The Journeys of Permaculture:

A study of how permaculture as a travelling model for sustainable living takes shape in a community in Scotland.

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Ellen ‘t Hooft (5517419)
Utrecht University
Masters Cultural Anthropology: Sustainable Citizenship
Supervisor: dr. Nikkie Wiegink
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Universiteit Utrecht

Abstract

Permaculture has become increasingly popular as a design for sustainable living. Permaculture design was established by Australians David Holmgren and Bill Mollison in 1978 as a response to the environmental crisis and is now practised internationally. Little anthropologic research is available on the topic and even less focuses on how permaculture has spread. This study contributes to filling that gap by studying how permaculture can be seen as a travelling model for sustainable living that takes shape at a permaculture community Rubha Phoil, on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. The concept 'travelling model' as coined by Behrends, Park and Rottenburg (2014) and the accompanying concepts of translation, mediator and interstitial space are used to give insight into how permaculture travels and takes shape in a small yet transnational community in Scotland. Through ethnography and literature analysis this study shows that, viewed as travelling model, permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil in multiple forms. Firstly, the international foundations of the community and different translations of permaculture community that the mediators show, allow Rubha Phoil to be defined as a transnational community. Secondly, through interstitial space at Rubha Phoil many different translations are created. As the owner and volunteers express a feeling of disconnection with their social and natural surroundings, permaculture is translated as a reconnection method. Also between the mediators of Rubha Phoil interpretations of permaculture differ, as their translations are shaped by their personal contexts. Lastly, Rubha Phoil is a node in an international permaculture network, to which it is connected through travelling mediators who carry their personal translations of permaculture.

Keywords: Permaculture; travelling model; translation; interstitial space; sustainability; community; reconnection; environmentalism; disconnection; alternative lifestyles.

Acknowledgements

During my studies in anthropology I was confronted with the numerous problems we face in this world: inequality, climate change, resource depletion, alienation, the refugee crisis and so many more. Studying these issues I was left with the question: Now what are we going to do about it? While I was looking for a topic for my thesis I had to think about my time in Australia, when a friend had told me about permaculture: a holistic design for sustainable living created in the 1970s. His positivity towards the subject struck me and I decided to look into it for academic purposes. It turned out little academic research was available on the topic, whereas the online community was exploding. Many people actively practise permaculture on a daily basis and courses are offered all over the globe. I became interested in how permaculture works in a specific location, remote from its origins in Australia. That is how I found Rubha Phoil, a young but international permaculture community on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. I contacted the owner, Ludwig Appeltans, and he was happy to host me as a research volunteer. What followed was a three-month fieldwork period during which I have learned a lot, both about myself and about the permaculture world. The results of my fieldwork will be presented in this thesis. I am happy to share that I became inspired by all the people I met in the process. They showed me that there is hope for a sustainable future and that people can change the ways they interact with nature. Working together with people who actively try to accustom their lives to sustainable standards has given me faith in the possibility of an environmentally friendly society.

I would firstly like to thank my friend Aaron for introducing me to permaculture. I would also like to thank Ludwig Appeltans for enabling me to do research at Rubha Phoil. Moreover, a big thank you is in order to all the volunteers I have worked with at Rubha Phoil, this thesis would not have been possible without your input and inspiring words on nature reconnection and permaculture practise. I had a great time working with you, both on a professional and a personal level. A special thank you goes out to my supervisor Nikkie, thank you for your support over the past year and for helping me create order in the chaos. Lastly, I am very grateful for my family and friends for giving me their love and support throughout this year.

Ellen ‘t Hooft

"Because until you die, until you pass on and transcend from your body to the next world, into the next dimension, right, your business here is not done. You've got some purpose to serve. Until you're gone from here. It doesn't matter how old you are, it doesn't matter how young you are. But like I say, warriors of the rainbow will unite.[1] Right now I'm one of them, I'm a warrior of the rainbow. It's awesome, truly".[2]

[1] 'Warriors of the rainbow' refers to a Native American prophecy that predicts that one day people will come together to restore the earth and bring back peace.
[2] Danny, interview, Rubha Phoil, April 16, 2018.

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Rubha Phoil, Isle of Skye, Scotland

"*Rubha Phoil is a young permaculture community in Sleat, the 'garden' of the Isle of Skye. We invite you to come and take a holiday with us.*"[3]

"The Community is located in 15 acres of the most stunning beauty you can find on the Isle of Skye: Rubha Phoil. It has all the natural assets one could dream off: Native and mixed Woodland, cliffs, stony beaches and stunning views. All inhabited by wonderful biodiversity. The land includes two islands, home of a seal colony. We share the ecosystem also with, 74+ species of birds, otters, deer and many others. If you are lucky you can even see dolphins. All very easily accessible from the road and the ferry to Mallaig."[4]

Figure 1 Sattelite photo from Rubha Phoil[5]
Figure 2 Location of Rubha Phoil in Scotland[6]

[3] "Rubha Phoil," Visit Scotland, accessed August 2, 2018, https://www.visitscotland.com/info/accommodation/rubha-phoil-p1677551.
[4] Visit Scotland, "Rubha Phoil."
[5] "Rubha Phoil," Google Maps, accessed August 2, 2018, https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Rubha+Phoil/@57.0629264,-5.8978037,523m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x488c1ea2d3f7da33:0xacabe7f49af7ee8b!8m2!3d57.064046!4d-5.8952409.
[6] "Rubha Phoil," Google Maps, accessed August 2, 2018, https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Rubha+Phoil/@57.0101704,-6.2583056,7z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x488c1ea2d3f7da33:0xacabe7f49af7ee8b!8m2!3d57.064046!4d-5.8952409.

Chapter 1. Introduction: Permaculture as a Travelling Model

"Permaculture offers us solutions to how we might live in communities and in nature in a respectful way. I think permaculture can offer us so much really. Because everything you do in life, not just natural things, every problem can be looked at through the lens of permaculture."[7]

1.1 Introduction: the spread of permaculture

Across the world the number of sustainable initiatives is rising. Many of these initiatives emerge in the form of *permaculture*, a design system that forwards principles for a sustainable way of living. Permaculture consists of twelve design principles and three ethical principles- *earth care, people care and fair share* (Appendix II).[8] Permaculture practitioners (also known as permaculturists) have a holistic approach to understanding the world. Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren coined the term 'permaculture' in 1978 in their book *Permaculture One*, based on the words 'permanent' (sustainable) and 'agriculture'. Mollison and Holmgren worked together for several years at the University of Tasmania and developed the design system as a response to the environmental problems that were frequently discussed in the 1970s (Holmgren 2015). Mollison indicated that permaculture is a positive answer to the environmental crisis, as it invokes people to act and to make a personal change rather than the more common negative approach of environmentalists, which is to oppose others and force them to change (Holmgren 2015). Forty years later, permaculture is practised across the globe. Holmgren's book *Permaculture: Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability* (firstly published in 2002) has been translated into more than eight languages and 40.000 copies have been sold worldwide (2015). Permaculture is taking root in society in a global manner. People across borders and cultures have picked up the design system and apply it in their everyday lives, for example on their balconies, at organic farms or in eco-communities.[9] The Permaculture Global website shows 19.531 accounts worldwide and 2.481 projects globally.[10] This website is not representative for all permaculturists and projects around the world, but it gives an impression of the vastness of the international permaculture network.

Anthropologists Veteto and Lockyer speak of permaculture as a "global grassroots development philosophy and sustainability movement" (2008, 49), on which little academic literature is available. Yet, in society permaculture has positively been taken up and spread far and wide across the globe in bottom-up movements initiated by environmentalists. Veteto and Lockyer believe that:

[7] Michele, interview 1, Rubha Phoil, March 4, 2018.
[8] Essence of Permaculture," Holmgren, D., accessed July 2, 2018, https://permacultureprinciples.com/resources/free-downloads/.
[9] "Worldwide Permaculture Projects," Permaculture Worldwide Network, accessed June 4, 2018, https://permaculturegloba l.org/projects.
[10] "People," Permaculture Worldwide Network, accessed June 4, 2018, https://permaculturegloba l.org/users; Permaculture Worldwide Network, "Worldwide Permaculture Projects."

> [T]he permaculture movement acts as a sort of a natural laboratory wherein potentially sustainable solutions are experimented with. Further, we believe that by engaging with this movement, we can create a powerful dialectic between anthropological theory and practice on the one hand and cultural critique in action for sustainability on the other. Engaging in this dialectic, we seek to help construct an anthropology that can productively contribute to an understanding not only of how the world is and how it got that way but also of how the world could be and how we can get there. (Veteto and Lockyer 2008, 53)

As an anthropologist, I would like to side myself with Veteto and Lockyer and delve into how permaculture spreads and localises as a model for sustainability. I also agree that anthropologists specifically are well suited to study problems related to sustainability. Brightman and Lewis suggest: "Our specialism in concrete and everyday realities and their relationship to wider phenomena and ideas leaves us well placed to offer insights into sustainability" (2017, 21). At this point it is significant to mention that *sustainability* is a contested concept within anthropology. For the sake of clarity, I will use anthropologists Brightman and Lewis' definition of sustainability in *The Anthropology of Sustainability*: "how to ensure a future liveable earth, but not in terms of maintaining what went before (as resilience thinking implies) but as a process that prepares us for an unpredictable future by supporting and encouraging diversity in all its forms, at the same time as confronting the causes of the situation head-on" (2017, 3). I believe that this definition gives a good reflection of what sustainability means to anthropologists. With permaculture as a holistic design system in mind Fiske's definition of sustainability is noteworthy: "For environmental anthropologists, sustainability means social and cultural sustainability, not solely biological sustainability" (2012, 147). I agree with Fiske that anthropologists also have a holistic view on sustainability, which makes permaculture an interesting design system for the anthropologic discipline. Yet, much of current anthropological literature that concentrates on the consequences of capitalism focuses on the global South while paying less attention to the urgent changes that have to be made in the global North (Brightman and Lewis 2017, 27-8; Moore 2017, 69-70). As Moore argues: "[I]f the trajectory of climate change and resource depletion is to be altered, anthropologists will have to engage not just with how communities are to be maintained, but with how they can be reworked, with what are the future desirable forms of society" (2017, 70). Studying sustainable ways of living such as permaculture are of significance to anthropology in order to investigate possible alternative future lifestyles. More particularly, it becomes relevant to study how ideas about sustainable ways of living such as permaculture are shared and travel around the world. How different interpretations of globally travelling ideas arise has been studied by anthropologists such as Appadurai (1990), Robertson (2012), and Tsing (2005) whose ideas will be further elaborated in the next paragraph. In this thesis I will use a fairly young concept within anthropology of globalisation that has been presented by Behrends, Park and Rottenburg (2014): *the travelling model*. Behrends et al. use and explain this concept in their book *Travelling Models in African Conflict Management* (2014). Rottenburg had already coined the concept of travelling models in *Far-fetched Facts* published in 2002, but in the former book Rottenburg and co-authors Behrends

and Park meticulously describe the meaning and application of the travelling model as a concept. Their definition of a model is as follows:

> [A] model can be understood essentially as an analytical representation of particular aspects of reality created as an apparatus or protocol for interventions in order to shape this reality for certain purposes. Models – and the ideas about reality inscribed into them – always come objectified and combined with material technologies to put them into practice and to transfer them as blueprints to new sites. The notion of the model implies that the travelling apparatus is already circulated widely – otherwise it would not have the status of a model. (Behrends et al. 2014, 1-2)

Additionally, Behrends et al. use the concepts *translation* and *mediators* to highlight how models travel and take shape: "Models, however, do not diffuse by themselves and they cannot be transferred without being translated. Translating models means that they travel by being conveyed, carried, picked up, called for and interpreted by various actors or – as we will call them – mediators" (2014, 2).
The travelling model has already been used by scholars in a variety of contexts. Behrends et al. use their concept to study African conflict management. They are interested in "how to study conflict and conflict management without subscribing to a narrow notion of comparison" (Behrends et al. 2014, 24), since many previous studies on conflict management tend to compare one area with another. Behrends et al. study how conflict management is translated across what they call *interstitial space*: "the space between one understanding and another is the space that enables creative new practice, or the space where change happens" (2014, 14). It is because of this interstitial space that differences occur in translations of a travelling model. Through interstitial space the model is creatively interpreted by the mediator and his or her personal context influences the translation. Interstitial space thus refers to all space where there is room for creative thinking and (re-)interpreting the model.

Sara de Wit (2015) studied discourses on climate change as travelling models. She focused on the local translations of the global discourses on climate change at the Bamenda Grassfields in Camaroon. De Wit states: "these are stories that cannot be confined to a village, a region or a country. This study transcends the idea of a 'classic' ethnography, taking place in a demarcated geographical space; rather it should be seen as an ethnography of a continuously moving story that is shaped by its own borderless journey" (2015, 18). Permaculture cannot be defined by borders as it is known and practised across the globe. When studying a locality where permaculture takes shape these wider connections have to be taken into account. Studying permaculture as a travelling model gives insight into how a sustainable alternative design travels and is translated in different contexts.

The anthropological case studies that are available on permaculture within anthropology often focus on how permaculture applies in a certain community or farm (Brawner 2015; Veteto and Lockyer 2008). They frequently mention permaculture being a globally spread sustainable design, yet do not study these permaculture sites within their transnational contexts. Rural geographer Damian Maye did look at a permaculture community's wider connections, but focused on "the transition approach to a novel food production context" within one nation specifically. By examining how

permaculture shapes a community through the lens of a travelling model I take permaculture's international network into account. I argue that we cannot fully understand how permaculture shapes a permaculture site, without studying its wider relations and connections which show how interconnected permaculture is and how it travels to different places whilst being translated in a variety of ways. To understand how permaculture takes shape locally, we have to understand the process of how permaculture travels and is translated through interstitial space. Additionally, Behrends et al. state that: "To place emphasis on the process of a model's travel as the main empirical object also moves us beyond the frequent distinction between universal global forms and local phenomena" (2014, 8). The travelling model goes beyond the global-local binary by concentrating on translations along the travels of a model rather than on what is local and what is global.

Therefore, I use Behrends et al.'s concept 'travelling model' to provide a description of how permaculture travels across the globe as a design for sustainable living and is localised in a permaculture community in Scotland. By providing an ethnography of this community *Rubha Phoil* in Scotland, my aim is to give insight into how permaculture is translated at a specific locality and how this locality is part of a wider international network. I give an example of the travelling model as a concept in practice, and by using this concept I intend to show how permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil in a transnational manner. Hence, the research question of this thesis is as follows: How does permaculture, as a travelling model for sustainable living, take shape at Rubha Phoil, a permaculture community on the Isle of Skye in Scotland?

1.2 Similar concepts to the travelling model in anthropology

Similar concepts to the travelling model have been introduced in the anthropological field, such as Appadurai's (1990) *scapes*, Robertson's *glocalisation* (2012), and Tsing's *friction* (2005). Appadurai defines the global cultural economy as global flows to highlight the mobility of i.e. ideas, people, technology and goods. He proposes in his well-known work *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy*: "five dimensions of global cultural flow which can be termed: (a) ethnoscapes; (b) mediascapes; (c) technoscapes; (d) finanscapes; and (e) ideoscapes" (1990, 296). By defining five different global flows as *scapes,* Appadurai emphasises the flexibility and subjectivity of the concepts. He suggests that the definitions of these *scapes* are influenced by the "historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors" (1990, 296). Appadurai coined the term 'ideoscape' to define sets of socio-political ideas that travel the world whilst taking shape in different localities (1990, 299-301). This set of ideas often has the intention of socio-political change. Appadurai uses democracy as an example of a construct that has travelled the world since the Enlightenment and is now interpreted and shaped differently across national and international contexts (1990, 299-300). Appadurai hints towards the idea of translation, by emphasising that the contexts of the actors influence how an idea is interpreted. Nevertheless, he does not define this phenomenon as clearly as Behrends et al. with their concepts of translation and mediators.

Robertson describes how glocalisation was first introduced as a term in Japanese business in the 1980s and later spread to the general business world. He argues in his paper *Globalisation or Glocalisation?* that glocalisation could be a better term to understand globalisation in academic theory: ''Glocalisation has the definite advantage of making the concern with ''space'' as important as the focus upon temporal and historical issues" (Robertson 2012, 205). Glocalisation explains that ideas spread globally, yet also take different shapes across local contexts. Even though this insight is a significant turning point within globalisation studies, it provides little explanation on translation and on how ideas actually travel.

In her book *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (2005) Tsing introduces the idea of 'friction' to describe how global ideas influence local ideas and vice versa. Tsing focuses on the Meratus people of Indonesia. She states:

> How does one do an ethnography of global connections? Because ethnography was originally designed for small communities, this question has puzzled social scientists for some time. My answer has been to focus on zones of awkward engagement, where words mean something different across a divide even as people agree to speak. These zones of cultural friction are transient; they arise out of encounters and interactions. They reappear in new places with changing events. The only ways I can think of to study them are patchwork and haphazard (Tsing 2005, xi)

Similar to Behrends et al., Tsing explores how ideas travel and meanings differ across space. Yet, as Higgins (2009) argues, Tsing's argument is at times intricate and jumbled (in Tsing's words *haphazard*) in the sense that non-anthropologists will have difficulty understanding the book. Even though friction also focuses on translation and interconnections across interstitial space, I have chosen for the more simply explained concept travelling model for the sake of a clear argument.

Even though permaculture may also be an ideoscape and how permaculture spread relates to the concepts of friction and glocalisation, I have found the notion of travelling model and its accompanying concepts of translation, mediators, and interstitial space more effective as they focus largely on the *how*. This allows for exploration of how permaculture travels and is localised as a travelling model in a small permaculture community in Scotland.

1.3 Research methodology

For this study I conducted fieldwork for a period of three months, February, March and April of 2018, during which I participated as a research volunteer at a permaculture community by the name of Rubha Phoil. Rubha Phoil is a peninsula located near Armadale on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. Rubha Phoil is both the name of the land and of the community that lives on the land. I found the community on the permaculture website of Scotland and I contacted the owner Ludwig who agreed upon my stay

in exchange for voluntary work and my partaking in a course on Village Building. [11] I found the community to be an ideal place to study how permaculture takes shape relatively off the grid yet connected to a wider permaculture network.

I used several data sources for this thesis, which is also known as *data triangulation*, in order "to reduce bias and provide a more in-depth picture" (Clarke 2012, 66-67) of the localisation of permaculture as a travelling model at Rubha Phoil. Through interviews, participant observation, and apprenticeship, which I will elaborate further below, I have collected data on the everyday lives of community members and volunteers and on the international permaculture network, which I will analyse further in this thesis. This study was initially intended as insider anthropology, as I stayed with the community I was involved in my research 24/7. However, even eating, sleeping and working with research participants did not always make me an insider. My lack of knowledge on local flora and fauna and my lack of practical skills concerning voluntary work sometimes made me more of an outsider than an insider. Anthropologist Bilecen explains that during her research on the social support networks of international students she found herself in multiple insider and outsider positions (2014, 54). Therefore she argues: "dichotomizing such insider and outsider positions is far too simplistic and methodologically impractical … the positioning of the researcher can be seen in terms of a continuum rather than a dichotomy" (Bilecen 2014, 53). Similarly, I found myself in an insider and outsider position to different degrees rather than just one or the other. When I just arrived at Rubha Phoil, I was definitely an outsider, I knew little about how the community worked. After my introduction, in which I was explained the basic house rules, I became less of an outsider. After three weeks when I introduced the new volunteers to the community, I was mostly an insider. I also noticed how I shifted pronouns when referring to the community. Whereas in the beginning I said 'they' do this, I quickly moved on to say 'we' do this. I believe that a significant aspect that contributed to this insider-outsider scale was the fact that the community was relatively small. During my fieldwork between two and seven volunteers stayed at Rubha Phoil at the same time. Consequently, we got to know each other rather quickly which enhanced my insider position rapidly.

The insider-outsider duality is closely related to *apprenticeship ethnography*. Anthropologists Downey, Dalidowicz and Mason discuss how "we seek through apprenticeship to put ourselves inside the social and practical machinery that facilitates developing expertise. We hope to achieve, not mastery, but a more intimate knowledge of the paths that lead to mastery" (2014, 185). By partaking as a volunteer at Ruhba Phoil I experienced the same events and learning environments as most of the participants. Even though I did not participate as much as they did, as I was occupied with my research and the online course, I had a good understanding of what they were going through and I was able to put their opinions into perspective. This method of collecting data returns in the vignettes that I

[11] "Rubha Phoil (ScotLAND Learner)," Permaculture Scotland, accessed July 2, 2018, https://scotland.permaculture.org.uk/people-projects-places/project/rubha-phoil-scotland-learner.

wrote throughout this thesis. In the rest of this study my experiences as an apprentice are not explicit, but implicit through my interpretations of the data used and the conclusions and analyses made throughout this thesis. I am aware of the influences that my personal experiences have on my position as a researcher, yet I agree with Downey et al. (2014) that this allowed me to better understand the learning paths of the participants and helped me study how permaculture travels as a model to and within Rubha Phoil. Additionally, as anthropologist Coy already mentioned several decades ago:

> If role assignments are going to influence the information collection process in any event, it might prove no more distorting to occupy as specific a role as possible. If it is possible to occupy a role that is specifically associated with the institution or behaviour that is of central interest to the participant observer given his problem orientation, then what might potentially result is information richly detailed and contextually accurate. (1989, 116)

Being an insider and outsider as an apprentice, I influenced my field of research, yet it would have been difficult to find a research position where I would be allowed to stay without doing any work at all. By participating as a volunteer for initially five days a week and after a few weeks for four days a week, I was able to fully engage with the volunteers and with community life at Rubha Phoil. The volunteers worked five hours a day for five days a week and had the weekends off (with the exception of on-going animal care and cleaning responsibilities). I worked five hours a day, for four days a week, spending one day a week and the weekends working on my thesis. Many hours of my volunteer time I spent with the owner of Rubha Phoil working together on a Village Builders course in order to establish a cultural design for the community. Through this course I learned about the future ideas for the community and the international network it is involved with. Interviewing the international volunteers, who travelled from place to place to learn about sustainable lifestyles such as permaculture, and interviewing and speaking to friends of Rubha Phoil's owner allowed me to collect data on the international permaculture network. Online research was also a large part of exploring this international web of permaculturists.

As throughout my stay multiple volunteers arrived and left Rubha Phoil, I had the opportunity to interview volunteers both at the beginning and the end of their stay. Most interviews were done outside in the forest, however several interviewees preferred to stay inside whilst enjoying a cup of tea. Being outside during interviews was positively reflected upon by the participants as it allowed them to be in their natural environments enjoying the fresh air, the view, hearing the birds sing and (if we were lucky) enjoying the sun. The idea of interviewing outside was inspired by cultural geographer Power (2005), who studied human-nature relations within suburban gardens and used a method of strolling through the gardens whilst interviewing to ensure that non-humans were always around. This allowed the participants to show their memories and emotions related to the gardens and to display gardening techniques (Power 2005, 43). I interviewed participants on Rubha Phoil's property and sat down and took strolls in the forest whilst asking questions, as I agree with Power that this allowed memories to be triggered. As this thesis will show, many volunteers formulate a feeling of

disconnection with their social and natural surroundings. Permaculture, as a sustainable design, helps them reconnect to nature and people. Even though this was not anticipated beforehand, interviewing in nature turned out to allow the participants to feel more comfortable being interviewed and sharing their stories of disconnection and reconnection. An example is when I interviewed volunteer Isaac on a walk through the forest and we got distracted by bird calls, a skill we had picked up by staying at Rubha Phoil and learning about nature connection and permaculture. All interviews have been done in English, but since this is not the native language of most of the participants any minor errors in grammar have been edited in the quotes used in this thesis to facilitate reading without altering the content. An overview of the interviews is listed in Appendix I.

1.4 Chapter overview

The second chapter illustrates how permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil by describing what Rubha Phoil looks like right now, and what the foundational elements of Rubha Phoil are. Additionally, this chapter identifies a tension in opinions regarding Rubha Phoil as a permaculture community. This tension is caused by translation differences of permaculture. Thanks to Rubha Phoil's international foundation and translation differences, Rubha Phoil is conceptualised as a transnational community. It is argued that, analysed as a travelling model, permaculture takes shape at Ruhba Phoil in the form of a transnational community.

In the third chapter Rubha Phoil is related to interstitial space. At Rubha Phoil the volunteers and resident act as mediators of permaculture and all parties involved formulate a feeling of disconnection with their social and natural environments. Permaculture is understood as a solution at Rubha Phoil as it provides a way to reconnect. Nonetheless, permaculture translations also differ amongst the volunteers and resident due to interstitial spaces between one person and another.

In the fourth chapter Rubha Phoil is shown to be in touch with an international permaculture network. As permaculture travels through and takes shape at Rubha Phoil it also travels to and takes shape at other places. Well-known permaculture mediators and ways of teaching permaculture are introduced in this chapter, as well as local mediators that are of importance to Rubha Phoil. The chapter ends by explaining how permaculture as a travelling model takes shape at Rubha Phoil as a node in an international permaculture network.

The fifth and final chapter concludes this thesis by presenting an overview of the arguments made in the chapters and thereby answering the research question. It presents the implications and relevance of this study both to anthropology as a discipline and to society. It ends by presenting the limits of this study and by giving suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2. Rubha Phoil as a Transnational Permaculture Community: Translating Community.

This chapter starts with a description of Rubha Phoil as a site and presents the foundations on which it is built. Rubha Phoil is shown to be characterised by many international elements. It is shown that Rubha Phoil is currently taking shape according to the owner's translation of the design system. A tension is highlighted amongst what the volunteers and owner at Rubha Phoil believe Rubha Phoil is and should become, as they have different translations of what a permaculture community is.

A walk through Rubha Phoil

I am standing next to the ferry port that takes tourists from Armadale (Isle of Skye) to Mallaig, on the mainland of Scotland. I watch the ferry until it's out of sight. Then I turn around. There is a large parking lot in front of me. I head left towards the entrance of the peninsula Rubha Phoil. I have to go uphill to enter the land. On my way up I pass a little gift shop that is meant for tourists taking the ferry. I remember talking to the lady who owns it, a quiet woman. I walk further uphill, entering Rubha Phoil. I pass several wooden huts and a large wood workshop. Halfway up, the road splits in two. Both paths lead to the reception. I take the right path. Vegetable beds cover the area next to the road. I pass the wigwam, a wooden hut that is rented out to Airbnb costumers, and I pass Robin's Nest, the green hut I stayed in for most of my time at Rubha Phoil. In front of Robin's Nest, two runner ducks, Yin and Yang are having a bath. I walk a little further. The pathway splits again. The path on the right leads to the shore where the pigs Rita and Alice live. I decide to keep walking on the main track and pass six chickens on my right. On my left sits the reception, the main building, which includes the living room, the kitchen, food storage, and via a side entrance the bathroom. Behind the reception one of the compost toilets is located. There are multiple around the site. Apart from these buildings, several huts and sheds can be found around the land that mostly serve as living areas for the volunteers or as tool sheds and storage rooms. Passing the reception, I walk towards the yard. The yard includes the main tool sheds and storage places for recycling material. I move along the yard towards a sign saying "Woodland Walk" and I follow the pebbled pathway through the forest. This path can become quite muddy, but the pebbles from the beach make it much firmer. After a few yards I have the option to take the straight route towards the eco-campsite. Yet, I decide to continue the woodland walk. During my walk I hear little birds chirping everywhere. I see the signs I made pointing the direction towards the beach and towards viewpoints, and several warning for swampy areas. I head to the beach. I have to go down a path between the high rocks to access the shore. At the beach I walk towards my favourite spot on the rocks and I sit and enjoy the beam of sunshine that hits the shore.

2.1 Describing Rubha Phoil

Rubha Phoil is a 15-acre peninsula located in the South of the Isle of Skye, Scotland, that includes two islands (Eilean Moal and Eilean Sgorach). Rubha Phoil is the name of both the land and the community set on the land. The land is mainly covered in forest and surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. From all sides of the peninsula the view is spectacular: you can see mountains on the surrounding islands and the ocean that stretches far into the distance, fading along the horizon. The ocean is a different shade of blue every day. Depending on the weather the colour varies from an icy light blue to a deep dark blue and an eerie kind of grey. The name Rubha Phoil is Scots Gaelic and stands for 'peninsula' (Rubha) and 'a pile of rocks' (Phoil). The pile of rocks refers to the rocky slope on which Rubha Phoil lies. Going inlands from the shore one has to go up-hill. Accordingly, the peninsula has a rocky coastline with cliff edges. There are several picturesque viewpoints on the cliff edges and on the beaches that can be accessed via the woodland-walk, a 20-minute circular walk through the forest. Many tourists stroll through the forest when waiting for the ferry to Mallaig, which is located less than 100 yards from the entrance of Rubha Phoil. Locals often visit the forest and beaches on sunny days, especially on the weekends. On cold or rainy days Rubha Phoil has fewer visitors. The forest is filled with wooden and laminated signs explaining what is going on or where to go. The land does not have many human-made borders, with the exception of a fence made of cut rhododendron that is intended to keep deer out, as they may eat the young trees that have just been planted. The other borders are natural ones: the sea and the rocks. Yet it is still possible to walk around the peninsula by climbing the rocks. Rubha Phoil is home to more than sixty different kinds of birds, fifty plant species, and wildlife such as otters, hedgehogs, seals and bottlenose dolphins and more different animal and plant species are being discovered every day.

Permaculture has been practised at Rubha Phoil for over two decades. Sandra Masson, the previous owner of the land, started practising permaculture at Rubha Phoil in the mid-90s. When Masson owned the land, Rubha Phoil was known as Skye Forest Garden. A webpage on Crowdfunder (which was created around 2015) shows that she taught permaculture at the site, yet there were also classes in music, making music instruments, horticulture, sewing and cooking.[12]. By 2016 she sold the land to Ludwig Appeltans, who continued the permaculture project in his personal way. Ludwig is presently the only permanent resident of Rubha Phoil. Long and short-term volunteers come to help out and learn about permaculture. Ludwig resorted to crowd funding to lend enough money to buy the land. This initiative was successful through national and international loans. This international financial support suggests the international awareness of permaculture at Rubha Phoil and is part of its foundations.

Ludwig has more than 25 years' experience with permaculture design. Ludwig is the founder and sole proprietor of Earth Ways which: "specialises in teaching you how and helping you to design

[12] "Skye Forest Garden Appeal," Crowfunder, accessed July 3, 2018, www.crowdfunder.co.uk/skye-forest-garden-appeal/?.

and create your own vibrant, thriving, highly productive natural ecosystem and edible landscape."[13] Earth Ways is an educational organisation through which Ludwig intends to spread his knowledge and teach others about sustainable practices such as permaculture design and forest gardening. Earth Ways is a separate entity from Rubha Phoil, since Rubha Phoil is the land and community and Earth Ways the tutoring element that Ludwig would like to develop further once more people come to Rubha Phoil for learning purposes. Earth Ways is not bound to Rubha Phoil as a community or to the land, as Ludwig founded it before he moved to Isle of Skye. Apart from Rubha Phoil, Earth Ways can also be seen as a part of permaculture as travelling model, as through this educational centre permaculture is taught and spread according to Ludwig's personal translation.

Currently, Rubha Phoil reflects many of Ludwig's plans since he is the sole permanent resident and owner of the land. However, it has to be noted that Rubha Phoil is not only shaped by Ludwig's ideas, but is also formed through the constant flow of international volunteers and has to be placed in its historical, temporal, and geographical context. Rubha Phoil originated as a permaculture environment over twenty years ago and has gradually been shaped according to different translations of permaculture design ever since. Coming and going international volunteers have left their marks and have contributed to Rubha Phoil in terms of knowledge, hard work and creativity. All volunteers carry their own stories to Rubha Phoil, which will be exemplified in chapter 3, and have their own personalities which shape the place's atmosphere. Consequently, the volunteers who come and go largely form what Rubha Phoil is and will be. Rubha Phoil is also shaped by its situational context. Location-wise, Rubha Phoil lends itself to both remote community life and permaculture practise. Situated on a peninsula of a relatively sparsely populated island in the Northwest of Scotland, people at Rubha Phoil have the opportunity to distance themselves from everyday Western (and Scottish) society. However, its location next to the ferry and Isle of Skye's fame as a holiday destination causes a relatively high number of tourists visiting Rubha Phoil. This in turn contributes to Rubha Phoil's international publicity. Nevertheless, in off-peak season the number of visitors stays relatively low. Rubha Phoil's 15-acre woody landscape surrounded by the ocean makes it an attractive site for volunteers and a great location for large-scale permaculture practise. Due to a combination of (amongst other things) climate change awareness, increasing concern towards sustainability, modern technology and globalisation, an international group of people find Rubha Phoil on the internet and travel to Rubha Phoil to experience an alternative lifestyle. A disagreement with contemporary Western society is what brings many highly-educated volunteers with a Western upbringing together in this community as will be shown in the following chapter. Rubha Phoil is thus also shaped by its location and its position in a post-modern world. The foundations of Rubha Phoil are largely international, the site is internationally supported and has visitors from many different places. Rubha Phoil is largely formed through the many international volunteers that come and go and leave their

[13] "Rubha Phoil," Earth Ways, accessed July 2, 2018, www.earth-ways.co.uk/rubha/.

marks. The next paragraph will show how permaculture currently shapes Rubha Phoil according to Ludwig's translation of what a permaculture community should be like.

2.2 Developing permaculture practise at Rubha Phoil.

Permaculture at Rubha Phoil is practised in line with Ludwig's interpretation of permaculture. An overview of the permaculture principles and ethics as established by founders Mollison and Holmgren can be found in Appendix III (Holmgren 2018). The permaculture principles return in what jobs the volunteers do and how they do it. Before starting a job, Ludwig elaborately explains the volunteers what tools to use and how to use them and what permaculture principles drive his motivation for the job. For example, a big job is to cut down the rhododendron, which is considered to be an invasive species in Scotland. The thin branches of the tree are used to create a fedge (a fench-hedge) to keep deer out, as deer eat the young trees that have just been planted. The thicker branches are chopped and will be used as firewood. This way of working relates to permaculture principle 1 "Observe and Interact". Holmgren explains in the chapter of this principle the idea of "the problem is the solution" (2015), a phrase Ludwig uses frequently. The problem of rhododendron evolves into the solution to keep deer out and the solution to a shortage of firewood. Re-using rhododendron is in line with principle 6 "Produce no Waste". Instead of throwing the trees out, they are used for a different purpose. The intensive composting and recycling done at Rubha Phoil also relates to this principle. All waste is recycled as much as possible and food waste goes onto compost piles which will be turned into fertiliser in the future. Additionally, compost toilets are used instead of flushing toilets. Visitors and volunteers at Rubha Phoil are asked to use eco-friendly soap and cleaning products, as the water flows directly back into nature. Recycling and composting also relates to principle 8 "Intergrate rather than Segregate", by integrating waste into the system rather than disposing of it. One of the most significant principles "Obtain a Yield" is still a work in progress at Rubha Phoil. At the time of research the polytunnel was in the process of being built, where most of the food will be grown in the future. A polytunnel is a greenhouse tunnel made of steel and polythene in which the perfect conditions can be created for fruit and vegetables to grow. The climate on Skye does not allow many vegetables to grow, which makes a polytunnel a key element of food production. Additionally, the volunteers put hard work into planting seeds and preparing the vegetable beds and compost tea (fertiliser). Nonetheless, Ludwig still uses his car to go to the supermarket and to move around. In an interview he agreed that driving his car was definitely not earth care[14], and that he intended to change that. At the start of my stay he owned two cars, and when I left he had sold the one. Ludwig mentions that it is difficult to do permaculture 100 per cent, e.g. moving around on the Isle of Skye is hard without a car, yet to him it is about doing the best you can. Additionally, the community is presently financed by tourism through the eco-campsite and by renting out the wigwam on Airbnb and by donations of, amongst others, visitors, volunteers and friends. Ludwig aims to move Rubha Phoil away from income through tourism and would like to earn money by providing nature-based

[14] Ludwig, interview 1, Rubha Phoil, March 8, 2018.

education. He says he intends Rubha Phoil to be as little part of Western society as possible. Ludwig feels that Western society is a poisonous environment. That is why after quitting his office job in Belgium about twelve years ago he decided to live in the forest in Scotland for four years:

> So the reason why I went to live in the forest was because I wanted to be free from the society, completely free. I undid any conditioning I had that I felt wasn't serving me when I was living in the forest. So do I feel part of it? Yes, because I've realised I can't really disconnect from it. Cause when I lived in the forest I was completely disconnected from it all. But then coming back into it, I realised you can't move around without being part of it. So I still feel part of it. But also not, because I don't have a job. I don't want to have a job. I don't pay taxes. I'm trying to be part of it as little as I can. I try to avoid supermarkets. I try to grow my own food. And I try to change it by inspiring people.[15]

Ludwig frequently refers to Western conditioning, by which he means principles and habits which show disconnection towards others and nature that are acquired when growing up in Western culture. An example of this is consumerist behaviour. Supermarkets are the norm in Western society and few consumers know where the products they buy are from. To Ludwig permaculture is a solution to this conditioning. Rubha Phoil is still in its early years as a permaculture community under Ludwig's leadership. Ludwig's vision for Rubha Phoil in 5 year's time is as follows:

> I want there to be eight permanent members. I want there to be kids. And I want loads of food growing. I want the huts that I have planning permission for now to be build and we would be doing loads of permaculture events and courses. And local people here would come and use this space to come and do courses and learn and teach. And we would all do the nature connection journey and spread it, teach.[16]

Ludwig's long-term vision is a permaculture community with both permanent and non-permanent residents where people and nature intertwine through education and permaculture practises. Ludwig outlines Western conditioning as being in the way of nature reconnection and he thus understands this as a central problem. In his vision, Rubha Phoil will become a self-sustaining permaculture community with Earth Ways as an educational centre.

2.3 Permaculture community: lost in translation.

The people at Rubha Phoil have different interpretations regarding Rubha Phoil as a permaculture community. The previous paragraph showed Ludwig's translation of a permaculture community at Rubha Phoil by presenting his actions and his plans. Rubha Phoil as a community is constantly changing to meet Ludwig's translation of a permaculture community. This paragraph further discusses his translation and that of several of the volunteers and address a tension between their ideas.

[15] Ludwig, interview 1.
[16] Ludwig, interview 1.

Michele, one of the long-term volunteers, explains the community feeling at Rubha Phoil as follows: “I don’t think it’s a community yet. I think people come and when there’s a gathering of people and they’re here for a while we become a community. We become a temporary community. But then it all shifts again. So it’s always like shifting sands and changing tides.”[17] Michele emphasises how Rubha Phoil transforms into a community when there are more volunteers around who stay for a period of time. But when people leave so does the feeling of community. Rubha Phoil is flexible in this sense, a community that becomes and dissolves. Michele’s emphasis is on the fact that the social structure at Rubha Phoil is ever-changing. Additionally, she did a course in permaculture in her home city several years ago and stresses that permaculture is practised extremely at Rubha Phoil: “I know more about seeing permaculture in action. I had it sort of theoretically in my mind. The course was very practical, but I wasn’t living it. But I’ve been living it here. And watching it being lived at a very extreme level.”[18] She addresses the heavy transition from city life straight into intense permaculture at Rubha Phoil, Michele’s translation of permaculture changed through her involvement with different mediators and media. Her course in England was based on theory and her experience at Rubha Phoil in Scotland was very practical. Even though Michele clearly defines Rubha Phoil as a permaculture place of practice, Rubha Phoil does not seem to match her idea of what a community should feel like. For Michele, a gathering of people has to be present to create the community feeling. Michele’s translation of what makes a community is largely focused on people care and as the next chapter will show, spirituality.

When asking Ludwig if Rubha Phoil used to be a community before he owned the land, he responds:

> It depends on what you look at what the definition of a community is. At the moment it feels like a community because we work together, and we like each other, and we interact. If that’s a community then it was a community before too. Cause there was lots of people coming and going and staying here. But she [Sandra Masson] was the only one who was here permanently.[19]

Ludwig emphasises the fluidity of the term ‘community’. In terms of feelings he would describe Rubha Phoil as a community both in the past and in the present. Ludwig’s translation of what makes a permaculture community is about giving it your best try: “I think it [Rubha Phoil] is a community and I think it is permaculture … the things that are not really permaculture yet we are turning into permaculture, so we’re doing the best we can and we are working really hard to change these things. And we’re making a permaculture design for the place.”[20] Ludwig’s focus is on applying the principles and ethics of permaculture at Rubha Phoil the best he and the others can do. Ludwig thus focuses both on community feeling and what makes a community theoretically.

[17] Michele, interview 2, Rubha Phoil, April 18, 2018.
[18] Michele, interview 2.
[19] Ludwig, interview 1.
[20] Ludwig, interview 1.

Isaac, another long-term volunteer, comments that Rubha Phoil is not a permaculture community yet. When asked "what makes Rubha Phoil a permaculture community?" he responds with:

> I can tell you why I think it will be one? I think that Ludwig's ideas about how to design his stuff and how to live respectfully with nature are good. Like, he wants to design on the buildings, he wants to build the new ones with local materials, that's good, that's permaculture. He wants to make them well insulated, so you don't have to burn heaps of fuel to keep them warm. That's smart. He doesn't want to cram to many people into the land, but still wants to get as many as it can reasonably support. I think that's a good idea.[21]

Isaac agrees with many of Ludwig's ideas on creating a permaculture community and therefore can visualise it as a successful permaculture community in the future. He focuses more on the practicalities of a permaculture community than on feelings when defining Rubha Phoil as a community. According to Isaac, once all plans have been set in motion at Rubha Phoil and permanent residents arrive, it can become a successful permaculture community.

Isaac, Ludwig, and Michele show different priorities when defining Rubha Phoil as a community or permaculture community. Michele's community feeling comes and goes depending on the number of people staying at Rubha Phoil. Ludwig experiences a community feeling, as permaculture is practised and translated in his way at Rubha Phoil. Yet, he addresses the subjectivity of the concept. Michele finds Rubha Phoil an extreme permaculture site, and Isaac believes that Rubha Phoil is not a permaculture place yet but will get there in the future. A tension exists in interpretations of what a permaculture community is and how Rubha Phoil fits in these ideas. Ludwig, Michele and Isaac have come from different countries and gathered at Rubha Phoil with their personal ideas about the sustainable design system. Behrends et al. (2014) explain that:

> [C]rucial to a model's transfer at all points of its passage is the respective carrier or mediator. … who appropriate a model and relate it to their own understanding of both the model's origin and intention and the situation into which it is supposed to be immersed … The ideas that make up the model necessarily influence the consultant's thinking and actions. At the same time, their understanding of a model depends on his or her existing knowledge and beliefs. (14)

The mediators at Rubha Phoil have translated permaculture in line with their ways of thinking; for Michele relatively spiritually, for Isaac practically, and for Ludwig the focus lies on both feelings and practices of permaculture. Their ideas about what a permaculture community should be like are part of their translations of permaculture as a design.

Understanding permaculture as a travelling model, Ludwig's, Michele's and Isaac's ideas are shaped by permaculture design and their personal translations of what a permaculture community

[21] Isaac, interview 1, Rubha Phoil, February 17, 2018.

should look and feel like. Their experiences at Rubha Phoil shape these translations, and their translations shape Rubha Phoil too by giving meaning to it. Isaac and Michele and other volunteers bring their opinions and experiences with them to Rubha Phoil, where they learn (more) about permaculture and what permaculture should look like. They form their opinions on permaculture, which are shaped through their previous experiences with permaculture and their experiences at Rubha Phoil. After staying in the community, they will travel on or go back home with newly translated ideas, enhancing permaculture's travels. The sense of community at Rubha Phoil is contested due to translation disparities. Ludwig, Michele and Isaac show differences in translation of what a permaculture community should look like as part of how they translate permaculture as a design system.

2.4 Conclusion: Rubha Phoil as a transnational permaculture community

The volunteers and resident of Rubha Phoil show different ideas about how to define the community. Within anthropology itself 'community' is also a contested concept (Amit and Rapport, 2002), yet the descriptions seem to agree on several elements. Parker et al. remark a few generalities regarding the concept 'community': "it seems to stand for a network of close relationships between a limited number of people, usually based on face-to-face interaction within a particular geographical area. It is also often suggested that … one community can be distinguished from another on the basis of their shared understandings" (2007, 58). Birkeland (2002) emphasises this definition by referring to Hillary (1955) when suggesting three elements that qualify a community: "social interaction, shared ties and common geographical location" (2002, 135). He stresses that geographical closeness is not as relevant anymore in this digital age. Additionally, Birkeland highlights: "We 'sense' community through appreciation of the same phenomena" (135). Brommesson and Enroth (2015) stated that "the most minimal of minimal definitions of community" (3) has been proposed by Spivak (2015), namely: "things held in common" (Brommesson and Enroth 2015, 3). At Rubha Phoil a shifting small group of people works together at the same place with a common vision of becoming sustainable by applying the framework of permaculture design. Taking into account the broad descriptions of community as previously mentioned, Rubha Phoil is a community. However, the people at Rubha Phoil have divergent opinions on what is crucial to a permaculture community. This variety in understandings are formed through different foci within their translations, such as the social aspect, the practical aspect, or both. Their translations are not constrained to Rubha Phoil, but are shaped by permaculture as a sustainable design and their personal contexts that transcend Rubha Phoil, Isle of Skye or even Scotland. Rubha Phoil can therefore be understood as a transnational community. Within anthropology the concept 'transnational community' is mostly used regarding migrants who travel between the countries they live in and their countries of birth (Farr 2006; Mirandé 2014). However, this approach is mostly bidirectional, while transnational communities can also be multidirectional. McGarry (2010) used the concept to conceptualise a community without a "kin state" (2). The definition of transnational is in its most literal sense 'across nations'. Social scientist Hall (2015)

explains transnational space as: “where processes unbound by any particular locality occur” (31). Rubha Phoil is largely shaped by international volunteers and internationally supported through crowdfunding, and more directly through tourism. The tension in opinions about defining Rubha Phoil as a community is created by different translations about what a permaculture community should be, shaped by the translators’ international backgrounds and experiences with permaculture. Processes at Rubha Phoil are thus not restricted to the community but transcend its borders. As permaculture originated in Australia and spread internationally, permaculture practice and teachings are not confined to Rubha Phoil but occur in and outside of many different places such as Bulgaria (Brawner 2015) and the United States (Veteto and Lockyer 2008). Conceptualising Rubha Phoil as a global community would be overstating the community’s reach. Even though Rubha Phoil’s connections, foundation and central design system crosses borders, not everyone in the world knows about it. Rather, Rubha Phoil is a relatively small transnational community as part of an international permaculture network.

Chapter 3. Rubha Phoil as Interstitial Space: Local Translations of Permaculture Design.

"The space between one understanding and another is the space that enables creative new practice, or the space where change happens … Interstitial spaces emerge each time the model is transferred from one person to another or from one place to another." (Behrends et al. 2014, 14).

This chapter illustrates permaculture as a travelling model by focusing on Rubha Phoil as interstitial space. The volunteers and resident act as mediators of permaculture and translate permaculture according to their personal journeys. At Rubha Phoil permaculture is translated as a reconnection method: as the answer to a feeling of disconnection with their social and natural environment that the volunteers and resident of Rubha Phoil express. In the form of exercises and active practise of permaculture principles they try to reconnect. Nonetheless, interstitial space also exists between the people at Rubha Phoil due to their personal backgrounds and their foci of what is important, providing room for the creation of new translations.

Morning

I get up at 7:45 AM and I get dressed into my work clothes. It is the beginning of March, not quite Spring yet. I'm wearing thermals, rainproof trousers, a jumper, a raincoat, outdoor shoes, and a hat and gloves. I turn off the electric heater in my room and I immediately feel the heat escape from my hut. When I step outside I feel the frost softly biting my face. I walk towards the shed to get the bird feeder for the ducks. On my way from the shed to the ducks several robins follow me, excited to nibble on the ducks' food. I let the ducks out of their little hut and change their water. They run around enthusiastically, stretching and flapping their wings. Then I make my way to the chickens. I check if they have enough food and if their water is clean. I unlock their hut and collect the eggs they've laid. I walk towards reception, ready for breakfast. When I walk in, several other volunteers are already having porridge or toast. Before 9:00 we make sure we have done our dishes and we get ready for the morning meeting. We sit upstairs where the electric heaters are, but it is still cold as it takes a while before the room has warmed up. We keep our coats on and prepare tea to drink during the meeting. Everyone is quiet when Ludwig comes in and makes his way to his white rocking chair. The meeting is about to begin.

3.1 Introducing the mediators at Rubha Phoil

Via an online platforms WA (Work Away) or WWOOF (Working Weekends On Organic Farms/ Willing Workers on Organic Farms), the volunteers can sign up by creating an account and apply for Rubha Phoil by writing a motivation letter. On the WA and WWOOF websites many similar places across the globe are listed, such as organic farms and communities. In exchange for labour and lessons in organic farming, volunteers receive free stay and meals. The volunteers at Rubha Phoil are chosen

by Ludwig, who explains he is relatively selective when it comes to choosing volunteers.[22] He receives many applications (several hundred a year) and is looking for motivated volunteers who are interested in Rubha Phoil specifically and in developing practical skills and learning about permaculture.

All volunteers at Rubha Phoil have a personal story as to why they came to stay in a permaculture community. In terms of similarities and differences between the volunteers it stands out that most of them are in their early twenties. Most of them are also highly educated and have more theoretical than practical experience. Additionally, the community has an incredibly international character: within my fieldwork period I met volunteers from France, Germany, England, Scotland, Switzerland and Australia. Even though the volunteers show great differences in nationalities it is noteworthy that they all share a Western cultural background. Hence, when speaking of Western culture or society the volunteers use 'we', 'us' or 'our society'. Most volunteers express similar views and emotions regarding the relationships between themselves and their environments. More specifically, the volunteers express a general feeling of disconnection. Upon arrival, they often say they do not feel in touch with their social and natural surroundings. This is understood as a negative feeling, something that has to be fixed. This is part of the reason as to why they are volunteering and wish to learn about permaculture: to reconnect and to understand how to live sustainably as an alternative to the society they grew up in. Western society is then typically characterised as disconnective, whereas permaculture is understood as reconnective. The volunteers thus display a need for a change towards reconnective lifestyles and they usually visit multiple places to explore these alternative ways of living. Some look for community life specifically, whereas others are more interested in staying at permaculture places (community or not). Either way, the volunteers formulate a shortcoming in Western society that has to be filled. It is noteworthy that an international group of people all show interest in permaculture as a sustainable alternative. The volunteers get in touch with permaculture and take what they learn back to their home countries and to other places they travel. The following paragraph will elaborate on the motivations for learning about permaculture of three volunteers who shared their personal stories about nature connection with me: Michele, Danny and Isaac.

Morning meeting

Inside the room it's quiet, but there's much noise outside. The birds have been up for a couple of hours now and are busy singing their songs and finding a mate, it's almost Spring after all. The sparrows are busy nesting along the rims of the windows, which allows us a close look at the tiny birds. When Ludwig begins the meeting, I hear the horns signalling that the morning ferry has arrived at the pier. I hear the faint voice of a Scot explaining the disembarking protocol. "And how are you feeling Ellen?" Ludwig asks me. I awake from my daydream. "I did not sleep very well because of the noise of the heavy wind and rain last night," I reply. The weather has been keeping me awake for a

[22] Ludwig, interview 2, Rubha Phoil, April 19, 2018.

few nights. I am reminded by when Isaac told me he would go out in the evenings to look for street lights, as that made him feel calm before returning to the pitch black forest. I also remember him saying that after a few weeks he slept better than ever in the woods. I am waiting for that moment. The meeting goes on. We talk about everyone's wellbeing and about what we have noticed in nature: bird nests we've spotted, wildlife we've seen, possible tracks we've discovered. We end the meeting by sharing gratitude for natural things. I share that I am grateful for the robins that follow me around when I feed the ducks. Then we divide jobs and start our day.

3.2 The underlying motivations: disconnection and the need for change

It is important to understand why the volunteers decided to come to Rubha Phoil as "[r]ational choice relates to travelling models and translation in that the theory also tries to explain why models travel or, in other words, what motivates people to pick up new ideas" (Behrends et al. 2014, 16). Most of the volunteers feel that the society they grew up in does not treat nature or people right. They experience or have experienced a feeling of disconnection from their natural and social environments. Their motivations for learning about permaculture and staying at Rubha Phoil originate in these experiences of disconnection. At Rubha Phoil they express feelings of reconnection by living in a permaculture community and by and partaking in nature reconnection exercises.

Michele is 57 years old and has lived most her life in Norfolk, England. She studied chemistry and has had several jobs varying from teaching to editing. Michele explains she has just been through a very rough period in her life and how reconnecting to nature and to herself has helped her find her way:

> I feel very connected to nature, it's where I feel I get my sustenance from, the earth. I've lived most of my life in my head. Totally in my thoughts and my thinking world, not realising I was totally disconnected from my natural being and my natural body and everything around me. It's taken me a big long process to come into my heart and into my body. I'm still not really there, but nature is a way that really helps me to become embodied and to be on the ground and to connect to our mother, I see the earth as our mother. It's been a terrible learning to come out of my disconnection and to know I'm part of this huge cosmic mystery really. I'm a tiny microdot of nothingness, but still I'm here so I must have some part to play in all of it. Let's try and make it positive.[23]

Michele tells me that she is looking for a community to live in as she thinks that is the way forward. She disagrees with the way Western society lives, she lived like that for a long time and over the last few years she realised that we have created a disconnected lifestyle and established it as the norm. When I ask her what she means by disconnected, she says: "[Disconnected from our] inner selves, the natural world, disconnected from each other, disconnected from… everything really. We are all in our little bubbles and we believe that, if we go on these little hamster wheels working 9-5 and get our

[23] Michele, interview 1.

money at the end of the month, we're good people. It's a construct, people don't realise they're in a construct."[24] Michele experienced disconnection in the way that she did not feel one with her true self or one with the world around her. She feels that this is a common phenomenon in Western society that many people do not realise they are going through. Community life could help people out of the construct she speaks of by focusing on oneself, on each other and on nature. Michele could often be found singing in the potting shed. She did much gardening throughout her stay, such as preparing the vegetable beds, seeding and weeding. During work she frequently chants mantras, as this helps her to be more present and grounded with the tasks at hand. Michele has a spiritual view on the world. She believes that everyone is divinely guided, even though it may not always feel that way. She has tried several spiritual communities internationally, yet was frequently confronted with unpleasant power struggles, which led her to look for a more nature-focused community. This she found at Rubha Phoil. Michele shared that her time at Rubha Phoil was challenging at times, emotionally and physically. But getting through rough times made her have a pleasant and learning experience in the end. She was happy being able to serve the earth at Rubha Phoil and admits that she thrives in this sort of an environment.[25]

Similarly, Danny believes in the divine and that we have to give back to Mother Earth. Through Work Away he and his girlfriend Jay are trying to increase their knowledge on organic farming as they wish to start their own organic farm in their homeland, Scotland. Danny starts his morning early by giving thanks to the universe. He writes down a list of ten things every morning of what he is grateful for and then raises his voice in the woods to shout out these ten things. After work he often meditates in or on the edge of the forest. When I ask him about his connection to nature he explains that he and his twin brother Liam have been connected to nature from a young age. Living in Australia for a few years as children made them feel like aboriginals in the rain forest, and they continued their adventures in the woods in the United Kingdom. At the end of his teens, Danny started partying on the weekends and working a full-time warehouse job during the week. He tells how this all became too much one day:

> From then it got to a point when it was getting too gnarly you know it was getting sort of tedious. I was working a job that I despised, I was going to a place that I really despised. It was at a massive warehouse and I was welding […] All day welding. Fumes in there. A loud environment. Doing things like that alone is unbelievably negative for a human body. When you think about yourself thousands of years ago in a forest, then you can compare yourself being in a warehouse. The combination of that and going out at the weekend, hard, Friday to Sunday cause I wanted to mask off all the things I was doing. Obviously there came a time that it just clicked in my head, and Liam as well. We had this sort of awakening, a spiritual awakening, that's what I'm gonna call it. […] And my brother was actually the

[24] Michele, interview 1.
[25] Michele, interview 2.

> one to say that "I'm going travelling." He said 'I'm fucking out of here, I can't handle this anymore', and he's my twin brother.[26]

Danny explains how he went from a surfing and skating teenager who spent much time in nature to an adolescent working a 9-5 job experiencing little nature connection. He would then try to relieve this frustration by partying on the weekends. After realising how unhappy they were, Danny, Liam and Jay left for Australia where they found out how disconnected they had been over the last few years. During their work and travels in Australia Danny and Jay transformed from being meat-eaters to vegetarians, to vegans. Yet most importantly, travelling awoke their dream of living in a cabin in the woods. This dream has guided them in their decisions on what to do with their lives in their early twenties. Right now, they have found a piece of land they would like to buy and they are doing Work Away to obtain the skills and knowledge they need for establishing a successful organic farm. Likewise, Liam went on Work Away to a different place. Both Danny and Jay speak of learning about biodiversity and the symbiotic relationships in nature. Their behaviour emphasises their active interests in nature and spiritual reconnection. I often found Jay writing in her notebook about the useful things she had learned, e.g. how to make bio-tea. Both Danny and Jay did much reading during their stay, usually on spiritual topics. Especially Danny enjoyed explaining his spiritual view in detail. The introductory quote of this thesis are Danny's words referring to a native American saying that together we will change the way we live and that everyone in this world has a part to play. Instead of speaking of how bad the world is doing regarding sustainability, Danny highlights that we need to act and he recognises that people around the world are acting. He mentions:

> But great things are happening in this planet as we speak. And I feel like there's a massive percentage of people that are doing great things for nature and there's obviously a few that are stuck in their ways but you've just gotta think about it like this. It's not their fault. They've been born into this way of thinking. But now is the time, because there's been a massive paradigm. A massive shift in consciousness and there's no stopping it. People want change now. This earth is ours, we're part of this earth and people see that and people are feeling that truly".[27]

Danny essentially talks about hope and change. He sees and he feels the initiatives people are taking worldwide and he explains he will try everything he can to create change and to inspire others to do the same. Danny explains that "it all starts from a few people, because a few people inspire the hundreds, and the hundreds inspire the thousands, and the thousands inspire the millions, and the millions inspire the billions. That's the jest of it. It's sort of transitioning people."[28] Danny's view highlights how ideas travel and the necessity of ideas to spread in order to cause change. Learning about permaculture and nature reconnection will allow him to teach others, who in turn can teach

[26] Danny, interview.
[27] Danny, interview.
[28] Danny, interview.

others. Danny's words evoke the key characteristic of a travelling model: the sharing of ideas globally which inspires and influences others to pick up on these ideas and apply, translate and spread them. This is what is happening at Rubha Phoil. It is one of many localities where permaculture is translated and spread from one volunteer to another, or from one volunteer to his or her friends and family. An increasing amount of people are becoming aware of permaculture as a design system for an alternative and sustainable lifestyle.

Isaac has a less spiritual view on nature connection. Isaac is 21 years old from Adelaide, Australia. Isaac studied philosophy for two years but quit as he disagreed with the education system. One of his study years he spent abroad in Oslo. Upon his return in Australia Isaac realised he did not want to study any longer and worked for a while before leaving for the United Kingdom. He decided to stay at Rubha Phoil for four months, the whole of winter. Isaac disagrees with several elements of the society he grew up in, yet does not show such a strong motivation for large-scale social and natural change as Michele and Danny. He believes that everyone has his own interpretation of what it is like to be connected to nature, and that one is not necessarily better than another. He explains:

> I sort of just mean like the experience of really having a great time when you're out in nature like being amazed at the mountains and the water and the sea and enjoying listening to the birds singing. There's nothing complicated. It's not like I have some mystical experience of being deeply connected to the growing of the trees. Not that I necessarily think that's bullshit. But it's just not what I mean when I would talk about connection to nature. I mean something that everyone experiences sometimes. I'm sure everyone has experienced it.[29]

Isaac understands nature connection as something that can occur easily when surrounded by nature. He continues explaining that his feeling of nature connection has occurred many times before in his life, when going camping with friends or walking through the woods. Yet, how quickly it comes is how quickly it goes. Isaac's feeling seemed to disappear once he had returned to his everyday life. However, after having spent four months at Rubha Phoil he had a sense that this time his feeling of nature connection would stay:

> And I have had that in the past. But I feel like that won't happen this time, because my experience of enjoying being in nature doesn't come and go anymore. If I'm in nature it just is there. And I don't think it could [go] really. It's not like I came to the woods and I was instantly amazed by them and loved it. I came here and felt shit. And the fact that I've worked through that, and really love it now, I think means that it's not gonna go away.[30]

Isaac feels that his sense of nature connection came from a deeper place this time; it arose gradually through struggle and effort. He did not enjoy his stay at first since he had a hard time falling asleep

[29] Isaac, interview 1.
[30] Isaac, interview 1.

and adjusting to the cold and the dark forest at night. However, after a while he slept better than ever. Isaac tells me he is a little worried he will not sleep very well when returning to an urban area due to all the noise. He also remarked that he looks up every time a bird flies by or when he hears a birdcall near him. Another positive effect of his nature reconnection was that he enjoys being in nature by himself, something out of which he did not always take pleasure. He also mentions he generally feels like a happier person. Nevertheless, it stands out to me that Isaac never insinuates that everyone should reconnect to nature, he merely points out the positive effects of it on himself. His experience of nature connection is very personal and does not result in a feeling to actively convince others of the benefits.

Even though every volunteer has his or her own story of how they became interested in nature (re)connection, it is notable that everyone experiences this feeling. Michele shared it took her a long time, yet reconnection with nature and her inner self helped her finally feel whole and made her realise she has her part to play in the universe. Likewise, Danny went through a rough few years to realise that he had to reconnect to his natural environment and the divine. Now he is on a path to inspire others. Lastly, Isaac's time at Rubha Phoil was tough in the beginning, yet getting through his four months stay and reconnecting to nature allowed him to feel happy and in touch with his natural environment without losing that feeling overnight. The volunteers suggest that nature connection just does not occur in contemporary Western society, since it is not the norm. This idea is also reflected in dinner table conversations at Rubha Phoil. We regularly talked about the news and problems that have occurred in capitalist societies that are due to natural and social disconnection. There seemed to be a consensus among the volunteers that nature reconnection is significant and has to be introduced in everyday life, since it allows you to be happier, to feel more complete and to live sustainably. In other words, the volunteers show that there is a need for a lifestyle that reconnects, which is something that a Western lifestyle lacks. Permaculture is expressed as a useful design system to achieve this, which makes disconnection a key motivator for the people of Rubha Phoil to learn about permaculture.

Midday

It's my turn to cook lunch. I quit work an hour before the others to be able to cook a large warm meal. I've never been a great cook, but since my arrival at Rubha Phoil I have learned a thing or two. I can now make a reasonable vegetable soup. The kitchen is filled with the aroma of freshly baked bread. Luckily, Michele had already put on the bread machine this morning, so a new bread will be done in time for lunch. I start preparing the soup while having small talk with my colleagues who drop in and out for tea or other things they need from reception. I spent most of my morning painting signs for the forest walk, while others were working on the fedge or chopping wood. At 12:30 lunch is ready, I make my way around the forest to let everyone know.

3.3 Rubha Phoil as an interstitial space: reconnecting through permaculture.

The previous paragraph showed that the volunteers feel disconnected from nature and came to Rubha Phoil with a desire to reconnect. With its focus on the three ethics *earth care, people care and fair*

share, permaculture is translated as reconnective. The practices at Rubha Phoil highlight this. Ludwig invites the volunteers at Rubha Phoil to take part in nature reconnection exercises. These exercises are largely based on the ideas of Jon Young, a permaculturist and founder of the 8-Shields Institute, an institute that offers help to people and communities worldwide to reconnect to nature and develop 8 essential attributes.[31] Ludwig takes much inspiration from Young and two of his books *The Coyote's Guide Connecting with Nature (2010)* and *What the Robin Knows (2013)*. The foremost exercise Ludwig applies from Young's teachings is called 'sit spots'. In this exercise the volunteers are asked to find a spot in the forest where they can enjoy sitting still for about fifteen minutes or more. By returning to this spot frequently and sitting still, the animals living in the area will become used to a non-disturbing human presence and understand that this person does not mean any harm. After a while the animals will not hide any longer and continue their daily life in front of the person watching. Nature reconnection can thus be understood to work both ways. People reconnect to their natural environments, and the natural environment reconnects to them if treated respectfully. To maximise results Ludwig mentions a few other exercises that can be applied, which are exemplified in the following vignette.

How to reconnect

It is 5:30 PM. We walk into the forest with the six of us. Ludwig walks up front and guides us to a peaceful spot at the edge of the campsite. We automatically stand in a circle. The sun is slowly disappearing. Ludwig breaks the silence with a question: "Does anyone remember why it is important to focus on bird language? Why I am so passionate about it?" He speaks softly, as if not to disturb the forest. We come up with several reasons. Ludwig confirms that birds give alarm calls when danger is near. If we understand bird language we will be able to tell when someone or something else is near. However, it is difficult to understand birds. "Most people from Western cultures are disconnected and will cause birds to give alarm calls," Ludwig explains. "When one bird gives an alarm call, the next bird will pick up on this and spread the word and so on. The other animals in the forest pick up on this too. In a matter of seconds, the whole forest will know you are there." Ludwig shares with us that there are several tricks or exercises we can apply to decrease the level of alarm call we cause. One of these is called owl eyes. Humans have focused vision, similar to other predators. This focused vision scares off animals that could be potential prey. Ludwig emphasises that we have gotten used to using focused vision when we study or stare at screens. He tells us that we can reactivate and train our peripheral vision. He shows us how wide our vision actually is by letting us spread our arms and move them slowly towards our faces while moving our fingers. Meanwhile we stare at a point in the distance and soften our eyes. Quite quickly we realise that we are able to see our fingers move in the corners of our eyes. Ludwig explains that by using owl eyes we can look at a bird without staring directly at it. This way we won't scare it off and it won't give an alarm call, or a lesser one. Additionally, Ludwig introduces us to fox feet: "By wearing shoes we have become accustomed to not pay too much

[31] "About Us," 8-Shields Institute, accessed June 4, 2018, http://8shields.org/about/.

attention to our feet, as they are protected at any time. This leads us to stamp around the forest and causing intense vibrations that can be felt throughout the woods," he says. Ludwig shows an example by stamping his one foot on the ground, which causes a vibration we are all able to feel. This too chases animals off in no-time. Ludwig shows how we can put down our feet carefully by starting our step by putting down our heel, then putting down the side of our foot, and then our toes. We slowly walk around like this for a while, meanwhile trying to apply owl eyes. We notice how quiet we can actually be. We talk a bit longer about disconnection and reconnection and discuss that if we act in a connected way, the animals will not be too bothered by us anymore and understand that we mean them no harm.

These exercises offer a way to become more aware of your personal influence on life around you on a small-scale. Owl eyes and fox feet can help increase awareness of human interference by noticing the effects when slightly altering the way you look around and the way you walk. The volunteers respond mostly positively towards these exercises. Michele explains that she enjoyed them, but she already did sit spots before her stay at Rubha Phoil.[32] After doing the exercises for a longer period of time, most of the volunteers shared that they had become more attentive to what was happening around them in nature. As talking about what we noticed in nature was part of every morning meeting, the volunteers actively participated in the exercises to be able to share their stories in the morning. Additionally, during jobs we often took a minute to look up to try to notice the birds around us. Ludwig had explained that there are several levels of alarm calls that birds give off to alarm their peers about danger. He found that the better the (re)connection, the lesser the alarm call the bird would give off. Even though most volunteers were able to recognise the alarm calls, the different levels were often considered hard to distinguish. Nonetheless, the volunteers expressed a positive feeling towards being aware of their influence on wildlife and being able to separate birds' alarm calls from general singsong and mating calls. By thoroughly discussing one local bird species every morning and by learning about animals, plants and permaculture during jobs, the volunteers became more knowledgeable about local flora and fauna, which increased their connected feelings. As mentioned previously, Ludwig carefully explained what permaculture principles related to the jobs the volunteers did before getting to work. This allowed the volunteers to get in touch with permaculture hands-on and experience permaculture practise right after introduction with the theory. Whilst building the fedge, the volunteers were aware of why and how they were doing it: to prevent young deer from eating trees with a fedge made from rhododendrons that have to be cut as it is an invasive species. Understanding reasons and motivations behind jobs made the volunteers more aware of how interdependent nature is and increased their understanding of their relationship with the environment. In other words, permaculture practise and learning enhanced their connected feelings. Generally, working outside, using compost toilets, living in a forest, sleeping in huts without central heating, eating vegan meals and taking care

[32] Michele, interview 2.

of animals all contributed to the volunteers' reconnection experience. These elements can be understood as typical sustainable practice, yet they also reflect the permaculture principles and ethics.

At Rubha Phoil, Ludwig and the volunteers agree that they grew up in a disconnected society and that they would like to reconnect. Permaculture is translated here in the form of reconnection exercises and active and theoretical practise of the principles and ethics. Rubha Phoil can be understood as interstitial space, where a translation of permaculture is created in the form of a reconnection method. Yet, between the volunteers and the resident translations of permaculture also differ. The next paragraph will show that also within Rubha Phoil, interstitial space exists as the volunteers and resident as mediators have personal translations of the design system.

Early afternoon

After lunch I go for a short walk to let my food settle. I walk down to my sit spot, a big rock at the beach. The wind makes me feel a bit chilly. For a few minutes I sit and breathe and watch the waves. About 50 yards in front of me oystercatchers are busy communicating, making high-pitched noises. On my far right I see a heron, near the spot Michele likes to sit. When the sun breaks through the clouds I enjoy the warmth of the sun on my face. I see a black shape moving in and out of the water in the far distance. It is too far away to identify and the sun shimmering on the water blocks my view. I hope it's a seal. I watch it for a while but when it disappears again I leave to start my afternoon job: cleaning the wigwam.

3.4 Permaculture as a multi-translatable tool

The volunteers were introduced to permaculture in different ways and translate it in line with their individual contexts. Some knew about permaculture before their arrival at Rubha Phoil through for example friends, documentaries or local courses. Others learned about permaculture at Rubha Phoil for the first time.

Ludwig explains that he knew about permaculture for a while before he actively started learning about it. He tells me he does not like following other people's ideas or theories in general. He often jokingly refers to his 13th permaculture principle 'rules are meant to be broken'. However, when facing the question of how to grow food in harmony with the forest he started reading more on permaculture. He explains: "And that's when I discovered that it's not like the 10 commandments … they're just tools. And you can make from it what you want."[33] Permaculture is a design system that forwards principles and ethics for a holistic and sustainable way of life. Since it addresses many different principles, you can choose where your focus lies or what matters most to you. Permaculture design is thus not extremely specific. It provides guidelines, or tools in Ludwig's words, to create your own design for your garden, your farm or your community. This broadly translatable characteristic of permaculture allows it to be widely applicable. Yet, when you can speak of permaculture specifically is unclear. Ludwig and Isaac argue that for something to be called permaculture it has to tick the boxes

[33] Ludwig, interview 1.

of the three ethics. Ludwig adds that there may be places that practise permaculture without being aware of it. Or places that claim to practise permaculture, yet that do not stick to the ethics. They would then have a different translation of the ethics, or of permaculture in general. As mentioned in chapter 2, Ludwig explains being a permaculturist as trying the best you can within a certain context. But even trying your best can be understood differently by permaculturists, due to interstitial spaces between people and places.

Isaac knew little about permaculture before his stay at Rubha Phoil. Ludwig gave him a permaculture course and upon completion a certificate. Isaac explains that to him the principles come relatively naturally:

> I think they [the permaculture principles] are pretty sensible. I think I kind of knew all of them without being taught cause they are so intuitive, but they're still good. One of the principles is work from patterns to details. And that sort of means: do the most important things first and then worry about the small details. So don't worry about where you're gonna put your flower garden before you worry about where your paths are gonna go. And that sort of makes sense, you don't need to be told that, but it's good to have the reminder.[34]

Isaac emphasises that permaculture is a logical design system that we can use as a reminder when designing intuitively. Isaac explains that if he starts practising permaculture in the future he will take his own approach. More specifically, he would like to start a personal project that suits his own ideas, yet that project would likely be a permaculture project as his ideas agree with that of permaculture. Trying the best you can to practise permaculture, in this translation is less effortful, as permaculture is understood to be in line with instinctive behaviour. Imagining permaculturists along a continuum that begins with 'intuitive' and ends with 'extremist', Isaac would likely be placed near the beginning as a permaculturist, and Ludwig closer to the end. Thus, there is diversity in translations of what permaculture entails or to what degree one has to practice permaculture to be called a permaculturist, even within a community such as Rubha Phoil. It is this variety of interpretations that allows many, for example ecovillages or gardeners, to relate to permaculture as a design for sustainable living. This is partly why permaculture was able to travel and spread quickly and successfully over the last 40 years.

Isaac addresses what the essence of permaculture is to him: "I guess that's one thing I really like about permaculture. It's pretty sensible, it's not about crazy ideas about not using any fossil fuels ever and we're gonna save the world. It's just about living in a way that's good for the people, good for the earth, and equitable. It's simple, but I think that's all it really needs to be."[35] Isaac stresses the simplicity of permaculture and the fact that it is not extreme in its essence.

Michele followed a permaculture design course in Norfolk and views it positively: "Permaculture offers us solutions to how we might live in communities and in nature in a respectful

[34] Isaac, interview 2, Rubha Phoil, February 24, 2018.
[35] Isaac, interview 2.

way. I think permaculture can offer us so much really. Because everything you do in life, not just natural things, every problem can be looked at through the lens of permaculture."[36] Michele feels that permaculture is widely applicable to every aspect of life, nature and community. This is reflected in the holistic character of permaculture. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Michele's translation of permaculture changed or expanded as she, in her words, "lived it" at Rubha Phoil. She learned much about permaculture theoretically when she did the design course, yet living it with others at Rubha Phoil in a way that felt extreme to her allowed Michele's translation of permaculture to travel and alter with her, from England to Scotland and to wherever she is headed in the future.

Permaculture design does not have one single definition as its meaning is given by its practitioners. Since permaculture provides a design in the form of principles and ethics, permaculturists can choose their focus and take away what they need from it. As Behrends et al. suggest: "All these actors translate the model, make it their own and convey it in their own way. Thereby, the model eventually changes" (2014, 6). This adaptability and applicability allows permaculture to travel internationally and to be translated in a variety of manners and contexts as a true travelling model. Even within Rubha Phoil, different translations are created in the interstitial space due to different priorities and foci within and outside of permaculture design. Interstitial space thus also exists between the mediators at Rubha Phoil.

Late afternoon and evening

It's 4:30 in the afternoon. The guests for the wigwam will arrive soon on the afternoon ferry. Ludwig will take care of introducing them. After having a cup of tea with the others I make my way to my hut. When I approach the fence, the ducks stare at me in silence. As this usually means they're hungry I already turn around to grab some food for them. When I walk into their enclosure I see I was right and I fill up their bird feeder. Then I walk into my hut and lie down for about an hour. I make notes and I listen to music while I wait for dinner to be prepared. Soon another day will have passed.

3.5 Conclusion: Rubha Phoil as a stop along the way.

Viewed as a travelling model, permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil through different translations. One translation is that it is a solution to a shared feeling of disconnection with the social and natural environments that the people at Rubha Phoil have experienced in their upbringing. Also within Rubha Phoil interstitial spaces exist amongst the volunteers and resident of Rubha Phoil: room for the creation of new translations. In line with Behrends et al.'s (2014) definition that a travelling model is "contingent since tokens need to be translated and thus changed unpredictably in order to travel" (21), permaculture does not have a set definition. The volunteers arrived at Rubha Phoil with their own stories of nature disconnection and their ideas on permaculture, they shared the same lifestyle for a couple of weeks or longer, and will move on with their (perhaps altered) personal translations of permaculture. Permaculture does not necessarily stop here; it can travel with Ludwig, Isaac, Michele

[36] Michele, interview 1.

and Danny and Jay to different places where their translations will alter. They will possibly tell or teach others about permaculture who in turn act as mediators of permaculture by forming their own translations and creating many permaculture trails. Rubha Phoil is thus not a separate entity, where permaculture is taught within closed off boundaries. Rubha Phoil can be seen as one of many places where people like Michele, Isaac and Danny can hop off and stay a while and learn about permaculture, after which they will continue their travels seeking sustainable answers elsewhere whilst permaculture journeys with them.

Permaculture is translated within Rubha Phoil as interstitial space as a possible solution to being disconnected. Interstitial space exists within Rubha Phoil as the meaning of permaculture differs from individual to individual. It is important to note that permaculture also travels in and to other places simultaneously. The next chapter will look at the international permaculture network and Rubha Phoil's relation to this network as a transnational community.

Chapter 4. The Travels of Permaculture: Rubha Phoil within the International Permaculture Network

> Permaculture is also a worldwide network and movement of individuals and groups who are working […] on all continents to demonstrate and spread permaculture design solutions. Largely unsupported by government or business, these people are contributing to a more sustainable future by reorganising their lives and work around permaculture design principles. In this way they are creating small local changes but ones which are directly and indirectly influencing action in the wider environment, organic agriculture, appropriate technology, communities and other movements for a more sustainable world. (Holmgren 2015)

Permaculture as a travelling model takes shape at Rubha Phoil through the community's connections with a wider permaculture network. This chapter provides an introduction to the international permaculture network. It introduces friends of Ludwig who are involved with permaculture and shows well-known mediators of permaculture worldwide and explains how permaculture is taught. This chapter also introduces the ideas of Jon Young on nature reconnection, as he is an important mediator in the international network including Ludwig and his friends. The last paragraph concludes this chapter by explaining how permaculture takes form at Rubha Phoil as part of the international permaculture network.

4.1 Outside of Rubha Phoil.

In the second chapter Rubha Phoil has been defined as a transnational community. Rubha Phoil is in contact with its local community through local meetings in the nearby village Ardvasar about topics such as ocean and forest wildlife on the Isle of Skye. Many volunteers at Rubha Phoil engage in volunteer projects outside of Rubha Phoil such as beach clean ups, road side clean ups and making paths. Now and then people from the local community come by Rubha Phoil to help out for an afternoon. Several of Rubha Phoil's international connections have been mentioned before. Rubha Phoil is active on multiple websites and social media, such as Facebook, Instagram and Crowfunding, which makes the community internationally reachable. Ludwig was able to buy the land thanks to the help of international crowdfunding, which emphasises transnational awareness of the permaculture project at Rubha Phoil. Additionally, most volunteers at Rubha Phoil come from outside of Scotland. Through WWOOF and WA they get into contact with the community. Many of Ludwig's friends and acquaintances are involved with nature reconnection and permaculture practices in Scotland. Nature reconnection and permaculture events now and then take place at and near Rubha Phoil. Ludwig and I visited a grieving ceremony inspired by traditional keeners (professional grieving women in Gaelic culture) in Inverness where we ran into several of Ludwig's friends who are involved with sustainable practices. During my fieldwork, numerous others came by Rubha Phoil being connected to Ludwig mostly through permaculture courses.

Halfway through my stay, four of Ludwig's friends hosted a nature-based camping trip with teenagers at Rubha Phoil. The eco-campsite, the forest and the beaches were an ideal location for the camp. The teenagers stayed for about a week and played games, created their own shelters and got taught about bird language by Ludwig. Two of the camp leaders were Scots Roisín and Dougie. Ludwig had been Roisín's permaculture teacher and Dougie met Ludwig at Findhorn, an ecovillage in eastern Scotland. Dougie tells me he went to Massachusetts with a friend where a man involved with Jon Young organised a Coyote camp for teens. Coyote stands for coyote mentoring, which in Young's teachings is mentoring others on their nature reconnection journey by asking questions and listening to stories the pupils have to share related to their journeys. Dougie intended to start up something similar and figured that the quickest way to learn was to see how it is done. Two years later, in August 2017, he started his own teen camping project with several others. They had already camped out several times in the school holidays before their arrival at Rubha Phoil during Easter. This week was the final trip of the project. Dougie and Roisín explain that a lack of experience with nature during their teens inspired them to start this project. They use words as feeling 'lost' and 'chaos' during their teenage years, which evokes the concept of disconnection once again. This feeling was resolved once they started reconnecting to nature by for example permaculture practice. Dougie clarifies: "there's so much in nature and that sense of connectedness and constant curiosity that nature brings. So for me it satisfies that need for exploration."[37] Roisín describes how her studies in zoology gave a wrong impression of conservation, as her university told her that she had to go to a faraway country to save the turtles. Instead, she found sustenance from learning about the land she grew up in and more locally inspired conservation. Permaculture and the 8-Shields Institute helped her on this path. Rubha Phoil is connected to the 8-Shields Institute through Ludwig. Based in the United States and a large inspiration for Ludwig, the 8-Shields is a significant international connection of Rubha Phoil. The third paragraph of this chapter will look into the ideas of this educational organisation.

Meeting several of Ludwig's friends in different places and through his and their stories, it became clear that a network of people in Scotland is involved with nature reconnection and permaculture. From Edinburgh, to Oban, Inverness and Skye, this network stretches across the country. Taking into account the connections to the 8-Shields Institute, this network becomes global. Dougie comments on this as follows:

> Knowing there's people all with a common framework, common language, mates. That feeling of connection around the world and everyone doing something of value and sharing templates is really supportive. Rather than feeling that you're doing your little thing on your own. So these wider networks have really fine-tuned systems like permaculture and the 8-Shields I think. Yeah they offer me a lot. This wider network of support and action.[38]

[37] Dougie & Roisín, interview, Rubha Phoil, April 7, 2018.
[38] Dougie & Roisín, interview.

Dougie describes a sense of community that crosses borders. Being aware of others worldwide that are working hard with a similar vision and framework offers Dougie motivation and support to continue his work. Ludwig, Dougie, and Roisín all attended an art of mentoring course given by Jon Young in the United Kingdom, where they met many people with a similar vision on nature reconnection and living in community. Dougie and Roisín are two mediators of permaculture, who take permaculture on a journey wherever they go and teach it to others. Through interstitial space their translations alter when entering different contexts. Even though there are differences in translations, Dougie and Roisín experience feelings of support by an international network. The next paragraph will provide more information on this worldwide network of permaculture.

4.2 Mediators, media and international translations.

Permaculture is translated through actors or mediators who pick up the concept and teach and practice it in different ways. The previous chapter already showed how Ludwig, Michele and Isaac translate permaculture in personal and different ways. This paragraph mostly focuses on the mediators of permaculture in the international educational context.

Permaculture is taught nationally and internationally through books, documentaries, blogs, videos, forums and online and on-site courses (with or without certificate). This multi-media educational approach makes permaculture widely available. The first and foremost mediators of permaculture are founders Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. Mollison dedicated most of his life to permaculture practise and teaching yet passed away in 2016. Holmgren is still active in the permaculture network through writing and teaching. The Permaculture Design Course (PDC) is the most commonly used method of teaching permaculture all over the world. This course is widely available and offered by many different teachers. Mollison founded the Permaculture Research Institute in 1979 in Australia to teach Permaculture Design practically.[39] In 1997 he also co-founded The Permaculture Institute in Santa Fe, a non-profit organisation that organises courses for both learners and teachers, to take some pressure of the Australian Institute that did no longer have the means to support all parties interested. [40] This development stresses the international expansion of permaculture design at the end of the 20th century. On the website of the latter institute is highlighted that "All PDC courses offered throughout the world must follow the same curriculum to assure the integrity of the certification process."[41] Appendix IV shows the criteria for a certificate course that have to be followed according to the Permaculture Institute to be able to hand out a valid certificate. These criteria include a minimum of 72 hours interaction with the permaculture teacher and a talent show at the end of the course. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that not all permaculturists follow the exact PDC curriculum as established in 1984. A prime example of an alternative teaching is that of the

[39] "What Is the Permaculture Research Institute," Permaculture Research Institute, accessed July 30, 2018, https://permaculturenews.org/what-is-the-permaculture-research-institute/.
[40] "About," Permaculture Institute, accessed August 2, 2018, https://permaculture.org/about/.
[41] "What Is a PDC?" Permaculture Institute, accessed August 2, 2018, https://permaculture.org/what-is-a-permaculture-design-course/.

co-founder of permaculture design: David Holmgren. In 1981 Holmgren started teaching the PDC. He mentions in his latest edition of *Permaculture: Principles and Pathways beyond Sustainability* (2015) that:

> Bill Mollison and others have asserted that a failure to adhere to the curriculum, the inclusion of religious beliefs outside the scope of 'design science', and a lack of attention to principles and theory is diluting and devaluing some permaculture education. Although I might agree with some of these claims about some courses, I have always found the perception of dilution has to be balanced by the value of diversity even when, like weeds, it comes in forms we don't particularly like. (2015)

Holmgren mentions that he used the curriculum as a basis for his teachings yet altered the way he taught to his personal preferences (2015). In line with Principle 10 'Use and Value Diversity', Holmgren stresses the necessity of accepting the existence of a variety of permaculture interpretations. According to this principle, valuing diversity increases resilience both in environmental and social context. Similarly, permaculture becomes a stronger design system through global diversification. In other words, the travelling of permaculture to different parts of the world leads to a variety of translations and to different foci, expanding permaculture design in the process.

Other mediators of permaculture include permaculture teachers all over the globe. Ludwig received his PDC from Patrick Whitefield, who was a famous teacher in the permaculture world. Whitefield wrote *The Earth Care Manual: A Permaculture Handbook for Britain and other Temperate Climates* (2004), a permaculture handbook that focuses specifically on cooler climates, and *Permaculture in a Nutshell* (2000). The former book already shows how permaculture is context-dependent. This latter book Ludwig often hands out as a prize when doing challenges within the community or when handing out a permaculture certificate. Ludwig gave Isaac his PDC and certificate. And in a few years of practice, Isaac will (officially) be allowed to hand out permaculture certificates himself. Ludwig explains that permaculturists need to have two years of experience in permaculture before they are allowed, according to Mollison, to give a permaculture design course by themselves. Before that moment they are only allowed to teach courses together with an official teacher. Ludwig adds that a permaculture certificate is officially recognised in the permaculture world, yet not by the government.[42]

Permaculture courses are taught across the globe in different settings through different media. Most certified permaculturists I have met followed their PDC in small groups at or near a natural site, such as a farm or forest, or in a community or village. The Permaculture Institute offers several immersion courses in both the USA and Costa Rica.[43] In addition to on-site PDC's online PDC's are also available, for those who do not have the time or money to complete on-site PDC's or for those who prefer to learn at their own pace. Websites offer online courses (with certificate) often stating

[42] Ludwig, interview 1.
[43] "Courses," Permaculture Institute, accessed August 2, 2018, https://permaculture.org/courses/.

direct relations to Mollison's teachings[44], which highlights Mollison's strong influence as a mediator of permaculture design. Aside from courses that offer certificates, other courses in permaculture include introductions to permaculture and courses that dive into specific aspects such as how to build sustainably and how to practise permaculture as a vegan.[45]

Permaculture is widely spread and translated and educated differently. Some permaculturists strictly follow Mollison's words and ideas, whereas others prefer exploring the design's flexibility and adaptability. None of permaculture's mediators, however, individually regulate the model's movements, as: "agency lies not in the hands of one organisation and certainly not in the hands of only one single actor, but is distributed between many different actors …none of these actors – including so-called centres of calculation – ever holds the full image of the process, or the full responsibility or control over what happens at each single step" (Behrends et al. 2014, 15). Mediators of permaculture include Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, but also permaculture teachers such as Patrick Whitefield and Ludwig Appeltans and permaculture learners and practitioners who spread their knowledge such as Isaac. John Young is another well-known mediator of permaculture. The next paragraph will give a short overview of Young's ideas, his translation of permaculture and how Rubha Phoil is related to his institute.

4.3 Jon Young and the 8-Shields Institute: a permaculture translation.

The ideas of Jon Young and his colleagues from the 8-Shields Institute are elaborate to the extent that not everything can be covered in this paragraph or chapter. In order to understand the vastness of Jon Young and his followers' network and its relation to Rubha Phoil, his most essential ideas will be explained below. All information has been taken from the Village Builders course provided by the 8-Shields and narrated by Young. [46]

Young's wish is to reconnect people to nature, as he believes this will bring the individual happiness and health plus it will ensure equal chances of health and happiness for future generations. Young often refers to Richard Louv's saying "in an age of rapid environmental, economic, and social transformation, the future will belong to the nature-smart- those individuals, families, businesses, and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of nature, and who balance the virtual with the real" (2012, 5). In other words, to sustain future generations, knowledge on nature and feeling of connection to nature is key. Young proposes eight attributes that everyone can develop in order to be fully connected, which vary from Inner Happiness to Empathy & Respect for Nature. In his Origin's Story Young explains how nowadays we are afraid that things will not go well in the future as natural resources are diminishing and we are constantly warned on the news about increasing environmental and social problems (e.g. climate change and the gap between rich and poor). [47] Young argues that

[44] "Courses," Permaculture Education Center, accessed August 2, 2019, https://permaculturеeducation.com/courses2/.
[45] "Course Listings," Permaculture Association, accessed August 2, 2018, https://www.permaculture.org.uk/education/course-listings.
[46] "Village Builders," 8-Shields Institute, narrated by John Young, MP3.
[47] "Origin's Story," 8-Shields Institute, narrated by John Young, MP3.

once people reconnect to nature, they will return to their biological state and all elements related to people and earth care will naturally fall into place. He frequently mentions this biological state and explains how in contemporary Western society we go against our nature by separating ourselves from nature and from each other. Young states that we have become content with this, unaware that we can become happier and healthier if we reconnect.

The 8-Shields Institute organises courses globally, sometimes in collaboration with communities or nature-connection teachers. Attending immersive courses can cost up to a thousand dollars and occur on different sites across the globe. Ludwig has attended a few of these and is in contact with members of the institute. Together Ludwig and I followed the online course 'Village Builders' by the 8-Shields to create a cultural design for Rubha Phoil. This course consists of 8 volumes (with each 4 modules) narrated by Young. Young explains his ideas by giving many examples from communities he has visited, from his youth, and from others who have taught him. Over the span of a couple of weeks Ludwig and I listened to one or two modules a day. Afterwards, I made course notes that I uploaded to Google Docs, where Ludwig checked them later. Discussing course material often happened throughout the day rather than directly after listening to the audio files as the material was usually relatively heavy and we needed some time to let it all sink in. Ludwig mostly agreed with what Young was sharing. Hence, I created a summary at the end of the course that he intends to use to introduce potential residents to what sort of community he is planning to create at Rubha Phoil.

The 8-Shields Institute is in contact with many communities and individuals globally through these courses and through emails, conference calls, or personal visits. In the Village Builders course Young translates permaculture as an ideal regenerative system to support nature connection in communities. Through Young's teachings and that of his followers' permaculture is promoted and travels on, in this context as an element of a different framework- that of the 8-Shields and that of nature reconnection. The next and the last paragraph will further explain and reflect on the qualities that have allowed permaculture design to travel far and wide.

4.4 Conclusion: a transnational community in an international permaculture web.

Permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil through its place in the international permaculture network. Mediators such as Dougie and Roisin, but also Ludwig, Isaac and Michele and other volunteers travel between Rubha Phoil and other places with their translations of permaculture. The meaning of the sustainable design system changes on its travels by being translated in many different ways. These translations also take shape in form of education such as permaculture design courses, both online as on-site. Young's translation is a great example of how permaculture has become integrated in a larger framework of reconnection. Permaculture travels to and between different places in a multi-directional manner: for example from Ludwig to the volunteers, the volunteers to friends and family, from Young to Ludwig, Dougie and Roisin and back, and from Dougie and Roisin to their students etcetera. As a

travelling model, permaculture at Rubha Phoil takes shape through international relations and breaking the local-global binary. As anthropologist Merry suggests regarding translation: "[t]his work [translation] is done by actors who move between the discourses of the localities they work with, taking ideas from one place and redefining them or adapting them to another. Multiple translators connect transnationally circulating discourses and particular social contexts" (2006, 39). Many who share disconnected feelings experience a sense of reconnection at Rubha Phoil through permaculture practice. This feeling of disconnection is shared outside of Rubha Phoil by Ludwig's friends and the 8-Shields Institute who use permaculture to reconnect and live sustainably, but also abide by it as a network for international support. Behrends et al. state: "local specifics and global trends become visible exactly at the point where human actors, models, and technologies are enrolled into new networks to engage a particular problem. Thus what is global and what is local turns out to be dynamic – emerging from processes where distant actors are connected by dealing with a particular problem" (2014, 9). The volunteers, Ludwig, Ludwig's friends and Young are bound through permaculture as a solution to reconnection. Additionally, all permaculturists are bound through the problem of sustainability that is tackled through *earth care, people care, and fair share*.

Rubha Phoil is a relatively small transnational node in an international permaculture network that consists of amongst other things bottom-up initiatives such as that of Dougie and Roisin, and Ludwig's Earth Ways and Young's 8-Shields, the volunteers' hard work, books and courses and many other permaculture translations. All mediators have their personal translations, yet encompassing issues such as disconnection or care for sustainability connect them in an international network. Therefore, seen as a travelling model, permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil in the form of a transnational community within an international permaculture network.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

> [T]he permaculture movement acts as a sort of a natural laboratory wherein potentially sustainable solutions are experimented with. Further, we believe that by engaging with this movement, we can create a powerful dialectic between anthropological theory and practice on the one hand and cultural critique in action for sustainability on the other. Engaging in this dialectic, we seek to help construct an anthropology that can productively contribute to an understanding not only of how the world is and how it got that way but also of how the world could be and how we can get there. (Veteto and Lockyer 2008, 53)

This study presented an ethnography of the transnational permaculture community Rubha Phoil on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. The travelling model established as a concept by Behrends et al. (2014) and its accompanying concepts translation, mediators, and interstitial space have been used to study how permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil.

Chapter 1 showed that permaculture takes shape at Rubha Phoil through its foundation on international volunteers, and international financial support. It also forms through a tension in defining Rubha Phoil as a permaculture community. The volunteers and resident have different translations of what a permaculture community should look like and different ideas of how Rubha Phoil fits in this description. Their ideas are shaped by their personal translations of permaculture as a sustainable design. These translations are influenced by their travels and their personal backgrounds. Rubha Phoil's foundation on international volunteers and international support and the tension between opinions of its definition as a permaculture community allow for its conceptualisation as a transnational permaculture community. Permaculture thus takes shape at Rubha Phoil in the form of a transnational permaculture community.

In Chapter 2 the volunteers of Rubha Phoil are introduced as mediators of permaculture. They express a feeling of social and natural disconnection, to which permaculture is translated as a possible solution. Rubha Phoil can be understood as interstitial space where permaculture is translated as a sustainable design that helps to reconnect. This chapter also showed that interstitial space between the mediators gives room for the creation of many different translations influenced by the mediators' personal contexts. These personal translations travel with the volunteers and take shape along their journeys. Rubha Phoil is presented as a pit stop, where the volunteers stay for a while and learn after which they travel on and teach and tell others about permaculture, stimulating permaculture as a model for sustainable living. Permaculture thus localises at Rubha Phoil in the form of different translations, such as a solution to social and natural disconnection.

Chapter 3 looked into Rubha Phoil's relations outside of the community and how this transnational community is part of an international permaculture network. This network consists of well-known mediators Mollison and Holmgren and elaborate teaching methods, as well as permaculturist Jon Young who inspires communities and individuals to reconnect. Permaculture then takes shape at Rubha Phoil in the form of wider connections to an international network, without which neither permaculture nor Rubha Phoil can be fully understood.

Within anthropology little literature is available on permaculture design. The literature that does exist are often case studies that focus on communities or farms as separate entities (Brawner 2015; Veteto and Lockyer 2008). They mention permaculture as a global phenomenon, yet often do not research permaculture sites in relation to this international network. Studying permaculture as a travelling model helps to understand how permaculture travels whilst shaping places such as Rubha Phoil. This study aimed to show that permaculture has to be studied in its rightful international context, as this international context shapes the design system through many different translations by many mediators through interstitial space. The case of Rubha Phoil shows that permaculture takes shape within the community through international relations and translations formed inside and outside of the community. It indicates that Rubha Phoil is a relatively small community within an international permaculture network of likeminded people. Transnationality defines Rubha Phoil and the concept of the travelling model explains how permaculture takes shape at the community.

This study also found that the volunteers and resident of Rubha Phoil, as well as friends of the owner argue that the Western society they grew up in makes them feel disconnected. Permaculture helps them feel reconnected to their social and natural environments, which makes the travelling model an interesting topic for those in society who experience these disconnected feelings. Permaculture can be translated by many to contribute to, as the volunteers showed, for example a need to reconnect to nature in a spiritual or more practical manner. Seen as a travelling model, permaculture is widely available and applicable and multi-translatable and could be an attractive sustainable option for those interested in for example nature reconnection or sustainable living.

Furthermore, I agree that anthropologists are well suited to study what future sustainable lifestyles could and should look like. In line with Veteto and Lockyer's quote at the beginning of this chapter, this study aimed to contribute to creating an anthropology that "can productively contribute to an understanding not only of how the world is and how it got that way but also of how the world could be and how we can get there" (2008, 53). By analysing permaculture as a travelling model, this study intended to introduce permaculture as an interesting topic regarding this debate: a sustainable design system that localises whilst crossing borders in many different translations.

Nonetheless, this study is limited to the ethnography of a single permaculture site and to permaculture practise in a Western context. It would be interesting to research if permaculture in a non-Western context has similar translations as that of a solution to a disconnected feeling. It would also be relevant to study other sustainable ideas as travelling models, to better understand how sustainable ideas spread.

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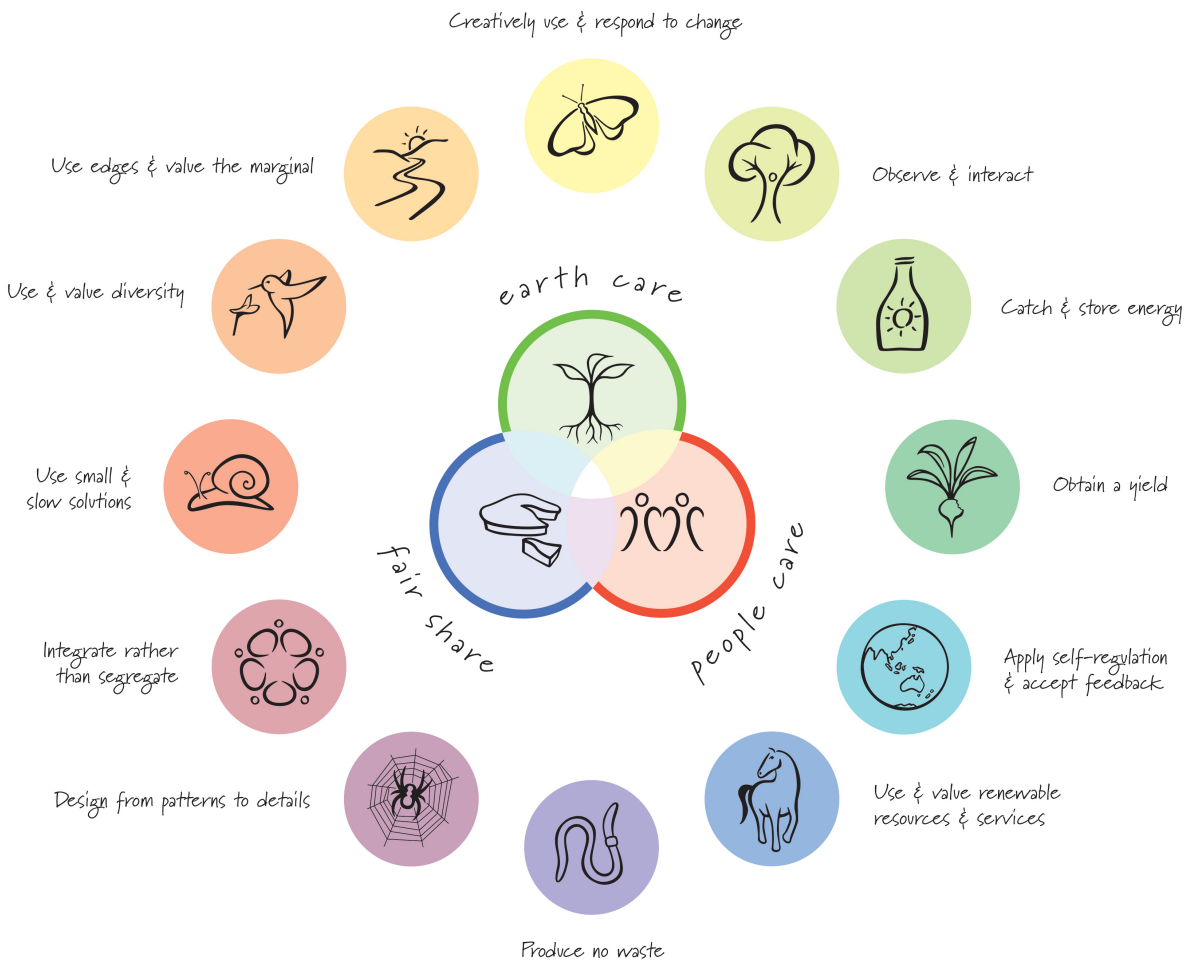
7. Appendices

Appendix I: Interview overview (all took place at Rubha Phoil)

Interview	Date
Isaac 1	17/02/18
Isaac 2	24/02/18
Celia 1	04/03/18
Michele 1	04/03/18
Ludwig 1	08/03/18
Paul	22/03/18
Celia 2	28/03/18
Dougie & Roisín	07/04/18
Jay	16/04/18
Danny	16/04/18
Lea	17/04/18
Michele 2	18/04/18
Ludwig 2	19/04/18
Lisa	20/04/18

Appendix II: Permaculture principles and ethics[48]



[48] "Essence of Permaculture," Holmgren, D., accessed July 2, 2018, https://permacultureprinciples.com/resources/free-downloads/.

Appendix III: Certification according to the Permaculture Institute (USA)[49]

Certification

Upon successful completion of the Permaculture Design Course one receives the Permaculture Design Course Certificate from their lead instructors (**who should have a diploma to issue certificates**). The certificate attests that the recipient has acquired foundational knowledge of Permaculture, and allows the recipient to use the term in their personal practice.

All PDC courses offered throughout the world must follow the same curriculum to assure the integrity of the certification process. At minimum, any certificate course should meet the following criteria:

- The lead instructor is an established permaculture teacher with a Diploma of Permaculture Design in the field of Education or equal credentials. Lead instructor is present throughout the entire course and course certificate bears their signature
- The course provides a minimum of 72 hours of direct contact with instructors in addition to group design time/self-study time/hands-on projects/visits to demonstration sites/and other learning activities. Courses shorter than 12 contact-days are generally not offering sufficient time for learning and should be evaluated by potential students for their validity
- The course material is inclusive of but not limited to all subjects listed in the PDC Curriculum Outline
- The course includes at least one design project or multiple design vignettes
- The course includes Talent Show at the end

[49] Permaculture Institute, "What Is a PDC?"