BLUE HORIZONS

Anthropological Reflections on Maritime Lifestyle Migrations in the Mediterranean

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Anthropological research and the anthropologist's personal life are interrelated in numerous ways and this research is no exception. In the course of my research on maritime lifestyle migrants in the Mediterranean I lived with my interlocutors (they were my neighbors at the anchorages), I sailed with them (they were blips on my radar), I followed their life stories (I dreamt about them), I perceived spaces and places through them (they were my compasses), I chatted with them over the Internet (they were and they still are my virtual friends) and I am following their journeys from my office now. Without their perpetual support it would have been impossible to accomplish this work. Thank you!

I would also like to thank my brother Igor Rogelja for helping me with the portraits presented in this book, my colleagues Martina Bofulin, Jernej Mlekuž and Jasna Zrinščak Šebelič, who gave me critical advice regarding the manuscript, and to Ana Jelnikar, proofreader of introduction and conclusion, a good friend of mine who has been (again!) so much more than a proofreader. I would also like to acknowledge the help of Nataša Gregorič Bon and other researchers with whom I had inspiring discussions that took place within the project "Ethnographies of Land and Water Routes: A Comparative Approach to (Im)mobility" (J6–6839), led by Nataša Gregorič Bon (ZRC SAZU). You gave me confidence and made me see my ethnographic material in a new light. My thanks go also to the ZRC editors, Aleš Pogačar and Aleksej Kalc, and to ZRC photographer Marko Zaplatil, who provided technical support to help make production of this book a smooth process. Thank you.

Lastly, to my family, Boštjan, Živa, Dan and Žan, who sailed away with me.

INTRODUCTIONS

Homemade sailing boat Maya, owned by two British liveaboards (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2010, Bay of Corinth, Greece).

SEARCHING THE HORIZONS

Ethnography is the art of gathering knowledge by waiting, hanging around, observing, talking, eating, drinking, laughing and crying with the people. All this takes place in certain locations that need to be reflected upon not just in historical and geographic terms, but also in the light of numerous relations spreading out from those locations. Researching migration from the anthropological point of view involves similar ethnographic practices but somehow anticipates a slightly altered focus that needs to reflect upon relations between the migrants, locations and temporalities, taking into account the material, structural and historical circumstances of the various places and periods as well as the migrants' subjectivities and their paths. Encompassing migrants' life paths as well as their footprints brings our focus to the interrelated world of temporalities and localities important for understanding migration as a social phenomenon as well as an intimate personal practice. But before we go on a journey through the flurry ethnographic seascape that might bring us to such a conclusion, let me first explain how I got to become involved in researching maritime lifestyle migration in the Mediterranean.

When I finished my PhD studies in social anthropology, I decided to take a break. A break was a family decision brought on by various circumstances. My unemployment at that time was one such circumstance, Slovenia becoming an EU member in 2004, a year before I concluded my PhD, was another. We sold our apartment, boarded a sailing boat for a few years and decided to go around the Mediterranean. In the second months of our journey we arrived at the coastal region around Igoumenitsa, mostly anchoring in smaller city ports and nearby bays, were I first met liveaboards[1], people who lived, travelled and worked on

1 In the book I will sometimes refer to my interlocutors with the word liveaboards and will use it as a descriptor. The word liveaboards is used mainly in the Anglo-Saxon context referring

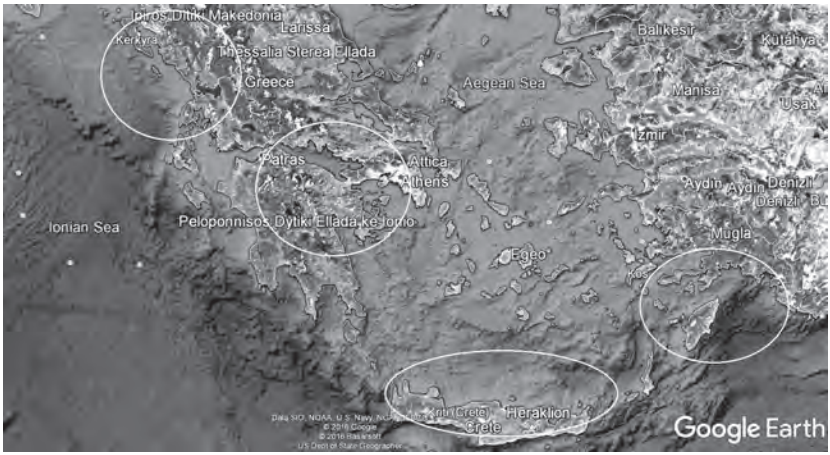
sailing boats. In that area they were mostly German-speaking people; couples, families or single men. Many of them lived on sailing boats for several years or decades, circulating between Germany, Austria and Mediterranean ports and many had close contact with Germans living on the land around Igoumentisa. Some reminded me of hippies or long-term travellers. I was surprised to meet also several families with children and felt enthusiastic to be part of that lifestyle. I said to my partner: "So this is what the sailing community looks like!".

Although the work presented in the book is not pure auto-ethnography – a research that seeks to systematically analyse auto-ethnographic data in order to provide answers to research questions – there is a great deal of auto-ethnographic data included in the book that needs to be mentioned. My involvement in this research was two-faceted. In the two years before the research commenced, I was involved in this lifestyle as an insider. As an underemployed anthropologist, I was in a precarious work position as freelance journalist living and traveling on a boat, while also fulfilling my dream of spending time with my children while traveling. For the following two years however, I was working on an anthropological project registered at the European Scientific Foundation and later at the Slovenian Research Agency[2] studying people mainly from Europe, USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, who live and travel on sailing boats in Greece and Turkey. Over these two years (2011–2013), the fieldwork (six months each year) was conducted in several locations: 1. Ionian Greece (areas around Igoumenitsa, Lefkas, and the town of Preveza); 2. the Corinthian Gulf (the island of Trizonia) and Peloponnesus (E coast); 3. Crete (Agios Nikolaos); 4. the Marmaris region in southern Turkey and the island of Rhodes, following the main winter-gathering points of my interlocutors. The knowledge about winter-gathering points and about the rhythm of living on the sailing boat in the Mediterranean (winter rest periods and spring-summer-autumn sailing periods) was however part of my personal experience.

My work and life among people who worked, lived and travelled on sailing boats in the Mediterranean also revealed that it was easy to find people who wanted to talk about their experience and who found it easy to understand the research project "Why did you sail away?" Discussing this under the bright Greek sun, answers to such question became almost self-evident. Sailing is a dream (for

to the people that live and travel on sailing or river boats. As the most popular sailing blogs and forums are in English, the word liveaboards also came to be current amongst the more general public as was evident in my ethnographic research. Even though the term is used here as a general descriptor for all my interlocutors (and not as an emic term), the differences in terminology between various cultural contexts should not be overlooked.

2 European Neo-nomadism, N6-0013 (A)



Map of the fieldwork areas (Google maps).

everybody), Greece is cheap and has slow-paced life and the sea offers freedom. All three obvious answers have their own life and are related to several contexts spanning historical, structural, material and personal factors. This book is about explaining the relationship between these larger contexts and the three given answers, as given by my interlocutors. The touchstone of all the three answers might be summed up under a heading a *quality of life,* and will be explained in the book by observing my interlocutors' lifestyle choices, their expectations, aspirations and experiences, to borrow from the title of the book by Benson and O'Reilly (2009). Following the theoretical debate on lifestyle migration I chose to call my interlocutors maritime lifestyle migrants, emphasizing choice but also specific place – the blue horizons – that in my opinion importantly marked expectations as well as experiences of my interlocutors. However, during the research, it became clear that the blue horizons (in its imaginary form) were only part of the answer. They were the initial imaginary platform, covering personal experiences and structural conditions that were not so different in comparison to numerous other contemporary flows of people. With this discovery in hand I reopened my initial theoretical starting points on lifestyle migration. Fragments of these long silent discussions can be found in the second chapter of the book.

Besides the biographies and structural conditions, there was something else lying beneath the blue imaginary paper – it was a maritime environment in all its material aspects – its uncomfortable humidity, harsh winds, big sky, dark clouds, bright light and the wide open sea. My interlocutors experienced

all these aspects looking out from hatchways struggling not to lose their balance, oscillating between expectations and experiences. The weather, the boat and the water played an equally important role in their total experience as did the personal motives, societal conditions and their initial ideas of the blue horizons. The ambivalence between the actual experiences and the initial imagination became one of the core interests in the book. It became clear that migration is much more then relocation and much more then representation. This "more-than-representational" perspective, following Halfacree (2014: 98), does not deny the importance of representations, as we will see in the second chapter of this book "… it calls on researchers to de-centre the social construction and cognitive realms of representations when explicating everyday life". Balancing the focus on practice and action with the focus on thoughts and contemplation became one of the tasks of my research project. The other ambivalence was linked with the tension between economic imperatives, moral obligations and personal expectations, as stressed by Hoey in his research on lifestyle migration in the American middle class (2014). This ambivalence supported my second presumption about migration being much more then relocation. I could observe how the act of relocation was never completed, never finite. It became, similarly as in Hoey's work, a means of (temporarily) realizing a degree of personal control in a quest for more fully integrated spheres of community, work, family and individual life (2014: 3). In this endeavours, the relocation and initial imaginaries were tools that enabled individual's tactics. The reasons for and outcomes of such a tactic went far beyond the blue horizons, as the book will hopefully show.

LIVEABOARDS IN GREECE AND TURKEY

After I had spent a few months living on the boat it became clear that the majority of the liveaboards in the Mediterranean hold European passports, that they have mostly lived in urban settlements before the migration, and represent a cross-section of different social strata and age groups, that they also have very different sailing experiences (from none to sailing instructors and contestants) and that their break-off with their previous routines occurred in a variety of ways. Among them I could find couples, who were the majority, as well as families and single men.[3] The liveaboards interacted frequently in official and

3 Even though mobility and especially maritime mobility is historically grounded in masculine subjectivities, the ethnography presented here does not discuss gender issues *per se.* The freedom of movement and the gender production of space within maritime lifestyle migration is a topic in its own right that would need to be discusses in a separate article. Here presented

unofficial marinas and city peers, sharing information on proper anchorages, and vital resources such as water, electricity, prices, weather, political situation in the Mediterranean and boat regulations. It looked like they really were a community, even if a temporary one. Information on crucial practical aspects of this life was furthermore spread through the internet on blogs, forums and e-mails. Above all, German, French and English liveaboards maintain contacts with their fellow citizens on land. This network is important for assistance and information concerning social and political conditions, market prices and health care services in the places they traverse.

The liveaboards' travel routes were often outcomes of spontaneous decision making. Destinations kept changing along the travel trajectory largely depending on the social, political, economic and climatic conditions in the localities traversed. Regarding the Mediterranean, many claimed that Greece was one of the few countries where conditions were suitable and life was affordable for them. However, their mobility was often seasonally patterned. They usually followed work and weather conditions in the Mediterranean (six months on the move and three to six months wintering in one place). Those who did not have regular income (such as pension, state support or salaries) earned their money "on the way" and most commonly engaged in seasonal or periodic work in the spring-summer-autumn months (mostly in tourism and shipyards). For those who worked in tourism, winters were largely devoted to leisure and boat repairing.

A unifying feature of all liveaboards was that they have taken a conscious decision to take up a mobile life. Ethnographic details show that the balance between the choice and necessity has to be taken into consideration when talking about the reasons for adopting this kind of life. Redundancy, health problems, blocked career choices and individual crises were not rare among the liveaboards. Personal reasons for choosing this way of life were various, such as: being without time for the family, for themselves and for community, they had a wish to adopt a healthier life, to avoid the rat race, to live active and fulfilled retirement. Some felt violated, having a lack of control over their lives, others highlighted their love of nature, the sea, traveling and of freedom and almost all said that living on the boat is the most economical way to travel (and live).[4]

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text is the first general presentation of the liveaboard phenomenon, since the phenomenon is under-researched within social and humanistic sciences with the exception of a few articles, such as: Lusby, Anderson (2008); Macbeth (1992); Rogelja (2015a,b).

4 Monthly budget for a couple in Mediterranean is approximately 800–1000 Euros including boat expenses.

Approaching pier in Vonitsa (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2008, Vonitsa, Greece).

A question "What do you do for living?" was frequently asked at the city ports and anchorages, as the topic of "alternative economic management" was an important practical question, mostly for "newcomers". Soon I realized that some liveaboards have regular incomes (mostly retired people) or savings while others have to resort to various flexible economic strategies; temporary work in marinas and construction sites, involvement in sailing and diving schools during summer or offering various services to charter companies (cleaning of charter boats, sail repairing …), long distance work through the Internet (computer programming, translation, writing …) or traveling back and forth to their home country or to tourist centers (ski resorts) for some occasional work. The problematic aspect of this kind of economic life is many times expressed through the reflection of inflexibility of sedentary oriented national state. As other ethnographies on neo-nomads and irregular migrants also showed, the entitlement to many social statuses, state supports, rights and benefits, and obtaining personal documents, certificates and licenses all require a permanent address. The same holds true with participation in the official economic life through the banking system (Juntunen, Kalčić, Rogelja 2013). For this reason,

many of the liveaboards keep fake permanent addresses in order to avoid problems. Soon I realized that I was dealing with a statistically invisible group of dispersed individuals whose common denominators were the sea, the sailing boats, the quest for a better life and my research. This, I felt, was quite a slippery ground to start with.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN MIGRATION STUDIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY: E-MAILS, BLOGS, INTERVIEWS AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

I discovered that having a headache over methodological issues on migration in 21st century was not only my personal problem but shared widely. Migration processes today are characterized by heterogeneity and hybridity (e.g. the porous border between categories of temporary and permanent migration). This, in turn, produces a fragmentation in the migration studies' field and a multitude of competing classifications and theoretical concepts. Still, the methodological issues underlying these developments remain comparatively under-researched (Bofulin, Rogelja forthcoming). As stressed by numerous authors, transformations in time and space are central to theoretical understandings of modernity (Harvey 1999; Giddens 1991; Beck 1992; Urry 2000). These transformations are also crucial for understanding the contemporary migration processes as well as for the methodological approaches used (Robertson 2014). Investigating "perpetual mobility" of individuals – who hold permanent addresses in places they don't live at, who might change locations on a monthly basis, who use Skype in place of family meetings, whose social relationships are often fluid and instant and whose movement occurs along loosely defined spatial and temporal trajectories – calls in my view for the reflection on traditional methodological approaches and categorical apparatus. In short, conducting fieldwork on migration in 21st century represents a challenge, technological and methodological alternatives notwithstanding (e.g. virtual ethnography Hine 2000; ethnography of the Internet Miller, Slater 2000). I believe that virtual material such as blogs, Skype and e-mails are precious research materials, but I also believe that they have to be contextualized with basic epistemological questions and supplemented with other methods and sources. Following my ethnographic example, I would argue that modern communication technology cannot offer us a short-cut in the situation of increasing heterogeneity and hybridity of migration flows. Doing research on liveaboards – an invisible, highly mobile and controversial group (oscillating between marginality and luxury) – I came to the conclusion that

my methodological approaches have to be adaptable, flexible and tailored to this specific case study (and not *vice versa)* in order to bring meaningful results. Tracking yearly and daily paths as well as life journeys of my interlocutors and relating these paths to issues of *multi-sitedness, temporality* and *hyper mobility,* as displayed through this exercise, found a special place in my reflection over the methodological approaches. Let me share my thoughts on each of these issues in turn.

When I strove to explain my research subjects to my colleagues or friends back home I often used the word *hyper mobile.* People I wrote about lived on boats, which is to say that they were able to leave ports, towns, states and continents (almost) whenever they felt like it, they often described themselves as birds of passage, and from a certain angle they resembled to me contemporary peripatetic nomads (Rogelja 2013). I reached for the literature on mobility (Urry 2006), lifestyle migration (Benson, Osbaldiston 2014; Benson, O'Reilly 2009) neo-nomadism (D'Andrea 2006) and I have also looked into the traditional anthropological sources on peripatetic nomads (Berland, Salo 1986). Even though I found some answers in the literature on nomads and nomadism I was not completely satisfied with my research directions that were dangerously heading towards "nomadic metaphysics" (Cresswell 2006) in contrast to "sedentary metaphysics" (Malkki 1992), glorifying flows over fixity. Reflecting back on my ethnographic material neither of these two extremes seemed to me to represent a "normal" state of things. Many times I was deeply grateful to my ethnographic material, my untidy yellow-blue fieldwork diary and chaotically scribbled transcriptions of interviews, which all gave me confidence to continue on my research journey. I started to chart movements of my interlocutors on the map together with important (or unimportant) events that caused those movements. I soon got a map full of lines between different places in the Mediterranean, NE Atlantic islands, W African coast and Germany (or England, France and other so-called W European countries) and dots of different sizes symbolizing the length of the stay in one place but also borders – temporal or spatial – showing the important obstacles, opportunities or personal events that importantly influenced steps of my interlocutors. Looking through the "time charts" I found loosely defined trajectories of my interlocutors that were not moving all the time. It became clear that hyper mobile does not mean that my interlocutors are constantly on the move, but, observing their practices, it neither meant that I could ignore their enhanced mobility. My cases were closer to what Eve Bantman-Masum described as lifestyle transmigration, referring to individual trajectories driven by the desire to live in many countries (2015). Similarly, as described by Juntunen, Kalčič and Rogelja (2013), I realised that I wanted to stress their enhanced mobility,

whereby the states of being relatively mobile or static would be perceived as particular strategies, known also among traditional nomads, to be utilized as opportunities dependant on specific conditions (cf. Berland, Salo 1986: 4–5). In contrast to traditional peripatetic nomads described by Bernard and Salo, my interlocutors' social relationships were often fluid and instant and I could relate their endeavours more with individualisation theories. Within these parameters I began to ask myself, how is this movement different from other professional peripatetic or other contemporary migration trends? The fluid and instant nature of my interlocutors' social relationships resembled professional peripatetics, as described by Vered Amit and Nigel Rapport (2002: 4), who experience cross border movement without simultaneously participating in transnational collectives or attributing a new social identity to the experience of mobility. Observing certain characteristics ascribed to marginal mobility and marginal mobile subjects (Juntunen, Kalčić, Rogelja 2013) such as being highly mobile, their mobility being not entirely forced nor voluntary and occurring along loosely defined trajectories, the lack of politicized public spheres, sentiments of marginality, liminality and constant negotiation against the sedentary norm of the nation state – I came to the conclusion that my interlocutors also resemble other hyper mobile subjects, such as irregular Moroccan migrants described by Juntunen (2013) or European neo-nomads in Africa (Kalčić 2013). These almost disturbing but fruitful exercise (comparing these different categories) that I undertook with my two colleagues Marko Juntunen and Špela Kalčić, highlighted, as Cresswell and Merriman wrote in introduction to the edited book *Geographies of Mobilities,* the variety of mobile experiences and pointed to "some of the connections and logic that link the seemingly disparate words of …" (2011: 12), in our case – maritime lifestyle migrants, European neo-nomads in Africa and irregular Moroccan migrants.

As discussed by Robertson (2014), who refers to various scholars (Allon, Anderson, Bushell 2008; Collins 2012; Griffiths, Rogers, Anderson 2013; Lewis, Neal, 2005), contemporary international migration is now acknowledged to have significantly varied rhythms, and is often distinctly non-linear and open-ended, involving diversion, repetition and simultaneity (Robertson 2014: 2). This is exactly what I learned from my charts. The paths of my interlocutors were non-linear and open-ended, their mobility contextualised with various reasons, possibilities and obstacles. They were hyper mobile because the infrastructure was available and because their passports were issued in the privileged part of the world. They said they chose to be hyper mobile because they wanted to escape the anxious position of Western European middle class before being swallowed by pressing moral concerns or physical illnesses of all kinds. They

A hundred-year-old wooden brig, once a fishing boat in the North Sea, transformed into a family home (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2008, Plataria, Ionian Greece).

were also hyper mobile because they used boats and the sea as their imaginary and material tools to realise their endeavours. But they were not so unique as it appeared to me at first sight (they were, as it were, citizens of late modernity, contemporary sea vagrants (to use Cresswell's expression 2011)) and they were not moving all the time, as one of my interlocutors once explained to me: "You know, most of the time you don't move. Sailing is just a tiny part of this life" (personal conversation, December 2009, Lefkas island, Greece). Regarding methodological concerns, I came to the conclusion that participant observation was still very much needed if I wanted to understand my interlocutors' endeavours and grasp the heterogeneity as well as the hybridity of their paths and anchorages. I came to realize that they have a lot in common with other contemporary migrants but that their hybridity was nevertheless somewhat specific, deserving a specific combination of methodological approaches. My interlocutors embarked on a kind of *temporarily non-belonging experiment* in the context of larger transformations in time and space and this in turn also

influenced my methodological approaches. Within these novel and yet familiar, humanlike circumstances and practices of mobility in the 21st century, it seemed crucial to me that methodology too was be heterogeneous and hybrid. By doing improvised participant observation while researching this peculiar kind of contemporary migration I found anchor in floating individuals much more than in places they traverse. I lived with these individuals (they were my neighbors at the anchorages), I sailed with them (they were blips on my radar), I followed their life stories (I dreamt about them), I perceived spaces and places through them (they were my compasses), I chatted with them over the Internet (they were and they still are my virtual friends) and it would have been even better if I could have experienced also their lives in their home countries, where they kept fake permanent addresses and had someone who would pick up their mail for them, but the latter never came to be. Instead I carefully reconstructed their life stories, using a biographical approach supported by a solid participant observation that took me to various temporalities and sites.

Multi-sitedness of my participant observation was tuned in with my interlocutors' movements and stagnations, with their everyday practices (from walks through the Greek bushes, to being tossed on the waves by the storm, but also participating in their virtual pathways) as permitted by my financial situation and practicalities of the research process. I met the same family on the Corfu island in the Ionian one winter, I traveled with them to the Aegean Sea, spent a few months there with them, and I met them again in a year or so in Lefkas island in Ionian. In the mean time I chatted with them on Skype and I still do. I did not meet their families and friends back home (even though for many the notion of "home" or "back home" becomes slippery over the years – e.g. family members move or die, ties with friends loosen) and this still remains a missing puzzle. In all these situations the participant observation took a major role as it became a solid foundation also for all the missing parts as well as for the future on-line observations. Slowly I perceived places through people. All the spots I had visited over these few years – wild anchorages, marinas, ports, their blogs as well as boats and the liquid testing ground, namely the sea – somehow merged with my interlocutors as well as with their mobile and stationary practices.

Some of my interlocutors are quite active in writing blogs, and I found such information, following their journeys from my office now, particularly interesting for understanding their recent practices. The contents of their blog posts are interesting *per se,* but what is even more interesting is the methodological issues stemming from that exercise. I noticed that without the previous experiences in fieldwork and participant observation practice, I would not be able to distinguish between information used for public and other information given in their blogs.

In short, without participant observation my analysis of their blogs would have reached different conclusions. Let me give you an example. When I conducted the first interviews with people who lived, traveled and worked on sailing boats, I have to say I was rather disappointed. With the first interviews, as is usually the case, you get specific information that in many cases reproduces the main discourse – in other words you are presented with what is expected to be heard and what is expected to be said. Similar performance can be found on blogs – you are served with the expected things, peppered with often invisible details. These invisible, in-between-lines of information became visible for me only after I had gone through the long term participant observation. The expected things such as positive self-representations etc. become understandable only if enriched with the in-depth knowledge that comes only after the interviews. That knowledge is usually gained after the recorder is turned off, after spending long, sometimes boring and tiring hours with people, using the old anthropological techniques of "hanging around". The question is how can we hang out with people in these new conditions? In my experience we have to invent our methodological approach by ourselves. I combined static participant observation in winter periods with mobile participant observation such as "sailing along" in summer-spring-autumn period. After I completed my fieldwork I also followed them through blogs and Skype which gave me the longitudinal perspective on the events after my fieldwork. Reflecting on the "life maps" of my interlocutors I would certainly stress that we have to adapt our fieldwork practices to numerous movements, places but also to the times meaningful for our interlocutors. That brings us to the third part of my methodological meditations – to *temporality.*

Researching maritime lifestyle migrants, I came to the conclusion that I have to be attentive to the time spans between different states of being relatively mobile or static, taking into considerations also the causes of these changing states. Considering longitudinal biographic perspective was also of crucial importance – not so much because I wanted to structuralize different migration periods but as an exercise in gaining knowledge over the total process. Through the time – space orchestration scores[5], elaborated from the maps of my interlocutors I acquired a deeper understanding of how the whole "lifestyle migration package" evolved. Following Doherty, Patton and Shield who wrote about family mobility in Australia, I similarly explored mobility decisions not in separate, analytically portioned domains of work, family, travel, education (in the case of families with children), but rather as "the messy lived nexus of competing priorities" (2015: 4). That in my experience could be partly gained through the

5 I borrowed this expression from Doherty, Patton and Shield (2015).

longitudinal biographic approach – a reconstruction of individuals' life stories across a longer span with the constant updating of information linked to several selected case studies. Such approach is, of course, not without its problems; one of them being the reconstruction. Apart from the two-year period that I lived around and systematically followed my interlocutors, the rest of the biographical story is a second-hand reconstruction that inevitably includes deviations. Again the participant observation effort proved to be very helpful in my case as was every next hour spent on the fieldwork, which allowed me to get a more complex picture of the events in the life course of certain individuals or families. What I gained from the longitudinal biographic approach was understanding migration as a life process within which individuals and families (families in the broadest and dynamic sense) negotiate their lifestyle choices across time and space in the context of late modernity. What I gained from the participant observation was an understanding of human beings as emotional-physical-rational totality swinging along structural and subjective waves, being pushed or hindered by temporal events and spatial materiality.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

As a whole the book gives the theoretical background and methodological approaches underlying it, it presents fragments of historical roots and other larger contexts important for understanding maritime lifestyle migration, it exposes ethnographic seascapes – namely the specific research settings and temporalities divided into two sections (winter and spring-summer-autumn stories), and finally offers concluding remarks knitted around the question – how to think this kind of migration? Here is a brief exposition of each of the steps.

Following the introduction, the second chapter Theoretical Journeys describes my own theoretical explorations through various approaches discussing relatively privileged mobility. These include non-economic migration, voluntary migration, amenity migration, counter-urbanisation research, tourism/travel/pilgrimage research, retirement migration, research on professional expats, flows of skilled labourers (tech-oriented, artists …) etc. Within these different approaches I found the lifestyle migration approach to operate as an umbrella term covering a variety of approaches in a loose yet comfortable fit engaging various theoretical fields, mostly individualisation theories. In this chapter I present several issues discussed within the field of lifestyle migration such as the quest for a better life, the rhetoric of self-realization, the geographies of meaning, the cultural mechanisms behind migration, changing attitudes towards family,

community and work, liminality and ambivalence as an analytical framework for explaining lifestyle migration experiences (Benson, O'Reilly 2009).

In the third chapter Lifestyle Migration: Understanding Migration through (Auto)biography I put forward several (family) portraits in order to highlight details from individuals' lives. Using a biographical approach, I discuss the process by which sea imaginaries are the inspiration for lifestyle migrants and how they are translated into practice. Within this chapter I explain how the growing interest in the potential of qualitative longitudinal research within the field of lifestyle migration is mainly connected to the fact that such an approach reveals the processual nature of migration, as it reflects on the merging of structural and individual factors. I claim that a biographical approach reflects on the idea of the processual nature of my interlocutors' experiences while also allowing me to understand specific attempts of my interlocutors to temporarily inhabit the gap between systems, ports and possibilities. Through the longitudinal biographic approach, through the careful examination of six crew portraits, I was able to discuss in the concluding part why this phenomenon cannot be fully described as an escape. From the theoretical perspective the third chapter engages mobility studies and methodological as well as epistemological questions as outlined within this "mobile field".

The next two chapters – Places and Practices of Rest (the fourth chapter) and Places and Practices of Movement (the fifth chapter) invite the reader to plunge into the blue ethnographic depths, presenting to the reader places of rest (winter stories) as well as places of motion (spring-summer-autumn stories) as displayed within my ethnographic fieldwork based mostly on participant observation. Each of these two chapters is divided into subchapters. Within the fourth chapter we visit ports, anchorages and marinas that offer shelter from winter winds but are also stages for colourful and sometimes conflicting social relations. Within this chapter we also give voice to the small talk generated within these settings encompassing rumours as well as 'big subjects', related to my interlocutors' aspirations, experiences and dreams. Within the sixth chapter we set out on a journey and travel with my interlocutors out onto the sea, hoping not to be seasick, as we are squeezed into a tiny sailing boat being swallowed by a big blue ocean as well as the sky. Subchapters dare to embark on a meditative theoretical journey trying to understand the sea and the boat not simply as a polygon or means of transport but also trying to embrace them as agents in the production of mobilities, following Cresswell and Merriman (2011: 7). The sky part offers a place to discuss the importance of the weather in my interlocutors' narratives and brings to the fore the question how much the sky (as well as the sea) is shadowed and constrained by the virtual sky (and the sea) – the red,

yellow and green colours, showing the force of the wind and the heights of the waves and displayed on my interlocutors' laptops. Within this chapter I also discuss sailing as a specific mobile practice (in comparison to driving, flying, walking …) with all its symbolic and practical implications, encompassing also the sailor, a subject of this mobile practice. Although a discussion is developed in relation to various theoretical concepts, in all of these debates my anchor lies deeply in the soft mud of ethnographic fieldwork.

The last chapter entitled Conclusions discusses migration as a process connecting all the previous parts – the practices, places and subjects – in the total whole, staying always in close relation to the specific biographic stories as well as with the methodology used. In this respect the final chapter states that imaginations and experiences are intrinsically interrelated and shows how this specific ethnographic material allows for reflection on the merging between structure and agency as well as the material environment. I elaborate on the never ending, hybrid, heterogeneous and dynamic processes of migration that seek to exceed, as King (2002) wrote, the old dichotomies of migration study such as internal versus international, forced versus voluntary, temporary versus permanent, legal versus illegal. The book concludes with a section Understanding Temporarily Unbelonging in Practice, bringing to the fore the theoretical understandings of a specific case study on maritime lifestyle migrants. I argue how the task of my interlocutors is no longer to change the structure or to escape it but to inhabit it differently. I link this attempt with the idea of unbelonging – a critical refusal of the terms, developed by Rogoff (2000). In doing so I place the individual stories, sea imaginaries, and people's experiences in dialogue, in order to better understand the expectations, aspirations and experiences of my interlocutors and to discuss further the idea of temporarily unbelonging in practice. Cocker, following Rogoff (2000), used the phrase 'temporarily unbelonging' to describe an art experiment of illegal border crossings aiming to actively create a productive gap into which other ways of operating can be called or conjured (2014: 60). In a similar way, I will show in the conclusion of the book that my interlocutors' decision to migrate, to temporarily unbelong, has opened up avenues for theirs (but not just theirs) possible future "journeys".

THEORETICAL JOURNEYS

Books and other carriers of intangible materials have a great influence on the initial imaginaries and ongoing plans of my interlocutors (photo: Nataša Rogelja, May 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia).

PRIVILEGED FORMS OF MIGRATION?

The range of relatively privileged forms of migration, such as maritime lifestyle migration, is broad and has an array of different names and approaches such as non-economic migration, voluntary migration, amenity migration, counter-urbanisation research, tourism/travel/pilgrimage research, international retirement migration, professional expats movement and flows of skilled labourers (e.g. tech-oriented and artists). These different names not only relate to various disciplinary traditions (e.g. amenity migration is usually related to geography) but to different geographic regions or specific topical accents. In the United States for example, following Hoey (2014), who wrote about relocations of the American middle class in Michigan, this kind of relatively privileged migration is called a non-economic or amenity migration while in Europe it is more commonly known as lifestyle migration, also due to the recent influential works of O'Reilly and Benson (2009). The distinction in terms is also disciplinary; lifestyle migration is used mostly among sociologists and anthropologists while the amenity migration is more commonly related to geographers. Besides academic terms, there are also different names present in the popular culture (as I learned from my Australian interlocutors) such as "sea change" or "tree change", this first describing relocation from urban centers to Australian coastal areas and the second referring to recent relocations away from cities to a rural environment in the hinterlands. Another popular name linked mostly with international retirement migration is "sunny migration" or "snow birds' migration", namely the migration of persons (mostly retired) who move from the higher latitudes and colder climates and migrate southward in the winter to warmer regions such as California, Florida or the Mediterranean. Apart from lifestyle migration, amenity migration has also gained considerable attention among scholars in the last ten years, and one of the most prominent figures in this field is Laurence Moss who recently joined various international scholars to address amenity migration in the edited book *Global*

Amenity Migration: Transforming Rural Culture, Economy and Landscape (Moss, Glorioso 2014). Amenity migration is usually defined as the movement of people based on the draw of natural amenities, affordable housing, and the climate in rural areas. In comparison to the interests within lifestyle migration research, the aforementioned amenity factors only partially explain the motivation of lifestyle migrants, as non-urban settings and amenities might not be the primary reason for their relocation.

All these relatively privileged forms of migration once constituted exceptional behaviour, but according to scholars they are now becoming "normalised" among the middle classes.[6] As critically observed by geographer Sam Scott, in his research on professional expatriates in Europe, the international migration of skilled workers has become a normal middle-class activity rather than something relating exclusively to a mobile economic elite (Scott 2007 in Hoey 2014: 187). Similarly, research on international retirement migration suggests a process of the normalization of practices that had once been exceptional and reserved for wealthier people (King, Warnes, and Williams 1998). Additionally, borders between different categories such as migrants, tourists and other travellers are becoming blurred, and the porosity between categories of temporary and permanent migration give rise to a number of methodological and epistemological questions. Rapport and Amit observed how economic globalization has changed the nature of human mobility and blurred the conventional distinctions between moving subjects (2002: 34, 35). In this situation, lifestyle migration research offered a broad enough rubric for discussing all these relatively affluent (and nowadays normalized) mobility practices, which may differ in numerous ways but are also connected through a number of notions which will be elaborated in the following lines.

Benson and O'Reilly have described lifestyle migration as the spatial mobility of "relatively affluent individuals of all ages moving either part-time or full time, permanently or temporarily to places which, for various reasons, signify for the migrants something loosely defined as quality of life" (2009: 612). As opposed to related studies of amenity migration (Moss 2014), lifestyle migration has taken an interest in questioning just how we can understand the quest for a better way of life, addressing the existential and moral concerns embedded in the decision to

6 As noted by various researchers, "middle class" has become a part of a political discourse as well as a category for self-identification (Heiman, Freeman, Liechty 2012). Numerous anthropologists and sociologists have become involved (from the perspective of 21st century) in research on middle-class aspirations and anxieties while paying particular attention to definitions of the "middle classes" (usually they perceive them in the plural) as well as to middle-class spaces, sentiments, lifestyles etc. (e.g. Hoey 2014; Benson 2011).

Boat repair is one of the main day-to-day activities of liveaboards (photo: Nataša Rogelja, May 2008, Plataria, Greece).

migrate (Benson, Osbaldiston 2014: 3). As Benson and Osbaldiston furthermore wrote: "The predominant conceptual and theoretical approaches to this field of study focus on the relationship between migrant subjectivities and the quest for a better life" (2014: 3). Although the notion of relative privilege is lately being questioned – in light of the costs of the so-called privileged movement of individuals (Amit, Rapport 2002) or in light of the normalisation of these movements (Scott 2007, King Warnes, and Williams 1998) – lifestyle migration is undoubtedly born of the global context of inequality as well as being an inheritance of colonial history (Hayes 2016) and is inseparable from contemporary economic circumstances (Benson, Osbaldiston 2014: 3). Nevertheless, these migrants cannot be seen as a "leisure class," as there are numerous working-age individuals who relocate and work in new places and are also regular subjects of lifestyle migration research (e.g. Hoey 2014). They cannot be characterised as labour migrants, as they usually do not move in order to pursue opportunities for work but, as noted by Hoey, work becomes a calculated means to an end, something to permit lifestyle

migrants a geographic place that is personally meaningful to them (2014: 59). There are numerous historical precedents important for lifestyle migration such as colonialism, Grand Tours and elite romantic travels. Scholars within the lifestyle migration field also acknowledge recent economic and social transformations that are also highly important for understanding the existence of these emergent migration trends. For example, the "sail away" idea can be contextualised within the myth of departure that has been widely celebrated in the popular discourse of the 20th and 21st centuries, particularly among the middle classes, but it also has historical roots. The sea and sea journeys, which have inspired maritime lifestyle migrants, has its own culturally specific meanings derived from a long history of colonialism and politically imposed ideas about the "sea of freedom" – evident for example in the treatise *Mare Liberum* (1680) by de Grotius. Passionate sailors can also be found among Romantic poets such as Byron, Keats, Wordsworth or Coleridge; they wrote about the sea, as did other famous explorers and small-boat sailors (Slocum 2004 [1900]; Moitessier 1960, 1967, 1971). The contemporary context – in particular the context of late, post- or liquid modernity as described by Giddens, Bauman, Beck, Beck-Gernsheim and others – is also an important reference point for scholars, as lifestyle migrants seem to be ideal subjects in the current era, in the so-called age of individualism, as observed by Korpela (2014: 27). However, as Benson and Osbaldiston have observed, the distinction between previous and recent migrations trends – although presented as *fait accompli* – remain untested (2014: 5).

RESEARCHING LIFESTYLE

There are several issues here as – specifically discussed among lifestyle migration scholars – among them the quest for a better life, the contradictions between expectations and realities, the rhetoric of self-realization, geographies of meaning, negotiating new lives, ambivalence and lifestyle migration and the ongoing quest (O'Reilly, Benson 2009). The idea of escaping to the good life has been extensively discussed in the edited volume *Lifestyle Migration: Expectations, Aspirations and Experiences* by Benson and O'Reilly (2009). Following their observations, a quest for a better life reflects the wider lifestyle choices that individuals in the post-modern world make on a daily basis, while the recent increase in this phenomenon implies that it emerges partly as a result of the reflexive assessment of opportunities that Giddens (1991) identified as having only recently been made possible rather than being a direct outcome of relative economic privilege (Benson, O'Reilly 2009). Following lifestyle migration studies

Playing and living in a limited space (photo: Nataša Rogelja, December 2013, Marmaris, Turkey).

as well as my own ethnographic documentation, migration is presented (from the interlocutors' point of view) as a "new beginning", as an "escape from the rat race", "escape from consumerism" etc. Regardless of the fact that those same societal conditions which caused the departure also enabled it (e.g. infrastructure, global inequalities, a belief in the prospect of rebirth through "creative destruction" as an essential element of capitalist growth (Hoey 2014: 9) etc.), lifestyle migration scholars argue that what is relevant is the way migrants narrate their migration in terms of a trajectory away from negative lifestyles towards a fuller and more meaningful life (O'Reilly, Benson 2009). Some researchers such as Hoey explain this quest in terms of individuals' struggle to negotiate economic imperatives, moral concerns and personal expectations (2014: 11). Sometimes this quest is born of concrete personal experiences such as redundancy, divorce, uncertainty about one's economic (and social) future or the wish to avoid an isolated retirement (Nudrali, O'Reilly 2009). Usually lifestyle migrants seek a different community, a togetherness with people with whom they share similar ideas (Oliver 2008; O'Reilly 2009). That might or might not happen, but the idea of a better community is accentuated in migrants' narratives. As we will see in the fourth chapter of this book, reflecting on the places and practices of rest as

well as on ports, anchorages and marinas where such alternative communities might be realised or experimented with, the contradictions between expectations and realities are at the core of these experiments. I would argue that such experiments are not only "disappointments" stemming from the contradictions between expectations and realities but may also be truly transformative experiences where, in Nigel Rapport's words, continuity is sacrificed and community membership becomes episodic; in such settings, group members could be seen as the accidental aggregation of free agents who are connected temporarily and by choice rather than fixedly through the past or blood or faith (Amit, Rapport 2002: 95). Observing my interlocutors in the long term, I would also argue that it is very difficult to sustain such achieved groups, whereas ascribed groups, based for example on nationality, seem to be "portable" and thus much more enduring. Another peculiarity of the quest for a better life is also one's future orientation, as lifestyle migration studies show. Migrants for example emphasise the desire to provide a better future for their children (Korpela 2009; Benson 2009; Nudrali, O'Reilly 2009).

The rhetoric of self-realization is also an important issue in lifestyle migration studies. As Hoey argued for the United States, self-realisation outside the realm of work is a phenomenon related to the early 1990s when he traced two parallel processes; one leads towards an even greater devotion to work (e.g. corporations promoting career fulfilment as the equivalent of personal fulfilment) while the other begins pushing people to question the underlying assumptions of a system of delayed gratification, both of these being responses to the new realities of economic restructuring and deepening social change (2014: 83). Hoey furthermore argued, on the basis of his case studies, that despite these corporate experiments in maximising workers' efficiency by equating personal and professional fulfilment, nowadays there is neither a guarantee nor an expectation of the durability of work positions (2014: 79). Today's work practices include part-time jobs, contracted or outsourced workers, home-based work, self-employment and can be, according to economist Freedman, called "contingent work" (Freedman 1985 in Hoey 2014: 78). All these processes pushed people to seek self-realisation and their safety nets in other ways and lifestyle migration could have been one of the experiments in this regard. It was in these self-realisation endeavours that place seemed to be of special importance. As Hoey wrote: "The desire to deliberately root selfhood in an actively cultivated sense of place, rather than in the domain of work, what we might call "career", is a basic motivation of lifestyle migrants" (2014: 106). This selfhood is shaped not only by what people do but by where they are. My interlocutors for example speak of "finding themselves" or "getting to know themselves" by relocation to

the sailing boat, to the sea and to the new life. "I" is doubtless at the centre of these discussions. Reflecting on the "project of the self", Korpela brought to the fore an interesting discussion regarding individualisation theories (Bauman, Giddens, Beck) in relation to lifestyle migration and her two case studies on Western lifestyle migration in Goa, India (2014). On the bases of her case studies she argues that internalising the individualised ethos of freedom does not mean escaping from the prevalent order – even though lifestyle migrants often tend to view their life in such terms. She argues that rather the opposite is the case – that lifestyle migration means internalising the current ethos (2014: 28). Although I generally agree with Korpela, I see the "experiment" of my interlocutors also as transformative; not belonging merely to the phase of the departure but also continuing after or during the "temporarily unbelonging" experience. Imaginaries and an ethos that "pushed" my interlocutors into this situation were transformed by personal experiences whence certain new insights can be traced.

Following migrants' aspirations, lifestyle migration scholars directly linked the rhetoric of self-realization with certain meaningful places and wrote about geographies of meanings (Benson, O'Reilly 2009). O'Reilly and Benson stressed the importance of specific geographic places holding certain meanings for the migrants in terms of their potential self-realisation.

> Lifestyle migrants seek literal and figurative places of asylum or rebirth […]. These representations of the destinations chosen were drawn from both personal experiences of the places through prior tourism and travel, but they also derived from wider cultural narratives. They can be categorised under three main headings: the rural idyll, the coastal retreat and the cultural/spiritual attraction (2009: 6).

As observed by lifestyle migration scholars, these representations of destinations are linked with personal experiences that people might have in prior tourism experiences or which are part of wider cultural narratives (Benson, O'Reilly 2009). Although the sea partially fits into all three proposed frameworks, *the maritime* could also be listed as a separate heading, stimulating lifestyle migrants with its own culturally specific meanings derived from a long history of colonialism and politically imposed ideas about the "sea of freedom" evident in the aforementioned treatise *Mare Liberum* (1680) by de Grotius. As we will see in the course of this book, these initial images – whether connected with holiday experiences or wider cultural narratives, and during the course of "embarkation" – are changed, transformed or confirmed in a new way through people's long-term personal experiences with the maritime environment and

the life-aboard lifestyle. In the provocative text entitled Jumping Up from the Armchair: Beyond the Idyll in Counterurbanisation, Halfacree calls our attention to the fact that there is a need to consider the longitudinal development of migrant subjectivities. In this way Halfacree broaches the important question as to how the lifestyle sought as well as imaginaries attached to this lifestyle may be transformed through "post-migration lives". I agree with Halfacree that understanding the place of the rural (or maritime in my case) within lifestyle migration does not end with the values that these places offer "even if it may usefully start with them" (2014: 93). In my experience this longitudinal and widened perspective not only reflects the space "beyond representations" or on more-then-representations – to use Lorimer's term (2005) as discussed by Halfacree (2014) – but also sheds light on migration as a process, a series of events, numerous "befores" and "afters". What is of special importance in this debate is the observation that the reasons for moving, whether connected with cultural narratives or tourism-related experiences, don't represent the actual lifestyle. As Halfacree argued, "lifestyle must not be seen as overtly fixed but as inherently mobile, mutating and evolving as the event of lifestyle migration plays itself out" (2014: 111). I agree with Halfacree that lifestyle migration research should be attuned to both representations and practices and on the unpredictable interplay between the two. In Halfacree's view, the narrative of self-identity within lifestyle migration is not just in the reflective hands of the lifestyle migrant. "Instead, a more-than-representational and more-then-human sensitivity appreciates both, how a whole host of other forces, potentially both human and non-human, work to shape this narrative" (2014: 111). Let us examine this "more-than-representational" notion which Halfacree adopted from Lorimer (2005). Halfacree calls on researchers to focus on practice and action over thought and contemplation in order to go *beyond* results. In other words, researchers are invited to de-centre cognitive realms of representations when explicating everyday life. Shared experiences, embodied movements and practical skills should be, in his view, place more at the centre of our endeavours (2014). In this view, the rural becomes "more-than-representation" and more-than-human"; it becomes more than just a rural idyll, influencing lifestyle migrants with its own materiality. One of Halfacree's key messages is that we should not discard the socio-cultural paradigm; rather it is the idea that a careful use of more-than-representational, more-than-human and "event-ual" sensitivities could extend its scope into what Ingold calls "creeping entanglements of life" (Ingold 2008: 1809 in Halfacree 2014: 93). In the case of maritime lifestyle migration, following Halfacree's suggestions, I will thus invite windiness, wetness, brightness and slowness into the discussion, and I will reflect on how

these sensitivities and forces in combination with representations and humans can shape the total experience of maritime lifestyle migration. Again, this doesn't mean leaving cultural mechanisms out of the equation. Benson rightly argued that highlighting the cultural mechanisms behind migration is one of the important contributions of lifestyle migration to the wider field of migration studies (2011); but following Halfacree, we could also extend this contribution, going beyond (not around) cultural mechanisms and also embracing the chaotic tangibility. Here Halfacree comes close to the phenomenological tradition and Merleau-Ponty's thoughts on the inseparability of inside and outside and his understanding of the lived unity of the mind-body-world system as "the lived body" (Bullington 2013). As Merleau-Ponty wrote: "The world is not what I think, but what I lived through. I am open to the world, I have no doubts that I am in communication with it, but I do not possess it; it is inexhaustible" (1945/1962: 16–17 in Bullington 2013: 25). It is from this perspective that the post- and pre-migration phases crumbled, resulting in unpredictable endings, and that the scientific categories and representations and cultural narratives of places became soaked with the sea and ruffled by the wind. But no matter how soaked or ruffled these places might be, I still want to keep humans at the centre of my endeavours, as the wind alone cannot smuggle ideas, but people can use the wind to "sail away".

SMUGGLING

When I am fed up with theoretical debates in my own research field I sometimes grab texts from other disciplines, visit an exhibition, talk to those friends who are outside of academia, or go for a walk with my children. Sometimes this is not just a temporary break without consequences. Sometimes it helps me see things from a different perspective and it feels like I am smuggling in new connections. In the course of my research, I visited Goldsmith University in London and I came across two texts written by art historian Irit Rogoff, a book entitled *Terra Infirma* (2000) and a paper entitled "Smuggling" (2006). And even though I am personally more of an "ethnographic type" (at times lacking theoretical sophistication) and even though I disagree with the exercise of extending ethnographic material to established concepts, I apprehended her text as a set of questions and reflections with which I was happy to have silent conversations with respect to my own ethnographic material.

I admit that I was first attracted by the title of Rogoff's book *Terra Infirma* and not by any knowledge of the author or her work (the publishers might

well have foreseen that). It sounded real and unreal at the same time, and I made several google searches on this term, which led me to the poem by Anita Endrezze, The Mapmaker's Daughter (1992):

the geography of love is terra infirma

it is a paper boat
navigated by mates
with stars in their eyes

cartographers of the fiery unknown

it is the woman's sure hand
at the helm of twilight, the salt
compass of her desire

the map of longing is at the edge of two distant bodies

it is the rain that launches thirst
it is the palm leaf floating on waters
far from shore

the secret passage into the interior
is in my intemperate estuary

the sweet and languorous flowering
is in the caliber of your hands

the circular motion of our journeying
is the radius of sky and sea, deep
territories we name
after ourselves

The effect that the poem and Rogoff's ideas had on my ethnographic reflections was to shine a fresh light on them, bringing me closer to what I wanted to discuss; namely to write about subject-in-formation and position-in-formation, not about firm things or categories but about an "infirm world". Also I found Rogoff's endeavours, explaining images through sentences, somehow similar to the anthropological transformation into words of non-verbal knowledge

gained by the participant observation. I also found Rogoff's ideas – which didn't have a certain position but discussed the effort of arriving at positionality – somehow more stable while also being more interesting ("cartographers of the fiery unknown").

In the book *Tierra Infirma,* Rogoff's theoretical preoccupations are built, among other things, around the active process of "unbelonging". While her discussion is not intended to promote an illusion that the state (or any other institution or ascribed identity such as ethnicity or nationality) is not powerful but rather "to examine some of the terms by which it has limited and shut down our capacity to understand and thematise issues of belonging beyond those annexed purely to the juridical status of its subjects" (2000: 5). The same can be said for the community. The notion of community, powerful as it is, can in a way also shut down our capacity for thematising issues of identity from other perspectives. As emphasised by Rapport and Amit in their book *The Trouble with Community,* "So anthropologists have often continued to seek out collectives even as many of the processes that they were analysing seemed to throw the possibility of community into doubt" (2002: 4). There were also numerous other authors mentioned in their book who had already drawn attention to similar issues several decades ago, one of them being Ernest Gellner, who wrote that the most basic fact of our lives was the knowledge beyond culture which was not only possible but already lived (Gellner 1993: 54 in Rapport, Amit 2002: 7). That being said, it doesn't mean that we are heading towards individualism. Through my ethnographic reading and the authors I here present, I would like to bring attention to the potential benefits of "stopping for a while", trying to imagine the world beyond the existing categories, trying to embrace the process of unlearning. This is something I felt that my interlocutors were involved in – the stopping-but-not-dropping-out experiment – and that is what most strongly pushed me into reflecting on the idea of unbelonging.

Reflecting also on her own migratory experiences, Rogoff wrote how learning and transitional processes are not so much an addition of information as they are the active processes of unlearning which can be translated into the active position of unbelonging (2000: 3). On the basis of such observations she develops a concept of "unhomed geographies" as a possibility of redefining issues of location away from concrete coercion of belonging and not belonging as defined by the state (2000: 4). In her book she writes about the active category of unbelonging; namely about unbelonging not as marginality and not as defiant opposition and certainly not as a mode of "dropping out" but as a critical refusal of the terms and their implications (2000: 5). She continues: "All these by working from within those parameters rather than outside of them and by

Liveaboard family (photo: Nataša Rogelja, July 2008, Preveza, Greece).

examining their constitutive components as an epistemological structure in which 'difference' rather than homogeneity determines what we know, how we know it and why we know it" (2000: 5). In her endeavours she chooses to locate her work in the arena of geography because:

> [I]t seemed possible to locate within its revised understanding an alternative set of relations between subjects and places – an alternative set of relations in which it is not scientific knowledge or the national categories that determine both belonging and unbelonging, but rather linked sets of political insights, memories, subjectivities, projections of fantasmatic desires and great long chains of sliding signifiers (Rogoff 2000: 7).

In the course of this work we will reflect on such alternative sets of relations, between people and places, observing for example how bridges but also the sea can be inhabited. I will suggest that my interlocutors inhabited "void" possibilities by leaving "solid" ones and by entering these void possibilities;

it was by unlearning that they created new dimensions, a kind of alternative spatiality that exists within and without the existing social order.

The second text of hers that caught my attention was one written six years after *Tierra Infirma.* A tiny six-page online contribution entitled Smuggling – An Embodied Criticality, this further developed some of her ideas. The paper was based on a collaborative project between Turkish video artist Ergin Cavusoglu, who had been researching smuggling practices from an artistic standpoint; British theorist Simon Harvey, who developed the theoretical framework for an analysis of smuggling in his PhD dissertation; and art historian Irit Rogoff, operating from an academic and curatorial perspective. In the text the term smuggling extends beyond "a series of adventuresome gambits" as reflected in the search for a practice that goes beyond conjunctives such as those which bring together art and politics or theory and practice or analysis and action (2006: 1). As Rogoff wrote, in such a practice we aspire to experience the relations between the two as a form of embodiment which cannot be separated into their independent components (2006). The notion of "embodied criticality" has an important place in the article, urging authors to move away from critique towards criticality, namely to inhabit a problem and not analyse it. This latter thought doesn't have the quality of prescription (something for researchers to follow) but rather the quality of description, of how things function "out there" when we move away from analysing to inhabiting the problem (not just a theoretical problem – any problem). Rogoff framed the notion of criticality in the following way:

> [C]riticality is in itself a mode of embodiment, a state from which one cannot exit or gain a critical distance but which rather marries our knowledge and our experience in ways that are not complimentary … The point of criticality is not to find an answer but rather to access a different mode of inhabitation (2006: 2).

It's the occupation of the problem that counts, not the judgement upon it. Such thoughts were related in numerous ways to transformation of the initial imaginings and expectations that my interlocutors had about the sea and a life on the water. So where does the smuggling come in? In searching for what might constitute an unbounded space, an unbounded practice and unbounded knowledge, Rogoff examined the notion of smuggling. Smuggling, according to Rogoff, operates as a principle of movement, of fluidity and of dissemination that disregards boundaries and it is within this movement that the identity of the objects themselves is obscured.

> One of the most interesting things that "smuggling" as a model allows us to do is rethink the relations between that which is in plain sight, that which is in partial sight and that which is invisible. […] What is so rich about the notion of "smuggling" is that the entire relation to the origin is eroded and the notion of journey does not follow the logic of crossing barriers, borders, bodies of water but rather of sliding along with them seeking opportune moment, the opportune breach in which to move to the other side (2006: 5).

Smuggling, as framed by Rogoff, exists in a way very similar to the experiment of my interlocutors with different lifestyles, it having precisely the same illegitimate relationship to a primary abode (e.g. many of my interlocutors do not have fixed addresses or they have fixed addresses but don't live permanently) or a dominant economy without being in conflict with it and without producing a direct critical response to it. And it is through such a practice that my interlocutors, similar to the interlocutors of other lifestyle migration researchers (e.g. Hoey 2014), try to resolve the tension between economic imperatives, moral obligations and their personal expectations. In the following chapter we will try to understand the experiences, expectations and aspirations of my interlocutors through a longitudinal biographic approach presented in six selected crew portraits.

LIFE JOURNEYS: UNDERSTANDING MIGRATION THROUGH (AUTO)BIOGRAPHY

Fixing fenders; everyday routine of a German family living on the sailing boat (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2007, Plataria, Greece).

MOBILE FIELDWORK?

When I started my journey back in 2006 I hadn't thought a lot about mobility. Mobility was always the obvious part of this story but was, in my personal view, somehow overshadowed by the idea of a better life, soaked with stories and images of the sea and seasoned with biographies of people I had met. What thrilled me most was not the mobility but quite the opposite – the fact that the people I met had stopped moving after choosing this lifestyle; they left behind the highly mobile routines of their previous everyday life some travelled extensively for work (feeling detached from their families), some felt caught in the fast lane of their home cities (feeling slow and old in a world spinning much too rapidly for them to keep) or were lost in the "liminal landscapes" (Andrews, Les Roberts 2012) i.e. lacking stability and control over their lives. My impression as well as my personal experience was that this lifestyle, although having an aura of hypermobility, has to do as much with stillness as it does with movement. Part of the proof for such came from observing the annual patterns of my interlocutors living on sailing boats in the Mediterranean – their everyday routines and life journeys. Regarding the seasonal patterns, I discovered that most of the people I met were mobile in spring, summer and autumn but worked in tourist centres during the summer; during the summer heat and with crowded ports and higher prices, they either sailed (island-hopping or longer crossings) or travelled to their home countries. The period from November to March was dedicated to rest, meaning they were tied up at the pier or anchored in the deep mud of a safe Mediterranean bay. In view of such, the mobility research was not the first literature I was eager to get my hands on. Instead I read books written by lifestyle migration scholars, as this literature dealt with the quest for a better life and with "geographies of meaning", namely the importance of specific geographic places holding certain meanings for the migrants in terms of their potential self-realisation (O'Reilly,

Benson 2009: 6). As I was also part of the "problem", living on a sailing boat myself, I wasn't so much concerned with methodological questions as how to approach and study people who were living, working and travelling on sailing boats in the Mediterranean. Methodologically speaking I simply went with the flow, doing participant observation in the winter period, sailing along with my interlocutors in the summer and otherwise staying in touch with them through the Internet. Later on, when I decided to write an article on methodology as it related to my fieldwork experience (Bofulin, Rogelja forthcoming 2017) and compared my work with the research findings of colleagues from the Slovene Migration Institute (e.g. Bofulin 2016) or with colleagues who did research on European neo-nomads (Kalčić 2013) and irregular Moroccan migrants (Juntunen 2013), I started to reflect more systematically on methodological issues. Together with my colleagues I observed for example how certain peculiarities of mobile trajectories or everyday lifestyle tactics were very similar even though our interlocutors would be "normally" placed within different categories such as migrants, tourists, travellers, sailors, retirees etc. (Juntunen, Kalčić, Rogelja 2013). It was obvious that the people we observed had very different starting points, different passports and very different family backgrounds; but the way they moved and their everyday tactics were much too similar to ignore this fact and to feel comfortable within the given categories. As Sheller and Urry wrote:

> Although some critics argue there is no analytical purchase in bringing together so broad a field – encompassing studies of exile, migration, immigration, migrant citizens, transnationalism and tourism – we argue that the project needs to be developed further (2006: 211).

I very much agreed with them and it was here in my research journey that mobility studies played a role. The array of theoretical resources and subject matter within the field of mobility studies was wide enough to leave room for "unusual comparisons" and new relations. Namely, I was attracted by the fact that the mobility scholars initiated different ways of understanding the relationship between theory, observation and engagement. Needless to say, methodological questions were at the core of these relations. As the authors of the edited book *Mobile Methods* wrote about the focus of mobility studies: "It engages new kinds of researchable entities, a new or rediscovered realm of the empirical and new avenues for critique" (Büscher, Urry, Witchger 2011: 2). Before jumping into concrete methodological questions and approaches, let me outline briefly the shape of this "mobile field".

Recent literature on mobility (a field emerging most strongly in the last two decades) combines movements of people, objects and information in all of their complex relational dynamic; it emphasises the relation of such mobilities to associated immobilities or moorings, encompasses different categories of mobile people (migrants, tourists, vagrants, travellers, professional peripatetics etc.) under one mobility umbrella and it overlaps with certain aspects of globalization studies, migration and border studies, tourism studies, transport geography and others (Sheller 2011; Sheller, Urry 2006). Its theoretical scope is broad, combining social and spatial theory in a new way, building bridges to various discrete approaches, such as the macro-structural one, and to elements of science and technology studies as well as postcolonial and critical theory, the phenomenology of embodiment and other micro-approaches and theoretical premises. Mobility research does not deny historical movements or immobilities, as some critiques would assume, but it argues that today the world is moving differently and in more dynamic, complex and traceable ways than ever before (Sheller 2011: 1). As Sheller states, today there is a new convergence between physical movements of people, vehicles and things while these new socio-technical transformations raise new issues for the social sciences at the theoretical as well as methodological level (Sheller 2011).

The focus of mobility studies also somehow overlaps with a range of philosophical perspectives within the post-human turn (e.g. Hayles 1999; Law, Hassard 1999) as well as within science and technology studies that treat objects as part of social networks (e.g. Callon 2004; Latour 1993, 1987; Law 1994). Following Sheller, this transdisciplinary field encompasses research on the spatial mobility of humans and non-humans, subjects and objects, the circulation of information, images and capital as well as the physical means of movement such as infrastructure, vehicles and software systems (Sheller 2011: 1, 2). Broad and unpredictable as it is, it seemed as an appropriate shelter for my methodological meditations knitted around the life journeys of my interlocutors who for example sailed on the sea but their experiences are closely linked with boat and navigational technologies as well as with the maritime infrastructure (ports).

What also caught my attention regarding methodological issues was the fact that the new mobilities paradigm suggests a set of questions, theories and methodologies rather than a totalising description of the contemporary world (Sheller 2011; Sheller, Urry 2006; Bücher et. al 2011). In a way it goes beyond globalisation, nomadism and flows – even though these issues remain at the core of its research. Theories of "liquid modernity" (Bauman 2000) are still important for mobility scholars, as they redirect the focus from static structures to liquidity, to the system of movement comprising people, machines and images. The works

of Gilles Deleuze are also central in terms of thinking about flows and circulations and in tracing the power of those discourses, practices and infrastructures of mobility that create movements; but the endeavours of mobility scholars deal more with delineation of the "context in which both sedentary and nomadic accounts of the social world operate, and they furthermore question how that context is itself mobilised, or performed, through ongoing sociotechnical and cultural practices" (Sheller 2011: 2). Power relations, as displayed within the mobilities-immobilities context, are needless to say at the heart of this field; namely, the mobility of some people is related to the immobility of other people.

Although mobility studies deal extensively with methodological issues (in my opinion one of its greatest strengths), this field is in no way merely an empirical project, as it challenges the fundamentals of social science epistemology (Sheller 2011: 3). With its transdisciplinary approach, mobility studies change the empirical by reinventing and reorganising methods, opening ways for new creative approaches as well as reconfiguring the relation between the observer and the observed. It is no surprise that metaphors of dancing and rhythm are a very comfortable fit within this field. Reinventing these metaphors, mobility scholars build their methodological constructs on the previous ideas of authors such as George Simmel and Henri Lefebre. In his book *Rhythmanalysis,* for example, Lefebre shows the interrelation of space and time in understanding everyday life in its movement between music, media and city, depicting the non-linear conception of time and history ([1992] 2004) while George Simmel (1997), as observed by Sheller and Urry, was one of the first scholars to establish a broad agenda for the analysis of mobilities (2006: 215), observing tempo within the modern city, the multiple mobilities and their effect on people, as well as the human will to connect. These inherited metaphors of dance and tempo leak out in numerous texts of mobility scholars trying to reorganise or enliven already established methodological approaches so as not to abandon them. As geographer Alan Latham poetically proposed:

> I want to suggest that rather than ditching the methodological skills that human geography has so painfully accumulated, we should work through how we can imbue traditional research methodologies with a sense of the creative … Pushed in the appropriate direction there is no reason why these methods cannot be made to dance a little (2003: 2000).

Mobility studies thus emphasised the need to reflect on existing and novel methodological approaches and various immobile actors and structures in order to be capable of capturing social life "on the move" (Bücher, Urry, Witchger 2009).

In this context, dance was not solely used in the sense of creative choreography, orchestrating different existing methods, but also as an epistemological tool to deconstruct existing structures. Understanding dance as organic and integrated rather than stepwise and fragmentary (Seamon 1997 in Haldrup 2009: 55) helps us to understand mobility and migration as perpetual processes that are codified and creative at the same time. While observing this everyday dance, the whole picture, as Jirón wrote, is never completely revealed, nor is this the intention (2009: 50). The dancer might or might not introduce his creative moves in a given situation and he might perform the same dance differently if repeated twice or for a different audience. As Haldrup wrote, dancing illustrates the tension between regulation (choreography) and expression (performativity) inherent in the field of mobilities (2009: 56).

Mobility scholars have proposed five different mobilites upon which empirical mobility research might focus (Büscher, Urry, Witchger 2009: 5). These comprise the corporeal travels of people, the physical movement of objects, imaginative travel through talk and media, virtual travel (e.g. attending conferences) and communicative travel (person-to-person contact via messages, postcards, letters, fax). The concrete research is often focused on one of these separate mobilities and its related infrastructures but the mobility paradigm emphasises, as Büscher, Urry, and Witchger wrote, the complex interdependencies between different mobilities and underlying infrastructures (2009).

Related to these five different mobilities, Büscher, Urry, and Witchger outline several concrete methods and research entities. These approaches are in no way a novelty since scholars such as George Simmel who observed the rhythm of a city or Michael de Certeau who took walks through New York, were "dancing along these routes" long before the mobility literature existed (Simmel 1997; de Certeau 1984). The proposed techniques are more ideas and suggestions for possible research journeys within the context of the 21st century as used by mobility scholars or their precursors. These are: a) observing people's movement (their driving, walking, running) often by following the people or things (Marcus 1995; Jirón 2009); b) participating in the patterns (walking along); c) using mobile video ethnography, d) time-space diaries, e) virtual ethnography (texting websites, multi-user discussion groups, blogs, e-mails, Facebook, Instagram but also postcards and letters), f) art and design interventions (Cocker 2012), g) mobile positioning methods (Ahas 2011) and literary, artistic and imaginative research (e.g. content analysis with the aim of capturing the cultural mechanisms behind (im)mobility); h) researching the active development and performance of memory (e.g. pictures and objects that people carry around and related memories), g) the "places of movement" (monitoring and plotting places that

move within the networks of human and non-human agents – e.g. favourable ratings of places in newspaper travel sections) (Molz 2011); h) examination of conversations (e.g. how people augment verbal descriptions with visual, cartographic, textual and technological information (GPS coordinates)); i) and researching activities and places *en route* (e.g. cafes, waiting rooms, motels, harbours, airports). Even though it seems that the above list is a chaotic mixture of methods and research entities, the logic behind this "confusion" is that methods and research entities are interdependent, they influence and stimulate each other, forcing the researcher "to dance a little".

TAILORING MY OWN RESEARCH APPROACHES

In my research I did not ditch traditional methods but instead used a mixture of well-known and traditionally established techniques (e.g. participant observation, interviews, the literature in my field). I then added my own research creativity (writing essayistic portraits of my interlocutors' life paths) and followed a specific logic of movement and life as displayed during my fieldwork (following people, experiencing their paths and trying to ethnographically understand and describe their everyday and yearly rhythms). To aid my own understanding I also created "biographical maps" of my interlocutors that provided a sense of concreteness in a longer time perspective. These "maps" were not used for representational purposes but served as a kind of internal tool for my own understanding to capture and manage the complexity of my interlocutors' lives. Similarly to Doherty, Patton, and Shield (2015) I constructed very simple visual images of how my interlocutors moved through space and time (one annotation system was related to one of the crew) in order to see how "their projects" were orchestrated in the time-space nexus.

In the process of doing research I developed several methodological choreographies, inspired by mobility research scholars but most of all by following my interlocutors as well as my enthusiasm to understand their expectations and experiences. The structure of the methodological approach was undertaken in several phases and involved the preliminary research period consisting of participant observation at the anchorages, city piers and marinas as well as in sailing along with interlocutors mostly in the non-winter periods. On the basis of the preliminary research (initial six months), I developed a more precise plan as to how to continue with my work. Since places, people and groups relevant to my interlocutors changed substantially, I decided to focus my research on crews. The second step in this approach was thus a case selection step. Once

my main cases/crews were selected (eight in this instance), I started with the following period (following selected crews through participant observation, via Internet as well as doing more focused interviews in order to reconstruct their life tracks, yearly tracks as well as daily tracks). In all these endeavours the participant observation was always my favourite and most fruitful approach, producing the richest research insights – which I had in fact known from the moment I embarked on "the anthropological journey", hanging out with Slovene fishermen in my student years. It has only been recently that I have re-thought this non-rational understanding gained through the use of the participant observation method. I was reading Falzon's introduction to the edited book on multi-site ethnography (2009) and came across the part where Falzon discusses Maurice Bloch's ideas related to cognitive non-linguistic ethnographic understanding (2009: 9). Bloch's idea regarding the richness of data gathered by the participant observation method is revealed in his comment on how crucial this non-linguistic ethnographic understanding is (Bloch 1991 in Falzon 2009: 9). Following Falzon, there is a problem with this rich knowledge, namely how to put it in words, how to present this knowledge to the reader (2009: 10). I did a small experiment regarding the former question by engaging in an experiment of essayistic ethnography, writing portraits of my interlocutors or crews in a creative manner. This approach helped me see things from a different perspective while also serving to present my participant observation knowledge. It was still a linguistic presentation but was packed in a different literary form. Once I started to write portraits I discovered that through creative writing I was thinking and writing about peculiar details while also able to put this non-rational knowledge "on the stage". When I was involved in the writing process I tried to describe the overall atmosphere of certain events, the emotional details of the situation or conversation as well as my own position from a more personal point of view. The aesthetic element softened the sharp edges of fieldwork diary notes and interview transcripts and enlivened the information from a different perspective. The notion of different times came out quite clearly – for example in the parts where I tried to describe the winter period, the wet Mediterranean months that had a special effect on my interlocutors' life and on their perception of time.

> Winter in Preveza, about one year later. Trisha is crying. Trisha often cries. She does not know why, she just cries. Right above the ankle of her left leg she is wearing a tiny tattoo. A memory from distant shores, a distant life, a distant time. Polynesia, washed out with years of Mediterranean winters, is still alive in her memory. Maybe one day. Maybe once again. Not yet (excerpt from portraits, Preveza, November 2011).

Even though time looked linear and "one" in my maps, from the perspective of portraits (and my participant observation experience) various times showed up as well as various places linked with different times (the crossing time, the rest time, the winter time) and here for example is an excerpt from a portrait describing crossing time: "We needed 50 days for crossing the Pacific Ocean. But after a week it is not crossing any more. You just live. That's it! You have a routine and you go. It is just the sea, the sea … After a month I saw a bird. This was quite an event" (excerpt from portraits, November 2011, Preveza). A notion of (temporary) *unbelonging* and *criticality* (for more see Rogoff 2006, 2000) also came out from these "writing exercises" as the endevours of my interlocutors resonate differently from the notion of escape, liminality or holiday.

> Fritz and Ines dream of sailing around the world, they dream about publishing a book, about their son publishing a book, about how they will establish a school on the boat, how they will conduct educational courses for youth about the sea, about ecology … Sometimes they dream of an ecological house, of a piece of land, where they could be self-sustainable. Maybe someday, but the journey comes first. Fritz and Ines have friends who are producing their own food: they also lived on a boat, they were also German. The father had a serious heart problem, the mother was a social worker. Employers spurned the sickly father; the mother did not earn enough money. Just as had Fritz, they also started making certain decisions. They sold their car and everything else they had, they put all their savings together and bought a boat. For several years they lived on that boat in Greece. Then, a few years ago they sailed with their three children to Sweden. They leased a piece of land and started to produce their own organic food. They live there with two other families. Maybe one day Fritz and Ines will join them (excerpt from portraits, Kilada, April 2012).

In the excerpts presented there are various layers that speak about the shift away from critique towards criticality, to use Rogoff's term (2006). Following Rogoff, the point of criticality is not a form of finding fault or exercising judgement according to a consensus of values (for example towards a capital-oriented society that "expelled" Fritz's friend for having a serious heart problem) but to access a different mode of inhabitation and to inhabit active position of unbelonging. She furthermore writes how criticality is in itself a mode of embodiment, a state from which one cannot exit or gain critical distance but which rather marries our knowledge and our experience in ways that are not complimentary. Unlike "wisdom" which we supposedly learn from our experience, criticality is a state of profound frustration in which the knowledge and insights we have amassed do very little to alleviate the conditions we live through (Rogoff 2006: 2). I will

explain these two notions – criticality and unbelonging – in relation to my case study and in greater detail in the concluding chapter.

PORTRAITS

In the following lines I put forward several representative (crew) portraits in order to highlight details from individuals' lives. Select biographical data of my interlocutors will be presented in the form of biographical portraits. Portraits are sometimes incongruent with the crew as a whole but in a way that reflects "my own entrance" into the specific "crew system". In other words, some portraits are more strongly linked to specific individuals, my key informants. Using a biographical approach, I have tried to understand their lifestyle choices and will later discuss the process by which sea imaginaries are the inspiration for lifestyle migrants and how they are translated into practice. I claim that a biographical approach grapples with the idea of the processual nature of my interlocutors' experiences; it reveals their experiences before they embarked on the boat and after they disembarked from the boat (sometimes it shows the departure has had no great significance in their stories) while also allowing for the demonstration of an attempt to temporarily inhabit the gap between systems, ports and possibilities. As I will argue in the conclusion, the task becomes not to change the structure but to inhabit it differently.

For the purposes of this book, I have chosen several portraits – a German family with two children, a childless British couple in early retirement, a French family with two children, a British couple in their fifties, a retired couple in their late sixties and a childless couple in their late forties – so as to provide a broad range of information.[7] Portraits are a combination of excerpts from my fieldwork diary and passages from interviews and they are deliberately written in a vivid essayistic manner in order to bring the research closer to the reader but also as a peculiar methodological approach reflecting various emotional details and my own personal involvement. Portraits are also written in the present tense, not because I am unaware of the discussion regarding the traps of the ethnographic present.[8] In the following portrait I do not use the present tense (implicitly or explicitly) for de-temporalisation but in order to bring details

7 The portraits presented here are shortened extensively in order to fit the format of this book.

8 The most common interpretation of the ethnographic present is the practice of developing analysis and generalisations from the ethnographic research as if they represent a timeless description of the people being studied. According to some authors, such an approach is implicitly denying the historicity of the studied people (Davies 1999: 156 in Pina Cabral 2000: 341).

Hiding in the shadow of the small cockpit, waiting for the afternoon summer heat to pass (photo Nataša Rogelja August 2008, Ionian Greece).

from my interlocutors' lives closer to the reader. As Pina-Cabral has noted, one of the most valuable developments in anthropology over the past decades is the discovery that many modes of ethnographic reporting are legitimately open to us (2000: 342–343). I will thus make use of this "modern opportunity" in the following lines and try to present portraits of my interlocutors in a relaxed way and at times in a "present time mode" while yet precisely following the ethnographic data gathered in my research.

Portrait 1

> Ionian Greece. There is a long bay in front of us. At the end of the bay there is a pier. Close by the fishing boats there is an old wooden brig anchored at the pier, looking a lot like the boat of Pippi Longstocking. Instead of a red-haired girl there is a blond boy, a dog, a lean mother with two pigtails and a man with a strong voice who show up on the

board. "You cannot anchor here! This is my place. I will stay the whole winter in this village!" he shouts, his voice echoing unpleasantly. That is how I first met Fritz. Fritz is a robust man in his forties with a deep brown sun tan. In my imagination, Fritz is the archetypical sailor – clumsy walk, strong fingers, gloomy look and tender soul. He always wears a colourful African cap on the crown of his head; a memory from the West African coast where he used to sail, now also covering his bald patch. That night, strong gusts of wind came down to the valley. The sea was foaming, anchors losing grips, boats were banging against each other. Fritz was there, fetching tyres, protecting boats, fixing ropes, running up and down the pier and helping everyone.

It was in the early 1990s that Fritz made his decision. He left his well-paid job as a mechanical engineer, scraped together all his savings and bought a boat. He said he didn't want to be part of the German political system; he didn't want to be part of an immoral morality; he didn't want to support a world in which he did not believe. So he resigned. "I never had empty pockets but I was never satisfied. Life is too short to be spent designing elevators for business buildings. Let people walk … Let people stop with immoral projects. To live and work in such [a] system is an ecological, social and moral disaster," he explains. He felt content with his risk-taking gesture and talked about it many times in our interviews.

He has gained experience along the way. For four years he has shuttled between West Africa, the Canary Islands and the Mediterranean. He works in the Mediterranean; he lives in Africa. Fritz earns his money by chartering, with occasional work in shipyards or building sites, exchanges his services for the services of others, he writes articles, works as a surveyor for boats. For Fritz the sea is a constant struggle, it's a contagious virus, a place of freedom, a place where a man hardens himself, and throws overboard all that is unnecessary and starts his life anew. In the third year of his new life, Fritz met Ines. She came to Fritz's boat as a charter guest and stayed. She chose Fritz because he offered the cheapest charter in the Mediterranean. Ines wanted a change. In Germany she worked as a teacher in a kindergarten and she was thinking about change very often, maybe volunteer work in Africa, maybe a journey. Fritz showed up at the right moment. While on the Canary Islands, Fritz and Ines sold their plastic sailboat and bought a hundred-year-old wooden brig, once a fishing boat in the North Sea, for chartering, for educational courses, as a home. "Wood is a good

material … wood does not harm Mother Nature," Fritz often explains to me. In the warm shelter of the Canaries, they start to renovate the boat. They treat the wood, they paint, cut and glue it. Their first son Nur watches them patiently from his baby chair.

Since Nur turned one year old, Fritz and Ines have lived in the Mediterranean. They explain: "The Mediterranean is comfortable for children … in the Mediterranean one earns better money, but the Mediterranean is also expensive for living … in the Mediterranean there are too many tourist boats … in the Mediterranean, people like us are not welcomed." Especially in the Western Mediterranean, they explained. That is why Fritz and Ines are moving slowly towards the east. They have a new plan. They will stay in the Eastern Mediterranean for a year or two to earn some more money, Nur will grow up, and afterwards they will go across the Red Sea to Madagascar. But plans keep changing. Fritz feels the pressure from his family and friends. Why doesn't he just stick to the plan? Why must he always change plans? "Because I am the master of my life," he answers angrily. When it all gets too much, Ines goes back to Germany and works in a kindergarten. They kept an apartment there, their permanent address. In the meantime, Fritz fixes the boat.

Nur turns school age. Ines educates him on the boat and does the rounds. She circulates between parents, exams in school and between old friends and new plans. School complicates life. In the meantime Fritz anchors himself at the pier of a particular Greek village where a lot of Germans live. Because of that, life here is easier. Once a month, a private German truck comes to the Igoumenitsa region bringing things people ordered from the home-country, mostly special food. Fritz also feels strange in the German community; he understands the German community but he feels he is not a part of it. Nevertheless he chooses the village, along with many other live-aboards, but just during the winter – since in the Mediterranean the weather determines life on the boat. Once, on their way from Italy to Greece, they got caught in a storm. Twenty-five hours of fighting the sea. They were scared. Fritz didn't follow online weather forecasts and it was late autumn. "Did the old sailors have Internet weather forecasts?!" he angrily says.

One spring, Nur is joined by a little brother, Hugo. Ines decides to give birth in Germany. She trusts the German maternity hospitals more, the doctors speak her language, her mother is close by. At scarcely two months of age, Hugo is looking around the boat from his

baby chair. Fritz is grinding, cutting, nailing and gluing. The boat starts to leak, the engine brakes, new expenses appear out of nowhere and then more expenses on top of those. Fritz becomes anxious. Hugo, the school, the money, the boat … Why do things not run smoothly? Why does he have to pay Germany if he wants to home-school his children? Why do they put pressure on him? Why doesn't Ines help him more? Ines decides. She will leave Fritz. He is inconsiderate, he doesn't know how to behave, he does not understand, she has many obligations because of the two boys, he doesn't support Nur enough. She will go back to Germany. She distributes Nur's toys among the children of the pier, she gives his flippers to a girl passing by, she gives the mask to the boy from the boat next to theirs. She will talk to Fritz for the last time. The children are waiting; the parents are talking. One hour passes, then two hours … The children wait. Ines shows up; she is not going to Germany. Not this time anyway.

Hugo was two years old when Ines received the message. It's her mother, she's had a heart attack. With her children, Ines returns to Germany, while Fritz stays on the boat. He comes occasionally to Germany and feels lost. All these machines at the bus station, he doesn't have a job, so he continues his work in charter tourism in Greece. Nur starts to attend school but Ines can enrol him only in the bad schools. Her official income determines it. So Nur goes to the bad school. He doesn't like it there, he doesn't like computer games, he doesn't like the rude boys. When summer comes, they finally go back to the boat. The family is together again, the world is beautiful, the sea is blue, they feel healthy and happy. The stars are there above them; what they most miss in the city are stars, the feeling of health and strength and the fresh air. One day they will sail across the Red Sea towards Madagascar. But not yet. They must help Ines's father. Who will help him if not his daughter?

Portrait 2

Dave is walking on the pier with his guitar. "Will you join the jam session tonight?", he asks. "I will be half an hour late!" I reply. Ann is following Dave carrying her yoga mat. Ann runs yoga classes at the marina. Only women ever attend. If they don't drink too much the night before, she explains. Ann doesn't drink. Ann likes to be alone – well, alone with Dave.

Ann and Dave met in the early 1970s. They shared a passion for travelling, for adventure, for motorcycling, for changes and motion. Ann worked as a nurse and Dave was teaching physics in a comprehensive. They lived in Wales. Work wasn't the centre of life. At the end of the 1970s they took the decision and set off. They bought a 21-foot sailing boat, they quit their jobs, said goodbye to their friends and left. Their friends admired them, they were brave, they were special, to leave felt so good, so victorious, they explain. After a month they came back. They weren't ready yet. Let's start with a smaller change. So they set off for Portugal and opened a small bar. For five years. After five years they again longed for a change. Let's go back! Back to Wales; back to teaching and nursing.

When Ann and Dave turned 55 they tried once more. This time more prudent, more mature, different. Dave was made redundant in school anyway so they turned disadvantage into opportunity and cancelled their permanent address. This time they intended to leave forever, they said. I once asked them: "What are your plans for the future?" The answer I got was: "We have no plans. This is our future!" They put all their savings into the boat and via the Channel Islands they sailed to northern France. Ann and Dave don't sail a lot, they travel. A sailboat is suitable because it's a home that's moving, a home where life is cheap. They follow the Internet weather forecast regularly because they are afraid of big seas. The height of the waves, the wind speed, the coloured lines of the weather forecast become a part of their life. Along the coast of Spain they sail towards the south of Portugal and stop in Lagos for the winter. In the spring they continue, passing the Balearics and Sicily to Malta where they spend the second winter. From Malta they turn north, passing Sicily, Italy and the Ionian Sea to Corfu – the third winter. The following spring they continue towards the Bay of Corinth, passing through the Corinth Canal, reaching the Aegean and crossing towards Turkey, Finike – their fourth winter. Along the Turkish coast they go back north till they reach the western coast of Turkey. Marmaris – the fifth winter. In springtime they cross the Cyclades, make a few brief stops on the Peloponnese and then come down to Crete. The sixth winter.

Life swings at a slow pace; six months of motion, six months of stagnation. The stagnation is anticipated, the motion between the winter refuges is chaotic and spontaneous. By the end of the summer their nerves are strained, bodies exhausted, thoughts restless. Hands

can hardly wait to moor the boat to the berth, the electric cable finds its way to the plug, and the hose looks for its faucet. But standing still can be unpleasant too, they explained. Darkness, moisture, rain, wind, crowded places. Too many people together, a lot of gossip, many obligations, too many drinks and then monotony. They don't join in the collective Christmas celebrations at the marina, neither are they part of the drinking team, they don't play cards, they don't bowl. "At the beginning of winter we were all friends, we were all sailors, and we all belonged. At the end of the winter we scatter, we get to know each other, small groups appear, the pontoon politics forms." Ann and Dave like to walk. Having company is fun, but they get stuck with pontoon politics instead. Every Thursday one excursion, every Tuesday and Friday yoga, every Tuesday night music. Days are shipshape, time runs fast, freedom slips through your fingers. By the end of winter their nerves are strained, bodies exhausted, their thoughts restless. Hands can hardly wait to push the boat off from the berth. The electric cable is folded, the pipe is coiled up, people on the pier – fellow villagers, neighbours and friends – wave their goodbyes, the sound of whistles cutting through the calm blue skies. The rope is untied, the umbilical cord cut.

Dave and Ann don't have a permanent address. Their permanent address is a temporary address. Motion is a constant. "Some people, they keep fake permanent addresses. They have children, parents, relatives. They collect letters, they pay bills, they lie to the officials, they sign documents." Ann and Dave don't have a permanent address, as they don't have children or parents. That's why they sometimes have problems. You can't get health insurance without a permanent address. Computer says no. Ann and Dave at least have a bank account. But not without problems. They asked a banker friend: "Why not without problems?" The bank is just following instructions – he shows them the answer to a query he sent to Whitehall: "Her Majesty's Government does not go out of its way to accommodate mavericks …"

Sometimes they feel like they are disappearing. Disappearing from the world but "thank god we have Internet and the BBC" they say sarcastically as they regularly follow news from their home country. Their circle of people gets smaller; only good friendships remain. And then there are new friendships. In other ways the circle gets bigger every year, encounters are not fleeting anymore, the repetitive procession of people circulating on repetitive, circular blue lines of the Mediter-

ranean. Some are spat out by this circulation, others swallowed up by it. Ann and Dave are planning to get off the circular and onto rivers and canals, into the world of locks, sluices, dead and live branches of rivers, heading towards new adventures. Not yet – next year. For now it's all just in their minds. To go back? To whom? To what? The house? They don't have enough money for a house, there isn't enough sun back home anyway. Around the world? Not for us! Forward? River canals? Maybe a year more in the Med?

Portrait 3

Trisha will turn forty in two years. She likes colourful jumpers. A red one, with bright blue llamas, is her winter favourite. Trisha is nimble. Jumps over fences, runs faster than the boys, competes as she climbs the monkey bars with the kids. For fun, for a laugh. I first met her on Korčula. A gray sailboat was anchored in the bay. All alone – the others were moored neatly in the marinas. Playing with the children on the beach, we spot a colourful canoe. Pushing off the gray sailboat, it heads our way. In it there are two boys, their mum swimming behind them. The mornings in Dalmatia are tranquil, hot and fragrant. The children talk with games, the adults with words. "We live on that boat and we are travelling round the world!" explains Trisha, and with these twelve words she has captured my attention.

Winter in Preveza, about one year later. Trisha is crying. Trisha often cries. She does not know why, she just cries. Right above the ankle of her left leg she wears a tiny tattoo. A memory from distant shores, a distant life. Polynesia, washed out with years of Mediterranean winters is still alive in her memory. Maybe one day. Maybe once again. Not yet. At the moment Trisha is in the thick of it all – planning, obligations with children. Standing still and waiting. She doesn't like waiting. Her husband Paul is paying off the gray sailboat with his work. The gray sailboat is a big project. Paul designed her, made her and is vouching for her. Paul always has a lot of work, Paul never stands still, Paul knows everything, Paul is never afraid, Paul is a hermit, a strange fish, Paul is an excellent sailor, he always has a good plan, with Paul everything is possible. Trisha stands still and waits. Like an island in the middle of a roundabout being passed by life. The island of Korčula, Corfu, Preveza, Lefkas, Peloponnese shipyards, the laughter of her

boys, little Bastian screaming, a crash, children weeping, the droning sound of the generator, the howling of the wind around the high mast of Dila. "Why Dila?" I once began a conversation with her on Lefkas. It's a cold and wet Mediterranean winter outside, but the saloon is cosy and full. Full of people, words, glances, children's drawings pasted on the walls, charts, exotic sculptures and instruments. Trisha doesn't cry anymore. She is not alone anymore. There is a Dutch travelling theatre crew, there is Nataly with her children, there is Jean Jacques who works with Paul in the shipyard. There's no Paul. He is working on a mega-yacht in the Caribbean for two months. But Trisha now has Nataly, Nataly has Trisha. Together they seldom cry, they often laugh, they teach children, they read books, smoke, run, dance, attend courses in biological farming, they have friendly relations with a farmer called Kostas, they babysit in turns. Nataly also lives on a sailing boat with two children. Her husband is also working on a mega-yacht. Also for two months. But Nataly has Trisha, Trisha has Nataly. "Why Dila?" I repeat the question and deal out the cards. The songs of Manu Chao are coming from the loudspeakers. "We wanted a name with no meaning. The boat is just a tool." Later, much later, when we celebrated solstice in the warm saloon of Dila, somewhere along the southern coast of the Peloponnese, when years of friendship had intertwined our lives, I painted, together with the children, a piece of wood that we found on the beach – *dila*.[9] With colourful stripes I decorated the edges and wrote "Good luck Dila" in the middle. A month later Dila set out to Scotland and then to the Caribbean, Polynesia and on to New Zealand, pursuing work, pursuing dreams. Clouds were building up above the South Peloponnese, children played on small pipes, Trisha and I both nursing a hangover, a reminder of last night. Dancing, ouzo, exchanging music and children's stories, laughing, crying, smoking. Moments of flowing time. Motion underlines them, makes them dense.

Why perpetual motion? Because Trisha and Paul have always lived like that. Because from 18 years on, Trisha has made her living by delivering boats around the world; because Trisha and Paul met once in the Caribbean at the skippers' meeting and afterwards they sailed together to Polynesia; because it is important to live like you feel in this very moment, once said Paul; because life on land is dangerous and odd; because Trisha wants to get to know herself, she wants to travel, to

9 In colloquial Slovene *dila* means a piece of wood.

watch her children grow. “You think it is because of the sea, right? she once asked. “But no, it is not just the sea. I grew up with boats and with the sea. Boats and the sea came naturally. They were always part of me. I ran away from my mum and got into the boat delivery business across the world. Because of my mum … I was 19 years old when I applied for the post of skipper. I was taking boats across the Atlantic Ocean. Once I had this guy on the boat. He was twice as old as me and he was a friend of an owner of the company I worked for. This guy, he wanted to have the experience of an Atlantic crossing but he was problematic. Problematic in such circumstances. He would have threatened the crew and the whole journey, so I had to make a decision. I made him disembark. It was difficult, I was just a girl«.

Trisha and Paul never really made the decision to leave. Maybe a long time ago, when their parents put them in sailing school. At six years of age they settled themselves comfortably in the cockpits of small sailing boats. Trisha jealously observed her older brothers and sisters from the shore and Paul sailed with his parents. Since then their attention has been focused on the sea. School was not on their mind, they learned along the way, from the sea, from people, from boats, weather, materials and situations. Once, when they sailed around Cape Horn with their tiny steel boat and landed somewhere along the coast of Chile, an acquaintance asked them if they could look after his Patagonian farm while he was away. Among chickens, Patagonian flatlands and winds, they forged a plan. A year later their first boy was born in Polynesia, a few months after the birth they moved to France and Paul started building their new boat – Dila. A year later their second boy was born. Paul worked and Trisha lived with two babies in a garage somewhere in northern France. The garage was small, but she had a big garden and chickens. She wouldn’t stay with her mum and stepfather. She wouldn’t stay with her father either. Paul’s uncle’s garage was good. Paul worked all the time. He borrowed money from family, from friends, from acquaintances. He was paying it back with his work, with chartering, by helping friends with their houses. He bought eighteen tons of aluminium, he learned, observed, surfing the Internet, he tried, he planned. Three years later Dila was ready. Invisibly, without insurance papers, she slipped into the sea. Trisha and Paul also didn’t have papers. Without health insurance, without social insurance papers, without a permanent address, they embarked together with their two children on Dila. The first sailing test was rigorous. A storm in the Bay

of Biscay, two toddlers aboard, France far behind. Paul stayed awake for three days, checking every joint, each pipe, and every screw. Dila survived. A week later I met them for the first time. A gray sailboat was anchored in the bay. All alone – the others were moored neatly in the marinas.

Every morning at nine o'clock, school starts on Dila. Trisha educates the children herself. Her stepfather, a school inspector, sends her official schoolbooks. Trisha seldom opens them; she doesn't use the official French home curriculum. But the stepfather still sends the schoolbooks. Trisha carries on an e-mail correspondence with a French language professor, she uses methods of visual language learning, she orders handbooks for painting and English story books via the Internet, she downloads funny mathematics games, she plays cards and dice with the boys and together they calculate the results. Sometimes they have art classes on the beach. Sometimes they plant tomatoes and basil with a Greek farmer named Kostas, sometimes they create a stage piece and perform it at a local school, sometimes they write an imaginary story day by day. Trisha wants to be a good teacher. Trisha is a good teacher. Her honest efforts and enthusiasm are contagious, so says Nataly. Nataly used to educate her children by following the official French home schooling system. When she met Trisha she stopped and her children now also paint on the beach. When Nataly set off with her children and her husband into the Atlantic and on into the Pacific Ocean, Trisha made a big world map with small paper boats stuck on it. One boat for Nataly and her family, one for the Scottish couple, another for the German family with the dog … Friends found their places on the map, colourful boats were moved around, e-mails came and went. It seems as if the world is smaller, it seems as if the people are closer.

Trisha is used to farewells. She says she does not like to attach herself too much to other people, she seldom cries at farewells. Her children maintain virtual friendships on the Internet, Trisha sometimes writes e-mails, sometimes group messages to all their friends and relatives. She writes as she moves, she writes when something big happens, like when she crossed the Atlantic with her children for the very first time. In group messages she writes only about nice moments. Trisha's letters are happy letters. A few years ago I received her e-mail: "We are waiting to cross the Panama Canal, you can see us today French time on the web-cam. Paul found work in Polynesia. Chartering along

Iceland didn't work out. Nobody applied!? Nataly and her children are waiting for us in Polynesia. How is your book getting on? Kisses, Trisha!" A few months ago I received a message: "Do you have time? I have big news. I am getting divorced. From now on I will live in France. I have to find a job."

Portrait 4

Helka and Marko wake up before the dawn. Their day begins at six o'clock in the morning. Their day ends at nine in the evening. There is nothing to do in the evenings, they say. Sometimes they watch a movie or surf the Internet. Only sometimes. Usually their boat is quiet and dark at nine o'clock. Every morning they exercise. On board, on the pier, on the beach. When December sunbeams build up their strength, Helka and Marko install themselves comfortably in the glittering white cockpit of their new boat. Their workout is done, the breakfast eaten, the plates washed and put in order, and it's reading time. Marko takes a deep cool breath of the mild Mediterranean winter and between the two chapters of his book looks up to the blue sky. The other inhabitants of the marina, those with groggy faces, they draw the curtains on the boat windows and continue to sleep.

In June 2007, Helka and Marko left Finland. That is how they planned it 27 years ago when they got married. It was Marko's fourth time, while Helka said "I do" for the first time. One day she would embark on the boat and sail with Marko around the world. Marko holds Helka to her word and Helka keeps her word. Marko began sailing 30 years ago. He is a self-taught sailor and a sea romantic. He wants to sail around the world, he had a small sailing boat even before they got married. He is a practical man, a building engineer. Marko wants to sail around the world and he doesn't want to be nannied and grannied. He wants to live an active retirement even if he dies on the boat, so he says. Helka had no other choice. Their working years behind them, they agreed to sell their house; Helka is attached to the house, attached to trees, rabbits, foxes, birds. And to the dog. Helka has no children. Helka had a dog, but the dog was old, too old to travel. So said the doctor. They had to put him down. So said the doctor. Marko has three children. Helka only had a dog.

And so the house is sold, the new boat launched and their first sailing trip is also the worst one. Helka and Marko sail into strong winds and slowly they leave Finland behind. Slowly and persistently. Helka is afraid, she doesn't know how to sail. In the worst moment she takes a swig of Jagermeister – for courage. Slowly and persistently they continue. On the way they stop. They check the weather forecast on the Internet. Helka always wants to know the forecast. Step by step, mile by mile. Sweden, Germany, Belgium, England. Mile by mile. The waves in the Bay of Biscay are huge. People say if you distance yourself from the Spanish coast, the waves get smaller. There are so many terrifying stories about Biscay. She takes another swig, followed by three days of constant sailing. Marko gets seasick, Helka gets accustomed. It's not so bad after all. Spain, Portugal. Mile by mile, Helka gets used to it. Gibraltar, Balearics, Sardinia. Mile by mile. With every new mile she gets better. They sold their house, she has no choice, so Helka gets accustomed. After three months of sailing they drop anchor in Tunisia. For two years, until Helka gets sick.

Surgery, recovery, medical tests. After eight months of Finnish hospitals, Helka and Marko return home – to Tunisia. In Tunisia there is no snow, no frozen streets, no darkness and no slush. In Tunisia there is sun and good food. Good and cheap. Helka and Marko eat out almost every evening. They go out for a dinner, for a drink. To see other people, but also not to just stare at one another all the time, Helka says. Days are becoming routine. Helka shops at the local market, she cooks, knits, observes and she applies for a French language course. The course is led by a stern young lady from the marina. She is less than half Helka's age. But the young teacher has old methods and new glasses. Authority has to be maintained. The young lady knows. Helka knows as well, because for more than thirty years, she was a teacher of English in a Finish school. She knows the methods, she likes to learn, she likes to teach.

Helka spends the next winter teaching English in Turkey. After five months of sailing around, Marko and Helka stop for six months in Turkey. Helka makes friends with a local merchant in the store near the marina and they strike a deal. The shopkeeper has children, Helka is an English teacher. Helka teaches the kids and the shopkeeper's wife cooks excellent lunches. Every day Marko and Helka eat at the shopkeeper's home while the children repeat after Helka: "a dog, a tree, a fox, a house, a dwarf …" That winter in Turkey is wonderful. Helka

feels useful, she gets to know the country, she goes to the concerts, to the opera, to the marketplaces. The prices are low; the sun is high. They stay another winter.

They give up the plan of sailing around the world. Helka is too afraid. Life alternates between seven months in a marina and five months of sailing. Sometimes they go to anchorages. Only sometimes, since in the anchorages there is no electricity, no water, no shower. They go back too, but one month of Finland is enough. In Finland they have a caravan. Life is set on new foundations. Moving foundations. Their self-confidence is returning, big expectations vanish, fears disappear, new questions are forming. Sometimes when it is hot, sultry, when the pain comes, a thought creeps in: "Maybe we should go back. Maybe we can exchange the boat for a house!" But houses are expensive and new boats lose value quickly. Helka and Marko continue on. From Turkey, across the Cyclades, they sail south to Crete.

Wintering on Crete is different. Crete is not Turkey. The marina isn't very nice, the Internet doesn't work, it rains a lot, the washing machine doesn't work, there is a swell in the marina, the people are not very open. Turkey was nothing like Crete, they agreed. The marina was good, the Internet worked, the weather was better, the washing machine worked, the marina was well protected and the Turks were much more open. And then there's the food. Food in Turkey is better and cheaper. From Crete they go back to Finland for Christmas, for the first time. They stay with Helka's sister. Marko gets a first grandchild. Maybe now they will return more often. Maybe.

Helka and Marko don't mingle with other people. Marko doesn't speak English. Finns are a quiet people. There are English people everywhere. And French people, and German people, they noticed. Usually one boat invites the other for dinner and then the invitation is returned. Helka and Marko don't invite anyone and are also not invited. On Crete it was different. They met Finns and Swedes. The Scandinavian group links up, invitations go around, dinners are cooked, coffee brewed, and walking sticks clank as the group goes hiking. It is nice to be a part of a group. It is so easy to talk in your own language. The mind is relaxed, the body is relaxed, thoughts easily slip into the words. And words trigger more thoughts, and more words upon those. Spontaneous, fast and relaxed, like breathing. New friendships are forged. Marko and Helka also keep in touch with old friends. Helka writes, Marko calls.

When Helka left Finland she had 50 friends with whom she exchanged e-mails. Today she has 38. Maybe 35. Tomorrow? Maybe 30.

Marko joins an international choir made up of English, Germans and Scandinavians on Crete. Before Christmas they put on a concert. An international audience of English, Germans and Scandinavians come to listen. Moments of happiness. Helka used to have many hobbies as well. Concerts, operas, tai chi, hanging out with her friends … Where can she practice tai chi in Greece? On the beach? Alone? For certain things you simply need other people, she explains. Helka used to train tai chi for 24 years in Finland. In the last several years she even became an instructor. She felt healthy. So strong. Moments of happiness.

Helka sits in the cockpit of her white boat and knits socks. Socks are a nice present for Christmas. Marko sits beside her and sings. In his arms he is holding a guitar. He bought it in Turkey two years ago. Unknown Finish melodies float around the Greek marina while the afternoon winter sun pleasantly warms our bodies. Above them, fresh laundry flutters in the air. On black T-shirts there are white spots. The washing machine does not work properly on Crete. In front of Helka there is a concrete pier, a web-like net of ropes, the forest of masts, skyscrapers … Somewhere far away, high above the houses of Agios Nikolaos, the mountains touch the sky. In winter time they have white caps. Helka likes to look at mountains. She breaths deeply the freshness of the Mediterranean winter, and between one and another thread of the sock she looks up to the blue sky. Other inhabitants of the marina admire masts. Helka prefers to look at mountains.

Portrait 5

Tom and Prudence are independent free agents in their late fifties. Prudence is tough, with dark eyes, strong hands and thick messy hair. A loud and confident woman, and a primary and secondary school teacher by profession. With Tom they are equal in many ways. In sailing, taking desalinators to pieces, writing articles, taming pupils, cooking, physical strength, leading the conversation, walking in the Himalayas, climbing the mast and cleaning the toilet. Tom is lean, agile, with dark eyes, and thick messy hair. A brawny teacher with the look of a sunburnt rock-climber, always ready for new challenges. They

are alike in many ways. In taking bikes to pieces, repairing engines, quarrelling, navigation and cleaning pots. Together they have passed through many years and places and through this movement they weave the threads of monotony and boredom into colourful patterns. Experienced backpackers, always ready to shove off, they have forgotten the years and the years have forgotten them. Tom and Prudence met in their early twenties in England. As a child Tom lived in Tanzania and Uganda with his parents. Prudence, the oldest child in a family of seven children, was always near at hand for babysitting. The decision was clear. There will be no children, there will be no house, eternal motion it will be. Boat? Who knew anything about sailing back then! School? Who knew that we would end up as school teachers? One year of working, one year of travelling, one year of working, one year of travelling. That will do. They can always get a job at TfL (Transport for London). Central America, Patagonia, Asia and India were always fuelling new desires, new ideas and new plans for travelling. Once Tom got work and a scholarship in New Zealand. Prudence joined him. Tom started to teach science; Prudence started to teach English, economics, sociology and anthropology. Prudence doesn't like teaching, she never did. She began teaching because it fit in well with travelling. There is a lack of English teachers all around the world, jobs are always available, the world is big, so Prudence passed her teaching exam. Later on she completed a Masters degree in applied linguistics. It sounds nice on your CV, but sometimes there's no teaching work no matter what your CV looks like. Then Tom and Prudence took every job they found, they picked fruit, they worked in warehouses, they cleaned boats, worked in greenhouses. One year of working, one year of travelling, maybe half a year of working, eight months of travelling. Until a life of adventure became routine. They've travelled with buses, cars and trucks, on foot, hitchhiked, on planes, through mountains, canyons, flatlands and high plateaus. What now? How to continue?

One day Tom and Prudence went to a library. They went through all the bookshelves on adventure. One book, written by a sailor, got their attention. The man had embarked on a 19-footer and sailed the world. Later he wrote a book about it. "If he did it, we can do it!", Tom and Prudence both decided. This time one year of working became two years, maybe even a few months more. They got their boating licence and then bought their very first boat in New Zealand. It was 1986.

The ten-meter sailing boat cost less than they expected. The boat was old, wooden and in dire need of repair. It was built in 1933. When the boat was ready, they sailed off with no sailing experience, with a plastic sextant worth 25 dollars and a small radio, all the way from New Zealand to Caledonia. Eight hundred nautical miles, 17 days, headwinds and storms. Luckily at least the radio did not fail. When French was getting louder and clearer on the airwaves, they knew they were approaching land. They landed and promised themselves they would never ever go back on the open sea. Adventure is adventure, life is life. Sailing just doesn't suit them. Sitting in the cockpit of the boat, they spend the next few months writing work applications. Somewhere between the twentieth and twenty-fifth application it finally hit home: living on a boat is damn cheap. Adventure is adventure, life is life. No rent, no bills, no mortgages. The ideal home. A mobile home. They clench their teeth and set off towards Australia.

In Australia, Tom and Prudence stay for a year. They apply themselves to all sorts of work. Picking fruit, helping in warehouses, cleaning … Once, on one of their adventurous travels, Prudence performed surgery on herself. The wound on Pru's finger was ulcerating, they were in a remote location, there was no doctor around, just a nurse without any proper equipment. Pus and the black tissue were spreading. Prudence decides and cuts her finger off.

After spending the year in Australia they sail further on. Their life keeps its old rhythm – one year of working, one year of sailing – but it acquires new content. And breadth, the expanse of sea-lanes. From Australia they continue to New Guinea. It is 1989. There they get a job in one of the local schools. A year and a half passes, the contract will expire soon. What to do? Should we stay or should we go? They stay. They write to the governmental office and they get a new job. A four-years contract at a remote school on the north side of the island. The school was by the sea, so they could live on the boat, the children were nice, they decided they would rather remain for a while in the school than work on the land. Their old life was running on new tracks. They were getting better and better at teaching, the references in their CVs were growing, they got jobs easily, time went by. Ten years they spent on New Guinea. It was only in the last year of the ten that they decided for a change. Through the tourist office they got involved in a project dealing with eco-tourism. Once again they travel, they learn how to sail, they write articles, observe, they submit reports … A year goes

by and new plans emerge. They will sell their old boat, buy a new one and sail with it around the world for four years completing the voyage in New Zealand. Why New Zealand? Because they bought a hectare of land in New Zealand. Why land? In case the boat sinks, because they do not want to pay rent to anyone, because land means safety.

It was 1998. The beginning of the Internet, mobile phones, Tom sees a job advertisement for work in Darwin. He applies but receives no call so they prepare to cros the Tasmanian sea again. This time with more experience, with a better and bigger boat, with new nautical technology, with a better compass, with GPS, weather forecasts … Then the phone rings: Tom got the job in Darwin. Darwin is far away, boats are slow, the first day of work is fast approaching, the school offers to pay half of the fee to transport the boat across land. Tom, Prudence and the boat come to Darwin on time. For two years and a half they anchor among the mangrove trees. Mangroves become their new home, new anchorage, a new address. When they want to renew their driving licences, the civil servant on the other side of the window asks: "Permanent address?" "We have no permanent address. We live on a boat," they explain. "It doesn't work like that!" says the civil servant. "I have to fill out the form!" They think, they ponder, have we ever had such cases before, what can we do. "Where do you have the boat?" he finally asks. "There, among the mangroves," they explain. "Let it be Mangrove Street 1," concludes the civil servant.

New year, same old story. Tom gets a job in New Zealand. It's a long way down to New Zealand, the boat is slow, the weather unstable, and again his first day at work is approaching. They decide to put the boat on the ferry and fly. The additional year in New Zealand is important, as Tom and Prudence count on getting New Zealand citizenship. It is 2006. Tom and Prudence become citizens and with their new boat they set off. Just before they leave they meet a woman, a single-handed sailor who sailed around the world in the 1970s. Tom and Prudence are about to start their own journey thirty years later. They compare experiences. In the 1970s and 1980s there were younger people living on boats, mostly long-term travellers, adventurers, sportsmen, also a few families. Today there are more and more retired folk, the development of navigational equipment making it possible for everyone to go out to sea, sailing is not what it used to be, sailing communities are like small towns, they say. Once sailing was adventurous, several years of crazy, heroic deeds. Today sailing is a lifestyle. So says Prudence.

Nevertheless, Tom and Prudence embark on their around-the-world journey in quest of new adventures. From Australia to Indonesia they join the Indonesian Rally. It is easier this time, more comfortable, papers are arranged, people are in contact through VHS, the journey is long. On the way to Indonesia, Tom and Prudence meet new people. They get to know the kind of people who got an itch in their sixties: I have to do something with my life. They get to know the wives who follow their men, they get to know families, those who travel rich and those who travel poor. Friends? "No, we do not have friends. These are people with whom we share the same experience. We talked for months on VHS, we went through the same troubles, we saw the same places, we faced similar problems and pleasures. You choose friends according to your personal affinities, according to education, political beliefs …" Fellow travellers share experiences of travel, but life companions share the experience of life. They also meet a group with whom they sail in 2008 in a military-type convoy through the Red Sea. The Mediterranean was not a plan, but pirate stories changed their plan. New fellow travellers appear, caught in the same net of experiences.

Tom and Prudence are not used to the Mediterranean. Prices are high, anchorages full, the places in the schools are taken. Maybe they will have to go back to England for a year. Back to one year of working, one year of travelling. By coincidence they come across an advertisement on the Internet. An anonymous employer is looking for ghostwriters of recycled articles for his web page. They apply for the job and get it. The pay is not very good, but the terms are more than favourable. The work can be done on the boat so there is no need to go back to England. In England, Tom and Prudence feel like strangers. They don't have friends, their siblings live in another world, they never have time, they are being swallowed by the rat race, they explained. There is no need to go back to England! They accept the work.

Crete, the port of Agios Nikolaos. All the inhabitants of the marina fall asleep, there is just one boat glittering in the night. Tom and Prudence are writing. When they finish their articles, they read. They read blogs by other travellers, books by their friends, and thoughts of sailors. Tom is interested in how journeys end. How to calm down the motion? Why calm down the motion? Tom and Prudence make a decision. Future plan? New adventures.

Portrait 6

The northern coast of Crete. Anchorages are empty, big waves are slamming against the big breakwaters, sailboats are moored snugly in marinas or city ports. All except one. The red steel boat always spends winters at anchorages. Not just winter, spring and summer too. And autumn. It's cheaper that way, there is more freedom, life is easier, the stars are brighter. Drinkable water is damn far away, it is terribly unpleasant to go shopping on rainy days, following the weather forecast is an everyday routine, and if the wind generator doesn't spin there is no evening movie. Two cats promenade on the deck of the red sailboat, above them there is a clothesline heavy with fresh laundry, an old frayed dinghy tied to the stern of the boat. Tony once saved it from certain death. He dragged the sunk hull from the sea, dried it and patched it. Right now Tony is preparing his bags. He is leaving for England to visit his sons. For two weeks. Linda will stay on the boat because Tony and Linda always travel home separately. Because of the cats, because of the boat, because it is more convenient, because they visit different families. Tony isn't worried about the boat, and he isn't worried about Linda.

A week later Linda is expecting a friend to come and visit. Tony studies the weather forecast on his son's computer. It's a gray and rainy day in England, but the weather forecast for Crete is strong north winds rising. Linda is used to taking prompt action. From her nineteenth year she worked in the army as a nurse. Linda drops an additional anchor, she lengthens the rope and pulls the dinghy out of the water. First she goes to Lidl for supplies, then she drives to the airport and back as quickly as possible. Before the waves get bigger, before the dinghy gets too small to handle the big waves. Linda is used to taking prompt action. Tony isn't worried about the boat, and he isn't worried about Linda. Nevertheless, Linda gets a text from some acquaintances in the nearby marina: "If you need any help, call!" She also gets a call from her English friends that own a house on Crete: "Do you really want to sleep on the boat?" Tony calls as well: "Everything OK honey?"

The weather is sunny and calm. Tony returns from England with a new computer, a bag full of boat equipment and a disappointed face. His younger son doesn't behave properly, his mother brought him up her way. They had an agreement that the boy should come to the boat to visit him, but now he doesn't want to come. His eldest is different, he

grew up with Tony. He doesn't drink, he's hardworking, he respects his elders, he has a serious relationship, Tony explains.

The first time, Tony and Linda choose Crete by coincidence, the second time on purpose. Maybe they will come for the third time. Force of habit? Feeling of comfort? Winters on Crete are inviting. On land they have English friends, the anchorage is very safe and free, the island is beautiful, they have many acquaintances in a nearby marina. Tony turned fifty on Crete, Linda will join him in three years. This is their second winter here. The next one will be the last one. Probably. Afterwards they will set out on a journey around the world. Or they could wait a little longer. The boat must be fully equipped, sailing knowledge improved, and all has to be done in good time. They need new sails, a desalinator, a sewing machine and Linda needs to pass her exam for sailing instructor. As an ex-member of the army she can choose different educational courses free of charge. This year she chooses navigation, seven years ago she did an exam to become an English teacher, so she could work in a school after she retired from the army. Costs for the house were high, life became expensive and teaching was how she could put by some money. For the departure, to travel free.

Tony and Linda left England in 2008. The Mediterranean was not their first plan, the departure sort of just happened. Tony and Linda were at a party, surrounded by their friends, the working week over, booze flowing, words telling stories, emotions flitting across their faces, the blur of smoke softening the harsh edge of the day. Tony hears a female voice from across the room: "I've had enough of everything. I won't be teaching anymore in this bloody school. Every day I have less hours, they cut my salary, these lads go to school just because they must, because they get benefits if they sit in school, so the government can improve its unemployment statistics. Life in England is getting more and more expensive. We are leaving! We are leaving!" Tony thinks: "Maybe she's had too much to drink, maybe he didn't hear right, maybe in the morning, when the smoke is gone, when the emotions and stories are forgotten, maybe in the morning it will be like it always used to be." Eight hours working, TV, shopping, an evening in a pub, eight hours working, TV, shopping, an evening without a pub … In the morning the resolve is still there. We are leaving! Are you in?

Tony is up for it. He's been up for leaving since he was nineteen, when he first embarked on a trawler and stayed there till he was trans-

ported on a stretcher to the nearby hospital. Ten years he trawled in the North Sea, he cleaned nets on his knees, he crawled on the deck collecting tons and tons of catch, and at thirty years of age he was confined to his bed. Something snapped in his back. Tony needed surgery and for three years he lived off disability benefits, but the lure of the sea didn't wane. "Strange," said his fellow fishermen. "He that would go to sea for pleasure, would go to hell for a pastime." And yet Tony's heartfelt wish to be out at sea hasn't faded. At sea Tony feels free, at sea nature's set of rules takes over, the administrative rules stay in the port. He left fishing because of the health problems, because fishing is becoming unprofitable, because of the quota system. "The world is turning in a wrong direction. One man, one boat. That is how I would arrange the world. If it's not like that, I don't play!" decides Tony and he retrains to become a plasterer. He buys tools and a small truck and then stencil-sprays "Painters and Decorators" on the side of the van and divorces his first wife. The older son stays with him, the youngest stays with mum. Tony starts to introduce his son into the builders' work, he meets Linda, years go by, a desire for change grows. Linda always wanted to travel. That is why she chose to work in the army after all, to travel. During her work she traveled just once. To Germany. What a disappointment. When she retires in her forties, she starts to hatch new plans together with Tony. One day we will buy a sailing boat, we will sail the world, we will change our life for the better. "Life is for living, not for working," Tony frequently says. "We will set off in 2012!" they agreed. "Maybe a year later."

In 2008 Tony and Linda leave. They leave before planned and unexpectedly. The construction sector in England collapses. Tony is familiar with the story. He has been through it in the fishery. He feels it impact him personally. The truck with the words "Painters and Decorators" written on it can maintain only one person. He gives his trade, the van and all his tools to his older son. Linda is not pleased either. Teaching in the worst area, stress, salaries, staff and working hours all being cut. So when Tony and Linda were at the party, surrounded by friends, the working week over, alcohol flowing, the voice from the other side of the room reached Tony's ears: we are leaving! Tony sells his half of the house and buys a 14-meter homemade steel boat. A strong, bulky, workhorse of a boat that's reminiscent of a submarine. Linda rents out her house, so it pays for itself. Tony and Linda leave in 2008.

The Bay of Biscay, Portugal, France, Balearic Islands, Italy, Greece. And still in Greece to this very day. Why Greece? Because they met people along the way who recommended Greece, because Greece is cheap, because the rules are flexible, because they found work with an English sailing agency called Sun Holiday, because they have English friends on Crete. Tony and Linda rest during the winter, they work during the summer. They clean boats, arrange ropes, they carry dirty bedding from the boats. They also take with them all the leftovers that the charter guests leave behind; olive oil, toilet paper, fly traps, coffee, tinned food … The owners of the company would throw it away anyway. Next year they will train themselves as sailmakers. A new sewing machine is already on the boat, the winter is the best time to learn, and there are plenty of customers. English customers trust English sailmakers. A lot of English people come to Greece. A lot of English people live in Greece. Greece is a sanctuary for liveaboards. The last sanctuary? So say some. Greece is a cemetery of English boats. So say others.

Tony and Linda lead a peaceful, steady and satisfied life on Crete. The day begins with a cup of coffee in bed. And with breakfast. Tony makes it, Linda takes care of all the other meals. Tony maintains the boat; Linda takes care of food and laundry. After breakfast, Tony scrubs the rust from the boat, paints the deck, sews sails or tinkers with the engine. After Linda washes and hangs the bedding, she sits in front of the computer. She reads nautical web pages, sailing forums, she corresponds with friends, sisters, nephews, and follows the weather forecast. When they go to the market, they go together, but hardly ever stop for coffee in town. "Tourists drink coffee, locals sit in front of the butcher's or the mechanic drinking ouzo, we walk. And observe." Linda takes her time cooking. The saloon is stuffed with cookbooks. And nautical books, and manuals for guitar playing, wedding photos, photos of Tony's sons and Linda's nephews. The afternoon is reserved for reading, guitar playing, scrubbing or painting the deck, resting, shopping in big supermarkets and walking. Tony and Linda sometimes pick wild lemons and they make jam. They also pick bunches of thyme flowers and dry them to make tea. Sometimes Tony dives and catches fish. Sometimes a seal wants to catch Tony. When it happens, then the evenings stretch into nights, stories become particularly interesting. These evenings are set aside for meeting English friends from land or other boat people. Lidl has cheap wine, the Mediterranean nights are

fragrant, the next day belongs to you only. Under such circumstances, when stars and stories are shooting, the tide washes out even the most secret plans. "My plan is to sail to Polynesia. If I fail it doesn't matter. Then we'll live on a barge, like my parents are living on. Life is for living, not for working! Linda, are you in?"

Discussion

By constructing and examining biographical portraits I was able to zoom in and out and observe my interlocutors' life in a broader scale, linking locations, families, friends, states, borders, books, plans and coincidences in a unified, never-ending game. By examining their paths, I realised that I was practicing multi-sited ethnography – not by following Marcus' (1995) theoretical prescriptions but by swimming along with my interlocutors' descriptions and experiences. From the perspective of my research, the relations between places (Germany – Igoumenitsa, different eastern Mediterranean anchorages in Greece, Turkey and Italy) were as important as the relations within certain places (the port of Agios Nikolaos in Crete embedded in the city life of this largest Greek island). In examining the life journeys of my interlocutors I was also able to observe the plurality of times; a biographical time (a personal event – the birth of a child or the death of a parent), a political time (economic and political crises in certain Western European states that made some of my interlocutors redundant), a Mediterranean time (tourism development in the western Mediterranean that influenced prices and the tempo of holidays or the incredible length of wet Mediterranean winters if one lives on a boat), a climate time (winter and spring-summer-autumn patterns) that all have a certain role in the framework of the portraits presented. Participant observation *in situ* on the other hand helped me to zoom into the daily or yearly experiences and routines of my interlocutors. In all these endeavours biographies of selected crews were the cornerstone of my research. It was through observing persons, participating in their lives, personally experiencing a liveaboard's life and by reconstructing their biographies that I hoped to connect places, people and ideas outside the conventional frameworks.

Following this specific research path I came to the conclusion that an in-depth investigation of migrants' lives on a broader spatio-temporal scale is especially important due to the fact that 1) through biographies we as researchers are able to understand migration within the trajectories of individual lives; 2) we gain knowledge about the whole migration experience (undivided between

pre- and post-migration) and 3) we can reflect on the merging of the agency-environment entity – in my case specifically by trying to understand cultural narratives in practice or as transformed/confirmed through experiences. For Fritz the sea is a constant struggle, for Ines the maritime journey was a change (and continuation) of her previous life (volunteering in Africa would also be an option); for both of them raising their children while travelling on the boat was their dream of a better life, a better world, with a better educational system, with more time for family and children, a more nature-attuned life, as they stressed. Their choice was not only connected with the question of where to live but also *how* to live, this also the case with Brian Hoey's subjects who moved to rural areas of Michigan (2005). Their choice can also be perceived as a play-work-existence self-experiment on the sea, through which they gain new skills, new time (e.g. new family time outside of the "institutional school time" or it could also be said that they migrated to another time) and new perspectives on their initial ideas (of freedom for example). The sea as it is framed within Western cultural narratives fits well with ideas of freedom and change (to a better life, a better school), with the idea of self-contemplation (personal move away from consumerism and the neo-liberal economy to a simpler life), adventure and escape (from patronage for example, as the Coopers, a pair of well-known retired sailors, wrote: "When we get very old we get patronized, nannied and grannied, and swept onto the scrapheap." (1994a: 3)), but the practical realities of living on the boat (especially with a family and without a pension) reveal other aspects as well. For Fritz and Ines, sailing adventurously, "the old way", didn't feel safe; living in a confined space resulted in quarrels, and while constantly looking for money they both felt agitated and finally started to turn on each other. Usually my interlocutors of working age were involved in precarious seasonal jobs such as tourism (chartering or working for charter agencies as Linda and Tony did, sailing or diving schools), peripatetic jobs in marinas (sail repair, engine work, boat repair, etc.) or they were involved in long-distance jobs associated with their previous professions (translation, computer programming, art, etc.), all the while having to make various money arrangements to get through the year. Their arrivals and departures (to or from their boat or home country) were not seen as start/finish events but as blurred areas merging into the never-ending process that was their life. In the case of Dave and Ann, the sea was suitable because it offered them a platform for more adventure while they turned disadvantage (redundancy) into opportunity (sea journey) and chose an active retirement. Their experiment of actively coping with redundancy was prolonged beyond a temporary experience but was then later on structured within the oscillation between ports and winter sailing communities (forms of belonging) and summer voyages on the open sea

(unbelonging). As we saw from the above portraits, seasonal times are much different from the perspective of liveaboards (in the Mediterranean) and cannot be compared on similar grounds. Spring-summer-autumn hours spent on the move and structured around weather circumstances (sailing in strong or light winds has a strong influence on the perception of time), loose social relations (in contrast to "rich" winter social life in marina) and Mediterranean summer heat all contribute to a different experience of time (working in tourist centres or relocating north to different places but also times). Following Ann and Dave we could observe how cultural narratives together with sea imaginaries (adventure, freedom, etc.) were as important as their own individual creative strategy in coping with redundancy. Dave and Ann didn't have to think about their money arrangements since they had savings from selling their apartment, but after a decade of living on the boat they felt like they were circulating on the same track (along with other retired people living on boats), following BBC news while the adventure somehow faded away in this liminal position of "always leaving and never arriving". They became aware of the humidity, the wetness, the windiness of their new home and they also became aware of the fact that they are not unique in their endeavours (writing in their blogs about "the flood" of British expats to Spain). They were not desperate, they still enjoyed the "Greek sun" from their small cockpit, they just reflected on their position sardonically (as was also evident from their blogs). In all portraits, my interlocutors talked about themselves as being adventurers, risk-takers (Fritz didn't use GPS), maybe even heroes (Ann and Dave entertained this notion when they left home the first time), however it seems as if they didn't in fact escape from the conventional structure but, as Benson argued for her interlocutors in rural France (2011), repositioned themselves within it. Ines and Fritz in a way left "the old life" but didn't give up all its privileges and obligations. Ines gave birth in a German hospital (because she felt it was more professional), they kept their apartment in Germany and they choose a "German village" to winter in. Upon the death of Ines's mother, they felt obliged to return to Germany. Coming back was a step backwards (in the same structure) for them even if they were "heroes" among their German friends as "the ones who left". Is this escape or is something else happening here and should it be investigated outside the fixed categories of tourists, escapists, migrants and vagrants?

Following these portraits, it is important to pay attention to the process of (un)learning and to the skills and knowledge they acquired on the way. The initial sea imaginaries and ideas about this lifestyle of freedom were enriched with the new knowledge about *windiness and hardship* (the experiences of the storms, the experience of always following the weather forecast carefully, etc.), of *wetness* (in

Liveaboard children constructing wooden toys on the pier and communicating in a mixture of Slovene, French and English (photo: Nataša Rogelja, July 2008, Plataria, Greece).

the wintertime, as Dave and Ann pointed out), of the *perpetual moving* reality of the fluid environment as well as knowledge of the *constant change* of social relations, *limited space* (in contrast to the image of the openness of the sea), *invisibility* (e.g. being without a permanent address and migrant status), different *bodily conditions* (seasickness, a feeling of health, etc.) but also enriched by ideas about the *stillness* of this life in comparison to the busy life they had led in their home countries. Although life at sea is difficult to sustain, my interlocutors also acquired new skills, for example how to lead family-work-school life in the new context, how to have less things, how to stay invisible, how to create an economy outside the "possible" paths, and how to live actively in their retirement. Some also acquired various social skills which enabled them to adapt quickly to new situations. It is important to note that these new skills and knowledge were also developed through the process of unlearning. While they put themselves in the position of "swimming along", the process of unlearning was activated and in the case of my interlocutors was translated into an active position of unbelonging.

It may be that my interlocutors plotted potential ways out or around for future lifestyle migrants or for their personal future experiments. It is interesting to note that for almost all of my interlocutors, the lifestyle migration to a boat was a temporary period of five to ten years followed by the return to the land (home country as in the case of Fritz and Ines or other locations) or by a wish for or act of relocation (several of the cases I followed sold their boat and bought a house or dreamed of buying a house in rural areas of France, in French Polynesia, rural Spain or rural Sweden as was the case with Fritz's friends). Those who moved back to the cities reported how they missed the physical aspects of their previous life most; the air, their health, stars, sleeping outside … Several of my interlocutors went on to live in "mobile homes" (Helka and Marko for example) such as caravans or house-trucks, illustrating how their time at sea plotted the way for further experiments.

All these details – oscillating between migration, tourism and travelling – as presented in the above portraits ultimately boil down to the three simple questions: 1) Who exactly are the migrants? 2) How can we define migration (ontology)? 3) How do we get a grasp on the floating interlocutors and which comparisons are reasonable (methodology)? Following my fieldwork example, I argue that creating a solid relational foundation between ontology and methodology can furthermore produce meaningful questions and possibly also meaningful answers. But before sketching my answer to the questions of how we can conceive the migration of my interlocutors, how we can connect "movement, representation and practice", and how we can trace this specific "constellation of mobility" (Cresswell 2010) in the next two chapters I would like to invite you to became more intimately acquainted with the yearly and daily routes of liveaboards.

PLACES AND PRACTICES OF REST: INHABITING PORTS, ANCHORAGES AND MARINAS

LIDL shops are very popular among liveaboards in Greece (photo: Nataša Rogelja, August 2009, Preveza, Greece).

PORTS

Crete, the port of Agios Nikolaos. Winter. A retired Finnish couple sits in their shining white cockpit, pretending to read, while in fact gazing at the sea. On their boat's port side, Bob, a redundant worker in his late fifties is drinking and watching the sea. Pablo, a strongly built man in his thirties, freelancer and sailor, holding the mast with his right hand, a screwdriver in his left, is meters above the sea, loudly reporting his observations to his assistant on the deck far below. Tom and Prudence are in Agios Nikolaos for the first time. Last year they sailed up the Red Sea to Turkey, this year they sailed to Crete. They've just taken apart their desalinator. They bought it a long time ago in Australia. Desalinators are expensive but important, and they bought a second-hand one. Water is expensive in the Caribbean, ocean passages are long, a desalinator is a must-have. Their plan for tomorrow is the helm. The boat is important. The boat protects the sailors. "Have you now realized what it means to be a liveaboard? It is about boat- repairing in exotic places!" they joke and laugh with their piercing voices. Pablo high above the marina agrees with them. Bob with whisky in hand agrees as well. One day, 15 years ago, when they were in their twenties, Tom and Prudence went to a library together. They refused to spend their life working for big corporations; paying back their loans; living in a house that would be way too big for them. They went through all the books on sea, travel and adventure. One book in particular, written by a French sailor, caught their attention. The man had set out alone around the world in 1968 to distance himself from the consumerism and environmental destruction of the West. Later he wrote a book about it. "The coast is a great whore," he wrote. They thought: "If he was able to do it then, we can do it now!" They set off. The clear blue winter sky begins to glow against the orange hues of the setting sun. People slowly disappear beneath the decks of their boats. Later on, in the evening, I was invited to Tom and Prudence's boat. I explained about my research and was able to start with my interview questions. At the end of the evening, Tom asked me sarcastically: "But

how on earth will you compare all these stories and people. We have nothing in common except the sea." (From the fieldwork diary, December, 2011, Crete)

Winter rest spaces such as the port of Agios Nikolaos are related to sociability. They are full of people, big stories, small talk and new plans. These are the places where boats stop for a while and bodies as well as minds are involved in a different kind of movement (e.g. routine walking to the nearby shop, meditating over the same mountain peak every evening, regular meetings or occasional dinners with new or old friends, differently structured week-time etc.). From there, most of people's new personal and spatial relations are established and/or ruined; experiences, books and clothes are exchanged and future plans are devised. "Sell-up and sail" stories, "big storm" stories or simply the stories about "how do you sustain this life" (economically and socially) pop out very frequently within these settings. From the anthropological point of view, rest spaces are locations where you can do more or less stationary participant observation among liveaboards – hanging around, establishing and joining the everyday routine, drinking, smiling, eating, hiking, playing, working and crying with the people. These locations nevertheless have certain specifics obtaining to them. At first glance they look comfortably bounded, yet after a while, as we will see in the conclusion to this chapter, they open up numerous uncomfortable questions regarding the theoretical frameworks linked to community, collectivity, identity, mobility as well as methodology. Apart from the livaboards, there are of course also local inhabitants present in the port who make important contributions to the winter life in the port; they for example work in the port administration or cleaning services, and there are local fishermen and local sailors in the port as well as other local inhabitants (afternoon strollers, restaurant owners, shopkeepers etc.) who cannot be edited out of the picture. Small ports or marinas such as Agios Nikolaos are different from places en route (e.g. cafes, waiting rooms, big transport ports, motels, harbours, airports). The fluctuation of people as well as social relations within these settings is different. In a way they resemble summer camps, serving also as an experimental setting for the "instant village" or "instant community". The fluctuation of people is slower and consequently the relations between people are more intensive in comparison to summer camps.

Inhabitants on the boats are, broadly speaking, an international group of people from the West.[10] Apart from the sea, as Tom explained, the other

10 The term "West" is used here in a loose manner referring to those societies and people from the more affluent countries of Western Europe but also some other countries with firm historical,

common denominator is their middle-class backgrounds.[11] These middle-class backgrounds have to be considered in plurality and observed with scepticism, while the plurality, following my research, shouldn't be solely linked with the national context but should be understood through various and sometimes unexpected relations. We shouldn't be afraid of breaking down the traditional entities or our understandings of entities or comparing people who share similar lifestyles but are unaware of each other. Regarding the research presented, I would argue that my interlocutors possess a relatively high level of cultural capital achieved through education and occupation (they are university-educated, they had or have jobs as IT specialists, teachers, managers, illustrators, anthropologists, artists, nurses), they see themselves as middle-class representatives (emic category) and their aspirations and anxieties as displayed within my research were relatively similar. All these issues together with Tom's opening comment ("But how on earth will you compare all these stories and people. We have nothing in common except the sea.") broach questions related to numerous theoretical issues but most strikingly to community. How should I employ the term "middle class" with respect to my research? Reflections on the port of Agios Nikolaos and on the relations within this setting (as displayed in winter months) could be understood as a small exercise establishing a dialogue with larger questions as posed by Nigel Rapport and Vered Amit, namely how is anthropology to theoretically approach a world characterised by plurality,

Mardi Gras in the port of Agios Nikolas (photo: Nataša Rogelja, February 2012, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

cultural and ethnic ties to Western Europe (e.g. the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia). See also Korpela (2009), Juntunen, Kalčić, Rogelja (2013).

11 See footnote 6.

transgression and irony in terms of socio-cultural identities; and in a world of movement, how do people conceive of community and how do they work towards effectuating its continued existence (2002: 2)?

Not every port in the Mediterranean functions as liveaboards' winter rest-spot and various factors contribute to it being just such a rest-spot, namely prices, safe berths (from winds and waves), the political situation, micro- and macro-geographical location, size, town/village infrastructure etc. They are also not of a stable character, as the change in one factor (political situation or prices) can result in the place becoming totally unattractive almost over the night. To find these places one must go with the flow. I discovered the port of Agios Nikolaos almost by accident. That autumn I sailed with my family across the Aegean Sea. The plan was to go to the southern Turkish coast and spend the winter there, as I had often heard from my interlocutors that this part of the Mediterranean was quite popular with non-European sailing boats with American, Australian and New Zealand flags, and whose crews wanted to take a long winter's rest in the northern Mediterraenan (the duration of a EU visa for American citizens was, at the time of this research, up to three months). On the way to Turkey, somewhere in the middle of the Aegean Sea, we stopped for a night in the anchorage at Paros island. Entering the big bay of Paros we spotted a sailing boat embellished with bicycles and laundry. This is almost a sure sign of a liveaboards' boat. The night was quiet, we didn't have to worry about the anchor and we could easily visit our new neighbours approaching them on a flat sea surface with our worn-out dinghy. We asked the British couple, Linda and Tony, if there was fresh water on the beach (a classic liveaboard question). We exchanged a few words about the water, the port of Paros and the weather over the next few days, and we also asked them about their plans. We discovered they were headed to Crete. They enthusiastically told us how they had already spent several winters at this largest of Greek islands. They also told us that in the port of Agios Nikolaos there would be more than eighty inhabited boats wintering there. They had that information from their friends who were already there. Next morning we turned our rudder to the south and joined them. After two days we arrived at the port of Agios Nikolas and stayed there for three months. This place provided a rich yield for my fieldwork on the maritime-lifestyle migration topic, both in terms of the quality and the quantity of data I gathered that winter. Linda and Tony stayed the whole winter at the wild anchorage near Agios Nikolas (which will be presented in the next section of this chapter on wild anchorages and unfinished Greek marinas) while we managed to squeeze our boat into a very packed Agios Nikolaos marina.

When we arrived I started to organise my fieldwork research. In the port's toilet I found a notice board with various activities (travel lectures every second Thursday afternoon, music jam session every Monday evening, crochet class Wednesday morning, an invitation to *boules* at the beach every Saturday …) and in the laundry room I spotted a bookshelf full of used and rather damp books, most of them in English, but some also in French, German and Scandinavian languages; I took a book from the famous British sailors Bill and Laurel Cooper down from the old bookshelf. Then I did what most anthropologists would do – I inscribed my name under as many activities as possible. After a couple of days I had already arranged for some interview meetings with several crews and although the "sell up and sail" stories didn't have such importance in the everyday life of the port, as I later discovered, they somehow regularly came out on the occasion of these first interviews. Methodologically speaking, first interviews usually have a "thin" character (in comparison to "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1973) stemming from the participant-observation approach) and they cannot be used as representative information on the topic. Nevertheless, they point towards topics that interlocutors want to stress in the interview situation or topics people assume should be mentioned. As "public, semi-formal events" they also reflect the socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and which are used as meaning-making and world-shaping devices, namely in terms of imaginaries, to use Salazar's interpretation (Salazar, Graburn 2014: 1; Salazar 2012). Data gathered through participant observation are of a different character. They go deep into the everyday routines, they uncover the splendor of imaginaries and they are not so exciting as the first interviews might have been. In what follows we will look more closely at the "sell up and sail" stories, we will follow one ordinary winter day in the port of Agios Nikolaos, and we will also observe special events in the port such as the Christmas celebration, Sunday picnics and cultural evenings.

"Sell up and Sail" Stories

Books and other carriers of intangible materials had and still have a great influence on the initial imaginaries and ongoing plans of my interlocutors. Many of these books travel together with my interlocutors but sometimes they also remain for a while in nautical clubs and port toilets waiting to be exchanged, read or just adopted. If the French sailor Bernard Montessier attracts the attention of more adventurous sailors like Tom and Prudence (whom we met in the introductory excerpt of this chapter) the *Sell up and Sail* bestseller by Bill and

Laurel Cooper circulates mostly among retired or soon to be retired people and is one of the books that has become the bible of long-term cruising in the third-age period. One can find Cooper's book on many liveaboard boats, on swap-bookshelves in marina toilets and clubrooms in shipyards. Some of their latest books also explain how to die on the boat with some amusing illustrations included. Although the liveaboard phenomenon is highly diversified, most of my interlocutors started their story in ways similar to that of the Coopers:

> In 1976 we sold our house, waved goodbye to the family, and took to the sea in a boat we had built ourselves. We became long-distance, liveaboard cruisers … Abandoning brick walls and gardens, property taxes, and interference from authorities who continually tried to order what we might or might not do, we took on the less comfortable but much more invigorating life of responsibility for our own actions, health, welfare and safety (Cooper, Cooper 1994a: 11).

From the narrations of my interlocutors I have also learned that the broader context of how they began to live aboard was usually marked by the books they read, by the stories they heard (usually about the man who sailed off) or by youthful experiences with the sea, sailing or travel. For example Tom and Prudence, who spent the winter of 2011 in Crete after they had traversed the Red Sea, met in England in their early twenties and started to travel a few years later. While they didn't speak of a single event as causing their departure (they left when relatively young and prolonged their adventurous backpacking/teaching experience into an adventurous lifestyle at sea), for many of my interlocutors the concrete occasion, the point when the departure happened, was usually connected with a very specific individual event in their narrations – a retirement or the possibility of early retirement, a redundancy, a political event, blocked career choices, disease, divorce or accident, the birth of children, setting up home on their own (in the case of the younger generation) or an inheritance as well as other kinds of financial circumstances that can enable the start of a journey. Ines (66), who lost a son in a car accident and shortly afterwards decided to sail around the world with her second partner, described her experience in the following way: "After the accident all was easy for me. I know it sounds weird. I lost fear … it was very easy for me to decide quickly and leave behind all what was not important … At that time I just needed emptiness, loneliness, a space with nothing … The sea fitted me" (personal conversation, December 2011, Crete). After spending a few years living on the sea, many of my interlocutors (as well as authors of books) described the sea as an "infection, a virus or a drug: "out of all the drugs, the sea is the most intoxicating" (Horvat: 1996) wrote a

Men planning future journeys (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2010, Ionian Greece).

famous long-term Croatian sailor named Jože Horvat, who influenced mostly those future sailors from the ex-Yugoslavian territory. While the idea of a virus in the above quotations was given romantic overtones by my interlocutors (this usually happened in the first interview), after spending a longer period with them it emerged that highly important for continuance of their lifestyle on the boat were practical aspects such as fresh air and health, the effect of sunshine on their mood, involvement in a different time structure (following weather patterns, seasonal patterns and day-night patterns as opposed to the Monday-Sunday structure) as well as the fact that they avoided all the winter viruses afflicting sedentary life (in a trade-off with sea viruses).

However most of the departure stories hinted at the glorious start and contained various layers that should not be too blithely simplified (e.g. after the first interview). These stories are also retrospective, meaning they were reworked over the time. Observing British lifestyle migrants Bensons showed me that by narrating their progress toward a better way of life, migrants can enhance their sense of achievement (2011: 39). In his book *Modernity and Self-Identity,* for

example, Giddens has argued that people tell stories to make sense of the world, to overcome discomforts and to establish a sense of continuity and coherence that is otherwise difficult to achieve in a flexible and fragmented world (1991). The stories of the departure thus function as a tool in establishing personal integrity but also as an acceptable public statement and explanation of one's position. By analysing interviews I could observe how these stories sometimes functioned almost as an "apology" for leaving grandchildren at home, for taking children out of school, for leaving well-paid jobs, for not having children, for not producing material inheritance for progeny etc. All these problems, however, correspond to expected or "normal" ways of life and in the case of my interlocutors were contextualised with various explanations. The hidden third angle in this debate are difficulties in achieving stability in their home countries, the frustrations with their previous "sedentary" lives and various moral concerns stemming from concrete personal experiences that can be somehow summarized in the phrase "the anxious middle class" – all this often camouflaged by stories that glorified their various motives. Retired people for example often stressed the fact that they wanted an active retirement as oppose to the "normal" one – watching television and waiting to be put in a home for the aged. However later on I discovered that second marriages, redundancy in their late fifties, health problems or deaths in the family played a large role in their decision to embark on this lifestyle. My retired interlocutors also described their choice as a decision long in the planning and linked to previous sailing experiences, holiday destinations or ideas that they had come across in a book they had read or a story they had heard from acquaintances and which later on developed into their life project. Movies were never stressed in the interviews as having played a revelatory role – although I think this had more to do with the prestigious status of the certain book in comparison to any movie.

People who were still of a working age and families with small children had an even more difficult task explaining and defining their lifestyle. Departure stories played a significant role in explaining their lifestyles, but it should be noted that in the "bigger picture" of a life trajectory "the departure" was part of their life, embedded in a process and should be understood more as "a departure". Nevertheless, the importance of departure and its context, the wish to explain it in the interview situation, remained highly important. This is evident from the fact that the topic of "why we did it" was usually the longest segment in the interviews with families. In compare to retired people these groups were generally more interested in talking about and explaining their initial decisions. "Sell up and sail" stories entailed most of these arguments. First there were some generic explanations regarding the decision to migrate. My

interlocutors (mostly those of working age) spoke of the "bad West", decline of welfare state, how they were unsatisfied with their lives in their home countries and how they chose this lifestyle to be able to fulfil their dreams (in terms of family organisation for example). Some told of the unsatisfying jobs they had, of the routine they didn't like and the immoral character of the economic and political system. These generic answers are important for understanding that this phenomenon is much more than just an individual choice. On the other hand, such statements can hardly explain the variety of migrations taking place at different points in time and under different circumstances, as Benson observed in the case of British lifestyle migrants in France (2009: 35). Regarding "the job story," it was in the process of my participant observation and repeated interviews that I discovered that for many there were no permanent jobs available (for some also due to medical reasons) or that the decision to leave the job was much harder then it seemed (related to a series of events which were in opposition to their sense of moral justice – e.g. the human resources manager had to dismiss his ill colleagues on orders of his superior). Many of my interlocutors stressed that their alternative lifestyle would have been much more difficult to realise in their home societies. In repeated interviews I discovered that many of them had been entertaining the idea of how to realise a better life without leaving their homes behind (or as their next project). Why it is much easier to sell-up and sail was nicely explained in an interview with a German family that left Germany mostly due to economic and health problems. They explained that they often use travel to camouflage this fact with family, friends and the school back home. At the same time they also stated that though they greatly enjoy travelling and sailing, their first reason for abandoning their previous life was connected with the idea of spending more quality time together. This was impossible for them in Germany due to several reasons – high cost of living, long working hours in order to pay the bills, health problems of the father that resulted in unemployment and long working hours in his precarious jobs – and as the mother explained: "It would be weird to go and live somewhere in the mountains in order to spend time together … If you say I travel you are normal … If you say I sail you are like a hero" (personal conversation, October 2009, Trizonia).

These initial ideas (but also other practical matters) were differently supported by the context of their home countries. The home country contexts influenced for example the choice of the travel itineraries, the degree of the "normality" of this lifestyle as well as the choice of the vessel. French sailors for example tend to see their sailing route often as going around the world and not leaving the country, French home schooled children are part of the well

acknowledged home schooling national system, they more often choose catamarans for their perfect vessels and their initial departures are more confidential linked with the numerous previous examples of round-the-world French sailors or families. Although the differences between imaginaries and practices related to the maritime and nautical tradition in different regions and countries (e.g. British maritime tradition has its own peculiarities linked with cultural, technical, infrastructural and political history) would be interesting to explore specifically in relation with the initial imaginaries and "departure stories", this matter is not a subject of the book, neither was it a focus of the research presented.

Following the life paths of my interlocutors across a longer time span, "the departure point" somehow faded away in the personal biography and in many cases simply became part of a continuing process in the individual's life. Regardless of that, the migration and departure stories are still important in that they reveal how individuals establish a sense of stability through narrations (these stories can be traced in the everyday conversations with families or with other liveaboards through participant observation) or they can reveal not only the interaction with social representations (and can be traced in first interviews, public events, books, blogs etc.) but the broader ethos of freedom. When woven together these threads reveal the fact that presented lifestyles are to be understood within the context of various discourses of late modernity which promote mobility, individual freedom and choice while also needing to be understood as a creative individual endeavour stemming from the anxious feeling of my interlocutors. Scholars of individualisation theories such as Giddens (1991) and others (e.g. Bauman; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim) have explained how our current societies are individualised and how individuals became responsible for their lives. In other words, one can choose but one also *must* choose. In following my interlocutors' narrations as well as other research (Korpela 2009) we might observe that lifestyle migrants usually see themselves as responsible for their current situation, they define themselves as different from others, they emphasise their success in living as they see fit, and they stress the importance of an individual freedom and choice which was limited in their home countries. Korpela for example argued how internalising the individual ethos of freedom does not mean escaping the prevalent order but rather the opposite, namely that lifestyle migration means internalizing the current ethos (2014: 28). Although I generally agree with Korpela, I will add some complicating factors to my case-study in the concluding chapter since I also see this "temporarily unbelonging" experiment of my interlocutors, which in a way does indeed stem from the current ethos, as transformative; not in the phase of departure but after or during the "temporarily unbelonging"

experience. The imaginaries and ethos that "pushed" my interlocutors into this situation were transformed by their personal experiences and it is from there that certain new insights can be traced.

Everyday Life in Agios Nikolaos

In the winter of 2011/2012 there were more than 80 inhabited boats in the port of Agios Nikolaos. In comparison to the size and infrastructure of the place it was very crowded and from the anthropological point of view quite manageable. Most of the people staying there enjoyed this crowdedness in the first few months (and felt uncomfortable later on) and were eager to make new contacts or to renew the old ones. Some simply enjoyed the "land life" – not having to worry about the wind and the waves. I didn't have an exact plan as to what I would be observing there so at first I observed "everything". One of the questions that occupied me was that of a community. Is this a sailing community, namely the community promoted on web pages and nautical blogs? How can I understand and maybe conceptualise this group of people, and is this a community at all? Apart from the everyday, rather routine participant observation, I did several other exercises. One of the exercises that I performed for a period of two weeks was to focus on people's exact routine over the course of a single day. Later on I did this exercise with selected crews. I also devoted attention to special events such as Christmas and Sunday picnics.

A day usually starts very slowly – except for the two individuals in question. A man and a woman from two different boats go jogging and swimming (separately) every morning (even through winter). The woman has lived in the port for years and she is a good friend of the administration staff. Apart from these two people there are only local fishermen awake, preparing nets or cleaning their boats in the fresh morning chill. The administration staff of the marina comes to the port at nine o'clock. They go straight to their offices and rarely walk through the port. They come to the boats only if bills for electricity and water are not paid. I note only one "friendship" between the administration personnel and liveaboards, namely between the British woman (a jogger) who has lived in the marina for years (sailing only for a few weeks in the summer) and a Greek woman who works in administration. There are also two Greek mariners working in the port, usually showing up when a new boat arrives or if there are problems with berths (ropes and such). They seem underconfident in their English and tend to keep to themselves. The majority of other liveaboards wake up between seven and eight a.m., and those who work during the night (IT specialists for

Various activities listed on the toilet's chalkboard (photo: Nataša Rogelja, November 2011, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

example) are the last ones to rise from bed. Heads are popping out from the cockpits, eyes are observing other boats and sky. Looking skyward seems like a very important morning activity. Usually people come out just for a minute and afterwards they disappear in their boats for an hour or so. Neighbouring boats are tied together side by side and the only privacy one can have is inside the boat itself. Regardless of this, some people do yoga on their deck, stretching their legs among the neighbouring boats. The smell of coffee coming from the boats signals the next stage. If the weather is nice, people drink their coffee "in public", sitting in their cockpits, almost touching their neighbours with their elbows. Here the first interactions began. Usually the morning conversations are limited to "good morning", sometimes they extend to weather comments. The first active inhabitants are usually parents with small children, walking with their towels and toddlers towards the toilets. The port toilet is a social place. There you can exchange information on movies, books, home-schooling experiences, how to use washing machines, excursions, afternoon activities etc., all while waiting to relieve oneself. After nine o'clock the toilets are empty again and people start their morning activities. Children usually have school for a few

Schooling on the boat (photo: Nataša Rogelja, December 2011, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

hours in the morning (usually with their mums), people who work on the boat turn on their computers (in the port of Agios Nikolaos there was one illustrator, four IT specialists, one stockholder, two text writers for Internet websites and e-newsletters, and me the anthropologist); individuals who are repairing their boats or earning money by repairing other peoples' boats start their grinding, welding, colouring, cutting or engaging in other noisy activities. The smell emitted by antifouling colours used for the underwater parts of boats is not an unusual smell in the port. Retired people usually have a long coffee or tea (with a book) and later on, around ten, they go shopping or walking. Sometimes a group of retired people meet for a drink in one of the town's cafés.

Washing machines usually churn away every morning and people sometimes wait in line for hours (reading books or chatting) to put their bag of dirty laundry in the machine. If the day is nice, the period from ten a.m. to twelve noon is one for hanging up clothes. The sound of fluttering T-shirts and sheets is a common one in port. Shopping for food constitutes another morning activity and sometimes people hire or borrow cars (from other liveaboards) for a joint

shopping trip to the nearby supermarkets. Pasta, wine, rice and cheeses are usually the necessary items of such big shopping runs. Smaller shopping at the food market, bakery or local shops are also part of the everyday morning routine. Once a week a crochet group, consisting mainly of British women, gathers in the nearby local sailing club room. Around one o'clock in the afternoon some people prepare their lunches. Some prepare hot meals while others have a sandwich or make a salad. After lunch some people take a short nap and continue with their activities (welding, writing articles or home schooling children for example – especially French families who are attached to the national home schooling system, KNED, spend longer hours at school). After three o'clock most of the personnel from the marina administration leave and various activities listed on the toilet's chalkboard (written in English) begin as well as some beach activities with children (families playing with balls on the nearby beach). Local Greek sailors come to their yacht club during the afternoon and prepare small sailing boats for their training sessions. If the weather is nice they have training sessions with local children. People from the sailing club speak good English and they have established relationships with people living in the port – one of them, for example, is loaning the club's rooms to liveaboards for various activities and social events in exchange for them painting the walls. Sometimes children that live on boats join local children and go sailing with them. There were six children living on boats that winter (three of them were mine) and some of them occasionally joined the Greek children. Although various nationalities, ages and genders participate in these afternoon activities there were some very specific "nationally coloured activities" as well, such as *boules* on the beach played mostly by a group of Swedish retirees. A French group (three families in their 30s and 40s) also organised numerous "exclusive" French excursions (sometimes joined by other families, the children happy to play together) and the main reason for such groupings was, as explained to me, the certain language being spoken. As one interlocutor explained to me:

> I don't like this, being only with other Swedes, but being able to speak in my own language is something totally different. I feel relaxed, I don't have to think. It's not so much because of the people it's because of the language, because I really like to meet other people, to learn about local culture. Also we all watched the same movies and things like this. I will give you these movies if you want. There are three movies very typical of Swedish people, you will see the landscape and the way people think (personal conversation, December 2011, Crete).

Painting walls of the nautical club in Agios Nikolaos (photo: Nataša Rogelja, January 2012, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

Apart from *boules* there were also other afternoon activities such as a painting class organised by a Scottish hobby painter, a former policeman. About twenty people from different countries and of different ages (from children to retirees) participated in the painting classes but also some Britishers and Germans living in their houses on the land regularly join this activity. A jam session in the evening, consisting mainly of men (former amateur musicians but also some professionals), and numerous other smaller and semi-private activities such as two mothers doing yoga or two couples playing cards (and drinking wine) all take place in the port's sailing club. Several people attend Greek language classes in the nearby language school and several people meet up for social nights at the yacht club once a week. People usually enjoy these activities but after a couple of months some start to complain about the crowded timetable as seen in the following excerpt from a blogs written by two of my interlocutors:

> 2 January 2012
>
> If it's Wednesday it must be yoga. And the computer workshop. And gym. And the Greek lesson. And band practice. And social night at the yacht club … There are

about a hundred liveaboards in Ag. Nikolaous this winter, and the number of activities increases exponentially as the number of liveaboards goes up. Liz has started a yoga group three times a week. We go on organised walks every Thursday … On top of all that I promised Liz I'd knock off that bestseller by Easter. We don't have time to draw breath. How did we ever manage to hold down full-time jobs? In fact, I think I'm going to have to go and have a lie down for a bit" (Birvidik SailBlogs, accessed 18 May 2017).

Apart from the routine activities there were also some special all-day activities (walking excursions) and afternoon or evening activities organised here, and then such things as Burns nights[12] organised by a Scottish couple, sailing travel lectures organised by a British man (to which all could contribute) and a series of computer lessons focused on how to organise a virtual library initiated by an enthusiastic collector of e-books. In theory all these activities were acceessible to all liveaboards, but in reality different groups formed on the basis of different reasons (language, gender, personal interests, common group experiences or previous skills). Some people almost never joined these activities – such as Tom and Prudence from the portraits. They occasionally showed up at some "special" evening events. They said they didn't have time for these leisure activities as they had to repair their boat and write articles for Internet websites in order to earn some money.

Evenings are usually quite vivid, people preparing dinners, visiting other boats, drinking wine in their cockpits or preparing children for bed. It looks like dinners are the main meals for the majority of people living in the port while also being "food social events". If breakfast and lunch are eaten separately (within one crew), dinners many times involve a social element (two couples or families eating together). After the dinner some people participate in a jam session or "local choir"; the latter, as my interlocutors stressed, consisted mainly of lifestyle migrants or expats[13] living on the land but few Greek people from the town. One of the very popular and most common evening activities is Skyping with family or friends, searching the Internet for news, following blogs or weather forecasts and watching movies on laptops. In Agios Nikolaos there was a vivid exchange of movies between boats and our neighbour, a couple in their 60s, organised a list of all the movies available on all the disks that existed in the port that winter with the intention of creating a common library and thereby

12 Burns Night is an annual Scottish celebration organized around January 25 that commemorates the life of the poet Robert Burns, who was born on January 25, 1759.

13 My interlocutors often referred to people coming from the Great Britain or Germany and living in houses on the island as expats.

exchanging movies between the boats. Apart from the mainstream productions that we all had on our disks (e.g. *Perfect Storm)* there was also a certain amount of movies specific to certain countries or regions such as the Swedish serial of three movies *(House of Angels)* or the Czech cartoon *(Mole)* that I distributed to "children's boats". The Mole was a novelty for French children but was common knowledge to Slovenians and other peoples of ex-Yugoslavia. One of the evening activities for teenage boat children was also computer games.

Around 10 o'clock in the evening the quiet period begins; people who have visited other boats are saying goodbye to each other, those who have gone for a walk or drinks return to their boats, and some are about to finish their evening movie. After midnight there are usually only a few boats with their lights on, one of them is Tom and Prudence' s boat as they continue with their writing work late into the night due to the time differences in the countries they work for, because of deadlines they have to meet, or owing to the fact that the Internet usually only works well during the night.

Apart from the routine everyday life in the port, there were also some special events such as the Sunday barbecue, the Christmas celebration, the cultural events and departures. The barbecues were potluck, everybody bringing some food (salad, pasta, cakes etc.). Picnics took place at the local Greek sailing club and several times older Greek sailors joined the event, though not for more than an hour. The seating arrangement was stable and unchangeable for the majority of people. Usually there was one French table, one Scandinavian table and a couple of English-speaking tables always consisting of similar people. Apart from these "settled tables" there were other people such as a Polish couple, a solitary Dutch man, Tom and Prudence, and our family which usually changed places, often joining tables with children (many times for example we joined French families with children). Picnics were initiated by several British couples as were other special events in the port, such as the Christmas celebration. After a while (from December on) some people started to complain that the majority of the activities were dominated by the British. One event that escalated such complains was a Christmas celebration organized by several British couples. Everyone was invited and contributed financially to the event (meat and vegetables were ordered from the nearby restaurant) but the whole event was designed as a "typical British Christmas" with crackers specially flown in for this event from Great Britain. Again, the seating arrangement followed that of the Sunday picnic events with few "satellites" circulating around decorated tables, trying to find their own place. Several people didn't join the Christmas event because they were offended by this British "dominance" of the event. The Scandinavian group decided to organize a special New Year's celebration in a private circle and explained to

Christmas party at the port of Agios Nikolaos (photo: Nataša Rogelja, December 2011, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

me that it it was not so much that they didn't enjoy the company of the other people in port but merely because of the language. From the anthropological point of view, my not being a member of one of the "big nations" or not having the opportunity to enjoy the company of other Slovenian people in the port somehow worked well for me, as my marginal position enabled me to observe things from the outside while at the same time being deeply involved in the everyday life of the port.

Cultural and other special events such as the Burns Night organized by the Scottish couple were generally welcomed by the majority of people (i.e. no major complaints). Mostly these events were seen as an "exchange of culture, learning about other cultures" and were attended by almost everyone with the exception of people who had to work late into the night. At the event there was special food prepared, namely the haggis with potatoes, and Burns poems were recited at the evening's opening. The event was much more relaxed than the Christmas event, as most of the people didn't know about Robert Burns and were willing to follow the organisation of the event as suggested by its hosts. Sailing travel lectures might also be listed among the special events, as they occur

Aftermath of the Christmas celebration (photo: Nataša Rogelja, December 2011, Agios Nikolaos, Greece).

only if somebody in the port is willing to share his or her sailing experience with others. Several people contributed to these evenings, but among the most frequented ones were those lectures that talked about faraway places outside the Mediterranean or lectures that had technical content, such as how to sail in a storm. Tom and Prudence, among the most experienced sailors in the port, never attended or contributed to these events (according to their logbook). During the course of the winter the idea of travel lectures was refashioned as "technical boat lectures" and a group of men who were keenest on these topics then took over the organisation. Apart from lectures and cultural events, walking tours were organised occasionally, mostly initiated by a British couple who had lived in the port for several years and was very familiar with numerous hiking tours around Crete. Usually the other expats living on the island joined these excursions. The exchange of information between liveaboards and expats was quite lively. Stories about Greeks being unkind to animals or not cleaning the hiking paths or not finishing EU-funded ports; but on these excursions there were also stories about grandchildren and "where to next" or "going back home." The last two issues where not often raised in my interviews but they emerged

quite frequently in casual conversations between people. Usually they were connected with the birth of grandchildren, with the idea of putting children in the ordinary school system or with concerns related to age and health. Numerous constraints were stressed in relation to the "coming back" idea, such as the difficulty in finding a job (mostly working-age interlocutors stressed this issue), and also mentioned in these conversations were the difficult financial arrangements which had to be made, including changing from the boat to an apartment, as well as the difficulty of adapting to the new-old life back home. One of my interlocutors in his early fifties stressed:

> I went back to Germany for two months. We had to help my father … and everything was changed. I am not joking. This is true. I wanted to buy a bus ticket and the system is now … You must use these machines and people were waiting in line because I didn't know how to use it. But also friends. I have some good friends back home but the majority, well, they talk just about money … We had a dinner. I was sitting there like an alien. I was really happy to come back to my boat (personal conversation, October 2010, Kilada).

The retired couple from Finland stressed on the other hand that the boat market is so saturated that it would be impossible to sell their boat for a good price in order to assure themselves an apartment back home. For different reasons some of my interlocutors concluded that their decision to live on their boat might be a one-way ticket. Such disjunctures, when observed across a longer span of time, also show that my interlocutors are sometimes without a safety-net, thus underscoring the vulnerability of contemporary forms of mobility.

Departures from the port usually occur in the spring and they too can be listed among "the special events". The crew that decides to leave is usually preparing for the event for days and the weather forecast is followed carefully. Usually a small group of crew's friends gathers on the pier, helping their outgoing friends with the ropes. When the ropes are untied they blow whistles and wish their friends a safe journey. Regardless of all the quarrels, departures are events when people tend to reflect on the good aspects of the winter period, they exchange phone numbers, e-mails and addresses in their home countries (if they have one) and tell of their future plans and how they might keep in touch. But despite all the sincere wishes and planning, the larger groups almost never stay in touch. Following several crews from Agios Nikolaos, there were only two families with children who stayed in touch over the years (through the Internet and occasional visits) and three retired couples planned spending the next winter together. Maintaining contact within the smaller groups involves

diverse personal links and fleeting groupings and are dependent on specific contexts and activities (e.g. being a parent living on the boat). While these personal networks can be related to cultural categories (e.g. notions of home, belonging, language) and extending across different situations, these cultural categories may not be their strongest link.

Apart from the sad aspect in relation to the disintegration of the winter groups, there is also a joyous aspect in leaving. A couples in their fifties explained to me that every time they leave port they "feel free again". They used the metaphor of cutting the umbilical cord in describing the moment when the ropes are untied.

> By the end of winter their nerves are strained, bodies exhausted, their thoughts restless. Hands can hardly wait to push the boat off from its berth. The electric cable is folded, the pipe is coiled up, people on the pier – fellow villagers, neighbours and friends – wave their goodbyes, the sound of whistles cutting through the calm blue skies. The rope is untied, the umbilical cord cut (excerpt from portraits, March 2012, Crete).

The metaphor of the umbilical cord was used in three different interviews (with three different interlocutors) and might be an interesting starting point for the next section since the metaphor was also used by Vargas Llosa, a Peruvian writer, politician, journalist, essayist and college professor writing about nationalism. My intention here is not to simply agree with Llosa or to confuse nationality with nationalism but rather to reflect on human sentiments regarding identity, community and belonging as experienced in the port of Agioas Nikolaos. Criticizing nationalism, Vargas Llosa was reflecting on the role of community loyalties in the following way: "The umbilical cord that connects you across centuries is called terror of the unknown, hatred of what is different, rejection of adventure, panic at the thought of freedom and the responsibility it brings to invent yourself each day" (1998: 169).

Sailing Community, National Fellows, Friends and Comrades

Despite the fact that the most popular sailing blogs such as Sailnet.com, Noonsie.com or Sailblog.com refer to the "sailing community", the actual marinas such as the port of Agios Nikolaos and the events taking place there during the winter are an interesting laboratory for testing the idea of the community and for observing individuals' actual experiences in relation to collective categories

and situations. At the end of winter, one of my interlocutors, who was in his sixties, explained how he experienced life in the port of Agios Nikolaos:

> At the beginning of the winter we all belonged to this sailing community. We were all friends, all sailors. I was happy to meet people from my country. At the end of the winter small groups formed. I didn't feel like I belonged anymore. There are two, three families … we became friends. That's it. And I didn't go sailing to be with Swedes all the time, you know. I enjoyed speaking in my own language for a while. But really I am happy to go and I will keep in touch only with friends, with just a few people … And then there is a connection between the group of people with whom we sailed across the Red Sea. They may have very different interests. We were very different really … maybe I wouldn't talk to them in normal life, you know … but we have this common experience. This is very strong" (personal conversation, February 2012, Agios Nikolaos).

In this short reflection recorded at the end of the winter period, we can find several groupings such as those which are nationality-based (Swedes), sailing-based (sailing community) as well as personal links (friends) and groupings of people who went through the shared and rather difficult experience of sailing through the pirate zone before entering the Red Sea. And all these groupings overlap in this specific situation of everyday life in the port of Agios Nikolaos. The sailing community broke up into smaller groups, as the symbolic idea behind it was not strong enough, while the national community seemed to be portable since it was laden with symbolic meaning. But relations towards the national community were of a pragmatic nature (language) and the concrete experiences gained within this group in turn transformed that community (as well as a sense of national belonging) into individual-centred links, needs and actions while creating a very fluid picture of belonging. As Bockhorn and Bockhorn stated, signifiers such as ethnicity give us momentary satisfaction and a sense of order and control (we know who we belong with) but they are much more useful to authorities such as the state, the church and the business world than they are to the individuals themselves (1999: 125). Observing the situation in Agios Nikolaos port, nationality came down to one's comfort in speaking a certain language, establishing a power position (e.g. the British group and their Christmas party) or staging a "theatre of culture" (Gellner 1993: 91) event such as Burns' Night, whereas preservation of the social relations which were deemed important (friends) seem to be a very difficult task in such a mobile situation. All these groupings (experiential foundation) and categorical identities (symbolic foundation) were used in a very creative way

by my interlocutors, operating *though them* and not *on them.* This small port experiment actually points to the complexities of individual interactions with ascribed and achieved communities and to the crosscutting process involved in the different groupings. These interactions are far more complex than the socio-cultural discourses would allow. One of the first things that clarifies very quickly in such a situation is the distinction between group and community, between *ascribed* and *achieved* communities, as described by Amit and Rapport (2002), but this also has the researcher adopting a sceptical stance. Amit and Rapport stressed how expressions of community (whether announcing its presence or bemoaning its absence) require a sceptical investigation rather than providing a ready-made social unit upon which to hang one's analysis (2002: 14). In their endeavour to clear the overgrown paths of studies dealing with community, identity and belonging, they pointed to two very different forms of community that should not be confused. There are ascribed categorical identities such as religion or ethnicity, which are conceptualised as anterior to the actual social relationships, and they rely heavily on symbolic markers (Amit, Rapport 2002: 60). Or as Barth observed in the 1960s, in such ascribed communities the boundaries between insiders and outsiders is often more important that the content which this boundary encompasses (1969). As Amit wrote, to create unity among people who have little in common requires much investment of time and in some cases also forcible means (2002: 60). Other forms of community, namely the achieved ones, are described by Amit as forms that are conceptualized by reference to what is held in common by members rather than in terms of oppositional categories between insiders and outsiders (2002: 59). These consociations derive from shared experiences through participation in certain events or associations. What Amit furthermore observed is that it is very difficult to maintain a sense of community and identity which arises through consociation when the basis of consociation is removed; and she also observed how ascribed identities based on symbolic markers are on the other hand quite portable (2002: 59–62).

As we could observe in the case of Agios Nikolaso, people used ascribed identities very easily, interacting with each other even if they didn't know each other prior to the actual social contact in the port. The issue of language proved to be the most important one in these interactions, but there were also other issues such as organising the traditional British Christmas celebration. It seems like these relations, even though portable and important in certain moments (to enliven memories of Christmas back home) and from certain perspectives (language), they somehow faded away in the course of the winter and were crisscrossed with those achieved identities and groupings based on

shared experiences (comradeship) or a friendship that might or might not have been crossbred with ascribed identities (national factor). We could also observe how community arising through consociation is difficult to maintain and includes individual efforts that in the case of my interlocutors would boil down to e-mails and rare occasional visits. But these communities do indeed exist and are more to be understood as transnational personal networks than transnational communities. This improvised attachment to other people, playful belonging and unbelonging (at home or in movement) as well as notions of disjunction rather than the stress on belonging and community (at home or in the movement) deserve more attention. That is not to say that community and social relations are not important for people. Following my ethnographic example, at the beginning of winter the people were eager to meet other people, to speak in their own language, to share, to interact, to feel safe, to belong; but at the same time I could observe how ego-based networks were established across, within and without categorical identities and were used creatively and situationally. A Christmas episode even produced a touch of patriotism (there being several separate Christmas and New Year's celebrations in the small port) and enlivened a sense of us-versus-them; but later on, with additional social interactions, this us-versus-them attitude was overruled by personal references based on common experiences, situations or personal inclinations (parents with children, comrades who had sailed the Red Sea, personal characters etc.). What this small port experiment also showed is that individual human beings situations are much too unpredictable and diverse to be perceived through the categorical models. I would say that sociocultural forms still existed and played an important role in the port, but these forms are far more compatible with observations based on individual tactics than on categorical forms. On the basis of my fieldwork sample, I very much agree with Amit who wrote that social conventions and categories are not existential truths but they are crucial for social interaction. Amit furthermore stressed that concepts such as community, culture etc. are not problematic if they are treated as useful heuristic tools of analysis, and they are not so much answers as repositories of the certain questions that we should be considering (2002: 162).

WILD ANCHORAGE, UNFINISHED GREEK MARINAS AND OTHER REMOTE PLACES

Apart from marinas such as the port of Agios Nikolaos, there were also some other more remote locations where I could study liveaboards in the winter. In the course of my fieldwork I observed four such settings – the unfinished marina at the island of Trizonia in the Corinth Bay, the small port village of Kilada situated on the eastern Aegean side of Peloponnesus, a remote location at the island of Lefkas, where several people spent winter period together, and the wild anchorage in Spinalonga Bay in Crete. All these locations were "inhabited" by one to seven boats. My interlocutors chose these locations for various reasons, as they stated, from economic (they didn't have to pay) to personal (they wanted to avoid crowded ports and quarrels) or simply because they had some occasional job near that location (e.g. building a house, working for charter agencies etc.). In the following section I will give ethnographic descriptions of some of these locations and will comment on the social interactions within or spreading from these locations as well as on people's use of the place.

Scene 1: Wild Anchorage (December 2011)

I met Tony and Linda, a British couple in their late fifties, on the way to Turkey, somewhere in the middle of the Aegean Sea. Linda, an ex-army member and Tony, an ex-fisherman, were headed to Crete where they had already spent several winters in the Bay of Spinalonga. Winters mean a rest period for them while during the summer, spring and autumn months they work for charter agencies in tourist centres. Before heading to Agios Nikolaos, we spent two weeks with them following their daily routine and experiencing for ourselves their everyday winter life in the middle of the lonely bay. Linda once said that they decided to spend winters at anchorages because "it's cheaper that way, there is more freedom, life is easier, the stars are brighter." I soon discovered all that to be true with the exception of an easy life. Drinkable water was very far away and it was terribly unpleasant to go shopping on rainy days. I soon noticed that just to manage the basic needs means a lot of work. My children very quickly noticed when the wind generator didn't spin – because that meant no evening cartoon. I felt like every simple act became very complicated and I noticed how I became more alert to weather conditions. Despite all these troubles I also felt privileged, not only in gazing at bright winter stars from the middle of the dark bay but also being alone out there. The feeling of privilege and Linda's comment

Dwelling on water (photo: Nataša Rogelja, November 2011, Elounda Bay, Crete, Greece).

on having more freedom were directly connected with the fact that we were alone in the bay. Other users of Spinalonga Bay employed the piers (fishermen, local boat owners) and beaches (strollers in the winter and swimmers in the summer) while the coastal stretch around the bay was dominated by different buoys which demarcated various activities. The middle of the bay was ours.

Small details of everyday life were different from what we had experienced in Agios Nikolaos, and the relations with local people were much more important and frequent. Linda and Tony for example exchanged several "services" with the local fishermen. They explained how they had helped fishermen in one winter storm and how the fishermen gave them access to drinkable water and supplied them with fresh fish. Linda also had a sewing machine to repair the sails on the boat, and in previous winters she had helped some of the fishermen with their awnings. Apart from the local people, they also made good connections with the English expat group on land. They had several good friends among the expats, but they also had a safety net in relation to this group. If they needed a dentist, or just information about the working hours of a vegetable market, they called someone from this group. Observing and talking about their daily routine, I noticed that their days at the anchorage were quite structured and

the roles quite strictly divided. The day began with a cup of coffee and a big breakfast. Tony made a breakfast, Linda took care for all the other meals. Tony maintained the boat, Linda took care of food and laundry. After breakfast Tony usually scrubbed the rust from the boat, painted the deck, sewed sails or tinkered with the engine. When Linda washed and hung the bedding, this was usually done with her computer logged onto nautical websites and sailing forums, following the weather forecast, and afterwards she would correspond with friends, sisters and nephews. They went together to the market, hardly ever stopping for coffee in town. They explained: "Tourists drink coffee, locals sit in front of the butcher's or the mechanic's shop drinking ouzo. We walk – and observe." Linda took her time in cooking. The saloon was stuffed with cookbooks, nautical books, guitar-playing manuals, wedding photos, photos of Tony's sons and Linda's nephews. The afternoon was reserved for reading, guitar playing, scrubbing or painting the deck, resting, shopping in big supermarkets and walking. Tony and Linda sometimes picked wild lemons and made jam with them. They also picked bunches of thyme flowers and dried them to make tea. Sometimes Tony went diving and caught fish. We entered their weekly routine just one week before Tony planned going to England in order to visit his sons for two weeks. Linda stayed on the boat because of the cats but also because they couldn't leave the boat at anchorage and because they usually visited various families. Linda was not worried about staying alone at the anchorage for two weeks even if there were some very strong winds being reported on the weather forecast. She explained how she had many UK friends on the island that she could rely on. If the weather got nasty she would drop the additional anchor and just go to her friend's house.

Scene 2: Unfinished Marina (November 2009)

In the years 2009–2013 we discovered several unfinished marinas along the Greek coastline that were inhabited by liveaboards in the winter period but were also used by locals to moor their summer or fishing boats. All these places had big notice boards explaining how a certain amount of money for building piers had been provided by the EU and the rest would be provided by the state of Greece. Certain sections were usually built up to the point that one could easily use piers for safe berths, but electricity and water as well as other infrastructure (paths, toilets) were missing. Sometimes unfinished marinas were also advertised on websites used by sailors such as the "Noonsite". The following excerpt describes the unfinished marina in the Gulf of Corinth on Trizonia Island.

> The village, with its small (unfinished) marina, is tucked into the northern corner of the bay on the eastern side of the island. The locals are reported to be very friendly and helpful. Berth in the marina if there is room (the outside of the mole is reported to have good depths). There is no electricity available. Water can be found on the north side of the marina next to the track, by going alongside one of the deserted yachts and extending the hose. It is free and good quality. Alternatively, anchor in the bay inside the 5m contour and clear of the marina entrance. The holding is good once through the weed. A good, sheltered place, possible for over-wintering. Last updated May 2015 (Noonsite.com, accessed 18 May 2017).

When we arrived in Trizonia, a tiny island (some 2.5 square kilometers in size), there were five inhabited boats there – a French catamaran with a family that had two children, a boat with a UK flag and a retired British couple, a German boat with another retired couple, an Irish boat with a solitary man in his fifties and a small transport boat transformed into a big floating apartment inhabited by a Dutch couple in their late fifties. Other boats were deserted and some were even sunken. There were cats all over the port, a sound of generators in the air and the seeds of Tamarisks trees all over the decks. Instead of any cosiness, this was one of the most problematic places in terms of social relations. Groups in the port were divided between natives along with those who had lived in the port for years (German and Dutch couples) and those who intended to spend just one winter. No port authorities were there to check and control berths, and there was a manifest competition over who would dominate the place. Natives have their own views as to who should or should not stay in the anchorage, and arriving there in the late autumn I felt like the place was pretty much dominated by two native boats. The sound of generators in the evening was another problem. None of us had enough electricity on the boat and occasionally we all had to use generators. Generators are very loud and everybody had their own idea as to when they could be turned on and for how long. Screaming children was the third problem, cats all over the place as well. All these problems were usually fought out between two native boats and the newcomers. A British couple explained to me that when they arrived they had the feeling that they had entered someone's backyard. After a month of living in the port, they had a big fight with a German couple over the "proper" use of the generators. As they explained to me:

> One evening he came and we started to quarrel. It was the usual quarrel over the generator. I thought he would leave soon. But he was really pissed off. He grabbed

our generator and threatened to throw it in the water. And it was really a good machine. Things got out of control. I came out and pushed him and even called him Nazi. Can you believe that? (personal conversation, October 2010, Trizonia).

On another occasion the German couple explained to me about British attitude that they encountered during all these years they spend in Greece. They claimed that British people wanted to be in charge and felt that they didn't like Germans very much.

Apart from the boat people, there were also a number of locals living on the island. Trizonia is the only inhabited island in the Corinth Bay (with 64 dwellers according to the 2011 census) but my own observation was that there were only six families living on the island during that winter (2009/2010). I also encountered a British man, an ex-liveaboard, now inhabiting a house. In the summer he was earning money with chartering and other tourist-targeted activities, and in the winter he sold his Internet connection to the liveaboards. He had monthly rates for Internet and he was also selling "shower and laundry services" in his house toilet. These activities were more profitable in the summer when the port was full of people, while in the winter he was more doing a favour for the people, as he explained. He had the role of "unofficial port manager", a temporary role he said since he expected some changes in the port in the next few years. But so long as liveaboards were staying in the port for free, he could earn money from them. He said that locals were not interested in his small business, as during the summer they had bigger businesses such as restaurants, transport to the mainland, shops and room-renting.

Scene 3: Other Remote Places (November 2008)

Winter in Lefkas. I am heading towards the Lefkas bridge. Just before the bridge there is a small protected lagoon with some sailing boats, among them the French one, the homemade aluminium sailing boat Dila. The owners Trisha and Paul have invited me for a tea. Paul has just come back from the shipyard where he has been grinding the underwater parts of the boats. He is carrying with him a piece of dark blue canvas. Someone ordered a cover for a sail from him. Dila can often be spotted in places such as unfinished marinas, anchorages at the edge of cities, and remote fishing villages. In the park in front of the unfinished marina there are Roma people; in a shabby hut near the anchorage, once painted by Trisha's boys, there is a group of Pakistanis; parked next to Dila is a hippie-looking Dutch theatre boat with two men and the homemade steel sailing boat of a German family that is

about to accomplish their dream – a journey around the world. Some of these people hardly communicate yet they share the same place – the invisible place. Starting points differ, ends are various, but the lagoon at the end of the city is a common reality. The place is almost invisible but cosy. Nobody charges here, nobody comes here, one can find free water on the pier. Children sometimes play ball with the Pakistanis, Roma children sometimes steal bikes from Trisha's children (excerpt from portraits, November 2008, Lefkas)

Places such as the "Lefkas Bridge"[14], situated at the end of the inhabited city areas, have a character of invisibility. Here we find ourselves at the margins of the city, outside the usual promenade routes, outside the city port, far away from the port police but still close enough to all the necessary infrastructure (shops, pharmacies, post office, water etc.). Near the Lefkas Bridge there are the ruins of what was once a prospering restaurant. A hidden water pipe was regularly visited by liveaboards, by a group of Pakistani men who organised a temporary shelter in a hut near the ruins, and also by Roma families who parked their trucks in the nearby park. Even though these three groups didn't have much interaction, they drank water from the same pipe and all deliberately chose this place because of its invisibility its infrastructure (sheltered dock, water, park area, hut). For all three groups it was a safe place – channel was protected from the swell, it was outside the city authorities' reach (outside their everyday routine paths) and it had water. The Pakistani men discovered that they could also avail themselves of the old electric installation from the hotel, and they used it mainly for watching TV in the evenings when they returned from working on Greek fishing boats. They put wooden plates in the windows. Several times they prepared grilled fish and offered some to the liveaboards.

At the Lefkas Bridge there were four boats, three of them inhabited. A Dutch theatre boat (two men), a French boat (family with two children), a German boat (family with two children who had temporarily left their boat and gone for a few months to Germany in order to earn some money) and my family; we stayed there for a month in the autumn of 2008. During the weekends some locals walked along the channel but didn't pay much attention to and of these three groups. Each of these groups made its own connection within the island. Pakistanis connected with local fishermen and worked for them, a French family established connections with French expats living on the island as well as with the nearby Lefkas marina and they offered their skills (e.g. sewing sails) to other

14 This name was invented by liveaboards staying at the location, which was situated a few hundred meters before the Lefkas Bridge, a gateway to the Lefkas city port.

Dutch theatre boat at the Levkas Bridge (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2008, Levkas, Greece).

liveaboards or local owners of sailing boats (mostly French). They also gained a connection to the Greek organic farmer who invited liveaboard children to his farm for a few educational courses of organic gardening. The crew of the Dutch theatre boat was the most unpredictable in their social contacts, floating between locals and liveaboards, preparing their boat for the summer seasons and occasionally walking through the city with strange accoutrements (big plastic ears for example). The liveaboard group was quite harmonious in comparoison to Trizonia Island (scene 2) and there were no serious quarrels among people. The Lefkas Bridge place was somehow unstructured (without piers and other official marina infrastructure) and indefinable. It had the quality of a simple gap. Despite its marginal and transitional position, the Lefkas Bridge was a spacious and uninhabited area with its own stony beach. In that sense it was quite similar to Spinalonga Bay (scene 1) since it offered "freedom," as Linda noted. Through different activities (playing with children on the nearby beach, living there, cooking there, watching TV, doing laundry, playing football) all three groups begin to dominate the place while also transforming it by filling it up with new possibilities.

A hut at Levkas Bridge that first served as a playground for children living on sailing boats and afterward as a temporary shelter for groups of Pakistani men (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2008, Levkas, Greece).

FROM NON-PLACES AND IN-BETWEEN PLACES TO "NEW" PLACES

In their own way the Lefkas Bridge and the middle of Spinalonga Bay as well as finished and unfinished marinas and ports tend to flirt with Auge's "non-places" (1995), places like airports and supermarkets, being without a fixed identity; but the ports and anchorages that I visited do have certain peculiarities that also strongly delimit them from Auge's non-places. They were inhabited, some were emptied of technology (no street lights in an unfinished marina or at the Lefkas Bridge) and some were neglected or had the quality of a wasteland as opposed to those "overused lands" such as supermarkets or airports. Non-places discourage "settling in", while the Lefkas Bridge (with its position and basic infrastructure) and Spinalonga Bay (with its good muddy anchorage, naturally sheltered position and emptiness) offered and encouraged certain (temporary) settling practices. Places that I have visited and researched can in a way also be placed in relation to places displaying the capitalist and consumerist logic of

modern society (nautical tourism, coastal restaurants) though their position is neither central nor clear but instead ill-defined (unfinished marinas, a destroyed restaurant at the Lefkas Bridge, the uninhabited middle of the bay). This odd combination of qualities related open up a space for activities and actors which transform them into something new, an alternative spatiality. In the concluding pages of this chapter I will thus try to reflect on the following question: How can we conceptualise and understand such places in relation to the liveaboard phenomenon?

A bridge, the open sea as well as marinas and ports (finished or unfinished) are all places of transition, yet in the cases presented above they served as temporary settlements. They were inhabited by different mobile agents (livaboards, Roma, Pakistanis) for a limited period of time and were exposed to a juxtaposition of various aims, moments, practices and objects (vehicles, huts, grill fish, football, laundry). Some of these agents returned to these locations during the following winter (French family) or on other occasions (Roma families stay there regularly when selling different items such as carpets, chickens, chairs and pots in the nearby city) while others, to my knowledge, have never visited them again (Pakistani men, German family). These agents, by way of their everyday lives, transformed the middle of a bay or a bridge into something that had the quality of a "new" place rather than a non-place; I argue that on a more general level the agents that I observed as well as their practices created an alternative spatiality – not a liminal spatiality but a new one. By moving there and moving through them at the same time, they filled up these transient places with new possibilities. With their actions they transformed a bridge, a bay or a port into something new – a transitional inhabited place, an in-between place that was inhabited and by inhabiting it, it lost its liminal character. As Ana Luz wrote about the creation of "other place":

> Mobility and the mobile act of transition between spaces usually creates an "other" place in space, which is neither the place from where it originally came (the departure point) nor the place which it is the objective of situation (the arrival point), but is related to both. The "transit" between creates another reality, literally a short-lived transit(ional) place […] These mobile spaces are in essence a space in which several incongruous sites and moments in time are juxtaposed, co-existent and layered together (Luz 2006: 148).

Observing a city's short-lived transitional places, which could in a way be compared to my own ethnographic settings, she wrote how these places also resemble Foucault's spatial zone of heterotopia (Luz 2006). According to

Foucault this zone accommodates shifting senses of time and place in which all other sites that can be found in culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted. The heterotopia is thus capable of juxtaposing in a single real space several sites that are themselves on opposite sides (see Foucault 1999 in Luz 2006). Reflecting on Lefkas Bridge, we could observe how various actors met (liveaboards, Roma and Pakistani), how they inhabited the place, how they invested it with their everyday practices while each of these actors were on opposite or different sides of a certain situation outside the Lefkas Bridge (e.g. having different passports). It would have been highly unusual for these individuals to have met and cohabited in any "central place" (e.g. in the hotel situated in the historical part of Lefkas), but the Lefkas Bridge – an ahistorical, empty and wide place – created an opportunity for just such an encounter. Consequently, these everyday practices moulded the Lefkas Bridge into something new. It was not abandoned anymore, it was not central, nor was it liminal. It was simply elsewhere, not a threshold, but a different place in itself.

During my research I was many times tempted to relate some of my fieldwork sites and my interlocutors' practices to the concept of liminality and liminoid (Turner 1967, 1974) but at the same time I was never quite happy with liminality or liminoide in relation to my research. Liminality is usually described as an in-between period between two structured worlds or world-views and was introduced by the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1960). In his famous book, *Rites of Passage,* van Gennep suggested a classification of existing rites, stressing the importance of transitions in society. He described how rites of passage consist of three sub-categories (rites of separation, transition rites and rites of incorporation) and he called the middle stage a liminal period (1960: 11). Later on Victor Turner re-discovered the concept of liminality and wrote a famous text entitled Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in the Rite of Passage (1967) and other books on this subject (1969, 1974). Turner showed how ritual passages were much more than reflections of the social order but also served as moments of creativity. Turner expanded our understanding of liminality that it could refer to any between situation while simultaneously opening up new ways of applying this term. He considered how to use the concept of liminality in situations of modernity and suggested that some of the liminal experiences in modern consumerist society have been replaced by liminoide moments related to such things as leisure activities. Liminoide experiences are optional, they are not directed towards a change of status or a resolution of personal crisis but are a playful break from "normality". As observed by Thomassen, liminoide experiences if understood as a playful "as-if experiences" lose key feature of liminality; they lose a quality of transition (2012:

28). Neither of these two terms, liminal nor liminoide, exits the existing social order and neither of them create new places. I was also unhappy in applying the term liminoide to the experiences of my interlocutors, as they didn't have much leisure time and their activities, though linked with a leisure infrastructure and their personal holiday experiences, were not leisure activities per se. In their experiments they were leading a "parallel normal lives" by working, living and travelling on the sailing boats. They inhabited the inhabitable, the sea and the ports. Places such as Lefkas Bridge were of the same character as the experiences of my interlocutors. They were not liminal or liminoide but were parallel experiments with unbelonging that created new places and opened up paths for future experiments. In borrowing a theoretical inversion called solid-void dialectic (from Ana Luz, who explored the spatial attributes of places in-between and defined streets and gaps between streets as void and buildings as solid (2006)), I posit that my interlocutors inhabited void possibilities by leaving behind solid ones and by entering these void possibilities and thus creating new dimensions, a kind of alternative spatiality that existed within and without the existing social order.

In the next chapter we will observe the same places (e.g. the bridge, the sea) from a different perspective, namely as places invested with different actions, that is to say with different movements. The sea that you move upon and the sea that you anchor in is a different sea; in fact I would call it a radically different place. If the inhabited sea has a "vertical quality" – people becoming familiar with the fish that swim about in it, with the rocks beneath the boat's hull, with the same mountain peak over which they meditate every morning – then the travelled sea has a "horizontal quality". This latter is invested with more condensed change, with the faraway view, with a horizontal depth that extends into remoteness, or simply with the quality of hyperopia. For the next chapter we should therefore put on different glasses in order to see far and wide while also attuning ourselves to the inner journeys that affect and are affected by the "horizontal quality" of the travelled sea.

PLACES AND PRACTICES OF MOVEMENT: THE SEA AND SAILING

The sea out there *is filled with waves, the sound of the wind, the motion of the boat, the clouds of all sizes and colourful sails (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2009, Aegean Sea, Greece).*

CUTTING THE UMBILICAL CORD

In the early Mediterranean spring, around March and April, the majority of inhabited sailing boats that are safely berthed in finished and unfinished Greek marinas, in wild anchorages or in the city ports start to loosen their ropes. For some the spring-summer-autumn period means island hopping, for others it is the time for longer cruising adventures. Some sail only in the spring and autumn period, whereas in the summer they work in the main tourist centers (as sailing instructors or divers), in the support services for flotillas (from toilet cleaners to sail sewers) or they return to their home countries up north due to the Mediterranean heat (mostly retired people). In any event, people begin to organize their spring-summer-autumn plans, preparing themselves as well as their boats for a different *modus vivendi,* namely for the places and practices of movement. As Ivan and Helen from Agios Nikolaos port said before they left the island of Crete in early March:

> The thing is that during the winter I walk a lot, I do things on the land, hiking, all these tours organized by Tony, I missed only two of them. Days are very organized during the winter. I have a real schedule. It's like different life, you don't have time to think … I have a feeling that during the winter I am very active, I am in motion all the time, not just hiking but you know, also doing all kinds of other things, and my boat is resting. Now is the time for her to wake up. In the spring we start to move. It's her time now [laughter] (personal conversation, March, 2012, Crete).

> I am happy to leave, too much of social life for me, you know I feel nervous, all these people, dinners, activities, and it is boring after a while. And you know this moment when you unplug your electric cable, you let your rope and off you go. It's like cutting the umbilical cord (personal conversation, March 2012, Crete).

In the above excerpts there are several starting points for our discussion on places and practices of movement. The relation between movement/stillness of the boat and stillness/movement of the body is, according to the above quoted interlocutor, inversely proportional from the perspective of winter vs. the spring-summer-autumn period. Boats rest in the winter and move in the summer while bodies do the opposite. This observation raises numerous questions. Are boat and body united in the summer ("we start to move") and re-united in winter? Is a new "sailor-boat creature" born every spring when the umbilical cord is cut from the land? Is it possible to understand the winter rest period without reference to the spring-summer-autumn period and vice versa? The other peculiarity is the experience of the differing winter and spring-summer-autumn time ("I have a real schedule. It's like different life, you don't have time to think"). Ivan feels he is active on the corporeal level during the winter but his mind is passive, as he "doesn't have time to think". It's not that he doesn't think, but he simply doesn't have time to think. By experiencing and researching the places and practices of movement, I came to the conclusion that the feeling of "not having time to think" is in close relation to the subjective experience of the day-to-day and minute–to-minute organization of everyday life in the port and/or in motion. There are many activities, people and tasks during the winter. The land life offers all the additional comforts (Internet, electricity, water) so one can organize additional tasks (Internet-related jobs, social life etc.). The burden of organizing everything by yourself (being self-sufficient in terms of electricity and berths, doing laundry in the buckets etc.) somehow falls from one's shoulders. Tasks are distributed among the group of people and machines, infrastructure offers comfort "and it's boring after a while": the organization of afternoon activities is perfect, shops are in the neighborhood, port administration takes care of electricity, water, washing machines etc., and boats are safely berthed. Consequently, one doesn't have to follow the weather rhythms or worry about the food supply but can give oneself up to those weekly rhythms of the broader Cretan or port society.

Following the thematic structure of the book *Geographies of Mobilities – Practices, Spaces, Subjects,* edited by Cresswell and Merriman (2011), I will examine the practices and objects (sailing and sailing boats), spaces (the sea) but also those certain subjects (sailors) which are important for an understanding of maritime lifestyle migration in the Mediterranean. If the previous chapters have been focused on the life journeys (third chapter) or on the yearly, monthly and daily routines (fourth chapter) of my interlocutors we will now plunge into the infinite sea of minutes and seconds so as to attain the experiential level of my interlocutors, flirting with phenomenology, a study of subjective

experience. Scholars like Merleau-Ponty (1962) brought to light the importance of experience, which is in direct relation to phenomena and has qualities of embodiment and worldliness. His idea of "Being-in-the-world" or "Etre au monde" draws attention to the bodily tasks and engagements that will be also important for our debate. Regardless of the fact that this chapter also partly relates to the aforementioned ideas, it is important to note that it will neither dwell on the theoretical discussion within phenomenology nor will it grapple in any extended sense with the theoretical questions in this field. The more focused and modest intent of this chapter is to present the subjective experiences of my interlocutors while also linking their personal experiences to the broader historical context in which these practices are embedded. In a way I will be developing an additional discussion to the one presented in the edited volume *Geographies of Mobilities* – where authors presented five different modes of mobile practices: walking, running, dancing, driving and flying – by adding the sixth mode, namely sailing.

THE SEA AND SAILING

As observed by Tim Cresswell and Peter Merriman (2011), different practices are associated with different spaces and scales of movement; they involve a range of embodied engagements, an array of technologies and infrastructures but also complex histories and geographies (2011: 5). Lorimel (2011) and Bate (2011) for example showed how running and walking have become bounded by various technologies such as shoes, walking boots, rucksacks, digital watches, running tracks etc. Flying, presented by DeLyser (2011) or driving presented by Laurier (2011) are heavily dependent on technologies, from cars and airplanes to airports, from parking places to roads to fuel. As Cresswell and Merriman elaborate, different practices also have different histories and are associated with different ways of being and thinking as well as with different ethics, aesthetics and ecologies (2011: 5–6). If walking has been constructed as romantic, running as powerful, dancing as poetic and driving as modern, where does sailing stand – or rather float? What are its historical, aesthetic, ecological, geographic, technological, practical and experiential peculiarities? I will start with the category of space, namely with the sea, and will continue with sailing, sailing boats and sailors, weaving together personal experiences, the experiences of my interlocutors as well as the historical, poetic and technological threads of sailing.

The Sea

> We were crossing the Aegean Sea from Peloponnesus to Rhodes on a windy autumn night with no stars above us. My glasses were caked with salt and I felt cold and uncomfortable. Apart from this "chilly reality", I also enjoyed the experience: I was listening to music on my iPod, imagining places that we will soon reach, breathing the soft fresh air. Sometimes the sound of the big wave broke through my music and destabilised my body. Was this wave sound the same sound as on my meditation tape? Did the sea around me resemble the images in the book or might the images just help me pass the chilly night? (Fieldwork diary, November 2012, in the Aegean Sea, on the way to Turkey).

Having had the experience of living on a boat and the experience of sailing alone or with my interlocutors, I noticed that the sea imaginaries as well as the sea as a concrete physical environment cannot be overlooked. The maritime environment demands special practical bodily adaptations (to stand, to cook, to sleep … on a moving object), it can cause seasickness, it can produce special psychological problems (being in a wide open space without landmarks), it can stimulate religious or emotional experiences (again due to its wide open space) and in the case of my interlocutors it can also offer a mobile platform for the perpetual quest for a better life. The sea, as perceived by my interlocutors, was not just a place to cross or a void to leave behind. It was full of stories, movies, poems, personal experiences, colours and sounds that were important to our discussions. Similarly, as Phelan wrote in his article on Western perceptions of the sea (2007), I do not wish to go overseas in this chapter but instead *out* to the sea, following my interlocutors' experiences, expectations and aspirations.

In anthropology the sea voyages themselves as well as the sea have merited little or no attention with the exception of scholars active in the field of maritime anthropological studies. The majority of studies within this field focus on fisheries and coastal communities, though some scholars have also brought attention to other aspects connected with the sea. Helmreich for example did ethnographic research on marine microbiologists, he coming to an understanding of the sea as a "microbial soup and worldwide web of genes" (2010) or reflecting on the place of seawater in the anthropological categories of "nature" and "culture" (2011). Even though Malinowski did devote some time to descriptions of sea colours or to the relation between people and their boats (1966, 1967) only a very few scholars noticed this peculiarity (e.g. Phelan 2007, Helmreich 2011). Regardless of this relative lack of interest in the maritime environment, the

history of anthropology is closely linked to the sea as it served as a "path" to reach fieldwork locations. As the Icelandic anthropologist Pálsson wrote:

> As a result of voyage by sea, different and isolated worlds were connected into a global but polarized network of power-relations. Prior to these voyages, the idea of anthropology did not exist. In a very real sense, then, anthropology, the study of humanity, is as much the child of seafaring as of colonialism (1991: xvii).

Yet the sea voyages as well as the sea were often seen as void and liminal, connecting those solid things that were truly worth researching, exploring or conquering (such as islands, lands, colonies, empires). Also, the sea was mostly observed from the land or from the perspective of a large-scale ship. Small-boat sailing, at times uncomfortable and close to the water, painted different colours on the canvas of Western perceptions of the sea. Before entering the subjective experiences of my interlocutors, let us briefly look at the historical context which will bring us to small-boat sailing.

Getting There

While it is the contemporary technological and other developments that facilitate small-boat sailing, the historical perspective has to be brought to bear as well. Initial models of the sea in the Western world were connected with fear and horror (Corbin 1994); the sea as a locus of horror, one that witnessed the Flood, is according to Corbin associated with two main sources – the Bible and a considerable body of classical texts.[15] In Corbin's view this context was prevalent before the 18th century when first the Enlightenment and then Romanticism created a perception of the sea as an idyllic environment.[16] The sea of English Romantics such as John Keats, William Wordsworth, George Gordon Lord Byron and Samuel Taylor Coleridge was portrayed with admiration. If the Romantics were democrats and freedom fighters (Raban 1993: 18) then Joseph Conrad, as a precursor of modernist literature who wrote many stories and novels with

15 One must nevertheless pay heed to the broader framework of Corbin's observations about the 16th and 17th century French Renaissance authors, who actually turned only very rarely to the ancient authors in describing the spectacle offered by the waves and the beach and were entirely ignorant of the stillness of the sea. On the other hand, they were very sensitive to everything in ancient texts that evoked fear and horror (Corbin 1994: 10–12).

16 Early examples of artistic representations of this "new sea" can be found in Dutch seascape paintings, the most famous example probably being Jan van Goyen's (1596–1656) *Beach of Scheveningen.*

nautical settings, set sail in a right-wing conservative direction. He saw the sea as a healing force because in his view the land was polluted beyond repair by socialism and radical reform (Raban 1993). For Conrad the sea was a strong national symbol and the last untainted, venerable and holy place left on earth,[17] a place where order could still be maintained (Raban 1993: 18-19). Conrad and his Romantic predecessors not only wrote about the sea but were passionate amateur sailors, travellers or had worked in the merchant navy.[18] They wrote about the sea and were emotionally soaked by the sea as well. In the context of this intimate relationship between sea and man, the small-boat sailors and their writings had a special place in the sea-symbolism of the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite the fact that small-boat sailing was well established in England by the end of the 19th century, it was an American who first circumnavigated the world in a small sailing boat. In 1895, Joshua Slocum – a seaman, adventurer and writer – was the first man to sail single-handedly around the world. A book he published in 1900, *Sailing Alone Around the World,* can even today be found on many liveaboards' boats. Slocum, a trained and experienced sailor, wrote about the sea and his experience in a much less spectacular manner than had his ancestors, while contributing (in his very descriptive way) to an understanding of the human experience on the sea:

> About midnight the fog shut down again denser than ever before. One could almost "stand on it". It continued so for a number of days, the wind increasing to a gale. The waves rose high, but I had a good ship. Still, in the dismal fog I felt myself drifting into loneliness, an insect on a straw in the midst of the elements. I lashed the helm, and my vessel held her course, and while she sailed I slept. […] The loneliness of my state wore off when the gale was high and I found much work to do. When fine weather returned, then came the sense of solitude, which I could not shake off. I used my voice often, at first giving some order about the affairs of a ship, for I had been told that from disuse I should lose my speech. At the meridian altitude of the sun I called aloud, "Eight bells," after the custom on a ship at sea. Again from my cabin I cried to an imaginary man at the helm, "How does she head, there?" and again, "Is she on her course?" But getting no reply, I was reminded the more palpably of my condition (Slocum 2004 [1900]).

17 On the other hand, his American contemporaries began to observe the sea more as a natural phenomenon and not so much as a national symbol. To the Americans there was no difference between the wilderness of the land and that of the sea (Raban 1994: 20–23).

18 Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), a Romantic poet and passionate sailor drowned on one of his voyages near Italy and later became a romantic hero (Raban 1994: 25).

In the course of the 20th century the idea of self-reliance, together with the anti-consumerism movement, found its way into many sea travelogues, with the sea once again serving as a sanctuary for fugitives. One of the most popular examples from the period of the student uprisings around 1968, and followed mostly by the younger French generation, was the French sailor Bernard Moitessier who sailed on a boat named *Joshua* in honour of Joshua Slocum. Apart from his books, where he writes about distancing himself from consumerism and the environmental destruction of the West (Moitessier 1971), he became almost a legend with his public gesture of "stepping out". In 1968 he participated in the Sunday Times Golden Globe Race, which would reward the first sailor to circumnavigate the earth solo and non-stop. Although Moitessier had a good chance of winning, he quit the race and continued on to Tahiti rather than returning to England.

In the second part of the 20th century, long-term cruising on small-boat sailing boats was no longer connected solely with "heroic actions", sporting achievements or short-term amateur sailing excursions but was also due to technological advances and supplemented by long-term living and/or travelling on sailing boats.

Out There

Although my interlocutors travelled on fully equipped modern sailing boats and were influenced in one way or another by the images and (hi)stories presented above, they also had their own experience with this fluid environment. It is this human-sea relational experience and the understanding of seascape through this experience that I want to explore further in the following pages. In his article on seascapes Phelan discussed several notions connected with the "emplacing" of the sea, trying to understand the sea on its own terms, not by grounding it but by conceptualising its very fluidity (2007). When we talk about landscape we usually refer to hills, mountains, monuments, houses and trees; but in talking about the seascape we are somehow left with nothing. Phelan wrote how the seas are empty and full at the same time – full of routes, memories and symbols, yet empty and hardly deserving to be called a place. "What is there for us at sea then? Nothing but a boat, one's body and endless waves, hardly deserving of the title 'place', it would seem, denied of all such landmarks" (2007: 5). Observed from the perspective of small-boat sailors, the seascape is far from empty. As one of my interlocutors said: "It's loud out there, wind and waves, sometimes I use ear plugs, otherwise I cannot sleep." (personal conversation, August 2008, Preveza). The sea *out there* is filled with waves, the

sound of the wind, the motion of the boat, colourful sails, the clouds of all sizes and colours, sometimes also birds, airplanes and airplane tracks, with the whole sky (which from the perspective of the open sea often joined with the sea in a unified picture) and coupled with the everyday subjective experiences of those who sail upon it. In this sense I would very much agree with Phelan (2007) who wrote that in the most literal sense we might conclude that the seascape means the perception of a person at sea but also bearing in mind the vessel he or she navigates.

Change and fluidity, together with motion, are also useful concepts to keep in mind when dealing with the sea and the perceptions of small-boat sailors. Many of my interlocutors described that total contrast between the romantic and very comfortable calm sea and the horror of the storm, as well as the joy of sailing on a choppy sea. The landscape changes or disappears as the boat moves by, the layer of water around the boat is unsettled and even the movement of the boat itself exhibits a multitude of characteristics. As Phelan observed, the only one who is not moving is the seaman. As the boat moves, the seaman waits patiently, struggling to accustom his body to the motion of the waves and the boat or fighting seasickness (Phelan 2007). According to my interlocutors, the physical "struggle" happens in the first three days, whereas later on the body accustoms itself to the fluid circumstances and together with the boat actually inhabits the liquid world. By overcoming seasickness, mastering "on-board walking" as well as the feeling of isolation or the fear of depths beneath them, my interlocutors described their personal experiences on the sea in the following ways: "being empty, being alert, being alive, being worried all the time, losing track of time, following the sun, being connected with cycles in nature, waiting, meditation". All these sensations relate to different modes of inhabitation (parallel and different to those on moored boats for example and also different from the liminal experiences of short-term crossings) but they also speak to different perceptions of time. I would argue that their time is still structured but it is structured differently. The majority of my interlocutors who have experienced long term crossings (30 days and more) agreed that "out there" they lived a normal yet a different life. If time in Agios Nikolaos was structured around shopping, working, afternoon activities, social life, hiking etc., time on the sea was influenced by the weather and structured around cooking, sailing, following the weather forecast, fishing, waiting and *thinking nothing,* as one of my interlocutors expressed it. Nataly, a mother of two who lives and travels with her family on a 50-foot home-built sailing boat, and who has experienced two ocean crossings, explained it this way: "You know it is a lot about waiting. Waiting is a special experience. I mean for your body and your mind. You are

Sailing combines technology, humans and environment (photo: Nataša Rogelja, March 2012, Aegean Sea, Greece).

changed, but it can be quite boring and tiring. I like it, you sit and you wait. That's it!" (personal conversation, August 2008, Preveza). The other family that I met on Corfu talked about the boredom and slowness and their positive effects:

> The first reaction is excitement or maybe seasickness (laughter) and then, after a while it's not so exiting anymore. You know how it is, sailing boats are slow. But it's good for them [for children]. I asked them, are you already bored? This is good, when you reach that stage then interesting things can happen, they start to think, to do things, all kind of things. (personal conversation, August 2008, Preveza).

In his article on Icelandic fishing, Gilsi Pállson used seasickness as a metaphor for learning, writing that enskillment – in the form of seasickness, fishing or ethnography – is not connected with internalising the body of knowledge but with an active engagement with the environment (1994: 901). In short, the change from "land legs" to "sea legs" is a bodily experience. To be at the sea the

body must become attuned to the waves and the motion of the boat. To return to land, as many navigators reported, is a similar but reverse bodily experience where one has to overcome the sickness caused by the land's stillness. Several of my interlocutors reported having problems with seasickness, the fear instilled by strong winds and big waves, or simply having difficulties in living in the confined space of the boat with no proper shower. Others discovered that their health improved drastically; they spoke of a bodily experience of health that they had never had before and how they had acquired skills which had helped them overcome the difficulties of life on a boat (how to have less things, how to shower with cold water …).

Some of the aforementioned characteristics of the sea and time perceptions of the sea can be compared with the concept of smooth space discussed by Deleuze and Guattari (1988) who drew the distinction between a smooth and striated space, the latter being ordered and regulated by a fixed scheme while smooth space allows for and even requires irregularities.

> The sea is perhaps principal among smooth spaces, the hydraulic model par excellence. But the sea is also, of all smooth spaces, the first one attempts were made to striate, to transform into a dependency of the land, with its fixed routes, constant directions, relative movements, a whole counterhydraulic of channels and conduits (1988: 387).

But sailing alongside my interlocutors, following their tracks and dots on the radar or observing my own track on the GPS, I was able to observe how the virtual sea, the sea as displayed on screens, is also an important element. It is much more striated and regulated, covered with parallels of latitude and longitude. And from a historical point of view, this is not just some recent development. Regardless of the sea's recalcitrant character, the land-attuned view has always tried to put permanent markings on it by imposing charts, latitude and longitude. With the development of GPS technology and its use in applications such as the Automatic Identification System (AIS) used for identifying and locating vessels by electronically exchanging data with nearby ships, AIS base stations and satellites, it seems that the sea has been finally brought under control and made accessible to a variety of people. With the development of accurate charts, the invention of GPS technology, and modern sailing boats with keels that can sail against the wind, it is not only the sea that has become more striated but the journey itself changes, as reported by many of my interlocutors. Even though the journey by sea is still characterised more by vectors and movement than positions and stillness, the electronic chart plotters

register and mark the tracks and the journey becomes straightened with the precise position of the boat. There are sailors who like and others who dislike this aspect. One can hardly get lost with the new technology, but on the other hand the wind still blows as it will, allowing irregularities to happen (one can end up in a different place than was initially planned).

Furthermore, the sea as a physical place, sea imaginaries as well as the practice among my interlocutors, liveaboard lifestyle migrants, undoubtedly leads to a reflection on the concept of liminality. The ancient Greeks had two words for the sea – *pelagos* and *pontos*. While *pelagos* was used to refer to the sea as a fact, *"pontos* indicates something else: it was the sea facing the human being, a trial to overcome, a threshold to pass, an open sea to be crossed, a danger, a challenge" (Thomassen 2012: 21). Those who sailed the seas also had a special position. When asked who were the most numerous, the living or the death, Anarchasis (a Scythian sage from the sixth century BC) is said to have answered, "Where do you place those who are sailing the seas?" (Endsjø 2000: 370 in Thomassen 2012: 21). Various researchers of lifestyle migration present liminality as an explanatory concept (or a concept with which they develop a critical discussion) while observing the ambivalence[19] of the everyday lives of their interlocutors. Some discussed the performance of liminality in migrants' lives (Bousious 2008), others used liminality to refer to the destination (O'Reilly 2000), they critically observed the difference between the term liminal and liminoide in relation to their case studies (Korpela 2009; Benson 2011) or referred to the in-between state of liminality[20] of their interlocutors in the context of mid-life crises (Hoey 2009). As we saw in the ethnographic material from the previous chapters, the models of liminality and the liminoid are only partly useful in the case of my interlocutors, as they entered this liminal position voluntarily and once there they also actively create their future options (rather than passively experiencing the leisure space). Their attempts to inhabit the gap between possibilities are better

19 For more on the concept of ambivalence as an analytical framework for explaining "post-migration" subjectivities in relation to British lifestyle migrants in rural France, see Benson 2011.

20 Originally the theoretical concept of liminality was developed by Arnold van Gennep (1900 [1960]) and Victor Turner (1969) and is today experiencing a revival. Van Gennep related the concept of liminality to the transitory phase in rites of passage (to the middle phase between separation from the old position and incorporation into the new one), while Turner further developed this idea by concentrating on the in-between state of liminal, situated between two fixed points. Passing the liminal stage, the individuals are socialized into their new status. Turner also introduced the term liminoide (1982) which not only refers to the in-between state but to any position outside of it. Since the liminoide state is described by Turner as a transitional phase that individuals enter voluntarily, it was associated with leisure space and adopted as more a suitable term than liminal by various researchers of lifestyle migration (Korpela 2009; Benson 2011).

suited in the third space of in-betweenness, borrowing from Homi Bhabha's vocabulary, where various modes of unbelonging (Rogoff 2000), smuggling along (Rogoff 2006) or simply lifestyle experiments within late modernity can be observed. Regarding the practices of my interlocutors, as we will see in the following section, I could observe how the sea has a liminal character when observed from the land. When observed from the sailing boat, by stocking it with technological equipment (the boat, the rain coats, wind-stoppers etc.) it loses its liminal character and becomes the third place, that place inhabited by "human-boat beings".

Sailing and Sailing Boats

In his article "Culture on the Ground," Ingold wrote how that it is surely through our feet, in contact with the ground, that we are most fundamentally and continually "in touch" with our surroundings (2004: 330). But only Jesus can walk on water, so it is solely through technology that we can experience and also inhabit the open sea. As Phelan observed, on the (open) sea the relation between person and environment is mediated through technology (2007). Sailing is thus directly and undoubtedly joined with the technology of sailing boats. My interlocutors generally agreed that without the rapid development of affordable navigation technology and the boat-building industry, sailing would not have been possible for them, adding that the impulses and experiences they obtained from living on a boat and on the sea are not only connected with culturally relevant images or their own personal aspirations. Some even joked sarcastically about their journey: "Have you realised yet what it means to be a liveaboard? It is about boat repairing in exotic places!" (personal conversation, December 2011, Crete). Many of my interlocutors referred to the boat as an extension of their body or personalised as one of their travel companions. It is therefore hardly surprising that all sailing boats have names (some of the boats in the Igoumenitsa area had names like Gypsy, Tiki, Anna, Maya or Freedom) and usually liveaboards refer to other liveaboards by the name of their sailing boat (e.g. the crew of Anna will also be coming to the dinner). One of my interlocutors stressed: "She takes care of me out there so I take good care of her too. You know it's not like a house, its more personal, you connect out there, my boat is my comrade" (personal communication, March 2012, Crete). This special relation between the boat and the person is created "out there", on the open sea and through the activity of sailing.

Sailing is an activity which combines technology, humans and environment: a sailing boat (the shape of the hull, the rig system, the sails), the wind acting

Morning in the open sea (photo: Nataša Rogelja, October 2007, Aegean Sea, Greece).

on sails moving the vessel along the surface of the water, the waves acting on the hull and on persons (causing for example seasickness), a person selecting a course that is usually part of a broader navigational plan, and weather (not just wind) influencing the journey. Modern sailing boats can sail towards the wind but they cannot derive power on a point of sail that is too close into the wind. This means that the location we want to reach, if straight up-wind, is not achievable by the direct route. It is achievable by zigzagging, meaning that the boat must constantly turn and tack in order to reach its destination.

As the sailing boat moves it changes the direction and force of the wind with its own speed so that the sailor must calculate two types of wind – a true wind and an apparent wind (this latter created by the movement of the sailing boat). While sailing, the sailor adjusts the sails with respect to the apparent wind in order to catch the wind in the most efficient way but not by pushing the boat beyond its capabilities. Taking all this into account one might observe that sailing is a tricky activity, dependable on various factors, demanding from the sailor the imagination and foresight to master those invisible forces and

theoretical calculations needed for the vessel to move apace. But the modern sailor is supported by technical equipment such as the radar, autopilot, GPS, echo sounder and AIS system which aid in this rather complicated operation. Supported by this navigational equipment, the sailor must continually stay "in the groove". Some sailors describe the groove as follows:

> Ah! The Groove. The Elusive Groove. The secret to boatspeed. That perfect combination of sail controls and boat trim and boat handling technique that is fastest in any given conditions. It's like jazz and love: it's hard to define but you know it when you feel it (Proper Course BlogSpot, accessed 18 May 2017).

Phillip J. Nelson wrote in his article "The Art of Sailing" that to stay in the groove the novice sailor must constantly imagine and remember how the entire process works, but for the experienced sailor the groove is a certain feeling or movement whereby the boat is gliding perfectly through the water (2012: 83). In such a situation the body, the vessel and the water become unified to the point that the body is no longer central to perception. As Jake Phelan observed:

> The combination of wind and waves takes effects not on the body but on the boat; size, depth and distance, position and direction become relative to the boat, no longer relative to the person. The lived body still perceives, but this experience is mediated through technology (2007: 3).

Technology matters. The length matters. The shape matters. Sailing on a catamaran or on monohull makes a big difference and one of my interlocutors explained that difference as follows: "My wife was so happy when we changed monohull for catamaran. We were sailing and I left a cup of coffee on the table and it didn't fall down. You understand? It doesn't lean, you are not seasick, it's great!" (personal conversation, May 2012, Kilada). But some of my interlocutors who have sailed in more extreme latitudes, namely in the Roaring Forties (those strong winds found in the southern hemisphere between the 40 and 50 degrees latitude) didn't bother about the cup of coffee. They said that they would never choose catamarans for these conditions as they can capsize despite their stability and natural buoyancy and which makes them practically unsinkable. The contrast between tiller steering and a steering wheel has been described by my interlocutors as a totally different experience: "Sailing with a steering wheel is like driving a bus. You don't feel the sea. It's a totally different experience" (personal conversation, Preveza, August 2010). Sailing with tiller steering feels like "having wind in your hands" and it produces a sensation of connectedness

between your body and the boat. One tiny move, a small pressure of the arm on a tiller, affects the movement of the whole boat. A sailor's hand is set in the middle of this "new body", between the underwater rudder and the sails. By moving the tiller one can feel the pressure of the water on the rudder as well as the pressure of the wind on the sails, creating balance/unbalance between all the elements that surround the midpoint, that is the sailor's perception and intentions. It's like having a puppet in your hands after a while – when you are deep into the puppet show the difference between puppeteer and puppet becomes blurred. Did the puppet become a puppeteer or the puppeteer turn into a puppet?

Following this interrelationship between the boat and the sailor I also noticed that the boat was not regarded merely as technical equipment for my interlocutors, mediating the relation between a human being and the sea, but was often referred to as an extension of their bodies or as a fellow traveller. Such observations were accompanied by descriptions of the walking experience ("walking on waves"), by a personification of the boat ("she is a good boat"), by accounts of the comradeship between boat and sailor ("we made it") or by relating the common experiences of the body's and the boat's accommodation to the movements of the sea ("after a few days she handled it quite well and I was not seasick anymore"). Sometimes when people feel tired or seasick they leave the steering responsibility to the boat and to the technology. As one of my interlocutors explained: "I totally trust her but also all the equipment I have on the boat. I usually sleep during the night or if I am tired I put my radar alarm on and I sleep like a baby" (personal conversation, October 2009, Trizonia). It was late October in the Aegean Sea when I had an interesting conversation with a group of my interlocutors about the relation between the boat and the sailor in extreme conditions. We were anchored in the soft mud of Kilada Bay a harbour in the Peloponnesus peninsula), we were drinking wine under the autumn sky and stories were told. I heard several scenarios about not trusting the boat in harsh circumstances, numerous stories about boats that survived the storm while the sailors who escaped to their dinghies didn't. I have never questioned the truthfulness of these stories but I do remember the moral of these tales: Never leave a friend behind!

The Sailor

Mobile figures such as migrants, tourists, vagrants, vagabonds, nomads, travellers, refugees, commuters and sailors perform different practices, they have different experiences, they come from different times, classes and countries – and yet they are all defined through their mobility, and their status is

often ambiguous, moving between marginal and central positions. What also unifies these different mobile subjects, according to Cresswell and Merriman, is the fact that they are defined by representational schemes that lie beyond the scales of individual. "They have been constructed and represented in law, newspapers, accounts, novels and films, but these subject positions are also inhabited, resisted and manipulated through practice" (2011: 9). In his article on "The Curious Career of Mobile Subjects," Cresswell centres his discussion around vagrants/vagabonds as important cultural figures but also as a part of European legal history in order to illuminate the paradoxical centrality of the vagabond's existence to understandings of mobility in the modern Western world (2011: 239). Vagabonds and vagrants, having numerous cousins and brothers and sisters, play a variety of roles ranging from "hero to villain", from "threat to salvation" (2011: 251). One of these curious cousins is also a sailor, an archetype of freedom but also its prisoner (Karjalainen 2004).

Similarly, as vagabonds, a sailor presents us with an alternative spatiality. This spatiality is different from the land-attuned views focused on communities, societies, nation- states, continents and settlements. By contrast to land-attuned views, as observed by Steinberg, ocean-based views give greater prominence to the cultural and economic interchange between societies; but they often see the oceans as a series of (terrestrial) points linked *by* connections and not the actual (oceanic) space *of* connections (2013: 157–158 it. orig.). Steinberg continues: "The material space in the middle – what is actually in the rim – drops off the map" (2013: 158). The sailor – as a metaphor and as subject – inhibits this material middle and transforms it through his perception and inhabitation by giving it a central position. He (usually the sailor is imagined in masculine form) centres the map (or the globe) on the colour blue; the oceans are peppered with pieces of black land. By inhabiting the water world, his position is changed as well – from a liminal to a central one. By appearing and disappearing he creates fear and admiration, he connects and enlarges empires (in the form of a colonizer) but he also attacks them (in the form of a pirate). He is a "threat and salvation", to use Cresswell words (2011), a truly ambiguous fellow. Although we could compare him with nomads, his routes may be much more unpredictable, his spatiality may offer more "invisible" opportunities. In contrast to nomads, the sailor as a metaphor may not always move on circular routes, his patterns may not be repetitive. Similarly, as vagrants, he also presents us with ambiguous positions (prisoners of freedom) and he sets his sails in different historical periods and from different positions (from "noble" explorers to "cruel" pirates, from privileged first-class travel to "hippies' adventures").

My interlocutors *inhabited, resisted* and *manipulated* the metaphor of sailor and used this alternative spatiality in numerous ways. Some used it as a coverage, as explained by a German family with three children and already mentioned in previous chapters: "It would be weird to go and live somewhere in the mountains in order to spend time together … If you say I travel you are normal. […] If you say I sail you are like a hero" (personal conversation, Trizonia, October 2009). Others used it as platform for "not being quite there yet", an endeavour so clearly articulated in much lifestyle migration research and explained in the theoretical concept of the perpetual quest for a better life (Benson 2009, see also chapter 2 of this book).

In our contemporary world the sailor represents a particular subject position, often stereotyped in the form of wealthy and handsome white men who are accompanied by beautiful (white) woman sailing on an expensive family yacht, as the covers of the nautical magazines show us. Their yacht is berthed in the luxury marinas and their mobile patterns are condensed into daily trips, the couple returning to their luxury villa in the evening. In the contemporary context they also represent leisure-time sailors, these stemming from the tradition of American and British nautical clubs established in the 19th century. One of the most famous yacht clubs, for example, is America's New York Yacht Club (NYYC) which was founded in 1844 and which since 1851 has been organising the America's Cup race, one of the most prestigious international sailing events. These contemporary stereotypes of sailors erase ethnic, national and socio-economic differences between contemporary sailors. According to my research, such presentations overlook not only the complex personal backgrounds of my interlocutors but the histories and geographies of maritime lifestyle migration in general. My interlocutors for example represent different social strata and age groups, they have very different sailing experience (from none at all through to sailing instructors and contestants) and their break with sedentary life in the West occurred in a variety of ways. Among them we can find couples in the majority but also families and single men. Who are they? Can they be called sailors at all? How do they manipulate the metaphor of sailor? How do they relate to the handsome man from the nautical magazine? Some of my interlocutors related to these images through negative relation, some are regular subscribers to these magazines, and there are also people who write for these magazines. One of my interlocutors explained:

> You know I am a sailor, I am *(accentuated),* but I never read these sailing magazines … It's only buy, buy, this is a rich world. And I don't have money to buy this fucking shit … You know who is reading these magazines? Those who never sail.

> They have their rich yachts in the port and they read magazines … I once wrote an article for them. I exaggerated a bit, you know, stories of bad weather and storms, they want to hear them (personal conversation, November 2008, Plataria).

I have here argued that embodied practices of my interlocutors are central in explaining their own inhabiting of the role of sailor, as their particular motivations, aspirations and experiences create a unique sailor as well as a unique spatial story. This new sailor is still an ambiguous fellow, a cross between that wealthy Western man and a hippie, sailing on the sea of stories (reading or writing them). The sea and the sailor as created and inhabited by my interlocutors contain some of the established symbolic attributes, but they also use the materiality of the sea (e.g. physical, biological, legal and spiritual opportunities and constraints linked to the maritime environment). In a way my interlocutors (perpetually) create a new sailor and a new sea by adding their own experiences to the picture. How we might conceptualise these specific yet historically grounded practices of my interlocutors and how we might understand this form of contemporary migration is the subject of our concluding chapter.

CONCLUSIONS

Scandinavian couple completing their decade-long journey around the world (photo: Nataša Rogelja, December 2011, Agios Nikolaos, Crete).

RESEARCHING MIGRATION

The ethnographic material presented in the book opens up (at least) four tricky questions: who are the migrants and how can we define migration (ontology) but also how to grasp floating interlocutors and which comparisons are reasonable (methodology)? It also brings to the fore the recognition that ontological and methodological questions are related, influencing each other. Following Bruno Meeus, researchers working in the field of migration should carefully examine the question which temporal and spatial scales must be taken seriously in answering the first question, namely who are the migrants. Can I talk about my interlocutors as migrants? They left their homes (a few years or few decades ago) and embarked on sailing boats. Most of them are still keeping their (fake) permanent addresses in their home country and are thus statistically invisible. Are they irregular migrants? Can I compare them with other irregular migrants? Because they are invisible they are not eligible for migrants' benefits (but in most cases they don't want benefits from the country where they live). Who are they? Can they be taken to be part of the international retirement migration, even though most of my "retired interlocutors" had left before their retirement period began and partook in longer "sailing breaks" also earlier in their lives. Regarding the Mediterranean, my interlocutors live most of the time in EU states but some of them circulate between non-EU countries, home countries and the Mediterranean ports for work. Does that make them work migrants? Does this qualify as is internal EU migration and if so how does "the Brexit event" (or future similar events that might follow the example of Brexit) change this perspective? Some circulate around the world. Are they travellers? In summer some commute to tourist centres for work and others work during the whole year from their boats (e.g. as IT specialists), some pay taxes in their home countries and they may not be eligible for health services unless they also keep fake permanent addresses in their home countries. Can we then say

that the system is unprepared for these hyper mobile subjects? Are they really hyper mobile or the sedentary norm of national states cannot accommodate non-normative lives of my interlocutors? And finally, my interlocutors are sometimes perceived as tourists. They wear crocs, sun glasses and sport clothes and they are "in charge" of their own time, as my interlocutors like to stress. Practically that means that they might drink wine or work "wrong" hours. Is this at all a migration and if so, what then is migration? Regarding lifestyle migration, we sometimes walk on a border line between migration and tourism and that border, following Icelandic researchers Unnur Dís Skaptadóttir and Kristín Loftsdótir is not always clearly distinguishable; however, the power relations between people in these roles (tourists who may take temporary work and migrants who might participate in tourist activities) and the local population are quite different (2016: 18). Tourists are defined by their temporality while migrant labourers are conceived of as more permanent then tourists (2016: 18) but there is no apparent agreement as to how long the permanent/temporary stay might be. Regarding tourism, a definition commonly used by World Tourism Organisation defines tourism as involving stays away from one's usual residence of not more than a year (Torkington 2010: 101). Almost all of my interlocutors have reached that line but not all are working or have permanent addresses in "new places". Some feel as tourists in their home countries and some said that the boat is their home country (this is literally and legally true as boats are legal national entities). But again, numerous liveaboards register their boats in countries other than their own in order to save money. As Skaptadóttir and Loftsdótir highlighted, it is important to acknowledge the diversity within each category but it is also important not to lose sight of the global context and differences that exist between tourists and migrants (2016: 18). Regardless of all these slippery characteristics or precisely because of them, I decided to call my interlocutors (lifestyle) migrants, their "elite" position, sunglasses and boats notwithstanding, since their migratory experience in many ways resembles experiences of other mobile subjects called migrants. I also decided to change the expected borders of this terms (e.g. tourists don't work, migrants work) with the unexpected ones (e.g. tourists work, migrants don't work) encompassing solid as well as fluid frontiers and solutions. This gave me space to compare people and practices, not categories.

Methodologically speaking, my advantage within this "almost invisible story of relatively affluent migrants" was that various fixations (e.g. methodological nationalism) became less obvious. The attachment to place (or two "homelands") was for example not an issue as my interlocutors were more attuned to what Juntunen, Kalčić and Rogelja framed as marginal mobility

lifestyles and loosely defined as highly mobile, not entirely forced nor voluntary lifestyles that occur along loosely defined travel trajectories that generally lack politicized public spheres and are marked by the sentiments of marginality and constant negotiation with the sedentary norm of the nation state (2013). They also resemble Cresswell's historical vagabonds, present throughout the history, producing anxiety because they were not legible within the clear hierarchies and geographies, their mobility being irregular and unpredictable (2010) or Bauman's metaphoric vagabond related to postmodern experience who does not know how long he will stay in one place. "Once on the move again, he sets his destinations as he goes and he reads the road signs, but even then he cannot be sure whether he will stop, and for how long, at the next station" (1993: 240). But they can also be theorized as "opportunists", surfing on the waves of colonial heritage and world's inequalities, reading, writing or posing for the elite nautical magazines. None of these proposed conceptual frameworks can be fully linked with liveaboards but fragments of all these figures and metaphors can be traced in the life journeys of my interlocutors.

This "slippery" situation forced me to rethink questions set above. I discovered that my research was not without fixations and I have very much agreed with Meeus who argued that methodological nationalism is but one particular way of "fixing" human mobility (2010: 5). In his article on Romanians who worked abroad, Meeus wrote how other fixes, for example the "methodological ruralism" also strongly influenced the research on migration.[21] In the case of the so-called lifestyle migration, the main reasons for the lack of research on the subject is the idea of a relative unimportance (e.g. low numbers) of this kind of migration (ontology) but also the practical difficulty of catching floating populations (smuggling across categories) coupled with statistical invisibility of lifestyle migrants (methodology). There is another reason that strongly influences understanding (or misunderstanding) of this phenomenon, namely the idea that "elite mobility" is not a serious research subject, the problem that anthropology of tourism had to face in early 1980s.[22] The recent rapid increase of the relatively privileged movements challenged numerous researcher to start

21 The fact that in Romania, ethnographic and survey research on migration has mainly been carried out in rural communities has been followed by two main reasons – the believe in the relative importance of migration from rural areas (ontology) and the practical difficulty to organise research in urban settings (methodology). This, in Meeus view strongly influence the collection and interpretation of empirical material (2010).

22 Following Heiman, Leichty, and Freeman as well as Sheper-Hughes, the anthropology as a whole has traditionally privileged the powerless ethnographic subject as indicative of a more purposeful, "morally engaged" scholarship (Scheper-Hughes 1995:420 in Heiman, Liechty, and Freeman 2012: 6). From this perspective, the middle classes were viewed as "tainted not only

taking them seriously, as these movements, such as the international retirement migration or the migration of professional expats, are becoming normalized, besides being on the increase and having enormous effect on local communities and economies. Even though my research was not particularly focused on the impact of maritime lifestyle migrants on receiving locations, I would say that these often invisible individuals generally escape the subsequent scrutiny and moral panic connected to mobility but nonetheless make a substantial impact on local, often rural communities. Also, the normalisation of these movements brings to the fore the question of luxury and privilege. Digging deeper into my fieldwork I was for example surprised how redundancy, blocked career opportunities and youth unemployment also have their share in this story and I was also surprised regarding statistical invisibility of my research subjects. How can we research and "catch" mobile, invisible but also "trivial" research subjects? If recognition of ontology behind migration studies can be linked with Favell's claim that migration researchers have to be more self-conscious about the way contextual factors determine the intellectual content of their research (2003), I would stress that our methodological approaches need to be more creative and flexible. Through the recognition of the diversity of mobility patterns (not just circular or between two places – e.g. between "two homelands") one can reflect on the ontologies of migration and one must also figure out how to approach and inhabit this situation methodologically. My own methodological approach in this situation was oriented towards a longitudinal biographical method (following my interlocutors across a longer time span) and participant observation adapted to specific research situation ("sailing along" observation in spring-summer-autumn period and "on-the-spot" observation in winter). I also engaged in an experiment of essayistic ethnography, writing portraits of my interlocutors or crews in a creative manner. This approach helped me see things from a different perspective but also served as a way to present my participant observation knowledge to the reader. In the writing process I tried to describe the overall atmosphere of certain events as well as the emotional details present in situations or conversations.

Regarding the question how to think this migration, I tried to approach this rather uncomfortable question from various "backstage" positions. Starting from anthropology of tourism rather than migration studies, I steered my theoretical journey towards lifestyle migration theory, continued towards mobility studies and later on did few small but important turns towards experimental

by implicit exploitation of their lower-class counterparts but also by cultural inauthenticity and mimicry of (often foreign, colonial) elites" (Heiman, Liechty, and Freeman 2012: 6).

transdisciplinary approaches that "dance" between art and humanities (e.g. works of Rogoff). That gave me confidence to embark on my own experiment of essayistic ethnography as well as to establish a dialogue with theoretical discussions "out there" as I found notions of smuggling, criticality and unbelonging, developed in interdisciplinary research approaches (mentioned in the second chapter of this book), as interesting discussants in relation to my research material. As written by Rogoff, one of the most interesting things that "smuggling" as a model allows us to do is to rethink the relations between that which is in plain sight, that which is in partial sight and that which is invisible (2006: 5) As we saw in the portraits, my interlocutors are not only potentially invisible to states (not keeping permanent addresses) but are also invisible for the researchers and their categories as they smuggle somewhere between tourists, migrants and travellers, at times visible (in the ports) at time invisible (in the anchorages or "out there" at the open sea). They might be visible on the radars sometimes (if not too far out at the sea). They might be visible on AIS - Automatic Identification System (if they don't switch it off). They move *between, in* and *around* various places and times, building a specific network between places, times, people, political insights, memories, departures and "a long chain of sliding signifiers", to end with Rogoff's expression (2000: 7), challenging established categories within migration studies as well as methodological approaches used. My initial question, how to think this migration, was posed in the context of my first interviews as well as in the context of my initial perceptions regarding the whole researched phenomenon, framed around the *beginnings, doings* and *endings*. During the course of the research all these three parts merged into the process in which there were several beginnings, numerous doings and re-doings and no ending. One of the reasons that departure echoed so strongly in the first interviews is also because the departure is celebrated in popular culture, but from the practical point of view also because it was, according to my interlocutors, difficult to leave the steady roots of everyday routine back home. The doing phase is slow, with various ups and downs, transforming aspirations and expectations slowly but persistently and irreversibly. From these numerous doings, new doings were born and new departures happened. While to say that *migration is a process* is almost a truism now, a true understanding entails long stretches of time-consuming and at times boring exercises of participant observation. At the end, this time-consuming endeavour as well as the longitudinal tracking of interlocutors presented in the third chapter of this book, might lead towards new perspectives. As Halfacree argued, "… widening of explanatory lens soon leads to critical reflection on the more general dominant epistemological and ontological scholastic framing of

'migration'. Migration, in sum, is about whole lot more than relocating from A to B" (2014: 97). But saying that migration is a process cannot be the end result of the analysis. It only clears out the space for interesting questions to emerge such as: what are the costs of relatively privileged mobility; which social groups are "portable" and which aren't; how initial representations are changed through the experiences and what effect does this change have? And, last but not least, how to approach these processes methodologically? My interlocutors were smuggling through the nets of our rigid concepts, using their own networks. This network, the mobility patterns within the network and the multiple time layers woven together by the creative agents call for adaptive methodological choreography where methods and concepts have to follow the research subject and not *vice versa.* On a more general level, the mobility practices in 21st century address researchers of migration to carefully examine the existing categories and their explanations of the phenomenon and take temporal and spatial scales seriously as well as creatively. This hopefully takes us to the "creative" ending sections of this book, namely to a closure that cannot be *the end* in trying to answer the initial question – how to think this migration? This attempt neither gives us definite answers nor has it the intention to impose rigid structures on fluid processes. It will rather temporarily freeze a certain thought about the research material presented in the book with the warm hope that it will melt soon and change into something else.

TEMPORARILY UNBELONGING IN PRACTICE

In this study I chose to follow people across a longer stretch of time, I chose to be faithful to the traditional anthropological method of participant observation, while also supplementing this with some auto-ethnographic observations. The combination of these approaches gave me both time and freedom, but also demanded systematic discipline that enabled me to explore apparent discordance between what people *say* and what they *do,* how their expectations and aspirations are changed by their experiences over time and within a variety of place(es) but also the possibility to inhabit the problem instead of only analysing it. "Inhabitation of the problem" enabled me to see migration as a process and people as uncategorised yet fully embedded in all symbolic and material contexts. Migration *per se* is not a class- or nation-bound phenomenon (or a phenomenon reserved for scholars within migration studies), but class and nation (as well as other categories we create) can condition the way people move (or don't move) as well as how they perceive the world and how they are perceived by it. Again

this multiplicity of movements, categories and perceptions doesn't mean that we cannot compare different mobile actors (and use, reject or compare concepts linked to them) even if their starting and ending points differ. Inhabiting this perspective, I partly followed the endeavours of mobility scholars who did not choose to operate with existing categories but were dealing more with the delineation of the "context in which both sedentary and nomadic accounts of the social world operate, and they furthermore question(ed) how that context is itself mobilised, or performed, through ongoing sociotechnical and cultural practices" (Sheller 2011: 2). From that perspective - abandoning categories but not the context of power relations - I also questioned the notion of escape as my research material clearly showed that my interlocutors didn't escape from conventional structures but they did reposition themselves within them. They took an active role in these endeavours and through their experiences initial imaginaries were transformed while criticalness (based on a critical distance) evolved into critiquality (based on assessing a different mode of inhabitation of the problem).

My interlocutors inhabited the sea and this lifestyle in all its imaginary, material and practical form and from there new relations and ideas sprang. In other words, judgements transformed into occupation. How this new "scaping" of "the maritime freedom" occurs can be observed through examining some of the themes as proposed by Halfacree for "the rurality" such as "slowing down, feeling life, connectedness, place-based dwelling and learning by doing" (2014: 99). Entering the concluding phase, I wish to start from the suggestion that the maritime environment, but also objects such as sailing boats, are not passive but are part of a mutually influencing and interactive environment, influencing the outcomes of this lifestyle. As Hafacree wrote, referring to Ingold and others, "the rurality" (or "the maritime" in the broadest sense), presents animated and lively zone of entanglement (Ingold 2008: 1807 in Halfacree 2014: 99). This atmosphere, as Halfacree observed, somehow overflows a represented world (2014: 100). The slowness of the sailing boat for example can result in boredom, in waiting, doing nothing, in being patient, but also self-reflexion, as my interlocutors reported. The slowness of life at the anchorage is changed from the romanticised "slow life" to the difficulties of getting fresh water from the shore and that in itself slows down the everyday activities. Feeling life was articulated by my interlocutors mostly through observing and feeling the weather, the wind, the clouds, the starts and the waves "Back home, I never observed clouds or the sky like that … You know really being part of it … following it every day … not just because it's beautiful but because it is important for me … for the boat" (personal conversation, November 2010,

Plataria). Windiness is sometimes transformed from the poetic form to the annoying fact and pragmatic reality, as one of my interlocutors confessed: "You know, most of the liveaboards I met, they hate wind … I hate wind […] but we need wind … fuel is expensive (laughter)" (personal conversation, Octobre 2009, Trizonia island). "Being attuned to nature", the idea that partly pushed my interlocutors into this particular lifestyle choice, was also transformed; not to its opposite or to the confirmation but to something else. One of my interlocutors said:

> I feel alive because I do simple things like cooking, fishing, cleaning, teaching other people how to sail … Back home I didn't know anymore what I was doing exactly … you know when people ask you … what do you do … what can I say … I work for this company, I sit in front of the computer and I sell something that is hard to pronounce … It's not so perfect here, winters on the boat, well … you know … in the winter I say I have enough of that … but it suits human nature, don't you think so (long break) … I don't feel like a robot …" (personal conversation, December 2011, Crete).

Connectedness was mostly associated with the boat ("we did it") and with the sea (my interlocutors reported about being infected with the sea, not with the "wild sea" but with their very intimate personal experiences like feeling healthy for example). Connectedness with "the sailing community" was expressed in ambiguous terms. Ports did serve as a setting for different interactions between ascribed and achieved identities but following my interlocutors on a longer run I could observe how community arising through personal encounters and connections is difficult to maintain and includes individual efforts that, in the case of my interlocutors, eventually boil down to e-mails and rare occasional visits. In other words, the imaginary sailing community transformed into different small groups (national fellows, friends and comrades) that questioned the representations of sailing community but also national (dis)connections, as language still proved to offer an important and cosy shelter.

Place-based dwelling is in the case of "the maritime" (and observed from the boat perspective) different from "the rural" as boats can be moved. But as we learn from the ethnography, places one moves upon (the sea) or void places (bridges) can also be inhabited. Through the experiences of my interlocutors we could also observe how initial maritime imaginaries transformed and how the sea is not just one. As described in the fifth chapter, the sea that my interlocutors move upon and the sea that they anchor in, becomes a different sea. As people get familiar with the fish that swim nearby, with the rocks beneath the

hull, with the same mountain peak over which they meditate every morning, the inhabited sea acquires a vertical quality. A vertical quality emerges in my interlocutors' everyday experience at anchorages, marinas and city ports. On the other hand, the travelled sea has a horizontal quality. The latter is invested with more condensed change, with the faraway view, with the horizontal depth reaching the remote. One has to keep in mind that the horizontal quality is not shallow; it only has a different kind of depth. This quality is more accentuated in the representational realm of the maritime (e.g. sunsets over the calm ocean surface) although the representational realm downplays certain elements (e.g. roaring sounds of the waves and the wind that bump against the hull and mast). As we observed in the fourth and fifth chapter, the vertical quality is also changed by inhabiting "the vertical sea", by "dwelling in moving", accustoming one's body to the waves, combating seasickness or "walking on the sea".

Learning by doing affected my interlocutors in numerous "small ways". They reported how they had to learn how to live with fewer things for example, with less space, with less privacy. They also reported how living in "chaos", as some of them described the boat life, affects people in various ways. On the way back to Slovenia, I stopped in northern Greece to visit a couple, former liveaboards that sold their boat and rented a house. It was a small house and we put our sleeping bags on the old wooden floor. After half a year of living constantly on the boat, the house felt big and comfortable, not to mention the hot water in the bathroom. In the course of our evening conversation they said: "When I invite boat people I don't complicate … I know you are used to everything. I wouldn't dare to invite somebody normal, you know … and said … ok, you can sleep on the floor" (from the fieldwork diary, May 2013, Volos). Furthermore, Fritz from the first portrait for example reported how, in the course of his boat lifestyle he lost his sensitivity towards critiques coming from his family or friends in Germany regarding his decisions or constant change of plans. As told by his wife, having this experience, it was much easier for them to disobey certain "normal rules" back home. These were small things such as where to put children in school, what is reasonable to wear, how one should look like, how big an apartment one should have, etc. Following this family in a longitudinal perspective it may look like nothing changed; Ines went back to Germany and worked (again) in the kindergarten, they lived with her father (again) and children went to school. But their experiment did affect their "normality compasses" and transformed their lives in small but significant ways.

Hence to conclude; I claim that a biographical approach reflects on the idea of "more-then-representational" sea; on the processual nature of my interlocutors' experiences; it relativizes the departure; it questions the notion of

escape; while also allowing for the demonstration of an attempt to temporarily inhabit the gap between systems, ports and possibilities. The task becomes not to change the structure but to inhabit it differently. My working age interlocutors for example still work, they still have obligations towards their families back home (as in the case of Ines in the portraits), they still use some of the comforts related to their passports and nationality (French workers might get better jobs in the shipyards as Moroccan ones) but they try to negotiate family-work balance in a different way by inhabiting the gap. I link this attempt with the idea of *unbelonging* – a critical refusal of the terms, developed by Irit Rogoff (2000) and further used by Cocker (2012). Following the experiences (and experiments) of my interlocutors on a longer scale, I argue that their attempts can be understood as temporarily unbelonging – an active disassociation in the attempt to clear the ground for something else to emerge. The sea, as a place which for migrants signifies something loosely defined as quality of life, has a quality of a "gap", which can be inhabited also due to modern technology (the very accurate colourful weather forecasts that my interlocutors follow, modern sailboats, etc.), and from where one can go in different directions. As we have observed in the ethnography for a few retired couples such a choice can even be an end point (one of Bill and Laurel Cooper's most popular books, entitled *Sail into the Sunset. A Handbook for "Ancient" Mariners* (1994b) has all kinds of advice on how to die on the boat, how to sail into death so to speak, in the aptly named chapter Your Time is Up), while for families it can be an intermediate phase, a gap suited for the period with small children. The geographic place of the sea and the liminal imaginaries of the sea can be used as a jumpstart that enables individuals to reflect or even rearrange work and family life, or it can be inhabited in a more permanent sense in order to achieve an active retirement. As we saw in the book, the models of liminality and the liminoid are in the case of my interlocutors only partly useful, as they entered this "liminal position" voluntarily and once "there" they are also actively creating their future options (rather than passively experiencing the leisure space) by observing their new position and by adopting a critical view that develops into *criticality* – a way of inhabiting the problem rather than analysing it (Rogoff 2006). In the duration of the actual inhabitation "… a shift might occur that we generate through the modalities of the occupation rather than through a judgement upon it" (Rogoff 2006: 2). It is exactly the shift towards new knowledge and new skills (acquired in the state of temporarily unbelonging and leading to future unknown directions) that can be effectively observed through a longitudinal qualitative approach. The desire of my interlocutors to change things by temporarily unbelonging does not signal a passive or romantic longing for wilderness or freedom (even if it is

initially informed by these imaginaries), but it rather creates a productive gap that enables them to learn new modes of action and thought. It would seem that the blue horizons functions as a perfect symbolic and material platform for such endeavours.

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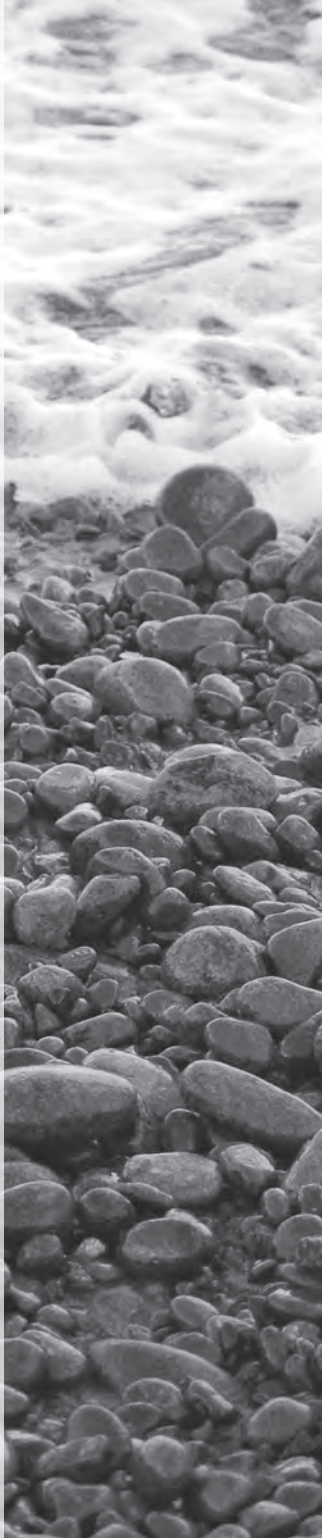

One day, 15 years ago, when they were in their twenties, Tom and Prudence went to a library together. They refused to spend their life working for big corporations; paying back their loans; living in a house that would be way too big for them. They went through all the books on sea, travel and adventure. One book in particular, written by a French sailor, caught their attention. The man had set out alone around the world in 1968 to distance himself from the consumerism and environmental destruction of the West. Later he wrote a book about it. "The coast is a great whore," he wrote. They thought: "If he was able to do it then, we can do it now!" They set off. (From the fieldwork diary, December, 2011, Crete)

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