “breath” comes along, the need for space and distance from work and from work colleagues - because often people hang out after work with the same people they worked with during the day - brings this feeling of “intensity” mentioned by several persons. The researcher also felt that when visiting the communities and this is, no doubt, one of the strongest points common to all projects.

“(...) There’s always events and things and sometimes you want to be a bit more quiet and it’s hard. You need to run away from out of the farm. We live in a public place, in fact like people show up and we deal with people from the outside all the time and sometimes when you need to be a bit more quiet you need to find your own way” (VdL-15)

For the volunteers, when asked about the main advantages of doing volunteer work in these projects, they talked about the possibility *“to put permaculture into practice, to work with the land, to live in an environment where permaculture is the central focus” (VdL-13); “to be more one with nature, more careful with nature and with each other, less stress. You’re outside most of the day it makes you feel healthier” (VdL-1) and “to see the initial state of the project, the construction, the basis” (VdS-5).*

When asked about the main disadvantages some mentioned the initial difficulties in adapting to the environment *“in the beginning it took me a while to get in the rhythm of the place” (VdL-13)*, some talked about the intensity of the social interactions which and the weather conditions *“more intense because you live together twenty four hours a day and problems or irritations with each other can escalate more than when you’re in a city (...) weather conditions are more extreme” (VdS-1)*. It’s interesting to notice that this intensity question already mentioned by some of the people that actually live and work in these projects is perceptible to the volunteers that stay for shorter periods of time and it was also perceptible for the investigator while visiting these projects. Of course, around this intensity of the social relationships and sharing common spaces, comes this need of personal space but it’s also this that allows the feeling of belonging to a community. In contradiction to this last opinion about the intensity of living together, another volunteer in the same project mentioned as a disadvantage the lack of social life and also the lack of some comforts like electricity at night *“socially now it’s a bit poor so it’s only work” (VdS-5)*.

b) Why Portugal?

When asked about “why Portugal?”, the answers were all very different but there’s the children factor of “raising children without fear” (VdL-21) and the search for ecological/permaculture farms as two important factors. Benson & O’Reilly (2009) when conceptualising lifestyle migration mentioned that the most-documented motivation in the *counterurbanisation* literature is the rural idyll or the attraction of the countryside as a way of life and as a stress free environment where children can grow up in safety (Benson & O’Reilly, 2009; Matthews et al., 2000). Then there’re motives like the social life, living in Portugal as a child, the Erasmus programme “*I did Erasmus in Azores, it’s like living in a culture and climate similar to mine, but I feel more free, there’s lot of social movement*” (VdL-19), to be closer from the family, through friends or Portuguese friends, Portuguese wife or Portuguese culture.

“(...) Friends told us a lot of good things about the country, the people, the history. We were passing through ecological farms in Israel and we decided to try something else out of Israel.” (VdG-23)

When we asked the volunteers about how they found out about the project we had three different answers: one was “*looking to buy land either in Portugal or France*” (VdL-13), another one came to the Boom Festival and there people told her about the project; another one met it through people in another project. They were in Portugal between 1 to 3 weeks.

c) Education and the life before

About the life before, among the Portuguese there’s a clear majority of people that were unemployed before going to the project, opposite to the Foreign people that were either entrepreneurs, teachers or were living in another sustainable community.

Here we have a critical gap between the Foreign and the Portuguese. Although not all of the Portuguese were unemployed, the majority of the people we interviewed were. And we know for a fact that, for example, most of the local workers working on the natural construction of the camping in Vale da Sarvinda were also unemployed before. Also, in terms of educational background and reinforcing this idea, it's very important to stress out that all the foreign people we interviewed have University studies with at least a Bachelor, some of them are PhD, while the Portuguese are distributed quite equally between University studies, High School Diploma and not having the High School Diploma or not identified (n/l) as we can see in the table below.

Table 8 – Level of Education of both Portuguese and Foreign Interviewees

	Portuguese	Foreign
University studies	5	10
High School Diploma	5	-
No High School Diploma or n/l	4	-

Source: Self-elaboration.

Of course these last reflexions lead us to question if having a high degree of education is like a pre-requisite to enter in the permaculture world? Is the dream of a new world more based on the permaculture ethics and principles associated to the middle/middle high class with a lot of scholar and cultural capital? And what are the differences between this kind of lifestyle migration and the more common type of lifestyle migration in Portugal?

In fact these questions are reinforced by the notion that there's more people with the PDC among the Foreign sample than in the other one. Considering that the majority of people, both Portuguese and Foreigners, have the PDC and by the analysis of the parent's background, there's a clear difference between Portuguese and non-Portuguese, since in the first group most of the person's come from a more humble

socio-economic context, while in the second group all the interviewees have or had their parents either in University or with a high level of education.

When we asked the volunteers if their family agree with them living in community, two of them answered yes and the other one said *“yes and no. They’re not used to have someone in the family always running around but they’re just concerned”* (VdS-5).

Two of them had already done volunteer experiences in other permaculture projects, the other was only visitor.

One of them had the PDC and the other two no, something that we think might have to do with the fact that the volunteers are not just interested in permaculture as a design methodology but also in permaculture as a lifestyle. And these projects are a good way to meet new open-minded people and having new experiences. Also the PDC has a cost and it might be more difficult for younger people to pay it.

In terms of parent’s professions we had three answers *“retired”* (VdL-13), *“the father works at the Ministry of Health and the mother is Massage Therapist”* (VdS-1), *“the mother works in an office and the father is the leader of a little four people company”* (VdS-5).

d) Notions of happiness and fulfilment

Of course the notion of happiness is not an easy concept to define. Although it’s surely an important value for many people, its meaning is complex and ambiguous (Schwartz, 1992), but more important for us is to try to understand if the sense of personal “unhappiness” was felt by the migrant before taking the decision to change his or her lifestyle. When we asked them if they felt happy before coming to the community, the Portuguese answered mainly *“more or less”*; in second place comes *“very happy”* and *“not happy”*. Among the foreigners, there’s an equal answer of *“happy”* and *“more or less”*. When asked if people feel happy now, the majority

answered “*happier*” and then “*happy*”, but with one answer of “*some days yes, some days no*”, another of “*glad*” and even another one that said that compared to the life before now feels more “*unhappy*” because of all the work and the responsibility he has in his project.

Table 9– Degree of Happiness before going to Live/Work in the Project

Degree of happiness before	Portuguese	Foreign
Unhappy	2	0
Not completely happy	1	0
More or less	3	1
Happy	0	1
Very happy	2	0

Source: Self-elaboration.

Table 10 – Degree of Happiness at the Present Moment

Degree of happiness at the present moment	Portuguese	Foreign
Unhappy	1	0
Some days yes, some days no	1	0
Glad	1	0
Happy	2	0
Happier	4	3
Much more happy	1	0
99% fulfilled	1	0

Source: Self-elaboration.

When we asked the volunteers about their feeling of happiness and fulfilment, again we had different answers. One that didn’t felt fulfilled in the lifestyle he had before, took the opportunity when he was fired because of the recession and the job’s cutting to change his life:

"I was working for charity. I wanted to find a way of traveling and working. I left London 4 or 5 years ago and I spent most time in India. When I was in London I didn't feel fulfilled. Now I definitely feel like I'm contented with what I'm doing" (VdL-13).

Another one was "*perfectly happy*" before, but she wanted something else.

"I was perfectly happy. I had my friends, I was working and I had a house, but I wanted something else, even though everything was good. I started travelling and going to this kind of places and I do feel a lot more fulfilled I think, I really enjoy" (VdS-1).

The other one didn't have a clear answer.

"My times were always mixed. I felt happy and I felt really bad as well. Portugal gave me an important insight about Nature generally. It's a good school also to learn about yourself. Now I'm in a state of recreation" (VdS-5).

About the acceptation of the family towards this lifestyle, among the Portuguese most were a little bit suspicious in the beginning but now accept it a lot better. Among the foreigners, there's one parent that is more supportive than the other one, this in the case of the people that still haven't build their own family.

e) Connection with the local population

In both groups there're clearly good relationships between the projects and the local population, which includes local trade, mutual support and exchange. Although we don't have the local's opinion about this topic, there are local people working in two of the three projects, which naturally reinforce this connection and, in the one

where there's no direct employment, there's a Portuguese girl that goes there to give Portuguese classes to the British family. Also there's the effort to organize events, workshops, learning opportunities and try to include people by bringing the locals to teach how to do bread, cheese and other traditional knowledge. Besides this, there's still some suspicious, strangeness and resistance from the local population, like the tensions observed by some authors between migrants and locals (Fountain & Hall, 2002). This resistance is mainly stressed by the locals working on the farms:

"(...) Oldest people are still very suspicious to see the Rasta's people working the land" (VdL-19)

"(...) We invite locals to come and do bread with us like the old women to teach us, but still many people for sure think we're freaks or hippies (...)" (VdL-20)

Among the non-Portuguese there's the will to see this connections stronger and more often:

"I think it's a good relationship, lots of local people come to the open events, many volunteer program for neighbours, it's a very local-based project with lots of interaction and it could be even better" (VdL-14)

"I think that the connections that exist are good connections but I think there's too little connection but it's growing slowly" (VdL-16)

When we asked some of the Portuguese people if they often get out of the geographical space of the projects, we had several different answers like everyday, every two weeks, twice a week and very often, but from what we observed most

people come and go a lot and they would probably go more if they were not so far away from the closest town.

When we asked the volunteers about the connection between the projects and the local population, they're not very sure about their opinion, but they say they think there're good relationships:

"I would say probably there's a good relationship. The local people working here are nice, openhearted" (VdS-5)

"(...) They give work to some people I think that's good" (VdS-1)

About how often they get out of the project, some go every three days, others once a week or don't get out.

f) What is Permaculture and it's role in the world today?

When asked about what is permaculture we're trying to understand in this question not the accuracy of the knowledge but the personal interpretation of what permaculture mean for each person we obtained several answers but mainly people defined permaculture either as a lifestyle or a design tool or even both at the same time depending on how we want to apply it. Some people said that permaculture is hard to define since it's something so wide. This difficulty in defining permaculture was also mentioned by the interviewees in Ingram's investigation since there's a wide range of interpretations existing different individual approaches and resulting lifestyles (Ingram et al, 2014). When explaining what is permaculture some of the Portuguese mentioned it like:

“Natural agriculture” (VdS-6), “alternative agriculture without chemicals” (VdL-19), “to live more in harmony with nature” (VdS-12), “methodology” (VdL-21) and “it’s the future” (VdL-18).

In the particular case of Portugal, the fact that the level of education has risen among the previously illiterate farmers has contributed to the search of techniques that allow people to make money easily even if putting into danger Nature and the public health (Firmino, 1999). In the foreign group other aspects are introduced:

“(…) Learning to think as a forest in terms of pattern thinking” (VdL-16)

“(…) Permaculture it’s not a religion, it’s not a belief system” (VdS-3)

“It’s compatible either you’re a Catholic or a Buddhist” (VdL-21).

About being in other permaculture projects there’s a clear majority of people who have been in other projects on both groups.

“It’s the art of creating systems in which everything is working at its potential” (VdL-16)

“It’s one of the most important environmental voices in the world at the moment” (VdG-23)

“It’s a liveable philosophy, permaculture speaks to me” (VdG-22).

Images 11 & 12 – Garden (left) and Clay House in Várzea (right)



Source: Photos taken by the author.

If permaculture has something new to add to the way of man living in society and in its way of relating to nature clearly most of the people believes yes:

“(...) It’s the new story of people as creators as abundant human being able to make the reality that we want to see in the world” (VdL-16)

“(...) The biggest thing permaculture can offer to the West is remember pattern thinking” (VdS-3)

“(...) To show how it’s possible to live more harmoniously with nature and the people close to you and that make part of your community even if it’s a larger community” (VdS-12)

“(...) Probably the greatest offering to humanity might be that it has good pedagogical sort of ground” (VdG-22).

Some people answered that although they believe that yes it has something to give they don’t think it’s something new.

“It’s nothing new, it’s learning by mistake. It’s a modern tool that will allow modern people to look again to the old traditions with new eyes and not say we’re going back but we’re evolving in new ways” (VdL-20)

“I don’t think there’s anything entirely new about it but I think it provides very critical principles which help people to understand some of the exchanges in the ecosystem and inhabited ecosystems so I think it’s pretty helpful” (VdG-22).

When we asked the volunteers what means permaculture for them more or less we had similar answers. Defined in different ways all of them mentioned the men’s relationship with nature *“it can either be a way of life or a process of being in harmony with nature” (VdL-13)*, *“for me it’s about finding a balance between humans and nature, to find a way to live together and not only take from nature but also give” (VdS-1)*, *“I would define it as a non pragmatic view of using but not abusing land field or nature. More a philosophy based on scientific researches” (VdS-5)*. When asked if they think permaculture has something new to add to the way of man living in society and in his way of relating to nature they all answered yes it brings something but it will depend on the people’s will *“(…) the potential is there. It depends on how resistant the permaculture culture will be” (VdL-5)*, *“yes, I think absolutely. There’s always been this question hanging over permaculture weather or not it can actually be something that can be used on a large or small scale. But I think people have to want to have that connection with nature” (VdL-13).*

g) Travels & Transports

About how often the non-local people travel home and which means of transportation do they usually use most Portuguese usually goes once a month by car with either their own car or a borrowed one. The foreign people living in Portugal at the moment most of them goes home once a year and most of them uses the airplane

in these travels only one family came from England by ferry and by van which shows that although people talk about and try to have a more sustainable lifestyle they're also still dependent on fossil fuels for some things like the transportation for example.

For the volunteers the connection with the home country and the means of transportation used in those travels we also had different answers like *"more or less once a year"* (VdL-13), *"I didn't travel for the last five years and all my other journeys were two months than I got back home"* (VdS-5) and *"normally after three/four months I go home but it really depends"* (VdS-1). Among the means of transportations mentioned there are two mentions to the train, two mentions to hitchhike and one to the airplane which shows an attempt to search for alternative options besides flying.

h) Diet and Connection to Nature

When asked if they have felt any change in the diet since in these projects there's usually a preference towards a vegetarian diet or in their way of relating to nature most people answered yes to the first diet question either because they were not used to eat vegetarian *"yes, I've introduced new products in my diet some I didn't know about"* (VdS-11).

"I had basically pre-diabetes because I was consuming vast amount of meat and sugar and processed food and it really helped to live at places where I can get access to fresh organic food" (VdS-3).

Either because the quality of the food is higher in these farms.

"Diet changes immediately because you're taking stuff from the garden" (VdG-22)

"I never ate so healthy food as here" (VdL-15).

For some this awareness in terms of food quality and diet it's nothing new *"I was already aware of this diet things. Since I was 14 I became a vegetarian"* (VdL-20).

"I have a very strong connection with ecological farming and I produce food for myself, family, community, market" (VdG-23).

About the connection with nature all the foreign people say there's no change because they already had a strong connection *"I already had a really deep relation to nature before"* (VdL-16) and although most of the Portuguese people says the same *"I feel closer (to nature) but the passion I have is the same"* (VdS-12) some of them say that yes there's a change towards a deeper connection *"(...) the way I related to nature was already part of my life but in VdL I was able to connect with the cycles"* (VdL-15), *"(...) you know, we're never separated from nature, we're apart from it but I would say much more closer in any way to nature"* (VdG-22). Some go further criticizing the hypocrisy of this allegedly felt "land and nature connection":

"Even like this I think we're really disconnected from the nature and even with the permaculture ethics and principles we use them in the things we want and the things we don't feel comfortable with, we don't use them. So we feel more connection with the land but (...) We don't want to live really radical or we don't want to live in the land but want to be vegetarian which for me it's not so easy" (VdL-14).

When asked the volunteers if they felt any change in their diet or in their way of relating to nature since they're there one of them answered that no, it remains the same as before but the other two mentioned differences in the way of relating to nature *"my connection with nature feels stronger in the sense that having grown up in the city I never felt part of it"* (VdL-13), *"yes, I got a lot of energy from being in the outside all day"* (VdS-1).

i) Language: a barrier?

When asked if the language is a barrier and this question was only made to the foreign people answered no or not within the community

“English and Portuguese for me are equal” (VdL-16)

“Portuguese wife of course made it a lot easier. Portugal especially the Algarve it’s one of the places the most amenable for foreigners. Everybody here speaks some English” (VdL-21).

One person answered yes and two of them are in fact learning Portuguese even taking Portuguese classes.

“I’m trying to learn Portuguese. I don’t want just to stay in a small community either British or German, I want to know more Portuguese people” (VdG-23).

Surprisingly one of the local workers said to us in the middle of the interview that we wished to know how to speak English so that he could communicate more with all the different people that go there. Interestingly all the children from these families speaks at least two languages, the one from the parents and Portuguese or they’re learning it. One of the two girls from one of the families living in the Várzea with only 3 years old already speaks Deutsch because of her mother, Hebrew because of her father, English because they speak it in the community and she’s now learning Portuguese which is quite impressive.

Images 13 & 14 – Locals and “Permies” Working in the Garden in VdL (left) and Dry Toilet in Sarvinda (right)



Source: Photos taken by the author.

j) Clothes and Habits: TV, Reading and Computer

About the habits clearly most of the people both Portuguese and foreign don't watch TV.

“The TV can be a little bit more distractive in a way you can go with the flow and just stay there watching a box. Specially with children this is a big challenge, not to have them hypnotized and... Once I took the TV out they are much more creative, they don't miss it I think” (VdL-20).

Most reads and spends some time in the computer although this question about the computer was only introduced in the question's script in VdL and the Várzea. In terms of following the local or global news the foreign people are more interested in that especially in the global news or the news from their home country.

“No, I don't follow the local news. I haven't got a radio... I do sometimes check the headlines on the BBC website just to know what's is going on, particularly in the Middle East... So sometimes but not much” (VdG-22)

“I follow Greek news. Since the last elections in the new government I really follow the Greek news” (VdL-14).

About the clothes Portuguese get them mainly in the regular commerce and the foreign more in second hand shops. All three volunteers don't watch TV and read. One of them follows the local or global news and usually they get their clothes in 2nd hand shops.

Table 11 – Television and Reading Habits of the Interviewees

	Watch TV	Reads
Yes	3	15
No	18	3

Source: Self-elaboration.

k) Learning experiences and future dreams

When asked about the biggest learning many Portuguese mentioned the learning with other people, the power of community and the professional experience:

“I learn a lot with other people, with their perspectives, how to deal with people”

“I learned how to live in community in a smaller place” (VdS-12)

“I've learned a lot because every day it's a different day” (VdS-7)

“(…) Not to judge people by the way they look” (VdL-19).

To the foreign there's no consensus: patience, communication skills and self-learning are the mentioned aspects.

“Patience. A lot of patience... Communication skills... Questioning when I’m in a state of mind being aware, being able to step out of it” (VdL-16).

When asked if people want to stay in the project in the future which is a question that wasn’t done to everyone because of the course of the interview but two people answered yes and one answered she wanted to look for land and stay in Portugal. To the foreign people we asked if they imagined themselves staying more permanently in Portugal and we had one positive answer:

“I would love to and I do think I do come with a contribution to Portugal (...) If I continue what I’m doing, to teach and to grow food for the local market I’m sure that people will enjoy it. And be a resident here, that would make me very happy” (VdG-23)

Against two negative ones:

“I don’t envisage staying permanently in Portugal at this present moment but I don’t envisage staying in England either. At some extent I may envisage some isolation back and forth semi-nomadically” (VdG-22).

When we asked the volunteers a more personal question of what they’ve learned from permaculture and their experience in the project we had of course different answers according to the different personal experiences and life story:

“I’ve learned from permaculture that nature is not something to be confused about or feared. I grew up with a sense that growing food is something really complicated when actually is just logic. It’s like permaculture is our instinct” (VdL-13).

This opinion is explained by the fact that the interviewed was born in a big city with few or no access at all to the countryside.

“With permaculture I learned it’s very important to observe what is happening. You should not just start doing things. First you need to look. I learned to make bread and some things about natural construction” (VdS-1).

Which is the first principle of permaculture: to observe. The other answer was more about the harmony that the nature connection gives to man:

“Being in permaculture projects I learned what are human being needs to survive. To get good psychological state from nature. In northern cultures where I’m from we don’t know that we can solve any problem just by being in nature” (VdS-5).

When asked about if they imagined themselves living permanently in Portugal we had two negative answers *“right now I’m travelling and I want to discover a lot of things” (VdS-1)* and one maybe *“yes, I can see myself either living in Portugal or in France (...) but we’ll see” (VdL-13).*

Images 15 & 16 – Making bread in VdL (left) and Chaym Class in Várzea (right)



Source: Photos taken by the author.

I) Food connection

In circumstances where diet is no longer given by “nature”, by the local seasons and by the availability of the local production, individuals have to choose what to eat (Giddens, 1995). About the connection with the food or how much of the food you eat you grow or help growing the most people said more than half.

“The vegetables in Summer I would say 80%. In the Winter I would say 70%. If it’s green it’s coming from the garden. Other things come from other local farms around” (VdG-23)

“There’re meals 100% garden, there’re meals 0% garden but I think more than half at this point” (VdL-16).

One said half-half referring to a couple:

“Well, here on the farm it’s fair to say that the farm at least all of the fresh food, all of the vegetables and the fruits taken together it’s fair to say that most of that it’s produced internally on the farm (...) With us, it’s probably half-half Walt and Nita” (VdL-21)

But this question was not made in all the projects since it was only introduced in a later stage of the investigation and it was only made to foreign people because of the extension of the interviews it was not possible to ask it to everyone.

m) Community living

When asked if people feel like living in community, which is an important point on our work of trying to understand if we can call communities to these projects, most Portuguese answered that yes they feel like living in community because of the support, the relationships, the shared values and the fact that they share the basic resources and all the foreign answered that they feel like living in community.

“For me it means support, it means going deeper in relationships, shared values, celebration... Even though I find very important to have your own personal space” (VdL-15).

Besides these aspects some people mentioned the importance of having space to have a personal space and some even mentioned as a disadvantage, as we’ve seen before, this almost promiscuity between work and personal life.

“I feel that there has been, not at the moment” (VdS-2)

It’s also important to refer that the people that said they don’t feel like living in community they’re from VdS and this is due to the fact either because the project it’s still an early stage so still there’re not the basic conditions that a community requires or because of the intensity of the work in this stage.

One person described the community of VdL as it follows:

“This is a very specific community. It’s a transition community probably for all of us; probably nobody is going to live here all their all lives. It’s a learning community” (VdL-20).

For the foreign people all said they feel like living in community.

“Yes, I think the entire Vale is an entire community and Várzea is a piece of the community with quite an important role in this community” (VdG-23)

“Well, we’re at the moment and as a community you can take more control over certain aspects of your life” (VdG-23).

Images 17 & 18 – Diamantino Working in the Natural Construction (left) and Structure of the Camping in Sarvinda (right)



Source: Photos taken by the author.

Another thing that is reinforcing this sense of belonging to a community in Várzea da Gonçalves is the fact that they have an alternative education system there for the children from the Várzea and the all valley called “*Borboleta*”, which means butterfly in English.

When asked if they feel like living in a community in their sense of community, although this question doesn’t fully applies to the volunteers, there was one negative answer “*in the moment no*” (VdS-5) and the other two said yes “*a community is I guess a collection of people who work in towards the same objective. I think here it works quite harmoniously*” (VdL-13), “*I think a community is when you live together which*

means you eat, talk, you communicate, share things, help each other. I'm here for a short period of time but I do feel living in a community because people ask you how you're doing, if you slept well, this kind of things that make you feel we're together" (VdS-1) which is contradictory that in the same project some people say they feel like living in community and other people don't. This shows the fragility of this sense of belonging to a community since it comes from a very personal sense of belonging and each one experience.

CHAPTER VI: REFLECTIONS

6.1. Reflections on the Permaculture Sustainable Communities

For the last fifty years Portugal has been a popular destination for lifestyle and sun-searching migrants. These migrants come mainly from Northern and Central Europe, specially from Great Britain, Germany, Holland and Sweden, as well as North America (United States and Canada), settling in the Portuguese coastal line – Algarve and Estoril/Cascais - where they can find the sun and leisure they're searching for a lower price in comparison to their home countries (Sardinha, n/l; Torkington, 2010).

Table 12 – Ages of the Interviewees in the Three Sustainable Communities

Age	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Total
Portuguese	3	7	3	1	14
Foreigners	3	4	1	3	11
Total	6	11	4	4	25

Source: Self-elaboration.

In terms of the average of ages there's a predominance of people aged between 31 and 40 years old both on Portuguese and Foreigners. Followed by those who have between 18 and 30 years old. So the majority of people in these permaculture projects has no more than 40 years old, although there are 8 people in our sample that do have more than 40. It's important to notice that this is only accurate for our sample of interviewees and may not be equal for the universe of all the people that live and work in these projects since we did not interviewed everyone and, of course, it may not represent the all universe of permaculture projects in Portugal. That's why that would be a very interesting question for further investigations: are these permaculture

projects in Portugal essentially composed by people aged between 30 and 40 years old? And is it the same in other countries?

In terms of men and women proportions, in Sarvinda there's clearly not a proportion between the number of men and women (Table 12). There were only 4 women (one of them a volunteer) for a universe of 30 people and we have the information that besides the volunteers at least 2 of them have left the project in the meanwhile. Perhaps others might have joined in, but we have no information about it.

Table 13 – Proportion between Men and Women at Vale da Sarvinda

<i>Vale da Sarvinda</i>	Male	Female	Total
Interviewees	9	3	12
Non-interviewees	20	0	20
Total	29	3	32

Source: Self-elaboration. The number of non-interviewees it's an estimative.

While in the other two case studies, when we look at the total universe of the people that live there (and not only the interviewee's universe) we observe quite an harmonious equilibrium between the number of men and women (Table 13). This table only refers to the people that really live in the projects, this way excluding the workers and the volunteers. This proportionality in some cases it's explained by the existence of couples.

Table 14 – Gender Proportion in Vale da Lama and Várzea da Gonçalves

	Male Interviewees	Female Interviewees	Total Male	Total Female
VdL	6	6	12	12
Várzea	3	1	4	4

Source: Self-elaboration.

From what we observed in Vale da Sarvinda at the moment there's a certain tension, a work tension due to the deadlines they have to accomplish. At the same time the tension due to the amount of work, not only felt by us as external observers but also by the people that live there. Only at Sarvinda some people told us that they don't feel like living in community at the moment.

"I feel that there has been, not at the moment. There is a group of people more connected (...) but beside those (...) I don't think I can speak in community. People come and go after a short time (...) and for me, at the moment, that word brings me a reaction a little bit negative" (VdS-2).

It was observed by the investigator that in both the other two projects this sense of community and belonging is strong: people interact with each other and share the common infrastructures, work together and even hang out together after work. Interestingly this happens but none of these two are intentional communities, meaning that it was not their initial goal to create a community, rather it emerged more or less spontaneously.

In Sarvinda we observed the bigger contrast between the day and nightlife meaning that most people don't actually live there. From the universe of 30 people working there only 4 actually live there; all the other people go to work in the morning and leave at the end of the day. Such a big contrast was not observed in the other two projects. In terms of diet, in all the projects the meals are, when cooked for the community, 100% vegetarians although many people are not vegetarian.

The Sarvinda goal is, for many, an ambitious goal. To be completely self-sufficient in terms of food, energy and income in such a big scale it's not an easy task. But it's not impossible. In fact it seems that people are working in that direction and there are people in the project who are really devoted to it. Some have completely changed their lives and sometimes even their family's lives. Others saw in Sarvinda a good opportunity for getting out of unemployment and do something they like and this, we could say, it's the biggest influence of Sarvinda on the local context: the

creation of employment. In this sense, VdL also created a good amount of employment in its local context opposite to Várzea, but that's not also its goal. Although Sarvinda might not be the best case study for an investigation about migrants in permaculture projects in Portugal, since it's not exactly a permaculture project but more an agricultural and touristic project that respects the permaculture principles, it's certainly a particular case in the Portuguese landscape by its features and its goals.

When analysing our three case studies together, we can see some similarities but also some differences. All of them practice and defend a vegetarian diet although most of the people are not vegetarian; all the projects receive woofers and volunteers although not all of them employ people; the land where they now have the projects was, for different reasons, abandoned; in all three, there's the founders and the people who have joined the project later, being these last ones more changeable; either if it's permaculture, biological agriculture or biodynamic all stand for a type of agriculture free of chemicals but not all of them are capable of producing more than half of their own vegetables; to a more or less extend of degree, all of them integrate the ethics and the principles of permaculture; all of them organize courses, workshops, dinners and events with and for the local population and for whoever wants to participate but in some people's opinion these bounds with the locals could be more often and stronger; they all have sources of alternative energy like solar-panels but none is completely self-sufficient in terms of energy; all of them do (or are planning to) tourism as a way of economical sustainability; all of them live in community, not all of them intentional communities, but not everyone feels like living in community which shows some of the tensions that might exist within it.

Also in terms of structure and organization they all organize differently, being the Várzea the least structured since there's not any kind of pre-defined organizational structure besides the respect towards everyone and everything. The decisions are made between the founders and the residents. In Vale da Lama there's a structure of organization very much based on Holocracy⁶ that allows the different work circles to

⁶ Holocracy is a way of running an organization that removes power from a management hierarchy and distributes it across roles (instead of jobs descriptions), which can be executed autonomously. It was created in 2001 by Brian Robertson, available at <http://www.holacracy.org/how-it-works/>

communicate between them. The process of decision-making is made between the founders and the member with higher degree of commitment, although the founders make some of the decisions like the financial ones. In Vale da Sarvinda they follow a model based on meritocracy where one man, one vote, makes the decisions collectively. The structural decisions are made between the founders and the member with higher degree of commitment (Nogueira, 2015).

Table 15–Differences and Similarities between the Three Case Studies

Similar	Vegetarian Diet	Woofers & volunteers	Agriculture free of chemicals	Permaculture ethics & principles	(Agro) Tourism	Courses, workshops, dinners
Different	Employment	The sense of community	Connections with the locals	Degree of self-sufficiency	Structure and Organization	People

Source: Self-elaboration.

In terms of self-sufficiency overall it seems to us that none of them is 100% self-sufficient because even if the majority of the vegetables comes from the garden they don't produce legumes or wheat; even if there's a solar-panel not all of the energy used comes from it; even if they don't have their own car they still need a way of transportation to get to these relatively isolated places; even if they're renting houses or rooms and doing (agro) tourism they still are not completely economically sustainable. Besides this, there's a much deeper conscious among people in these communities about the consequences of the human actions on the natural ecosystem and that tries to attenuate it by using natural soaps and cosmetics, reutilizing the waters, dry toilets, recycling, compost and whenever not being able to produce something to buy it locally. These are certainly preoccupations that they have and that, most of them, have already incorporated them into their daily life so that it's no longer something strange.

Nogueira, in her thesis about sustainable communities in Portugal, says something quite interesting about the fact that the Nuclear Members (those who have more responsibilities inside the communities) come from higher social backgrounds

like middle or high class and have higher levels of education (Bachelor and other relevant formations in sustainability, permaculture or community building) than those considered to be Active Partners that have the High-School degree, so as their parents. They are younger (usually between 22 to 28) and have less responsibility inside the communities (Nogueira, 2015). These last reflexions about the level of education and the social background lead us to question if having a high degree of education is like a pre-requisite to enter in the permaculture world? Is the dream of a new world more based on the permaculture ethics and principles associated to the middle/middle high class with a lot of scholar and cultural capital?

What the literature says is that the focus of the research on lifestyle migration is often made to migrants that are possessors of resources and assets alongside with a certain amount of privilege, like the possession of passports from relative powerful countries which enables them the opportunities to realise their aspirations (O'Reilly & Benson, 2015) which does not answer our question since it seems that the authors are making more of a critic to the focus of the majority of the research on this topic rather than an explanation of it. What we can say from the analysis of our interviews is that there is, in fact, a divergence between the Portuguese's general level of education and social background and the Foreigner' s level of education (as seen before on the chapter *Education and the Life Before*) which consequently leads to different types of responsibility and commitment inside the communities (Nogueira, 2015).

In terms of the economic dimension of the question, it was not something that we considered as central to this investigation and so we did not asked it directly to our interviewees but we did tried to understand some things and what we can say is that for the founders they have of course taught about the economical viability of the projects thinking them as a real estate investment with agro-tourism (Vale da Lama), as tourism and agriculture self-sufficiency encouraged by Europeans funds in the early stage (Vale da Sarvinda) or as a guesthouse (Várzea da Gonçala). So it's common to all projects the tourism dimension as a way of income.

6.2 Reflections about the concept of Lifestyle Migrations

Some concepts are quite direct like the definition of refugees and asylum seekers, displaced persons and other forced migrations or when describing the direction of a migration flow like counterurbanisation or North-South migration while lifestyle migration is a difficult concept to operationalize as a category (O'Reilly & Benson, 2015) and this is something that we noticed in this research even in trying to define what can and what cannot be considered as life style migration, also because the academic literature about this topic is not very clear in its own definition. It works more like an open notion that has been worked on mainly by Anglo-Saxon authors and its research has been in its majority, like in this investigation, a qualitative and ethnographic one, focusing on people (not in places) and in their personal trajectories.

The lack of conceptualization of this kind of migration, often viewed more as a process rather than a one single act completed at the destination, has only very recently been attenuated by the publication of an article by O'Reilly and Benson that exposes precisely these issues and the limitations of the concept (O'Reilly & Benson, 2015). As general limitations of the concept we can highlight the difficulties in using this concept in quantitative research; the diversity of the concept or the fact that it focuses on a wide range of variables (like age, part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent), which makes it an imprecise concept difficult to measure (O'Reilly & Benson, 2015). Said this, is lifestyle migration really a concept or a notion that has been worked on? This is still an open question. It seem to us that even if it can be considered an operational concept, it's main characteristics are still not completely defined in the literature which makes it difficult to operationalize in quantitative research but also in qualitative investigation, since there are too many "possibilities of choice" and variety of range within the term. Although, for some authors, it's certainly a concept (O'Reilly & Benson, 2015; Benson, 2015; Torkington, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009;).

Table 16 – Nationalities of the Foreigners Interviewees

Nationality	UK	American	Israelite	Check Republic	Greek	Deutsch	German
Total	4	2	1	1	1	1	1

Source: Self-elaboration.

When we analyse the total data from both people living permanently in Portugal and the volunteers, we verify that the country with more people is the UK, as we can see on Table 13. This data is very much influenced by Várzea da Gonçala and the two British couples that live there. Besides that, there is quite an egalitarian variety of nationalities from Israel, Check Republic, Greece, Netherlands and Germany. Even though they don't all come from Northern Europe as developed by some of the lifestyle migration's authors (Torkington, 2010; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Benson & O'Reilly, 2015) they all come from developed countries.

From the foreign people who are either living or working in our case studies (so this excludes the volunteers) we have a total of six interviews. In this sample we have people with different nationalities like American, Greek, Czech, Israelite and from the UK, but in their itinerary some did not come from their country of origin, like is the case of the Greek Yorgos that was living in Spain, and the Czech Mirka that was living in the United States. All the others came from their country of origin and here we can already see a divergence in one of the main characteristics pointed by the literature as a feature of lifestyle migrations, that is, the mobility movement from the North of Europe to the South (Torkington, 2010; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Benson & O'Reilly, 2015) since we have two people coming from the United States, one coming from Israel and the other from Spain. Only two people confirm this North-South of Europe movement from the UK to Portugal. Also not all of them came from an urban settlement; in fact, the two people that don't come from an urban mean were living in other sustainable communities so, although both seek a sense of community (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015), the community living in a sustainable permaculture project by itself was not the driving force for the migration but as one of the interviewees says:

“Greeks are not so open, they’re not so open to alternative things. I feel judgement in everything I do, I know how people think so for me, if I leave outside of my country, it’s easier” (VdL-14).

In terms of time mobility they’re all here for more than one year now, even if with some travels home for business or family issues usually once a year by airplane, so they can no longer be considered as tourists (Torkington, 2010). In terms of level of education, as we have seen before, they all have at least the Bachelor and come from middle/high social backgrounds sometimes entering in conflict with their parents generation in terms of world’s vision and lifestyle:

“My mother would much rather if I had a well paying job and a car and official husband and insurance and whatever... She thinks this is very unsafe... Which is funny because I think her lifestyle is very unsafe. She is living in a big city; she’s completely dependent on a supermarket that could be empty in 3 days if we run out of gas. To me that’s not safe so I feel much safer having a garden so it’s just a question of perspective” (VdL-16)

Interestingly, one might think that often a change in the lifestyle is related to a professional change in the job activity, but from our interviews only two people changed their activities after the migration: one of them was a Biologist in a research lab, but wasn’t happy with what she was doing and, the other one, was living in an almost self-sufficient project with two families in the mountains in the North of Spain which was something he loved and now he’s doing business planning so that he can have more economical sustainability for his family and his small child. All the other have kept their activities: entrepreneur, eco-farmer, teacher and academic (Appendix 4).

But can we consider these people as lifestyle migrants? Since one of the main premises for lifestyle migration is the mobility in search of a better lifestyle (Benson &

Osbaldiston, 2015; Torkington, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; O'Reilly & Benson, 2009), we tried to understand if our migrants were in fact in search of it and we obtained a positive answer from all of them; the real question here is what does it mean to have a "better lifestyle"? This is something that we cannot answer because it seems to us like a very subjective issue closely related to the personal history, context, environment, culture, economical situation and social background of each person. One example that shows this is the answer of one of our interviewees:

"I was living in Boston and I was renting houses and I wasn't very happy (...) I live in a tend after three years, I love it. They offered me a room and I said no" (VdL-16)

For most people to have a good or a better lifestyle means at least to have his or her own room, space and privacy but as this quotation shows, that is not equal for all. For the interviewee, in her personal experiences of renting houses, she prefers to live in a tend than in a room, in fact she's really happy with it and this is not something that can be universally applied. Therefore, this is also one of the limitations of the concept of lifestyle migrations. This reminds us how societies can be changed through individual choices of how we want to live (Giddens, 1995). Basically, with different motives, they were/are all in search of what, for them means, a better lifestyle either it's in terms of a community set-up *"As a community you can take more control over certain aspects of you life"* either it's in terms of sense of belonging *"I never felt at home in the UK and wanted to emigrate"* or climate *"The winter climate in the UK was not very good for my mobility"* and, in all the cases where it's applied, that is, those who have children, all of them try to provide the best possible environment and lifestyle for their children (Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010; Mathews et al., 2000):

"(...) My children are much more connected to the land here, much more capable of engaging in the life-death process. They are learning a lot from other people" (VdG-22).

“(...) Because now I have a child and it’s totally different... Your conception of how you see the world it’s totally different” (VdL-14)

A frequent critic made to the concept of lifestyle migrations is that since most migrants are, in fact, in search for better life conditions, this is a concept that doesn’t offer anything new (O’Reilly & Benson, 2015).

In terms of seeking a feeling of (self-) realisation (Oliver & O’Reilly, 2010; Benson & O’Reilly, 2009), or (self-) authenticity (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015; Benson & O’Reilly, 2015), here, the answers are again divergent. Some weren’t happy with what they did before and now they feel more fulfilled:

“(...) Working with chemicals and animal research... It wasn’t what I love (...) I feel like I’m really discovering what I love to do and learning to become good at it, finally” (VdL-16)

And feel like living a more authentic life in the sense of a simpler life, more aligned with one’s roots:

“I’m a product of North-American culture where we eat 100% packaged everything (...) it’s a deep move towards living a life that is more truly aligned with my roots” (VdL-21)

While others think that both realisation and authenticity can be obtained no matter the place you’re in. So the migration, in this case, was not driven by these searches since the interviewee believes that this is not related to the geographical place or to the environment but perhaps more related to the personal development of the person:

“No, that can be achieved anywhere, if one is ready to do so” (VdG-24)

This statement almost sends to the ground these notions of (self-) realisation and (self-) authenticity as expressions of lifestyle migration’s motives and it differs from the academic literature *“Some styles of life are simply more easily imaginable and available in some places than others”* (Benson & O’Reilly, 2015: 11) but since this is, as mentioned before, a wide range term it allows a wide variety of answers within it, which also weakens it as a conceptual framework.

As for the seek of a sense of community (Benson & Osbaldiston, 2015) there’s a general search for a sense of belonging that was not felt in the countries of origin and the opinion that as a community you can be more resilient:

“I never felt at home in the UK and wanted to emigrate” (VdG-24)

“As a community you can take more control over certain aspects of you life” (VdG-22)

And this resilience or the capacity to overcome difficulties was indeed observed by the investigator in certain aspects of the communities’ life, like for example when the parents know that all the adults that live there take care of their children, or when someone needs help to do something and there’s always someone capable and willing to help and, as a more practical example, the communal gardens where everyone helps a little bit and everyone benefits from what the garden produces. But of course this comes with the other side of the coin, that is, the lack of privacy or the feeling that it’s not a lifetime personal project.

For some, at the same time that there’s this search for a sense of belonging, there’s a rejection of the community living and a valorisation of the personal space. That could be explained by the age of the interviewees, as one of them said, but the age factor doesn’t explain it because there’re other people with the same age that privilege the community.

“Personally, I am not over-enthused about living as a community and keep to my own space most of the time. However, it is not unpleasant” (VdG-24)

“I could come to live here but... I need more privacy (...) I work here but then I go at home and try to forget the things of everyday” (VdL-14)

Also, even in this search for a community sense there’s something more. There’s the need not to be constrained just to the community, but to interact with the surroundings and with the locals:

“I don’t want just to stay in a small community either British or German, I want to know more Portuguese people (...) and for myself and for my family, of course, is very important to learn the language, to learn the costumes, be a part of the environmental movement of Portugal which is quite big, I know, it’s coming... And not be excluded because I do know of immigrants that buy land in Portugal and just exclude themselves” (VdG-23)

And this is where the language topic comes into picture because, in order to connect with the locals, the migrants must learn Portuguese. And that’s what most of them did or are in the process of doing it, precisely because they don’t want just to live in a permaculture island. In the interviews they often mentioned their interest in the Portuguese culture and history, even taking advantage to the fact that the investigator is Portuguese to ask her about the Portuguese dictatorship and cultural habits, which is something different from Etrillard’s study about the British presence in France, where most of the British people only speaks a very basic French (Etrillard, 2014).

Something that seemed pertinent to try to understand, in our investigation, is if permaculture can be considered a turning point in the decision to migrate for any of our foreign interviewees and the readings that we have from our analysis is quite

heterogeneous. For some people it was not either because they were already practicing permaculture before the migration or because they only met permaculture in Portugal after the migration (Appendix 4).

“It was the same (lifestyle), living in permaculture farms, teaching and doing education with the children” (VdG-23)

While for others the fact that they met permaculture originated that something changed inside them that made them want to migrate in order to change the lifestyle:

“I met it (permaculture) when I was living in Boston and I wasn’t very happy but I decided I really need a garden. I went to a bookstore (...) I looked at the pictures and I was like “This is the garden I want!” and (...) so I started getting evolved with this group that explores self-sufficiency activities” (VdL-16)

“I heard maybe the first time about permaculture in 2006 or 2007 from a friend of mine, Hugo. I was more in an hippie way of life, enjoying everything. I was not so focused in the practical thing... And then it came, in 2009 I was trying to live in the forest, trying to live off the land” (VdL-14)

In the first statement there’s a clear will to change the lifestyle since the person in question did not felt happy and the fact that she decided she wanted a garden eventually made her discover permaculture and after starting getting evolved in an urban group that explores self-sufficient activities she decided to really change lifestyle to one that is more aligned with her ethics and what she believes in:

“I actually almost stayed in the States but then I started studying permaculture. The idea of localizing myself and I saw how much I was travelling and I saw this is not

aligned with my ethics, I'm living like this and I say I want this so I decided to go back to Europe to be closer to my family and to end up with my travels as much as possible" (VdL-16)

While in the second statement it's a different path. He was living a more "hippie way of life" (VdL-14) and after he met permaculture through a friend, two years later he was living in an almost self-sufficient project but not in Portugal. The decision to come to Portugal, in this case, was for different motives. Others have met permaculture a couple of years before the decision to migrate but it was not something so direct as these two previous statements.

"The first time I came across permaculture it was about 7 or 8 years ago. I came across it actually in the early 2000's (...) Permaculture speaks to me. It's one of those quite liveable philosophies (...) we came to look for, you know, some potential permaculture projects" (VdG-22).

CONCLUSION

This important and new phenomenon that Pelt studied in the 90's is occurring a little bit all over the world and Portugal is no exception. In the search for a simpler life, more natural and ethically aligned with one self, more and more people are changing their lifestyles in order to achieve what they believe it's the best possible way. Sometimes this change implies to migrate to another country. Some never felt at home in the origin countries, therefore this change of lifestyle was also a pretext to the long will to move away. Others just feel safer and happier in Portugal, a country that is referred to as being culturally welcoming. The weather conditions come as a plus: good weather for the people and for the practice of agriculture. In this search for a better life, the production of food is something essential since there's a rejection of the highly chemical agriculture practiced nowadays. Taking into account the sentence "we are what we eat", the origin of the food is not the only concern. Vegetarian diets in the community (excluding fish, meat and dairy products) are preferred to the non-vegetarian ones since it's healthiest even though this might not be everyone's personal choice. Environmental concerns in terms of building materials, energy and transports are also a concern, although these last two with less success. Still the car is the main transportation for most people and none of the projects is completely green energetically.

In these projects, besides the locals working there, we also found Portuguese people dislocated from their places of origin, usually coming from urban areas in a process that the academic literature designates as *counterurbanization*. Since the rural is no longer perceived as it was a couple of years ago, we can no longer talk of a movement from the city towards the rural (Halfacree, 2014). The road's conditions, the means of transportations and the new technologies of communication, such as the cell phones and the Internet, contribute to the shortening of distances and to the inclusivity of the countryside into the global village (Halfacree, 2014). This Portuguese movement was not so deeply explored in this investigation as the foreign migrations since there was not enough time and space available in the dissertation to do it. It's therefore an interesting theme for further research.

One of our first conclusions for this investigation is that there're no universal characteristics among these permaculture communities. They're all completely different in their own characteristics and our three case studies are not enough as reference to a bigger universe. However, we can identify some similarities and some differences between them. In terms of similarities, there's the vegetarian diet, the woofers and volunteers, the practice of agriculture free of chemicals, the permaculture ethics and principles, the (agro) tourism and the organization of courses, workshops and events. In terms of differences since not all of them do it, we identified the employment, the sense of community, the connections with the locals, the degree of self-sufficiency, the structure and organization and the people's characteristics in general.

Besides the interviews, a fundamental resource for the present investigation, the fieldwork while visiting the projects, talking with the people, sharing meals with them and specially while observing their interaction with each others and with the space around them, allowed us the possibility to get a small picture of this particular "alternative" world with so many more worlds inside it. This reminds us how societies can be changed through individual choices of how we want to live (Giddens, 1995). More than a way of life in order to earn a living, permaculture is seen here as a form of life, a lifestyle based upon very clear and simple values.

We asked before if these people migrate for environmental motives, can we consider them as "environmental migrants" (Black et al, 2011), we cannot say they're environmental migrants since they're not escaping a natural disaster. Therefore, in the attempt to try to answer to our initial question, if we can consider these migrants in permaculture sustainable communities in Portugal as belonging to the concept of lifestyle migration, we have several different answers. Firstly we had to question the viability of the concept of lifestyle migration and ask if we can even consider it an academic concept.

From our readings of the academic literature and from our own reflections we concluded that this is a term that has been inductively developed through qualitative research, mainly by Anglo-Saxon academics. Besides this, we feel the lack of a solid definition of what means lifestyle migrations because, indeed, due to its subjective

character it's a difficult term to define. In the analysis we made to the foreign interviews with the initial indicators (Table 2) presented in the methodology chapter, we conclude that some answers of the interviewees about their motives to migrate are in accordance with the general indicators used when talking about lifestyle migrations. However, others do not match. So the indicators match for some people but don't match for others. Also we did not have any case of a person that matches in all the indicators, as we also don't have any person that doesn't match any. Therefore, our investigation's results contribute to reinforce the idea that lifestyle migrations it's a multi-forms, subjective concept that does not have a single definition. Its open framework is also one of its biggest criticisms because it's a fluid concept, not yet fully accurate.

Secondly, we tried to understand if permaculture itself, understood here simultaneously as a design tool and as a lifestyle, was a trigger for these migrations from which we observed, again, a mix of possibilities. In some of the observed cases permaculture was clearly a trigger that marked an important step in the person's decision towards the migration. However, in other cases it was not. Either it did not worked as a "trigger" in the decision to migrate, or the migrant only met permaculture after the migration. Here, again, each person's history and context designs a different migratory path, with different reasons, with different goals and with a different relationship with permaculture in particular and with environmental issues in general. Therefore, we argue that permaculture is a more difficult concept to define than what we find on the literature about the topic. Through the people and the founder's opinion we conclude that the way the concept is projected and transformed into reality makes it a lot more complex. Permaculture on the field is, in this way, more complex, more contradictious and has more dynamics than when theoretically explained.

Thirdly, in terms of the community dimension, that was also an important theme in the discussion. It's clear that exists a sense of community and belonging in general, even if we're not talking about intentional communities, which only reinforces the strength of the bounds between these people. In terms of the general connection of the communities with the local people, we conclude that there're good relationships

that were built throughout time. At first there's usually a degree of suspicious and resistance that, if worked out, diminishes over time. The locals that work in the communities serve as "bridges" between worlds. Through the organization of courses, workshops, open-days and events, the locals are invited to come in; through the daily shops and local commerce the community holders have to come out, therefore, in this way, the connections and the exchanges are almost inevitable. Language is not a barrier for the majority but of course, as several people said, these connections with the local populations inside the communities could be stronger and more frequent.

Having said this, how can we place this type of migration into the general framework of the migrations movements towards Portugal? This is clearly not a typical kind of migration in the Portuguese context, but a very specific one. Accordingly to the *Observatório das Migrações* (Migrations Observatory), the main foreign nationalities living in Portugal in 2014 were either from Brazil, Cape-Verde, Ukraine, Romania, China, Angola, Guiney-Bissau, UK, São Tomé e Príncipe or Spain⁷. Portugal is chosen as a migratory destiny mainly by people from the ex-Portuguese colonies such as Brazil, Cape-Verde, Guinea or Angola and by people coming from Eastern Europe like Ukraine (Pires, 2003; Machado, 2002), but not only: China, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan (Rocha-Trindade, 2009; Pires, 2003; Ávila & Alves, 1993), are also common origin countries. The well-known British migrants generally described as lifestyle migrants (Torkington, 2010), are not the same migrants studied in this investigation since these migrants don't come to the Algarve to enjoy their retirement and play golf. Even though they came mainly from Northern Europe (Table 13) and are highly educated people (Table 8) this is a different kind of migration with different motivations (Appendix 4). Another distinctive trace interesting to point out and that reinforces this displacement of the general framework of the Portuguese immigration is the fact that all the individuals presented in this investigation are Caucasians, showing again a distinction from the vast majority of the more economical kind of migration towards Portugal. Therefore, we could say that we have a type of migration that is more based on ethics and values than on economical goals, marking a significant difference from

⁷ Observatório das Migrações, available at <http://www.om.acm.gov.pt/documents/58428/327722/Permanencias+de+estrangeiros+2014.pdf/1e9e0994-0772-474f-b0da-254f46a75ed4>

what is the general picture of the migrations towards Portugal. Of course the economic factor is not completely absentee: there're agro-tourism projects, the rent of houses, European funds, courses and workshops and even the sale of some products in order to achieve economic sustainability. In comparison, we can say that this particular kind of lifestyle migrations in permaculture communities that we have analysed, differentiates itself from the more typical kind of economic migration in the Portuguese context, coming mainly from Angola, Brazil, Guinea, Cape-Verde, China, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Ukraine (Pires, 2003; Machado, 2002) and also it differentiates itself from the more common understanding of lifestyle migrants in Portugal as being Northern-Europeans, coming mainly from the UK, to enjoy their retirement in a sunny and pleasant country more amenable economically than the origin countries (Torkington, 2010; Benson & O'Reilly, 2009).

In conclusion, nevertheless the limitations of the term lifestyle migrations that it's certainly not a "safe" established concept, we believe that we're talking about lifestyle migrants when we talk about the migrants in permaculture sustainable communities in Portugal. More specifically, lifestyle migrants who are in search of the rural idyll. This rural idyll typology inside the concept of lifestyle migrations still hasn't been very much developed in terms of empirical research, as pointed out by some authors (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009), but it basically refers to the search of a simpler life in the countryside, seeking a sense of community and belonging, with a concern for the quality of the environment, food, life and life for the children. All these factors, plus the concern for the way of practicing agriculture, building materials, energy sources, diet, permaculture ethics and principles make us believe that we're not only talking about lifestyle migrants in search for the rural idyll but we're also talking about lifestyle migrants in search for the "permaculture idyll". Therefore, there's not just one definition but, as the people we interviewed showed, there are several realities.

However, there's no doubt that we're talking about a very peculiar kind of migration; we're talking about people who are mainly Caucasian, highly educated, who come mostly from Northern Europe, that are equal in terms of gender (sometimes they come as couples), who come to the countryside or to the more "rural" areas and that live in permaculture sustainable communities. When looking only at the first four

aspects previously mentioned one can say that there's no doubt they're lifestyle migrants but the fact that they have ethical concerns towards the environment and the agriculture, and that they come to the countryside, more specifically to permaculture sustainable communities makes them a particular kind of lifestyle migrants. The communities' project issue, the permaculture values and principles, the move to the countryside as a return to the land, are some of the essential features that distinguishes this type of migration from the more common kind of lifestyle migration in the country, which is also explained by the migrants life-trajectory and background. This specific kind of migration has a small significance in the general framework of the migrations towards Portugal. Even with little relevance, it's definitely an important subject to study and to continue looking at it, not only because it's an interesting theme but also because this is a growing phenomenon. Every month new projects are added to the platform *Rede Convergir*, more and more people are coming to Portugal, either to buy land or to join a community. In our fieldwork in Várzea, it was very surprising that most of the North-European that were doing a course there at the time (a group of 10-12 people) were thinking to buy land either in Portugal or Spain, as it was too expensive to do it in their countries. Therefore, through courses, volunteer programs (such as Woofing), internships and others, people coming and visiting Portugal usually stay for a couple of weeks and, if they like it, they try to return later.

In this way, it would be interesting, for future research, to deepen on the one hand, the theoretical approach of lifestyle migrations on permaculture sustainable communities with its conceptual fragility and what is its exact role in the migrations context towards Portugal and, on the other hand, how is permaculture seen by the Portuguese society? Does it even know it? What's their role in the local food production? What's their role in the social and economical local contexts? Are the main characteristics pointed out by this investigation similar in other permaculture communities in Portugal?

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Semi-Structured Interview Guideline

1.1. Model of the interview made to the Foreign people in the Permaculture Sustainable Communities in Portugal

The interview is divided in six big groups of topics with several questions that can be done or not by the interviewer according to the answers.

Name (optional):

Age:

Sex:

Qualifications:

Profession:

Nationality:

Community:

Group 1 – Travelling before coming to the Community

- 1- For how long have you been in Portugal?
- 2- How long do you plan to stay?
- 3- How did you found about this community?
- 4- Did you plan coming here or were you travelling around the world before coming here?
- 5- If yes, for how long were you travelling?
- 6- Why Portugal?

Group 2 – Life in the Community

- 7- For how long have you been here?
- 8- Are you volunteering/working? What are the conditions of being volunteer/worker?
- 9- Do you know when the project began?

10- Do you know which are its main goals are?

11- What are the main advantages and disadvantages of living in a sustainable community?

Group 3 – The life before

12- How would you define your life outside, and before coming here?

13- Were you happy and fulfilled?

14- Are you happy and fulfilled now or closer to becoming it?

15- How does your family see your stay here?

16- What are the professions and the level of education of your parents?

17- Have you already been in any other permaculture project(s)? Which one(s)?

Group 4 - Permaculture

18- How and when did you first meet permaculture?

19- How would you define it?

20- How would you define the lifestyle in a permaculture sustainable project? Emphasize three aspects.

21- Do you have the Permaculture Design Course (PDC)?

22- What do you feel about the ethics of permaculture (Care for the Earth; care for the People and fair share)?

23- Has your diet and your way of relating to nature changed after coming here?

24- What do you think about a vegetarian diet?

25- Do you consider biological food as important?

26- In short, what do you feel that you have learned from permaculture and the your experience of living/working here?

Group 5 – Connection with the home country

27- How often do you travel to your home country?

28- Which means of transportation do you usually use?

29- Do you imagine yourself living permanently in Portugal or are you thinking going home soon?

Group 6 – Connection with the local population

- 30- What do you feel about the connection between the project and the local population?
- 31- Do you consider it open or closed to the local surrounding population?
- 32- Do you often get out to buy some food or newspaper or to go to some cultural activity outside the community?
- 33- Do you watch TV? And how would you define your reading habits?
- 34- Do you follow the news of local and/or global politics?
- 35- Where do you usually buy clothes?
- 36- Accordingly to the western values do you think that the ethics and the practice of permaculture have something new to add to the way of man living in society and his connection with nature?
- 37- Do you feel like living in community?
- 38- Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you for your collaboration.

1.2. Model of the interview made to the Portuguese people in the Permaculture Sustainable Communities in Portugal

The interview is divided in six big groups of topics with several questions that can be done or not by the interviewer accordingly to the answers.

Name (optional):

Age:

Sex:

Qualifications:

Profession:

Community:

Group 1 – The life in the Community

- 1- How did you found about this community?
- 2- For how long do you live/work here?

- 3- For how long do you plan to stay?
- 4- Are you a volunteer/worker here? What are the conditions as volunteer/worker?

Group 2 – The life before

- 5- How would you define your life outside, and before coming here?
- 6- Were you happy and fulfilled?
- 7- Are you happy and fulfilled now or closer to becoming it?
- 8- How does your family see your stay here?
- 9- What are the professions and the level of education of your parents?
- 10- Have you already been in any other permaculture project(s)? Which one(s)?

Group 3 - Permaculture

- 11- How and when did you first meet permaculture?
- 12- How would you define it?
- 13- How would you define the lifestyle in a permaculture sustainable project? Emphasize three aspects.
- 14- Do you have the Permaculture Design Course (PDC)?
- 15- What do you feel about the ethics of permaculture (Care for the Earth; care for the People and fair share)?
- 16- Has your diet and your way of relating to nature changed after coming here?
- 17- What do you think about a vegetarian diet?
- 18- Do you consider biological food as important?
- 19- In short, what do you feel that you have learned from permaculture and the your experience of living/working here?

Group 4 – Connection with the city of origin

- 20- How often do you travel to your home town?
- 21- Which means of transportation do you usually use?
- 22- Do you imagine yourself staying permanently in here or are you thinking going away?

Group 5 – Connection with the local population

- 23- What do you feel about the connection between the project and the local population?
- 24- Do you consider it open or closed to the local surrounding population?
- 25- Do you often get out to buy some food or newspaper or to go to some cultural activity outside the community?

Group 6 – Cultural habits

- 26- Do you watch TV? And how would you define your reading habits?
- 27- Do you follow the news of local and/or global politics?
- 28- Where do you usually buy clothes?
- 29- Accordingly to the western values do you think that the ethics and the practice of permaculture have something new to add to the way of man living in society and his connection with nature?
- 30- Do you feel like living in community?
- 31- Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you for your collaboration.

1.3. Model of the interview made to the Founders of the Permaculture Sustainable Communities in Portugal

The interview is divided in six big groups of topics with several questions that can be done or not by the interviewer accordingly to the answers.

Name (optional):

Age:

Sex:

Qualifications:

Profession:

Nationality:

Community:

Group 1 – The beginning and the life in the project

- 1- When was born the idea to create the project and which are its main goals?
- 2- What is the dimension of the land and which are the projects being developed at the moment?
- 3- How many people work here at the moment?
- 4- Why Portugal? (Question not made at Vale da Sarvinda)
- 5- What are the biggest difficulties of the project?
- 6- How can we define the structure of the organization inside the project?
- 7- What is the relationship with the foreign volunteers? (Question only made at Sarvinda)

Group 2 – The life before

- 8- How would you define your life outside, and before coming here?
- 9- Were you happy and fulfilled?
- 10- Are you happy and fulfilled now or closer to becoming it?
- 11- How does your family see your stay here?
- 12- What are the professions and the level of education of your parents?
- 13- Have you already been in any other permaculture project(s)? Which one(s)?

Group 3 - Permaculture

- 14- How and when did you first meet permaculture?
- 15- How would you define it?
- 16- What are we talking about when we talk about land regeneration and holistic management and what is the role of permaculture in it? (Question only made at Vale da Lama)
- 17- Do you have the Permaculture Design Course (PDC)?
- 18- What do you feel about the ethics of permaculture (Care for the Earth; care for the People and fair share)?
- 19- Has your diet and your way of relating to nature changed after coming here?
- 20- What do you think about a vegetarian diet?

21- More or less, how much of the food you eat do you produce? What is your connection with food?

Group 4 – Connection with the home country/city of origin

22- How often do you travel to your home country/town?

23- Which means of transportation do you usually use?

24- Do you feel the language is a barrier? (Question not made at Vale da Sarvinda)

Group 5 – Connection with the local population

25- What do you feel about the connection between the project and the local population?

26- Do you consider there's a good feedback from the local population?

27- Do you often get out to buy some food or newspaper or to go to some cultural activity outside the community?

Group 6 – Cultural habits

28- Do you watch TV? And how would you define your reading habits?

29- Do you follow the news of local and/or global politics?

30- Where do you usually buy clothes?

31- Accordingly to the western values do you think that the ethics and the practice of permaculture have something new to add to the way of man living in society and his connection with nature?

32- Do you feel like living in community?

33- Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you so much for your collaboration!

Appendix 2 - A Brief Profile Sketch of Interview Participants

2.1. Vale da Sarvinda

MAYA VAN IWAARDEN (VdS-1) is a Dutch 24 years old girl volunteering at Vale da Sarvinda. She initially came to Portugal to the Boom Festival then she travelled around and she met Sarvinda. At the time we met her she was volunteering there for the second time and she was biking through out the country. She studied Physiotherapy and that's what she was going to work at in Morocco afterwards.

BERNARDO REIS (VdS-2) is a 34 years old Portuguese Vet by profession working in Sarvinda as Chief of Construction for more than a year. He's originally from Lisboa. Since he's there he lives in a tent and he says he feels good.

DOUG CROUCH (VdS-3) is an American Permaculture Teacher living in Portugal at another sustainable community in Sintra called Terra Alta. At the time he was there doing permaculture consultancy. He graduated from Fish and Wildlife Management in the USA that discovered Permaculture on a trip to India (?). For him permaculture is a design tool and not a belief system.

NUNO PAIS (VdS-4) is a local and a student of Anthropology very interested in the social aspects of permaculture and sustainable communities. He is the youngest of our interviewees with 21 years old and he defines himself as a Farmer. He is in charge of welcoming the volunteers and the visitors at Sarvinda and he also helps in the kitchen.

DOMINIC VELASCO (VdS-5) is a German volunteer. He studied Engineering and he was unemployed at the time. He had been in other permaculture projects in Portugal before but permaculture it's really "his" thing. He was more in search of himself and he says that in Portugal he discovered a sense of well-being and connection with nature.

JOANA MARTINS (VdS-6) had travelled through South America for a couple of years before returning to her city of origin, Lisboa. She was searching for a job and she saw and add in the Internet for a working experience in Sarvinda. She applied and she stayed. She was the Cultural Coordinator there for more than a year. We have the information that Joana is no longer living in Sarvinda.

LUÍS PIRES (VdS-7) had a steady job in the Portuguese capital. Married and father of two boys he quite his job and the life he had before when he received the invitation of Frederico to join the project. He was an eco activist in his youth but he's not the biggest fan of permaculture. He now lives in the nearest village with his family and he works in Sarvinda as Team Chief.

FREDERICO ABREU (VdS-8) is the founder of Vale da Sarvinda. Original from Lisboa, he sold most of his possessions to pay some debts and while he was tutoring and moving around by bicycle he started designing and studying the project of Sarvinda. The idea is to create a fully self-sufficient project in terms of food, energy and income.

DIAMANTINO PIRES (VdS-9) is a local Bricklayer in charge of the bio-construction of the camping in Sarvinda. Diamantino was an emigrant in France most of his life and since he came back to Portugal he started getting interested in bio-construction and natural material doing workshops to learn more about it. He helps in what we can because he likes the people and he likes the project.

MARISA PINHEIRO (VdS-10) is a local that was unemployed until she found an opportunity for a job in Sarvinda. Besides her cooking skills she has a big interest in gardening and agriculture and for her permaculture is exactly the same as traditional agriculture. She was the Cooker. We have the information that Marisa no longer works there.

DANIEL PATRÍCIO (VdS-11) is a local who studied Administrative Sciences at University and that in his search for a job found that same function need in Sarvinda. Daniel is a bit suspicious of vegetarian food that slowly has been changing his habits.

JOSÉ COSTA (VdS-12) is original from Porto where he studied Nutrition. He is passionate by agriculture and in his search for a job related to agriculture and sustainability he found in Sarvinda the function of Coordinator of the Agrícola Project.

2.2 Vale da Lama

JACKSON GORE (VdL-13) is a British Business Manager of Property that was volunteering in Vale da Lama at the time. After doing his PDC in India, where he travels often, he was searching to buy land either in Portugal or France.

YORGOS ATHANASIADIS (VdL-14) is a Greek Permaculturist that works as Business Planner in Vale da Lama. He used to live in a small almost completely self-sufficient community in Spain but since his child was born and also because of his companion, he came to Portugal where he had already lived doing Erasmus. He doesn't live in VdL but nearby.

XANA PITEIRA (VdL-15) is a Portuguese Educator living and working in VdL since three years. Before that she was travelling through Asia and as a passionate educator she is she started an

NGO in East-Timor. After a couple of years in Asia doing permaculture and developing communities she decided it was time to return to Portugal where she saw the “permaculture scene” increasing with time.

MIRKA HLAVACOVA (VdL-16) is a Permaculture Teacher and Educator original from Check Republic living in VdL since 2013. Before, she lived in Portugal as a child and then in Brazil and in the United States. In her personal quest for alternative types of education she met the Wilderness School and Permaculture that gave her more tools. In VdL she mainly takes care of the greenhouse.

ARMINDO VIEIRA (VdL-17) is a 50 years old local that works in VdL since more than five years as a Gardener and in the Maintenance Team that basically helps in everything he can. In VdL he likes the liberty, the good environment, the team spirit and to work in the countryside.

PAULO VIEIRA (VdL-18) is a 50 years old local passionate by gardening and agriculture and that what he does in VdL since 2003. For him it’s a privilege to work in such a place with such conditions and water abundant because he says that to practice agriculture free of chemicals is the most important thing in life.

ANTÓNIO JOSÉ (VdL-19) is a 50 years old local in charge of the Maintenance and Building for 10 years with some interregnums. Permaculture is not exactly his thing but he is happy with the diversity of the work and the different people he meets. He only regrets not speaking English to be able to communicate more.

ANA MARREIRO (VdL-20) is a Mother, Cooker and Artisan living and working in VdL for five years with her three children. Vegetarian since she was 14 years old, Ana had her own restaurant before going to VdL where she is now the main Cooker of the Eco-Resort and for the events besides other functions.

WALT LUDWICK (VdL-21) is an American Entrepreneur and founder of the VdL together with his wife Nita. To create a resilient landscape with the help of tools like permaculture and holistic management is on of the main goals of the project. Walt’s family still don’t live in the farm they’re planning to.

2.3 Várzea da Gonçalves

ANONYMOUS (VdG-22) is a British Post-Doc Academic in the area of Anthropology living in the Várzea over one year with his family. In the beginning they were searching for a place for holidays and a good environment for the children and they ended up staying.

CHAYM FELDMAN (VdG-23) is an Israelite passionate Eco Farmer and Teacher living in the Várzea with his family since the beginning of 2015. Chaym had been travelling through eco farms in Israel and because of friends suggestion he decided to come to Portugal with his wife and two daughters and he says he loves the country.

CHRISTINE LOWIS (VdG-24) founded the Várzea together with Chris. She's a British Teacher, House-builder and Designer living in Portugal since 2008. She made all the decorations in the houses and it's truly a work of art. Their daughter, Megan, was born in Portugal and she attends the local school. Community living is not exactly Christine's thing so she lives in the Várzea but a bit more isolated from the rest.

CHRIS LOWIS (VdG-25) founded the Várzea together with Christine. He's also British and he studied Ecology. When asked about his profession he said "land regeneration, agriculture related activities" and he's definitely a very passionate person about taking care of the land and constructing sustainable ecosystems.

Appendix 3 - Permaculture projects mapped on Rede Convergir on November 2014

Name (N-S)	Location	Starting Date	Mission	Foreign Community
Quinta do Barbeito	Arcos de Valdevez	2006	Self-sufficiency in terms of food	No
Encosta do Paço	Arcos de Valdevez	2014	Wines farm with biological production and an education centre	No
Quinta dos Gabiões	Valbom, S. Martinho	2011	Development of an Atlantic kind food forest	No
Quinta da Juncenda Eco-living Project	Alfena, Valongo	2013	Sustainability and self-sufficiency; to raise environmental consciousness	Maybe
Horta Viva	São Pedro do Rio Seco, Almeida	2011	To bring attention to the actual situation of agriculture; exchange inter-generational knowledge and between urban and rural	No
Quinta das Moitas	Vila Ruiva	2010	Rebuilt soil and forest; Agricola systems based on the permaculture design	Maybe
Eco Aldeia Permalógica	Tábua	2012	Eco-tourism; Sustainability; Permaculture and environmental education	Maybe
Quinta dos Melros	Tábua	2005	Eco-farm of permaculture, bio-construction and food forest	Maybe
Casa Verde	Aldeia das Dez, Chão Sobral	2014	Food production in Agricola systems with trees; forest management; education	No
The Hive, Cooperativa de Actividades Culturais	Colmeal, Góis	2008	Ecological centre of art, design and education with the aim to promote permaculture	Maybe
Vale dos Coiços	Aldeia Velha, Góis	2010	Family farm with the aim to obtain self-sufficiency through permaculture	No
O Fojo	Alvaiázere	2008	To do courses, workshops and activities related with permaculture	Maybe
Vale da Sarvinda	Vila Velha de Rodão	2011	To create wealth through systems of Agricola production, tourism, energy and food through biological agriculture, biodynamic and permaculture	Maybe
Soalheira	Rio de Couros	2011	Sustainable and resilient lifestyle; to promote the local permacultures	No
5 Elementos	Carregueiros	2013	To promote the permaculture principles; to contribute for a social, economic and individual transformation	No
Cure a Terra	Vila Moreira	2012	To contribute for the harmony between mankind and nature; food forest; re-forestation	No

Aldeia Infinita	Amieira Cova	2012	Eco-village of biological agriculture with the aim of self-sufficiency; bio-construction	No
Comunidade Equilibrium	Cadaval	2012	Eco community in an economy based on resources	No
Permabio	Mafra	2010	“Permaculture, Ecology & Sustainability”; construction of a sustainable human ecosystem	No
Quinta do Manchas	Subserra	2012	To recover an abandoned farm with the aim of making it self-sustainable	No
Quinta do Luzio	Janas, Sintra	2012	To work with the community through ecological farming	No
Quinta dos 7 Nomes	Colares, Sintra	2012	To encourage people to be agents of transformation; permaculture courses and horticulture	No
Terra Alta Permacultura	Ulgueira, Sintra	2009	School of ecological design and sustainable living skills blending permaculture teachings and others	Maybe
Courelas do Monte	Évora	2012	Space of permaculture, bio and sustainable agriculture; environmental and artistic awareness	No
Dias nas Árvores	Foros de Vale da Figueira	2011	Production of horticulture, agro-forestry and a certified orchard of biological agriculture	No
Biovilla	Palmela	2009	To take sustainability to the everyday life of the Portuguese people	No
Heal the Soil Portugal	Aldeia do Meco	2012	To teach permaculture to the local communities	Maybe
Cerca das Amoreiras	Aldeia das Amoreiras	2014	Sustainability and self-sufficiency; to raise environmental consciousness	No
Terra do Milho	Monchique	2010	Self-sufficiency through organic agriculture and permaculture	Maybe
Várzea da Gonçala	Aljezur	2007	To create a self-sustainable system of food production with trees and vegetables according to permaculture	Maybe
Quinta do Vale da Lama	Lagos	2011	Regenerative agriculture; permaculture; education and social transformation; Eco-resort	Maybe

Appendix 4 – Synthesis Table of the Interviews made to the Foreigns in the Three Case Studies

Interviewee	Time in the project	Nationality	Direction	Comes from an urban mean?	Level of Education	Lives in the project	Previous profession	Current profession
Walt	Founder, more than 15 years with often business/family travels	American	USA-Portugal	Yes	Post-Graduation	No	Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur
Mirka	Since 2014	Czech	USA-Portugal	Yes	Bachelor	Yes	Biologist in a research lab	Educator
Yorgos	Since 2015	Greek	Spain-Portugal	No, another sustainable community	Bachelor	No	Not applied	Business Planning in VdL
Chaym	Since 2015	Israelite	Israel-Portugal	No, another sustainable community	Bachelor	Yes	Eco-Farmer and Teacher	Eco-Farmer and Teacher
Christine	Founder, since 2004	British	UK-Portugal	Yes	Bachelor	Yes	Interior Architecture Teacher	Teacher, House-Builder and Designer
Anonymous	Since 2014	British	UK-Portugal	Yes	Post-Doc	Yes	Anthropology Academic	Anthropology Academic

Reasons/Motives			
Interviewee	Better lifestyle?	Better lifestyle for the children	Seek (self-) authenticity?
Walt	Founder, he still doesn't live in the project but he's planning to	Yes, "Raising children without fear"	Yes, "I'm a product of North-American culture where we eat 100% packaged everything (...) it's a deep move towards living a life that is more truly aligned with my roots"
Mirka	Yes, "I was living in Boston and I was renting houses and I wasn't very happy (...) I live in a tend after three years, I love it. They offered me a room and I said no"	Not applied	Yes, "I appreciate living with other people who have the same mind-set of life as a growth experience and welcoming all the challenges"
Yorgos	Yes, "we were living a bit isolated in the mountains in Cataluña (...) I feel there's a lot of social movement of people that's a thing I missed where I lived before"	Yes, "because now I have a child and it's totally different... Your conception of how you see the world it's totally different"	No, he felt authentic before "I was waking up every day and I didn't had to do nothing so I could do whatever, I was like a really free..."
Chaym	He says the lifestyle is the same to the one he had before in Israel	Yes, "There are some good people here, people that I can relate to... And it's good for children and that's very important too"	No, rather a feeling of gratitude: "I'm privileged to live in a place that was cultured by so many Portuguese farmers and I feel an obligation to grow organically and to preserve the land of Portugal has much as I can"
Christine	Yes, the in Winter in the UK was not good for mobility and since she was raised in Australia she prefers the outdoor	Not applied, her child was only born after she was in Portugal	No, since both authenticity and realisation can be achieved anywhere if one wants to
Anonymous	Yes, "in the UK the mainstream media and advertising is now so powerful that when you have children there you feel like you have no... You can't really get away from it and I don't think it's a positive message"	Yes, "my children are much more connected to the land here, much more capable of engaging in the life-death process. They are learning a lot from other people"	Yes, "Using an old system between biosphere ecosystem here we rely, of course not everything, in fact still a minority of things comes from the local ecosystem but there's a much more flow and exchange between people here and the immediate landscape than were we are"

Reasons/Motivations (Continuation)

Interviewee	New start?	Seek (self-) realisation?	Others
Walt	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portuguese wife - The culture <i>"the culture appealed to me much more"</i>
Mirka	<i>Yes, "I actually almost stayed in the States but then I started studying permaculture. The idea of localizing myself and I saw how much I was travelling and I saw this is not aligned with my ethics, I'm living like this and I say I want this so I decided to go back to Europe to be closer to my family and to end up with my travels as much as possible"</i>	<p>Yes, <i>"working with chemicals and animal research... It wasn't what I love";</i></p> <p><i>"I love the challenges of communication and conflict in community. I feel that's really healthy tension to help me grow as a person"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lived in Portugal as a child - To be closer to her family - Lifestyle more aligned with her ethics
Yorgos	In part, yes – <i>"where I lived I was with my partner and our child who is very young, we decided to make a change because we were living a bit isolated in the mountains in Cataluña"</i>	No, <i>"I was like a really free... I experienced a freedom that is really rare and I was really feeling good but for my partner, the same freedom I was experiencing, for her it was like suffering..."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did Erasmus in the Azores - The birth of his child - His partner wasn't happy in the other place - Geographic isolation before
Chaym	<p>Yes <i>"We were passing through ecological farms in Israel and we wanted to try something else... Out of Israel"</i></p> <p>AND NO <i>"It was the same, living in permaculture farms, teaching and doing education with the children" (about the lifestyle before)</i></p>	Yes, <i>"If I continue what I'm doing, to teach and to grow food for the local market I'm sure that people will enjoy it. I think it's very important to contribute to a country"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friends told him nice things about the country
Christine	Yes, <i>"I never felt at home in the UK and wanted to emigrate"</i>	No, since both authenticity and realisation can be achieved anywhere if one wants to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portuguese people - Comfortable climate

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting landscape - Interesting culture
Anonymous	<i>Yes, "We came for holiday, we came to travel around, we came to look for, you know, some potential permaculture projects, I've been interested in permaculture for some time so I wanted to see some permaculture projects"</i>	<i>Yes, "I'm finishing my book, it's a very good place to write. The children are able to run around much more freely than in England and that just allows me the space to write as well"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portuguese culture - Portuguese people

Environmental Dimension			
Interviewee	Nature Connection	Food Connection	Permaculture as a turning point?
Walt	<i>"In a very visible you can see it from Google earth sand, the land is drying up because of climate and global climate change"</i>	<p>Healthy - <i>"Growing our own food is the best way to experience that farm to table right from the ground with these little intermediate in the process as possible to sustaining yourself. It's the healthiest way to live"</i></p> <p>Garden – <i>"with us, it's probably half-half, Walt and Nita"</i></p>	Maybe not
Mirka	<i>"the connection to nature I already had a really deep relation to nature before I came thanks to the Wilderness School. I think I've grown more my sense of responsibility, my sense of love and belonging"</i>	<p>Healthy – <i>"I love the food. I love that the food is from the garden and that it feels really healthy to my body"</i></p> <p>More than half is food from the garden – <i>"There are meals that are 100% garden, there are meals that are 0% garden but I think more than half at this point"</i></p>	<i>Yes, "I met it (permaculture) when I was living in Boston and I wasn't very happy but I decided I really need a garden. I went to a bookstore (...) I looked at the pictures and I was like "This is the garden I want!" and (...) so I started getting evolved with this group that explores self-sufficiency activities"</i>
Yorgos	<i>- Weather "we wanted always to change place to be in a place a bit hotter"</i>	<i>Before: "it was kind of a self-sufficient project. I tried to produce everything possible there, from our garden. We used to have animals, we used to live in the forest taking advantage of things from the forest... It was kind of low...Like simple life and self-sufficient life and it was good"</i>	<i>Yes, "I heard maybe the first time about permaculture in 2006 or 2007 from a friend of mine, Hugo. I was more in an hippie way of life, enjoying everything. I was not so focused in the practical thing... And then it came, in 2009 I was trying to live in the forest, trying to</i>

			<i>live off the land"</i>
Chaym	<i>"Here there is clean air, clean water and there is quite an awareness of environmental issues"</i>	<i>"I have a very strong connection with ecological farming and I produce food for myself, family, community, market (...) The vegetables in summer I would say 80%. In the winter I would say 70%. If it's green it's coming from the garden"</i>	Not to come to Portugal since he was already doing eco farming in Israel
Christine	<i>"Permaculture is a way of living with nature not against it. I get fed up of hearing the word but I am certainly glad I discovered it"</i>	Not much, <i>"In the UK, neither of us were growing our own food"</i> <i>"I do have my own little veg garden but I'm not much a cultivator, I'm more a constructor"</i>	No , she only met permaculture afterwards
Anonymous	<i>"I feel that globally we're in deep trouble in terms of food security, in terms of environmental degradation, in terms of bio-diversity, in terms of habitat loss very closely linked with climate change, we have to adjust what we're doing"</i>	<i>"Last summer there were so much stuff coming from the garden and that dictates your diet massively"</i>	Maybe , <i>"The first time I came across permaculture it was about 7 or 8 years ago. I came across it actually in the early 2000's (...) Permaculture speaks to me. It's one of those quite liveable philosophies (...) we came to look for, you know, some potential permaculture projects"</i>

Social Dimension				Economic Dimension
Interviewee	Social interactions	Seek a sense of community?	Language, a barrier?	Economic Dimension
Walt	Not applied	Not applied	No	- To invest in real estate <i>"My dad always said, you know, land is land but land on the water is an investment"</i>
Mirka	- The depth of the social interaction <i>"I love the depth of the social interaction, the friendships and the kinds of conversations that we can have... And I love the challenges of communication and conflict in community"</i>	Yes , <i>"I think the greatest advantage for me is to be able to live in community (...) in the future I would see myself deepening this"</i>	No	Not asked
Yorgos	- Social life <i>"I feel there's a lot of social movement of people that's a thing I missed where I lived before"</i>	Yes , <i>"Greeks are not so open, they're not so open to alternative things. I feel judgement in everything I do, I know how people think so for me, if I leave outside of my country, it's easier" and No</i> , <i>"I could come to live here but... I need more privacy (...) I work here but then I go at home and try to forget the things of everyday"</i>	No	Not asked
Chaym	<i>"For the human ecology I would say it's quite ok, it's quite harmonious. There are some good people here, people that I can relate to"</i>	YES , <i>"Yeah, I think the entire Vale is an entire community and Várzea is a piece of the community with quite an important role in this community"</i>	Yes, learning	Not asked
Christine	- She prefers her own privacy and space <i>"When there're too many egocentric people working on the same job, I have no interest in being among them"</i>	YES , <i>"I never felt at home in the UK and wanted to emigrate" and NO</i> , <i>"Personally, I am not over-enthused about living as a community and keep to my own space most of the time. However, it is not unpleasant"</i>	Yes	- Initial intention to do a guesthouse <i>"It was never our intention to do this! When we initially bought the place 11 years ago, we were going to continue running it as it had precious been, as a guesthouse"</i>
Anonymous	<i>"I don't envisage staying permanently in Portugal but I don't envisage staying in England either. At some extent I may envisage some isolation back and forth semi-nomadically"</i>	YES , <i>"As a community you can take more control over certain aspects of you life and once you get to medium scale you can do interesting things in terms of recycling and soil regeneration and this sort of things"</i>	No but learning	Not asked

