Constructing the moral framework of hospitality in non-commercial homestays

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own independent work and all secondary material has been referenced appropriately. The content of this thesis has not been submitted in part or in whole for any other academic degree or professional qualification.

Signed by: _____

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Abstract

In the past few years there has been a rise in people trying to find more meaningful ways to experience a country and its local culture when travelling, such as non-commercial homestays. Non-commercial homestays refer to the encounters where food and accommodation are offered by the host in exchange for a few hours of daily work by the guest. Due to the complicated nature of this encounter where the private and the public arena overlap, with the host simultaneously being an employer and the guest being an employee, the rules of the exchange are often unclear. This study explores the ways in which the two sides of non-commercial homestays construct the moral framework of the encounter by reacting to micro-ethical dilemmas they are faced with throughout their experience.

To that end, a combination of an autoethnographic account and in-depth semi-structured interviews were employed. For the former, I participated in a Workaway an exchange as a guest to sensitise myself as a researcher to the experience. The autoethnography was followed by 50 interviews with hosts and guests in this setting, participating in au pairing and exchanges facilitated by organisations such as WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX.

The findings suggest that the main aspects of the exchange were the work offered by the guest, the hospitality offered by the host as well as the interpersonal relationship, education and cultural exchange that take place. Each side enters the encounter with their own perceptions of fairness in relation to these aspects and is often faced with micro-ethical dilemmas; situations where they were uncertain of what the moral framework dictates. Their reactions to these dilemmas communicate their viewpoint to the other side - explicitly or implicitly- and, in turn, feed into the moral framework of the encounter according to which they will act for the duration of the experience.

In terms of theoretical contributions, the study offers an insight into the host-guest relationship, the resulting power dynamic, as well as the negotiation that takes place between the two throughout the encounter. In terms of practical contributions, the findings of this research can be used by both organisations and their members that participate in such encounters to secure better host-guest matches and ensure a positive experience for both sides.

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To Míri

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“It's quite equal, I feel we're quite, we just talk about it really. But that doesn't mean it's not, I know it's still a power relation, I know that we're still the family and this is where she lives. And so I do understand that however much we feel like we're equals, of course there still may be things they feel are difficult to say.”

Stella, au pair host

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Study Background and Rationale

Ethics of hospitality have been analysed extensively on an international level, mainly related to hospitality provided by countries to people in need for sanctuary; immigrants, refugees and displaced individuals (Bulley, 2015). However, attention has been increasing towards hospitality on the micro level, particularly in the home, what Lashley (2000) characterises as the private domain. With the setting being a rich in meaning space, the relationship developed between the host and the guest is a constant power play with both sides having to abdicate a certain level of freedom (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007b). When the guest is a stranger, further complications are added to the exchange. Bulley (2015) argued that the way we treat a stranger who enters our home is what constitutes an ethical relation. On the other hand, according to Derrida (2001) ethics is hospitality:

> *Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethic amongst others. Insofar as it has to do with the ethos, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, ethics is hospitality; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality.* (Derrida, 2001, pp. 16-17)

Hosting strangers in the home is becoming a common practice with not only more established commercial types of exchanges such as Bed and Breakfasts, but also, more recently, encounters such as Couchsurfing and AirBnB. While these encounters are either based on a financial transaction or completely free of charge, new forms of hospitality exchanges have risen where, rather than including a financial compensation or a complete lack thereof, hospitality is provided in exchange of work. WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX, while existing for years have been popularised recently and become more accessible through the use of the internet. The hosts in these encounters offer food and accommodation in exchange for a few hours of daily work that is provided by the guests. In WWOOF, work is focused on organic farming (WWOOF, 2019) while in Workaway and HelpX the posts are more varied, including work such as language practice, childcare, domestic work, volunteers helping NGOs, work

in hostels and various others (Workaway, 2019; HelpX, 2019). A similar encounter is au pairing. The host invites their guest to live with them and help out with housework and childcare, while giving them a stipend. Au pairing started -and is still described in the official narratives- as a cultural exchange; au pairs are supposed to be ‘on par’ with their hosts and be integrated into the family (Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007). However, this is not always the case, with au pairing having become a source of cheap domestic labour in recent years (Yodanis and Lauer, 2005).

Cox and Narula (2003) characterised au pairing as a combination of work, homestay and cultural exchange, a combination that could arguably be applied to the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters on the basis of their characteristics. This overlap of home and workplace, with the host being simultaneously a type of employer and the guest an employee, adds a further layer to the already sensitive power balance. The effect this overlap has on the guests has been studied in the au pairing context, where it has been argued that the hosts are in a position to take advantage of the proximity and have their guests being constantly ‘on call’ (Williams and Balaz, 2004; Anderson, 2000).

Selwyn (2000) argued that in every hospitality encounter the two sides have to reach a common moral framework according to which they will behave. However, the process through which this moral framework is established has not been given attention in the existing literature, especially in this complex setting. The purpose of this study is to fill the research gap on the process of constructing of the moral framework in non-commercial homestays. The lack of formal contract, the nature of work involved, the interpersonal relationship between the two sides as well as the overlap between home and work -the private and the public spheres- create a sensitive power dynamic in these encounters. With both sides having their own perceptions of fairness in the transaction, that is what they believe they should offer and receive in exchange, there is a level of negotiation taking place between the host and the guest in this setting (Kosnik, 2013; Cox and Narula, 2003). Gibson (2010) argued for the necessity of an analysis on the micro level of host-guest interactions to illuminate the nature of moral dilemmas that emerge during tourism encounters. This study analyses the construction of the moral framework through a view into

the micro-ethical dilemmas both sides face and their reactions to them. A good interpersonal relationship between the two sides is imperative for the whole experience to be positive (Mosedale, 2012) and with the two sides being aware of this necessity they often try to avoid tension. Accordingly, it has been found that au pairs often use passive expressions of discontent rather than confront their hosts (Hess and Puckhaber, 2004).

This complicated situation creates a need for a negotiation between the two sides to decide on the rules of the exchange. A combination of autoethnography and 50 in-depth semi-structured interviews with hosts and guests in this setting was employed. Through exploring both sides' perceptions of fairness in the encounter and the ways they express these perceptions, this research aims to shed light into the construction of the moral framework of the exchange.

1.2 Research aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the construction of the moral framework in non-commercial homestays.

This aim will be achieved by completing the following objectives:

- To critically review the existing literature around the studied topic
- To explore the main aspects of the exchange and participants' perceptions of fairness in relation to these aspects
- To investigate further aspects that influence the power dynamic
- To examine the reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas that they face during this exchange
- To discuss the theoretical and practical implications of this study

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This study is divided into seven chapters. **Chapter 1** introduces the reader to the thesis, providing an overview of the background and rationale for the research, its aim and objectives as well as the structure that is followed. **Chapter 2** explores the existing literature on and around the topic. It commences with a view into the setting, non-commercial homestays,

presenting WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters, as well as au pairing. The next part examines the ethics of hospitality as discussed in philosophical debates, mainly focused on an international perspective. Subsequently, the home and its significance to its dwellers as well as a setting for domestic hospitality is examined. The final part introduces the concept of micro-ethics in relation to hospitality exchanges. **Chapter 3** presents the methodology applied in this study. The discussion of the philosophical approach, critical theory, is followed by a justification for its use in this study. A short introduction to qualitative research and a more in-depth view of the chosen methods, autoethnography and semi-structured interviews, as well as the sampling method, analysis and ethical considerations for each method are discussed. The chapter concludes by presenting an evaluation and the limitations of the chosen methods, as well as a reflexive part. Chapters 4 and 5 present the findings of this study. **Chapter 4** introduces the reader to my autoethnography. By studying my own experience as a guest in this setting, I discuss my feelings, observations and micro-ethical dilemmas throughout my two stays with hosts in early 2017. **Chapter 5**, focused on the interview findings, is divided into three parts, structured as follows: Pre-encounter expectations, that is the motivations and criteria of participants; Perceptions of fairness in the encounter; and micro-ethical dilemmas and moral framework. These findings are illustrated by quotes from participants that bring the observations to life. **Chapter 6** discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature presented in chapter 2. Finally, **Chapter 7** concludes the research by summarising the main findings, discussing the study's contribution to knowledge, revisiting the aim and objectives and addressing the latter one by one. It then discusses limitations of the study while suggesting further research that can be undertaken.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews relevant literature on the area to provide context for this study. It starts by introducing the reader to the setting, non-commercial homestays, by discussing existing studies on WWOOF -as Workaway and HelpX have not been studied in depth in academia- and au pairing. The following part explores ethics of hospitality as they have been analysed, mainly focusing on an international level. However, as these encounters take place in the home, central ideas and concepts related to the home are presented in the next section of the chapter. The literature review concludes with an overview of micro-ethics in the hospitality context.

2.1 WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX

This section will discuss the main characteristics of the three exchanges, WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX. While WWOOFing is focused on organic farming, the other two organisations offer a variety of posts from hosts requiring farming but also housework, language teaching, childcare and work in NGOs. Research on these exchanges is not extensive and largely focused on WWOOFing. However, due to the similarities in the nature of these encounters, a review of the existing studies on WWOOFing can provide an insight into the various aspects of these transactions.

WWOOF, with the acronym initially meaning Working Weekends on Organic Farms, is an organisation that was founded in London in 1971, at a time when many people with a hectic urban lifestyle felt the need to reconnect with nature, aiming to provide them with the opportunity to work in organic farming in rural areas (Maycock, 2008; WWOOF, 2019). The name was changed to World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms as the movement grew due to worldwide interest, an increase in the length of the stays, as well as due to the common misapprehension that WWOOF was connected to migrant labour (Maycock, 2008; Terry, 2014). Today, WWOOF guests (WWOOFers) can choose to visit a farm in one of the over 120 countries it is available, some of which have a national WWOOF chapter, while in others there are hosts

operating independently (WWOOF, 2019). It is not a single organisation anymore, but rather a network of organisations propagating organic farming and alternative lifestyles (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). The initial concept has remained unchanged in the years; providing visitors the opportunity to connect with nature and work, stay and eat in organic farms while allowing smallholdings access to cheap but mostly unskilled labourers (Terry, 2014). The payment of a small subscription fee is required to become a member of WWOOF after which visitors are able to browse through available hosts and contact the ones they are interested in (WWOOF, 2019). During the visit, hosts provide lodging and meals, while guests work for four to six hours per day in the farm and learn about organic farming (McIntosh and Campbell, 2001), making WWOOFing a combination of two types of tourism, accommodation and activity-based tourism (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006).

Workaway offers guests a wider range of placements, not only with host families but also volunteer work on a community level, with NGOs, local projects and businesses. It is described on the website as a cultural exchange, with possible educational aspects and a way to meet people (Workaway, 2019). Tourists can be hosted in homes and help with gardening, farming but also housework, teaching languages, babysitting and even working in small family businesses. Therefore, the focus is less on promoting organic agriculture and food compared to WWOOF. An annual membership fee is required in order to create an account and have access to hosts' information, who are also able to contact potential guests and invite them if their skills are needed (Workaway, 2019). HelpX is a similar platform, which was launched in 2001 and brings hosts and guests in contact for voluntary work exchanges. The HelpX website also describes the encounter as a cultural exchange, an opportunity to meet locals and gain experience, while the typical work day is supposed to be four hours long (HelpX, 2019). However, academic literature has not looked into Workaway and HelpX as a distinct type of tourism. It can be assumed that the large variety of work available in the websites, makes it difficult to study them as a whole. In the context of this study, the placements that relate to volunteering on a community level will not be examined, as they do not exhibit the characteristics of home-based hospitality, which is

researched. It is expected that exchanges positioned in farms and smallholdings will closely resemble those of WWOOFing, while those placements that involve helping with children and housework may exhibit characteristics similar to au pairing. Guests in these exchanges are called Workawayers and HelpXers by the organisations and will be referred to as such in this study.

As this form of travelling has begun to rise recently, research on the topic is rather limited and mainly focused on WWOOF. Mostafanezhad et al. (2015) position WWOOF, along with other types of organic farm volunteering, within the broader context of market-based activism, the politics of fair trade and the wider organic product movement incorporated into the tourist 'experience economy'. This definition refers to the visitors' longing to experience an authentic encounter with a lifestyle that is closer to nature. WWOOFers are motivated by a combination of the desire for new and unique experiences, the need to connect with nature and discovering this lifestyle but also the wish to undertake common touristic activities, such as sightseeing (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). In relation to hosts' motivations, the literature indicates that environmental and social reasons prevail, however, due to the low profit usually deriving from such farms, the financial benefits of free labour were also strong incentives (Yamamoto and Engelsted, 2014). WWOOF farmers in Terry's (2014) study also highlighted the enthusiasm of guests to participate and learn compared to paid workers, which made them a more desirable choice for hosts.

Mostafanezhad, Azizi and Johansen (2014) investigated the hosts' perceived financial and non-financial gains and costs. The hosts reported a significant saving in labour costs by employing WWOOFers and thus a reduced need for seasonal workers. However, they also mentioned the accruing expenditures of their guests, which vary between visitors, depending on their prior knowledge and productivity, and between hosts who provide different types of amenities. Regarding the non-economic aspects, hosts cited benefits related to the creation of relationships, socialisation of their children and the spiritual development of guests while the most commonly noted non-economic costs, were lack of privacy and emotional labour. Terry (2014) correspondingly found

economic and social benefits to WWOOFing, with the most predominant being the contribution of this type of tourism towards labour shortages in agriculture.

Daugstad and Kirchengast (2013) argued that this type of tourism tends to interest travellers who pursue deeper, meaningful and intimate experiences that are also expressing their own values. The absence of money in the transaction is a significant aspect of WWOOFing, which is ruled by a moral economy "*based on an understanding between the members that both sides benefit equally from the exchange without gaining profit at the expense of the other*." (Kosnik, 2013, p. 86). WWOOFers tend to dismiss many of the traditional market values and capitalist lifestyle, with the movement being perceived as an expression of market-based activism and part of the organic movement and politics of fair trade (Mostafanezhad et al., 2015). It is thus a form of ethical tourism, aiming to experience a deeper and more personal encounter with their host communities, while following environmentally, socially and culturally responsible practices (Lisle, 2010). Accordingly, these views have also led to a rejection of the characterisation of WWOOFing as tourism by both members of the network and various WWOOF directors, as tourism often carries connotations connected to consumerism and capitalism (Kosnik, 2013).

However, similar to some of the criticisms against other forms of volunteer tourism, WWOOFing is argued to often perpetuate some of the local community's very challenges that it is attempting to tackle. With temporary solutions like WWOOF, structural issues of organic agriculture and problems faced by organic smallholdings are not resolved but only partly addressed (Mostafanezhad et al., 2015). Terry (2014) disagrees with this sentiment, arguing that, at least in developed countries, the host-guest power relations are more balanced, compared to volunteers from developed countries visiting developing nations to offer their work. Moreover, Deville and Wearing (2013) argue that this type of tourism, which they brand as 'transformational tourism' can deal with issues faced by the society by prompting and inspiring change.

Nonetheless, the WWOOF encounter is not always positive. Deville and Wearing (2013) highlighted that the experience should not be romanticised as

hard work is involved. They found that many visitors were dissatisfied with the amount or nature of labour required and suggested clear communication between hosts and guests before the visit regarding their respective expectations, something that is also strongly recommended in the organisation's website (WWOOF, 2019). Furthermore, lack of agricultural experience by visitors can lead to problems and additional expenses for hosts, related to training but also costly mistakes occasionally made by unskilled individuals (Terry, 2014).

The possible selfish motivations in this setting have been analysed by Deville, Wearing and McDonald (2014), who found that guests and hosts are often driven by the appeal of cheaper holidays or labour, rather than an authentic experience and the provision of genuine hospitality respectively. WWOOF hosts were reported to be occasionally dissatisfied with the reduced privacy when hosting WWOOFers, communication problems caused by language barriers and differences in routines, habits and food choices, as well as the emotional labour that is connected to the relationship (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006; Mostafanezhad, Azizi and Johansen, 2014; Cronauer, 2012). The loss of privacy, which has been found to be an issue in various types of homestay, often forces the host to resort to their own measures in an attempt to separate their private life from the visitors. Mostafanezhad, Azizi and Johansen (2014) provided examples of various strategies employed by hosts, from drastic ones, such as the building of a separate accommodation for WWOOFers, to more discreet ones, like creating front- and backstage spaces, by restricting their guests' access to various rooms in the house.

Along with the discernible transaction of work for bed and board in WWOOF, there is an additional exchange, namely the personal exchange between participants, people who until recently were strangers and will share their daily lives and between whom a certain level of trust has to be established (Deville and Wearing, 2013). As Kosnik (2013) notes from her own experience, her engagement depended on her relationship and emotional connection to the respective host. While it is a considerable and desired aspect of WWOOFing, emotional engagement is certainly not something that can be foreseen or demanded and is also not inherent in the experience to an extent that it can

define it. Nonetheless, it cannot be disputed that meaningful and deeper interactions between hosts and guests contribute to the success of the exchange (Mosedale, 2012; Terry, 2014).

McIntosh and Bonnemann (2006, p. 95) characterised it as a "*voluntary non-commercial barter system*", a term Kosnik (2013) disagrees with due to the commodification of the exchange, arguing that this was not the intention of the founder. Hospitality, food, drink and help around the household are not easily described as goods or services that can be traded. Moreover, Kosnik (2014) noted participants mostly prefer to describe the transaction as sharing rather than trading. The author highlights that immersion in the daily lives of hosts and emotional engagement are the primary motivations rather than a simple transaction of work for food and lodging (Kosnik, 2013). This concern has also been expressed in the commercial hospitality sector, namely the risk of turning the various aspects of hospitality into simple commodities (Lynch et al., 2011).

Burns (2015) reported that the Japanese WWOOF chapter requires hosts to provide a monthly report on the type and nature of the encounter they have with their guests, with the purpose of promoting cooperation between the two parties. The various WWOOF organisations, seem to promote the integration of guests as part of the host family, which is not necessarily welcome by all participants, with certain hosts avoiding emotional involvement and social relations with their WWOOFers and vice versa, something, nonetheless, that often changes as the transaction progresses. When hosts are reluctant to allow their visitors into their home life and socialise with them, WWOOFers tend to feel exploited and in turn are dissatisfied with the exchange (Nimmo, 2001). In most cases, however, a positive social relationship is desired by both sides of the exchange, demonstrated through acts of hospitality by the hosts, from shared meals to welcoming cards, and the guests, who often bring gifts as an expression of gratitude towards their hosts (Kosnik, 2013).

Hospitality can be understood as a continuum, according to Lynch et al. (2011, p. 11) "*with commercial hospitality at one end, ulterior-motives hospitality a bit further along, reciprocal hospitality somewhere in the middle and genuine altruistic hospitality at the other end*". This type of transaction, WWOOFing, it can be argued, lies somewhere between purely commercial hospitality and

genuine, unconditional hospitality (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000) or even Couchsurfing where there is no explicit anticipation for mutuality (Germann Molz, 2011). The reciprocal obligations that emerge from the relationship, have resulted in it being compared to a familial relationship within the home, where all family members are supposed to contribute in the household. Accordingly, the rules that regulate the relationship, while being not being as strict and precise as in a commercial homestay, are also not as relaxed and informal as in Couchsurfing, often leading to uncertainty and misunderstandings (Kosnik, 2014). As in most homestays, the host determines the majority of the rules in the transaction, in an effort to maintain a separation between the private and the public life of the family, which tend to overlap in this setting (Sweeney and Lynch, 2009). They are the ones who decide on the duration, amount and type of work the visitor undertakes, but also what they offer in exchange in terms of food and accommodation (Cronauer, 2012).

Kosnik (2014) discussed the food, drink and substance sharing in the WWOOFing context as a means of negotiating the host-guest relationship. Especially regarding the food, the scholar found that it can lead to tensions between the two parties, when the food provided does not match the preferences, amount, diet, schedule and rituals the guest is used to. At the same time commensality plays a central role in the creation of closeness and social bonds between the host and the guest. Kosnik's (2013) study goes into certain aspects of the process of constructing a moral framework in WWOOFing, albeit from a sharing and etiquette perspective. Similar to the food etiquette, the rest of the home rules are also learned through observation, while the guests are not supposed to dispute these rules and the family's habits, traditions and rituals but rather perceive them as an aspect of the cultural exchange that takes place.

Lans (2016) connects WWOOFing to care labour in the sense that it combines relationships and work, with guests providing labour not for money but because of their emotions and feelings of responsibility towards their hosts. Yet, as the author points out, the fact that it is founded on interpersonal relationships and not on a financial exchange, does not make the economy of

care more fair or equitable; neither does it affect the value or quality of the care provided. This care labour involved in WWOOFing shapes the conditions for a gendered division of duties within the host family. Domestic and care work are historically associated with women and motherhood, thus perceived as the responsibility of the female family members (Yeates, 2012). Hosting, and everything it includes, cleaning, entertaining and cooking for the visitors, has traditionally been considered as a female role, something that has also been observed in commercial homes (Lynch, 2005a). This appears to be the case in WWOOFing as well. It has been found that women are predominantly responsible for hosting WWOOFers and taking care of the home, while the men tend to deal with physical work and farm duties (Wilbur, 2014; McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006; McIntosh and Campbell, 2001). This role, of the "host mum" has been either embraced or rejected by female WWOOF hosts in the literature (Wilbur, 2014; Cronauer, 2012). Wilbur (2014) noted that many of the participating women, especially educated and previously employed women who chose to return to the rural life from an urban environment, were unhappy to be limited to household duties and had difficulties conforming to their new reality of having to clean and cook for others. Nonetheless, the author emphasised it is not always the case that labour is divided that strictly in the household with women being solely responsible for the home duties and even if they are, not all of them perceive this as disempowering.

Gender issues are not solely confined to the hosting tasks as WWOOFers' tasks can also be divided according to the hosts' perceptions on labour and gender roles. Kosnik (2013) found that when the division of work between the hosting couple is gendered, it is often the same with their WWOOFers. Male guests are usually assigned harder tasks, such as chopping wood, and female guests the more delicate activities, like weeding. While WWOOFers are generally not supposed to do household chores, they are often encouraged to contribute in the home. Kosnik (2013) notes it is more common for the female WWOOFers to be asked to help with not only farmwork, but also domestic work. As one of her participants, a female host, disclosed *"It feels easier to ask girls to do housework [pause] when I'm really honest [pause]. Now I said it I'm ashamed of myself"* (Kosnik, 2013, p. 117).

Apart from gender issues, race and social class also enter the equation of the host guest relationship and its power balance in WWOOFing, issues commonly connected to care work (Razavi, 2007). WWOOF members, both hosts and guests, appear to be a rather homogenous group, despite its global nature and narrative of diversity. Kosnik (2013) notes that WWOOFers tend to be young, educated, well-off individuals from European, East Asian and North American descent and hosts have a similar background but appear to be older and often with a family. There are differences depending on the country the exchange takes place, with hosts in the USA or New Zealand, for instance, usually being lifestyle farmers who enjoy the 'bohemian' way of life rather than traditional farmers who rely on it for their income (Yamamoto and Engelsted, 2014; McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006). This type of farming has been described as "*a more bourgeois counter-urbanisation trend of moving to the suburbs, "backyard farming", and lifestyle blocks*" (Kosnik, 2013, p. 80). At the same time, WWOOFing has been characterised as a form of travelling principally performed by the middle or upper class, a product of the recent rise in socially and environmentally responsible tourism trend (Fullagar and Wilson, 2012; Guthman, 2017). Thus, hosts and guests often come from a similar socio-economic background, of middle-upper class individuals, who have the luxury to choose holidays that adhere to their own lifestyles and value systems, promoting the culture of organic farming and eco-friendly travelling.

However, this is not always the case. Lans (2016) also reported situations where individuals arrived in a country through WWOOF claiming to be tourists but with the purpose of permanently settling in or at least to work for a while without the need for the respective visa. In these situations, the hosts have more power over their visitors, particularly due to the guests' precarious situation. On the opposite side, farmers may also be relatively underprivileged compared to their guests. Small organic farms often cannot survive without WWOOFers as they are not able to pay for the labour costs and rely exclusively on the volunteers to provide the work that is necessary for them to keep afloat (Mostafanezhad et al. 2015). Thus, the relationship between the two parties of the exchange, while often balanced, may also be unequal, as a result of the differing socio-economic status between the two.

2.2 Au pairing

In contrast to WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX, where research is still in its initial stages, exploring its main characteristics and tendencies, literature on au pairs is more extensive, as the phenomenon has existed for a longer time and in a more institutionalised form. It has mainly been viewed in the context of care, domestic work and migration, often being researched from a feminist standpoint, looking into the exploitation and abuse that au pairs can face. The vulnerable position of au pairs results from the ambiguous legislation in many receiving countries and the exploitation of the scheme for provision of cheap domestic and care labour. The narratives used in these regulations and by au pair agencies use linguistic terms that depict it as a cultural exchange where the au pair becomes a 'family member'. These family narratives along with traditional perceptions of housework have created an image of au pairs' tasks being a 'moral obligation' rather than work. At the same time the relationship with the host family, particularly the mother, can shape the au pair's experience.

After WWII the au pairing scheme became popular as a socially acceptable alternative to having servants, to avoid the stigma involved with the latter, which was considered unacceptable for the modern society. Since then numerous young people, in their vast majority female, have travelled to different countries to provide childcare to local families (Liarou, 2014). In 1969 the European Agreement on 'Au Pair' Placement was signed by the European Council, promoting the programme as a cultural exchange (Dalgas, 2014), according to which:

> *Au pair' placement is the temporary reception by families, in exchange for certain services, of young foreigners who come to improve their linguistic and possibly professional knowledge as well as their general culture by acquiring a better knowledge of the country where they are received.* (Council of Europe, 1969, p.2)

While the Agreement was signed by many EU Member States, it was only ratified by six; Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Spain and Luxembourg, with other countries refusing to ratify the agreement citing the harsh conditions and lack of protection for the au pairs (Stenum and Dahl, 2011). Au pairing is distinct from domestic employment, as host families are expected to treat au

pairs as equal members of the family, provide them with a room, food and pocket money in exchange for light housework and/or childcare. The term ‘au pair’ is a French term meaning ‘on par’ referring to the equality of the au pair to the members of the family they are hosted in (Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007). Thus, in its initial form, when au pairing was targeting mainly young Western European women, it was considered as a cultural exchange where the au pair would be a guest of a family in a different Western European country, learning about the latter’s culture and language in a safe environment (Stenum and Dahl, 2011). The 1969 Agreement specifically notes that au pairing is a temporary live-in arrangement, namely:

> [...] *persons placed "au pair" belong neither to the student category nor to the worker category but to a special category which has features of both, and that therefore it is useful to make appropriate arrangements for them* (Council of Europe, 1969, p.1)

According to the European Agreement, au pairs should be between the ages of 17 and 30, should be able to provide a medical certificate of health and the arrangement between the hosts and the au pair should be in writing. Moreover, they should not work for more than five hours each day, have at least one free day each week and have to be allowed enough independence and free time to attend language classes, which, however are not financed by the host family (Council of Europe, 1969).

Like WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX this arrangement, incorporates essential features of work, homestay and cultural exchange (Cox and Narula, 2003). Nonetheless, au pairing in Europe changed dramatically in the years after the Agreement, turning this exchange into a sector of the domestic and care work labour market. Au pair schemes have been used to provide workers assisting elderly and retired people, while certain EU Member States such as Austria, publicly subsidise au pair placements for childcare, thus normalising the concept of these arrangements into a type of affordable welfare service, rather than a cultural exchange (Stenum and Dahl, 2011). Many countries have their own policies regarding au pairs, aiming to create a cheap market for domestic work and childcare, through using a similar rhetoric of characterising au pairs as family members or foreign visitors, which allows a circumvention of migration and labour legislation restrictions (Yodanis and

Lauer, 2005). In certain states, such as the UK and Australia, the absence of regulation around visa and labour conditions for au pairs leaves them in a precarious position and vulnerable to exploitation (Berg, 2015; Busch, 2015). The scheme, however, is completely different in the United States. It is strictly regulated, characterised as an 'intercultural childcare program', with au pairs being able to participate only through an official exchange programme and receiving the same visas as foreign exchange students. They undergo a training session before their deployment and work for 45 hours per week, which is significantly higher than the European average but in positions that only involve childcare, while placements in other types of care, like for the elderly, are prohibited (Geserick, 2015).

In 2004 the Council of Europe's Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men recognised the vulnerability of au pairs and issued a report on domestic slavery in relation to au pairs but also migrant domestic workers and mail-order brides. This report noted that although au pairs are not supposed to be an alternative for nannies and housekeepers, they are often treated as such, exploited and even physically or sexually abused in certain cases (Gaburro, 2004). This precarious situation au pairs might result in due to their vulnerability, led to concerns from the sending countries, with Philippines, for instance, banning the placement of Filipino au pairs in European countries between 1998 and 2012, aiming to protect them from potential abuse (Bikova, 2015).

The representation of au pairing by agencies, however, especially in their promotional material, still contains a narrative that depicts it as a cultural exchange in hopes of attract young workers, predominantly women. By using terms like "big sister" and "family member" they attempt to enhance the perception that au pairs will be treated as someone belonging to the family and to highlight the moral obligation of helping around the house (Hess and Puckhaber, 2004). On the other hand, advertising pictures of au pairs in agencies' websites were found to depict them in their vast majority as young, white, blond, good-looking females. They tend to be desexualised by performing activities connected to motherhood, being dressed relatively

conservatively and happily attending to children, thus promoting images "*of a slightly domesticated but still very attractive femininity*" (Cox, 2007, p. 219).

Through the use of the family narrative the work that au pairs provide is trivialised, not perceived as labour, but rather as a normal set of tasks for which every family member is responsible (Cox, 2007). This approach has been characterised as fictive kinship (Anderson, 2014; Sollund, 2010) or false kinship (Cox and Narula, 2003). It allows higher expectations from the au pair as a family member than it would from an employee and justifies wage levels and working conditions that would otherwise be unacceptable. Thus, the portrayal of the au pairs as family members, similarly to other types of domestic workers, is using intimacy in order to understate the servitude aspect (Parreñas, 2001). Families are inherently hierarchical institutions and these power imbalances affect the au pairs as well (Anderson, 2014). Cox and Narula (2003) argued that the parenting approach taken by hosts towards their au pairs, similar to children, can establish and expose these hierarchies. When the host parents take a personalising approach to their guests, that is they communicate and negotiate with, them the relationship becomes more egalitarian. However, if they take a positioning approach, the dominant family members -that is the parents- have the authority over the rest of the family, and consequently, the au pairs.

The nature of this type of work, focusing on care, has been traditionally connected to females and 'motherhood', while domestic chores have been perceived as women's responsibility (Hess and Puckhaber, 2004; Yeates, 2012). As such, although gender-neutral language is employed and cases of male au pairs have been documented, public discussions tend to connect care work to 'mothering', thus feminising the role of the caregiver and normalising the perception that these types of jobs are targeting women (Yeates, 2012). Accordingly, the majority of au pairs are female, despite the exchange being open to everyone (Bahna, 2006; Dalgas, 2014). Therefore, there appears to be a strong preference towards female household workers of any type and, accordingly, au pair hosts generally prefer female au pairs (Anderson, 2007). This preference, however, is not only connected to stereotypes of women but also of men, with many hosts in Anderson's (2007) study mentioning concerns

about their children's safety, the inappropriateness of men caring for their children, especially female children, and generally perceiving male au pairs as a potential threat.

However, perceptions of gender roles in housework are not only affecting au pairs. Women have historically been considered the household member responsible for the household and the increase of women's employment has expanded the need for domestic workers. Even today women have been found to perform more housework and childcare than men, whose growing contribution has still not reached the level of women's work in the home (Sollund, 2010). With women being considered responsible for these duties, they are also perceived as the ones in charge of delegating them and, in turn, in charge of the au pairs. This obligation falls on women to, in a way, compensate for working outside the home (Anderson, 2007). Accordingly, while the experience of au pairs is shaped by the interactions with the family in general (Smith, 2015) it is mostly affected by the relationship with the mother (Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007).

Research has found that for many of the au pairs from Western countries this experience is a rite of passage, the first step away from their families and towards independence (Bagnoli, 2009). Aiming to collect assets for their future such as experience in childcare and language skills, they often undertake these roles during a gap year before or after their studies (Geserick, 2012; Nagy, 2008). Hess and Puckhaber (2004) found that the young women they interviewed before their au pair experience expected to be integrated in the family. They considered the domestic work involved not as labour, but rather as 'help', namely a moral obligation, a way to express their gratitude and a task that emphasises the fact that they become a member of the family. Nonetheless, as quite often their expectations of the encounter do not match the reality they face, with many of them being required to do much more housework and being treated like employees, they often end up perceiving the encounter as downward class mobility (Bikova, 2015). However, for au pairs of a lower economic background, often coming from developing economies such as the Philippines, these jobs generally have the purpose of providing them with money necessary for their own or their family's survival (Parreñas,

2000; Rohde, 2012). Female migrants have historically been considered as suitable for degrading and difficult jobs, while racial aspects have also been found to play a significant role in their labour conditions (Cox, 2007). These women, whose immigration status differs significantly from their European counterparts, are dependent on their host families for their visas, while not being protected by labour legislations and minimum wage regulations (Moss, 2015; Stenum and Dahl, 2011).This dependency increases their vulnerability and many of them may be willing to accept harsher job conditions (Bikova, 2015). Conversely, Cox (2007) referred to an instance where an agency employee explained the difficulties of placing British au pairs, because they "*were not subservient enough*".

In domestic work it has been argued that the employer pursues the purchase of not only labour but the employee's identity and personhood (Anderson, 2000). This is more discernible in cases where the worker lives with the employer in a space where the private and public spheres merge and the worker is usually considered as being constantly 'on call', available for work at any time (Williams and Balaz, 2003). Moreover, the unique nature of domestic and care work, and especially in the au pairing context, is characterised by an ambiguity in relation to the rights and duties of the worker, with the limits of the employer's power being significantly blurrier compared to other types of work (Berg, 2015). The overlap between private and public space and the unclear rules of employment in this setting can lead to the au pairs' feeling of losing their personhood, exposing them to abuse and exploitation (Williams and Balaz, 2003). Anderson (2000) has noted that the movement between the 'family' and 'work' domains is used by the employers in live-in domestic work to emphasise their power, with the former, for instance, being mentioned when it comes to issues of flexibility and work hours and the latter when the employee is too sick to work.

Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi (2007) argued that the au pairs' experience is mainly shaped by the work and non-work interactions between the guest and the hosts -mostly the host mother- as well as the relationship between the parents. In terms of work interactions, au pairs see themselves as an equal family member if the host mothers have a similar role to them, follow the same

rules that they impose on them and reciprocate favours. Non-work interactions are just as significant; au pairs appreciate when they can use the common areas, are included in family events and the conversations between the two sides are reciprocal.

Hosts often employ house rules to ensure the home's routines will not be disturbed which can create further inequalities in the household if they are not applied to every member (Cox and Narula, 2003). Anderson (2014) suggests that these rules regarding space, behaviour and daily routines can be an expression of control over the guest. Further aspects of the exchange have been argued to indicate the social control imposed by the host, the type of the relationship created and the negotiation of the encounter. These aspects include living arrangements, that is where au pairs sleep and if they can use the common areas and food, namely what they eat and who they eat with. Control can also be imposed on their free time, that is if they are actually free or constantly 'on call' and whether they are included in family activities; visitors and social interactions, that is whether they can invite friends and who they can interact with; as well as personal hygiene, namely how often they can shower and do laundry (Cox and Narula, 2003; Hess and Puckhaber, 2004).

Au pairs often choose to accept the conditions imposed by their hosts rather than negotiating with them or confronting them if they see them as unacceptable. One of the most commonly chosen by au pairs forms of expressing discontent or passive resistance, as Hess and Puckhaber (2004) characterised it, is to withdraw from the family life as much as possible and spend most of their time in their rooms. However, retreating to their rooms has been a tactic used by au pairs for various reasons, apart from personal issues with the host family. For instance, they often reported to stay in their rooms hoping to avoid any further work requested by the family (Cox and Narula, 2003), or even because they were not allowed to enter certain areas of the house, such as the living room, outside the times they were cleaning them (Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007). Similar passive expressions of discontent exhibited by the au-pairs that effectively shape the moral framework of the exchange can be found in the literature. Some examples include not

joining the family meals when they were unhappy with their hosts (Dalgas, 2016) or referring to their hosts as “Sir” and “Madam” to indicate the power distance, a method used by Filipina au pairs in Sollund’s (2010) study.

The above analysed aspects of au pairing demonstrate the vulnerable position they may come into. The rather loose regulation in most European countries, aiming to bypass labour protection and immigration laws and allow for a low paid domestic and care giving sector has led to a significant influx of au pairs in the past years. Enhanced by the relevant regulatory bodies’ narratives, the scheme has become highly gendered and often racialized, positioning these women in a precarious situation that has been recognised by EU bodies and governments of their home countries alike. Their overall experience, however, has been found by researchers to be affected mainly by their relationship with the host family (Cox and Narula, 2013; Geserick, 2015; Hess and Puckhaber, 2004; Smith 2015; Nagy, 2008; Yodanis and Lauer, 2005). It is evident, that while regulations and official discourse and representations may affect the overall flows of au pairs, on an individual, micro level, the most significant factor is how they are viewed and treated by the families they are working for. As the power mainly lies on the host, social control tactics or hospitable gestures shape the role of the au pair in the home and the relationship between them and the family.

WWOOFing and au pairing share some characteristics in terms of the nature of the exchange. They both incorporate elements of work, homestay and cultural exchange. However, from an overview of the existing literature it can be argued that the power relations between the host and the guest are significantly different. It appears the type of work involved plays a crucial part in the perception of the guest. Although au pairing is promoted as a cultural exchange, the nature of domestic and care work is such, that it is downplayed by the existing discourse and not considered labour at all. WWOOFing has been also found to be used for the provision of cheap labour by the hosts, yet the characteristics of the guests, ironically, put them in a position more ‘on-

par' with their hosts compared to au pairs, while in some cases they are of higher socio-economic status than their hosts. This results to an interesting situation where two very similar exchanges, display very different power dynamic between the two parties.

On the other hand, Workaway and similar organisations supply a variety of placements that include both organic farming and care giving. This raises an important question. Do volunteers who choose positions including childcare duties in these organisations face the same issues that many au pairs do? Or is there a difference in the ethics of the relationship due to the lower vulnerability of these guests? With the host being aware of how much control they can have over their guest, they are able to choose which exchange they want to be involved in. However, hospitality rules would instruct them to treat their guests with morality regardless of their origin and personal characteristics, more so if the guest is in a vulnerable position.

2.3 Ethics of Hospitality

Most of the following positions that will be viewed here have been developed to understand hospitality on the macro level, hospitality as it is expressed and performed by states towards the outsiders that reach their borders. Nonetheless, hospitality is performed daily on various levels and domains. The everyday practice of hospitality is often perceived as mundane and secondary (Still, 2013), and scholars tend to focus on unique events or moments such as the recent refugee crisis, war etc (Bulley, 2015). However, the micro level is still significant as what we do on an everyday basis often translates to our practices on a macro level, on a larger scale.

The hospitality that is offered at the home, much like the one this research is studying, concerns the 'private' domain, one of the three domains described by Lashley (2000), with the other two being the 'social' domain, namely hospitality expressed in the public arena and the 'commercial' domain, which refers to hospitality as an economic activity. These three domains are simultaneously separate and overlapping in various situations, such as the case of commercial homes, where hospitality is an economic activity of the

commercial domain performed in the private domain (Lynch, 2005a). In the private domain, the act of receiving guests can create social cohesion among people or groups but also be a cause for mental strain and antagonism in situations of dissimilar or clashing understandings of hospitable behaviour and rituals among the host and the guest (Lashley, 2000). While the specificities of hospitality in the home setting will be viewed in the following chapter, it should be noted that the theories on ethics of hospitality analysed here, which are mostly favouring Lashley's (2000) 'social' domain and are mainly based on Derrida's work, are also applicable on the home level, the 'private' domain. The way we welcome and treat the arriving stranger who enters our territory, whether our home or our state, who comes from the outside to the inside, is precisely what constitutes an ethical relation (Bulley, 2015).

Borders are present everywhere, whether they are symbolic, imaginary or physical. They indicate control and security for what they surround, power to select what and who will be accepted and invited inside them, while simultaneously separating the two (Carvalhaes, 2010). Crossing these borders, the threshold to the inside, can be regarded as a transgression on behalf of a newcomer (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). On an international level, the borders of nation-states are these thresholds, at the same time their boundaries and their entrances, which, in the West, are gradually being sealed off to outsiders (Worth, 2006). Within Western States, and particularly the European Union, a clash between sovereignty and hospitality seems to have developed. While inside their borders their citizens are increasingly enjoying a cosmopolitan justice, the securitization against others who are arrive from outside, increases. Legislation on migration is usually based on suspicion and apathy towards these newcomers (Benhabib, 2005; Eriksen, 2013). This attitude emanates from the fear that the provision of unconditional hospitality on the international level might signify the collapse of the nation-state. As a result, the respective laws and regulations are founded on a preconceived or often distorted understanding of the state's function, its sovereignty and border control (Worth, 2006). By restricting the freedom of mobility and in turn hospitality, these policies constitute the conditionality of global hospitality (Friese, 2010).

Hospitality ethics research has traditionally been focusing on international relations in a political context, concerning the welcome states offer to outsiders reaching their borders such as economic migrants and asylum seekers (Benhabib, 2005; Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000; Derrida, 2001; Kant, 1991; Dikeç, Clark and Barnett, 2009). According to Derrida (2001) ethics is hospitality, namely welcoming and allowing the stranger, the other in:

> *Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethic amongst others. Insofar as it has to do with the ethos, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, ethics is hospitality; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality.* (Derrida, 2001, pp. 16-17)

The ethics of hospitality differ between places, cultures and points in time, in relation to the way otherness is dealt with, specifically strangers who are not part of a confined political order (Friese, 2010). As globalisation in the recent past has facilitated an increase in human mobility, issues of hospitality, access, borders and exclusion, are becoming more relevant than ever (Carvalhaes, 2010). International hospitality and access are limited to a select share of the population, such as businesspeople, tourists and academics, while other groups, like refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants face significant barriers in their mobility and access to certain territories (Dikeç, Clark and Barnett, 2009). This has been questioned by various scholars, also called the modern hospitality enigma, namely how certain states expect their expatriates and travellers to be treated and honoured as guests and at the same time act in a rather inhospitable manner towards their own guests, the incoming immigrants from other states (Wahnich, 1997 in O'Gorman, 2007). Thus, as Kant (1970) remarked, the universality of peoples varies significantly, with the inhospitable behaviour of Western States, visiting other countries and people, while at the same time disallowing the opposite movement. This phenomenon, the philosopher likens to conquer, namely the one-way movement of people from the West towards other countries, where they treat the inhabitants in an unjust way and the lands as if they were uninhabited.

In his essay "Perpetual Peace", Immanuel Kant argues that "*Hospitality means the right of the stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on*

someone else's territory" (Kant, 1991, p. 8). He continues by construing the cosmopolitan right to hospitality, namely the right of the stranger to stay, which is not dependent of the host's philanthropy. Because of the finitude of our world, as well as the fact that it is a communal possession of all mankind, everybody is entitled to access the earth's surface, everybody has a *natural* right for hospitality (Kant, 1991). Nonetheless, as the essay progresses, Kant introduces conditions to hospitality, much like the conditions Derrida (2001) analyses in his writings on hospitality. Kant (1991) grants the host a certain level of discretion in the choice of offering hospitality. The host has the right to turn the newcomer away, under the condition that this expulsion will not place the individual in danger or lead to their death. Moreover, when the stranger is in the host's home or territory, they must behave peacefully, and the former is not obliged to entertain the latter during the provision of hospitality. The temporal restrictions of hospitality, allowing only a transient welcome of the stranger, exist to ensure that the newcomer will stay for a short amount of time, as much as they need but not more, to ensure they do not become a guest, thus no longer a stranger (Onuf, 2009). This time restriction emanates from the fact that, according to the philosopher, the stranger can only request the right of visitation rather than the right of residence (Kant, 1991). The right of residence would place the newly arrived stranger under the protection of the state, as they would become a citizen of it; a possibility denied if they only have the right of visitation (Kakoliris, 2015). Thus, his notion of hospitality has clearly imposed restrictions, as tolerance towards the stranger is required solely if the latter fits certain criteria, while their rights are dependent on the state and limited with regard to the space and time they are granted for (Dikeç, Clark and Barnett, 2009).

In "*Totality and Infinity*, Levinas (1969) utilised a phenomenological approach to ethics and the treatment of the other, aiming to accentuate their critical position in philosophy. He argued that infinity is created through the relationship the Being has with the other and a separation between the self, or the 'same', and the other is innate to the relation with Being. Levinas uses the analogy of the home to describe the self and the encounter with the other, namely a confined structure which can simultaneously be separate from the

world as well as accessible and hospitable. Thus, the essence of ethics and the construction of the self are founded on the relation with the stranger and the recognition and acceptance of their alterity (Levinas, 1969). The ethical welcoming of the other is unconditional, rooted within humanity and any further dimensions, like morality and politics, issues of choice that are contingent on conditionality, ensue (Leung and Stone, 2009).

This conditionality of hospitality has been heavily featured in Derrida's work. In his theory, he deconstructed the notion of hospitality and introduced two inherent dimensions of hospitality, unconditional and conditional hospitality. Unconditional or unlimited hospitality entails giving the stranger the home and all of oneself, without expecting any reciprocity or imposing any restrictions and conditions. The host is to provide unconditional hospitality to the guest without even asking their reason for visiting, where they came from or even their name, welcoming the individual before they even identify themselves (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). For hospitality to be absolute, it cannot discriminate against the strangers, even if this openness creates a danger, a risk for the host, who will not know anything about the guest's identity, intentions or behaviour (Kakoliris, 2015). There is a parallel to be drawn here to a chapter of Homer's Odyssey, when after a shipwreck Odysseus landed on the island of Kerkyra and the king of the island, Alcinoos, without asking his name or anything about him, granted him hospitality, a large feast. During the time of the banquet, Odysseus, a naked castaway, who clearly had been through hardship and, unbeknownst to Alcinoos, was a king himself, was offered a hospitable welcome while being referred to as stranger, a title that expressed respect (Onuf, 2009). A hospitable welcome requires letting the visitor to overtake oneself without warning, being *"ready to not be ready*" for the foreigner's arrival and being ready to be surprised by this arrival. The host does not get to choose who receives hospitality. Unconditional hospitality means welcoming the unexpected, uninvited other, the outsider who is neither a brother nor a neighbour but totally outside oneself. If the host is expecting, prepared and willing to welcome someone, this does not comprise hospitality. It becomes a case of visitation rather than invitation (Derrida, 2000; Derrida, 2002).

On the other hand, in conditional hospitality rules and restrictions are imposed on the guest, as soon as they enter the host's premises. On a state level, these laws refer to the rights of the stranger, the visitor, immigrant or refugee who enters through the country's borders. These laws of hospitality dictate, not only who is allowed in, but also how they are treated. And while the laws essentially turn the Law of hospitality into an obligation to provide hospitality on behalf of the host and a right to receive it by the guest, they eventually lay down certain conditions on it. Thus, they pervert the unconditional Law, the absolute hospitality (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). Moreover, the laws of hospitality can be rather blurry as they are tacit and unwritten, thus often dependent on the understanding and interpretation of each individual (O'Gorman, 2007).

Nonetheless, these two concepts are *"… both contradictory, antinomic and inseparable. They both imply and exclude each other, simultaneously."* (Derrida, 2000, p. 81). Unconditional hospitality is an ideal that cannot be attained, that is impossible to achieve. The guest, when arriving to the host's home, has to be an "other", thus match specific criteria. Furthermore, they cannot be a complete stranger, offering no name, as the host would not know how they would react to this offer of hospitality (O'Gorman, 2007). Therefore, unconditional and conditional hospitality require one another to exist. Without the laws of hospitality, namely the rules imposed by the host, the Law of unconditional hospitality would be utopian and abstract. In order for the Law of hospitality to come to existence, be materialised and be effective, the laws are necessary, even if they do create borders that endanger or distort it. For the conditional laws of hospitality to actually be hospitable, they must be inspired and guided by the unconditional Law (Derrida, 1999; 2000). With the impossibility of unconditional hospitality, in every occasion hospitality is offered, it will be inadequate, due to the conditions imposed on the visitor, creating a constant negotiation between the Law and the laws and, thus, a perpetual movement to attain the impossible (Kakoliris, 2010).

In *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, analysing Kant's conception of hospitality, Derrida (1999) also points to the use of the word "right" by Kant, which makes it subject to state legislations and imposes further conditionality and limitations

on the acceptance of the stranger. Hospitality being contingent to state laws and regulations, thus under the control of the state, does not only affect public but also private hospitality, its provision, extent and limits. Foreigners are perceived as such based on the place they were born and their mother tongue (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). This faraway and precarious place of birth, places the other into a peripheral position, making them an eternal stranger (Bejan, 2010). Citizenship becomes the foundation for legitimization of not only the political but also the human rights an individual can enjoy, therefore the power to choose if and to what extent a person can be granted these rights lies in the discretion of the State. By acknowledging an individual as a citizen, the state makes bare humanity contingent to its laws and thus brings it under its protection. Once the individual is granted the rights of a citizen of the state, their entire existence is depending on this state (Agamben, 1998).

Dikeç (2002) characterizes hospitality as a sensibility rather than a right, paralleling this sensibility to critical responsiveness, a term first introduced by Connolly (1995), encouraging the consideration of the political and ethical connotations of hospitality as well as its applications. Conversely, in Still's (2013) analysis of Derrida's works, she argues that there is a distinction to be made between politics and ethics. She highlights that ethics is related to interpersonal relations, while politics are concerned with the relationship between states or a person and a state. Taking the analysis one step further, she posits ethics as a part of a metaphysical or spiritual domain, while politics, she argues, is the sphere of settled order and pragmatic compromise. However, Derrida noted the necessity of a coexistence between unconditional hospitality, namely ethics, and the laws of hospitality, which are subject to politics. They require each other to exist despite their seemingly contradictory nature and the laws of hospitality should not be seen as a distortion of absolute hospitality (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000). They should not be perceived as a distinction between ethics and politics, rather as two vital forms of ethics, both crucial for the formation of efficacious conditions for hospitality (Barnett, 2005). Ethics impose an obligation on politics, to respond to the other's

demands, while without politics, or conditions, hospitality would be a meaningless theory (Leung and Stone, 2009).

Connolly (1995) accentuates the ethos of critical responsiveness, which is not subject to an established system of moral laws or criteria but advances the current perceptions of morality through *"…a cultural reserve of care and generosity"* (Connolly, 1995, p. 183). Critical responsiveness, the scholar notes, encourages the crossing of boundaries and supports pluralising developments. In his review of Connolly's (1995) position, Dikeç (2002) stresses the necessity for recognition of both sides, rather than mere tolerance, as tolerance can also be connected to indifference and lack of interest, while hospitality should express acknowledgement, approval and engagement with the guest. He emphasises the crucial role of the latter, noting that hospitality entails "…*the cultivation of an ethics and politics of engagement*" (Dikeç, 2002, p. 237), likening it to a both political and ethical sensitivity that expresses respect towards the other. Similarly, Barnett (2005) highlights the requirement of hospitality to welcome, acknowledge and name the guest and in this way treat them as a person, someone with a distinct identity. Eriksen (2013), on the other hand, advances this thought, by introducing the need to accept any offer of reciprocity by the guest. Reciprocity is crucial in the provision of hospitality as it builds mutual respect and trust. Allowing the other into one's home is not sufficient, but rather the host has to show interest in them and in their possible offers for reciprocation of hospitality. On a macro level, a common example is the need refugees often feel to return the hospitality they received to their host communities, work and contribute to the society which has welcomed them, an offer which, however, is usually denied (Eriksen, 2013).

Denying the offer of reciprocity can be an expression of power. "*The unreciprocated gift still makes the person who has accepted it inferior*" (Mauss, 2002, p. 83) and denying an offer for reciprocity is a way to keep the other side indebted and in a disadvantaged position (Blau, 1964). In his 1925 essay "The Gift" Marcel Mauss (2002) examines the practices of 'archaic' societies in Northern America, Melanesia and Polynesia to discuss the norms that guide gift giving and exchange. Mauss argues that in these societies gifts are not

given freely, there is no such thing as a ‘pure gift’, a gift given by purely altruistic motivations that does not entail any expectations, as some of his contemporaries, like Malinowski, claimed. Using the example of the “potlatch” system of some tribes of Northern American indigenous people, he expands his argument about the obligation to give, receive and reciprocate as an issue of honour and power relations between people. He also notes that receiving a gift without reciprocating bestows a power to the gift giver over the recipient – a kind of debt that is punishable in some of these societies. Thus, exchanging gifts creates a spiritual connection between the two sides, whether individuals or groups, that develops into a social relationship deeper than a mere exchange of physical objects. Mauss characterises the gift as a “total social fact”, that creates an obligation as the gift giver does not only hand over the material object, but part of themselves.

Despite its strong influence on later theories, Mauss’ work has received some criticisms, especially his claim that gifts are never free. Alain Testart (1998), for instance, disagreed with Mauss’ conflation of gift and exchange, noting his omission of a definition for the word gift. However, his strongest criticism is against Mauss’ claims that gifts always entail an expectation of reciprocation. Using the example of himself giving money to a poor person on the street, he posits that the act does not involve a universal obligation for reciprocity as they are strangers who are unlikely to meet again; thus, the giver does not expect anything in return whether another gift or the formation of a spiritual connection between the two. He also highlights the difference between the honour involved in indigenous American groups and today’s society in terms of obligation to reciprocate an invitation, arguing that the social repercussions and sanctions are much less severe in the latter. In this way, the feeling of obligation to return the invitation is also less strong; Testart provides various examples to demonstrate different levels of that feeling of obligation, depending on the situation and setting.

In a similar vein to Mauss (2002), Peter Blau (1964) argues that for individuals or groups that undertake any type of social exchange, there is an expectation of getting something in return. That may not necessarily be a material object or a service, as Blau’s (1964) position is that gratitude from the receiver and social

rewards such as improved reputation are often rewarding enough for certain acts of generosity. At the same time, the association with another individual or organisation that is created through social exchange can have value in itself for the giver and thus be an adequate "repayment". Therefore, social exchange, as opposed to economic exchange, creates feelings of obligation, trust and gratitude between people. He notes that an exact equilibrium of balance in any exchange is very difficult to attain, as one side will always give more than the other. Thus, the deficit that is created is offset by power; the side that has given more to the relationship will have a power over the other side, which, in a way, leads to an equilibrium in the exchange between them. As a result, Blau (1964, p. 26) claims, individuals tend to prefer the balance be in their favour as they *"… [a]ccumulate credit that makes their status superior to that of others*". The other side, however, wanting to eliminate this power over them, feels obliged to reciprocate and thus a circle of reciprocation ensues, with both sides aiming for a balance and avoidance of indebtedness.

Blau's Social Exchange theory is not without its critics. Blau's utilitarian and economic understanding of social exchange has been criticised, with Miller (2005), for instance disagreeing with the reduction of social exchange to a rational process and the perception that intimacy is the aim of such relationships, while noting how the theory may be dated due to social norms changing from the time of its conception. Moreover, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) disagree with Blau's view of social exchanges as transactions, distinguishing them from relationships, while they point out the ambiguity in his language, arguing that social exchange relationships are mediators in exchanges.

Every performance of hospitality involves a certain level of hostility, also evident in the etymology of the word 'hospitality'. The term's root is the Latin word 'hospes', which in turn derives from 'hostis', initially meaning foreigner and later on enemy. Derrida (2000) called this 'hostipitality', to note the hospitality towards the welcome stranger and the hostility towards the unwelcome stranger. Even when the host welcomes the guest, the act of welcoming emphasizes the former's dominance as the ruler of the premises (Caputo, 1997 in Leung and Stone, 2009). It is imperative for this power,

nonetheless, to stay in the hands of the host, so that they can maintain sovereignty and control, in order to be able to grant refuge to the visitor (Cheah, 2013). In this way, the guest respects their host's right not to be conquered, as the act of allowing a stranger into one's home, increases the vulnerability of the host. Similar to colonialism, when the Western guests took advantage of and overthrew their hosts in Asia, Africa and the Americas, a failing or denial on part of the guest to acknowledge the borders can result in conquest (Dikeç, 2002). Hence, hospitality incorporates a contradiction; the host has to impose rules and restrictions in order to provide it. Therefore, this control imposed by a host on their home, is not necessarily negative, as it essential for the host to be able to provide hospitality to their guest (Derrida, 1999). Thus, a paradox arises; "*the possibility of hospitality depends on its impossibility*" (Kakoliris, 2010, p. 67).

New perspectives in the study of hospitality have provided a variety of different directions research can take. Accordingly, this research is viewing hospitality as ethics, in order to elucidate the relationship that emerges between the guest and the host in a quite unique setting, where, while the transaction is not purely commercial, there is still a reciprocation expected. Through the exploration of the literature on the ethics of hospitality, certain themes have emerged. The imbalance in access to hospitality by the citizens of different countries and the conditionality imposed on it, demonstrates the desire to receive hospitality but also the reluctance to provide it, mainly by the global West. While Derrida (1999; 2000) argued for an inspiration by the Law of hospitality, accepting that it is impossible to achieve, but helpful to aspire to, this does not seem to be the reality nowadays, with immigration laws and asylum procedures becoming stricter and more bureaucratic than ever. The hospitable treatment of the other, a central value of cultures throughout time, has been declining. While certain conditions are necessary to allow the host's provision of hospitality, they cannot be too many or too confining that they end up impeding it. Hospitality has been characterised as a right (Kant, 1970), a sensibility (Dikeç, 2002) and critical responsiveness (Connolly, 1995). All these terms have different connotations with regard to what hospitality entails and what conditions are placed on it. However, in the end, as Bulley (2015) argued, the

treatment of the arriving stranger comprises an ethical relation. It is a matter of ethos, how we welcome the other into our own homes, and the way we relate to others either as own or as strangers (Derrida, 2001).

2.4 Home

The previous part of this chapter focused on the ethics of hospitality as they have been elaborated on in the existing literature. These writings focused mainly on the national or the international context or the 'social' domain, as described by Lashley (2000). However, this research is examining the ethics of hospitality on the home setting, Lashley's 'private' domain. In the home, a variety of hospitality types can be practiced, from the commercial home, such as B&Bs to the most personal welcoming of friends or family. Yet, even in its most commercial form, hospitality in the private home setting is distinctly different from the one provided in the rest of the industry. This difference is a result of the uniqueness of the home environment and what it represents. The type of tourism this study analyses, is expected to fall between the two extremes of purely commercial hospitality and purely personal welcome, because, while the guest does not pay for their stay, the transaction does involve an expectation of compensation in the form of work. This section investigates the specificities of the home as well as certain examples that will elucidate the nature of domestic hospitality. These particularities of the home setting and domestic hospitality create a certain power dynamic between the host and the guest that influences the relationship between them and causes uncertainty about the roles involved.

Saunders (1989) underlines the importance and centrality of the home in our society which has placed it at the focal point of political and philosophical debates. The home is much more than the physical construct aiming to serve the simple purpose of dwelling. It is also an emotional construct, created by the ideas, self-expression, relationships, subjective meanings and memories of its residents (Heller, 1995; Lynch, 2005b). It has been argued to be a haven that disconnects the outside from the inside (Russo, 2012), a condition for welcoming and the performance of hospitality (Levinas, 1969; Mallett, 2004)

but also a place of tyranny and oppression, especially for women (Douglas, 1991; Oakley, 1974 in Mallett, 2004).

The home, it has been argued, is for its residents more than the sum of its functions. Douglas (1991) contends that home is not merely having shelter or a physical house, but it begins when this space is brought under control, it has a certain structure in time as well as aesthetic and ethical aspects. Moreover, while being located in a specific space, the home does not have to be a built, immovable structure and can also be a boat, a tent or a caravan. As Abdelmonem (2012) noted, there is a significant difference between the terms “house” and “home”, with the first one concerning the physical structure of a building meant for residence while the second one referring to a broader concept, which is often used in a variety of contexts. The common element of these contexts, in addition to the spatial aspect, is the meaning connected to them, which derives from the social determination of a specific group of people. Thus, it can refer to a family home but also to the “home” town or the “home” country (Abdelmonem, 2012). Massey (1994) argues that it is the social interplays that take place in a specific locale, the resulting social outcomes, as well as the connections to the external world that define a place. As these relationships in the inside of the home, the relationships with the outside and their effects may change or develop over time, so does the identity of the place and, as a result, its boundaries. Russo (2012) claims that “*Home means shared intimacy*” (pp. 309-310), that is the emotions that are connected to the sense of home stem from the specific bonds that are created in it.

Along with the abovementioned determinants of the meaning a locale carries, memories, which likewise alter over time, influence the construction and negotiation of its meaning, as they ‘*illuminate and transform the present*’ (Hooks, 1991, p. 147 in Mallett, 2004). Douglas (1991) reinforces this view by providing, rather practical, examples. The scholar states that memory can help in the prediction of future occurrences, from the recollection of previous experiences, whether in short or in longer cycles. Thus, the home is decorated and stocked depending on past events, with the residents, for instance, anticipating, equipping the home accordingly and planning for a strong winter, based on the memories of the past. Douglas’ (1991) illustrations of how the

home is shaped by past memories, while accurate, may appear a bit prosaic. The influence of memories on the emotions of 'feeling at home' is present on a much deeper and complex level. Heller (1995) notes that the home is a composite of feelings, relationships and memories. It is, therefore, *"a physical construct but also a temporal, social, cultural, personal and emotional construct with aesthetic and moral dimensions"* (Lynch, 2005b, p. 46). It becomes a form of self-expression, manifesting the residents' identity and the demands of the society imposed on the residents (Lynch, 2005b). Through the design and decoration of the home's interior and the use of its rooms, a person's personality is expressed (Mallett, 2004). In other words, *"Our residence is where we live, but our home is how we live"* (Ginsburg, 1998, p. 31 in Mallett, 2004, p. 83).

Thus, the home is defined by the subjective meanings it has for its occupants as well as the feelings of security, protection, affection and contentment it provides them with (Abdelmonem, 2012). These feelings relate to the notion of the home as a sanctuary. It is a refuge which the person has power over along with the independence to act freely as they wish, while engaging in personal, affectionate relationships. At the same time, it allows a withdrawal from the outside world, the public sphere, which is usually connected with the notions of work, politics and non-familial relations (Mallett, 2004). The home, therefore, signifies a partition between the public and the private realms, with the increase of individuals' need to resort to private life in modern times having been connected to the crisis of the public realm (Russo, 2012). It becomes a constant in people's lives, a permanent locale which they leave but always come back to, with the necessity of being able to return, being fundamental in one's existence and sense of being (Heller, 1995).

However, this clear separation between the inside and the outside world of the home have been contested. The home, while allowing the exclusion of the public sphere, is also a condition for welcoming, hospitality and reception of the outsider, the other to the inside. In 'Totality and Infinity' Levinas (1969) defined hospitality as opening one's home to the Other. Moreover, it has been suggested that this distinction of the private and public space, often associated to the distinction between work and personal life, is not as clear as it is depicted

(Mallett, 2004). While the most evident example is housework by the family members, usually the women, further examples can include individuals who work from home, paid domestic labour and home-based hospitality establishments such as guesthouses.

The meaning of the home has often been connected to gender. While studying the existing bibliography on home and gender, Mallett (2004) found that whereas earlier writings characterised the home as a status symbol for men and a refuge for women, many second-wave feminist academics portrayed it as a space where oppression and patriarchal control occur, forcing women into domestic and care labour. Saunders (1989) however, noted that women can both work in the house and have control over it, and their domestic role does not prevent them from having positive emotions towards the home and perceive it as haven. The view of home as a haven has been supported by various scholars, not only for women, but for members of various minorities, who may feel threatened in the public realm due to, for instance, their ethnic background or sexual identity. As the use of the public sphere is not shared equally between these groups, and more pertinently to this study, between men and women, the latter need to have a territory in which they can feel free and have a certain control over (Darke, 1996 in Lynch, 2005b). Nonetheless, the control women have over the home has been disputed, with, mostly feminist academics, asserting that women tend to have increased duties and diminished authority in the home, while the opposite applies to men (Mallett, 2004).

It is often argued that the relationships that are formed within the home, the memories and the routines, can either reinforce or undermine specific perceived gender roles and thus determine the duties of family members, rather than the preconceived notions of gender themselves (Massey, 1994). With women entering the workforce in the past decades, their responsibilities have increased greatly. The time they had to create a welcoming atmosphere for their family and guests has diminished, as it is divided between their roles as professionals and homemakers (Russo, 2012). This has led to some expressions of longing for the past, traditional roles of women, curiously even by feminist researchers (Boycott, 2007 in Russo, 2012).

As Levinas (1969) noted, hospitality, the welcoming of the other from the outside, is a crucial dimension of domesticity, the home and family life. However, hospitality in the home is not only offered to friends and family. There are various performances of hospitality transpiring in the home setting, with respectively varying relationships between the hosts and the guests. Two very common but very different types of home-based hospitality will be viewed here, to demonstrate both the nature of the transaction and the encounter between the host and the guest. The first type are commercial homestays, such as Bed and Breakfasts and guesthouses, where the visitor is a paying customer of the homeowner, while simultaneously being their guest, creating quite a complex relationship between the two. The second encounter is Couchsurfing, where members of an online community, when travelling, stay at each other's homes, for no pay. While these transactions appear quite dissimilar at first sight, the home setting creates comparable relationships, obligations and micro-ethical dilemmas that emerge during the stay.

Bed and Breakfasts, guesthouses and lodgings have been described as amalgams of the commercial and private arenas, an overlap creating intricacies in the space which operates as both the home of the host and their place of work (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007a). They are often referred to as 'commercial homes', which have been defined as:

> *[...] types of accommodation where visitors or guests pay to stay in private homes, where interaction takes place with a host and/or family usually living upon the premises and with whom public space is, to a degree, shared* (Lynch, 2005a, p. 534)

One of the earliest works on commercial hospitality in the home setting was John K. Walton's 1978 book "The Blackpool landlady: a social history". Walton (1978) explores the characteristics and stereotypes of landladies offering space in their home to visitors throughout the development of Blackpool as a holiday destination from the 19th century, mainly focusing on the Victorian and Edwardian era. Through the review of historic documents, archives and newspapers of the time he paints a picture of the town, its tourists and the lodging industry, situating the landlady at the centre of Blackpool's hospitality industry. Walton discusses issues of social class, gender and the politics of the time, exploring the landlady' identity, her motives to undertake this role, her

family situation but also the roots of the landladies' caricatures that emerged over the years. The author discusses the stereotypes of the landlady as a strict, greedy, middle-aged woman, providing their guests with limited space, basic amenities in a home with, often, unhygienic conditions. While Walton recognises this image is based on a certain reality, the author explains these behaviours and conditions by analysing the economic situation of the time as well as the landladies' necessity to make ends meet. Becoming a landlady was one of the few relatively "respectable" options women of the era had to make a living or as a supplementary income to their household. Thus, the lodging businesses of Blackpool were largely run by women, whether married, or, mainly, single or widowed, with the profession considered at the time as a "woman's business" (Walton, 1978, p. 86). In this way, Walton argues, the lodging business empowered women and allowed them to be financially independent and often being the sole or main breadwinner of the family if they were married (Walton, 1978). The significance of Walton's work is in paying attention to the hitherto largely neglected topic of hosting in the home as an important theme of academic study.

In commercial homes, the boundaries between home and work, the private and public spheres are unclear as the family and the home are present in the place of work, and involved emotionally (Sweeney and Lynch, 2009). In contrast to hotels, visitors have a frequent and more intense contact with the hosts, who treat them as guests, thus creating a situation where they have more control over their routines and behaviours. This difference is due to the nature of the guest-host relationship as opposed to the customer and service provider one, as well as the accruing obligations and gratitude on the guests' behalf (McIntosh, Lynch and Sweeney, 2011). The monetary exchange that takes place in this setting appears to provide the guest with a higher level of flexibility. Guests are able to make their own schedules and routines, which, however adapted to their hosts' rules, are not totally depended on them, as they would in a non-commercial domestic setting (Lashley and Lynch, 2013). In this setting, home rules exist, whether clearly stated or implicit, to provide the host with the power to decide on spatial and emotional boundaries as well as conduct within the premises. The possible differences between hosts' and

guests' daily habits and in what is understood as socially accepted behaviour, can lead to the 'othering' of the guest by the host, and, thus, to clashes between them (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007b). Therefore, a certain level of social control is exerted, which can be perceived as positive or negative depending on the circumstances, and may also be ignored at times, hence constantly changing (Lynch, 2005b). It has been found that this control is aiming to separate between the 'frontstage' and 'backstage' areas, namely the public and private, creating boundaries for the guests and their access to certain areas of the home (Seymour, 2007). Nonetheless, hosts still lose a certain amount of power over the premises whenever they welcome guests, as their own routines are interrupted and they have to fulfil the wishes of their customers at the same time (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007b).

Homestay enterprises have been found to help towards the empowerment of women and other minorities, by aiding their social and financial development while reducing social, ethnic, economic and gender inequalities (Acharya and Halpenny, 2013). In small Bed and Breakfasts and similar home-based accommodation businesses, hosting is often considered as a female role, with women customarily being the primary hosts in such settings and their work often being undervalued (Lynch, 2005a). Traditional gender roles are still prevalent in home based commercial hospitality, with men running enterprises in this field rejecting its association to domestic work, which is considered a female domain, and highlighting the business aspect (Di Domenico, 2008).

Provision of hospitality and shelter in one's home to a stranger can be depicted as a continuum regarding the expectation of reciprocity, the transaction that takes place between the host and the guest. Bed and Breakfasts are almost at the one extreme of this continuum, with the exchange of money making it a rather commercial transaction and hospitality being offered under specific circumstances, namely only if the guests pay for it (Lashley and Lynch, 2013). Towards the other end lies a different type of home-based hospitality. Couchsurfing, a network which connects travellers and hosts from all over the world, grants its members the chance to stay at others' homes for free (Germann Molz, 2011). The travellers usually contact members living in the area they plan to visit and, after initial communication, are invited to stay in

their hosts' home, provided with anything from a private room to a bed or a couch in a common area without financial compensation (Pultar and Raubal, 2009). Therefore, the visitors are possible future hosts who are currently travelling, while at the same time the hosts are potential guests who are momentarily at home (Germann Molz, 2011).

Nonetheless, while there is no stated demand for direct reciprocation in the exchange, an expectation of a generalised type of reciprocity does exist, namely towards the Couchsurfing community. It can be in the form of gifts or invitation to the host but mainly includes providing hospitality to other members of the community, a requirement for this network to succeed (Lauterbach et al., 2009). And yet, despite the significant differences with more commercial transactions of home-based hospitality, some of the emerging issues are essentially identical. While the encounter itself is more personal compared to Bed and Breakfasts, the home setting creates similar ethical dilemmas, albeit intensified in the former. Research suggests that rather than the appeal of free accommodation, it is emotional aspects of the transaction that motivate members to participate in Couchsurfing, such as being included in a worldwide community, meeting new people and becoming acquainted with their cultures (Bialski, 2012; Germann Molz, 2007). These encounters take place between strangers; therefore trust, familiarity and intimacy necessarily develop between the two parties, simultaneously due to the nature of the home setting and the perceived roles of the host and guest. At the same time, the exertion of power from either side can lead to occasions where discomfort, mistrust, friction and even hostility appear (Bialski, 2011). The visitor has to adhere to the homes' rules, adapt their routine and behaviour thus accepting constraints they would not have to in a purely commercial stay, like in a hotel. On the other hand, the host must relinquish some of the control over their space, their freedom as well as their daily habits, during the visit (Lynch, Di Domenico, and Sweeney, 2007; Bialski, 2011). These rules and daily rituals have been characterised as a crucial aspect of the home, as they create a sense of continuity, control, balance and, consequently, comfort and security for the members of the household (Russo, 2012). The entrance of the stranger into the home disturbs this balance, thus forcing the individuals to negotiate the

boundaries, both spatial, to separate the private from the public, and emotional, to determine the friend and the stranger. At the same time, closeness is created through this negotiation, with the relationship being construed through acts of mutuality and compromise (Bialski, 2011).

From the analysis of these two very different types of homestay, commercial homes and Couchsurfing, it can be argued that, even though the financial exchange that takes place in the former introduces certain dissimilarities in the encounters, the home setting produces comparable issues of intimacy, social control, inclusion and exclusion. These issues are directly connected to the ethics of the relationship, the way the other is treated during a hospitality exchange (Bulley, 2015). And when this exchange takes place in the home, the space individuals so strongly connect with their sense of self, their privacy, their most intimate relationships and memories of their past, further dilemmas related to identity emerge. But the home is not only a haven, allowing its residents to withdraw from the outside, the public life (Russo, 2012; Mallett, 2004). It is also the main site to provide hospitality, to welcome the other from the outside, an essential aspect of domesticity (Levinas, 1969). The home and its central role in our society have been underlined by scholars (Saunders, 1989), and this study into the types of relationships that are formed inside it can help elucidate certain questions on the ethics of human interactions from a hospitality perspective. This insight into the encounters and the ethics that inform them on a micro level and in such a setting, laden with meaning, like the home, can be translated to a macro level and shed light on the ethics of relationships that are created within and between societies.

2.5 Hospitality Micro-ethics

The entirety of innumerable interpersonal relationships that are created between individuals constitute the basis of society (Simmel, 1910) and hospitality has been argued to reinforce these relationships as well as contribute to the formulation of new ones (Selwyn, 2000). However, in order to establish these connections, it is imperative for the two sides of the exchange to agree upon a moral framework, in other words "*a moral universe*

to which both host and guest agree to belong" (Selwyn, 2000, p. 19). In tourism encounters in general, as well as in non-commercial homestay tourism in particular, the rules of the exchange are not explicit or written and a moral framework is created during the time of the transaction. A positive social exchange is crucial for the success of the encounter (Mosedale, 2011) but this uncertainty or even disagreement regarding the rules of the exchange can lead to dilemmas, friction or moments of inhospitality (Rosello, 2001). The purpose of this study is to explore the way the moral framework is created and negotiated between the two sides during the transaction, in non-commercial homestays, where work is offered in exchange for food and accommodation. In order to portray some of these instances where the moral framework was developed or negotiated in such a setting, with positive or negative results, examples from the relevant literature have been collected and are presented in the corresponding tables. However, as these narratives are outcomes of a literature review, they are limiting, incidental by-products of studies that are somewhat but not completely related to the studied topic and have not been viewed from this study's micro-ethical lens. Therefore, a deeper insight into the encounter from this perspective is necessary to allow for a more detailed view into the formation of a moral framework in non-commercial homestays.

In his essay "How is Society Possible?" Georg Simmel (1910) notes that, individuals are simultaneously internal and external to society, by being both a part of it and separate entities. However, both these two aspects of the person are indistinguishable, inseparable and imperative for the construction of society. According to Simmel

> *Society is, first, the complex of societalized individuals, the societally formed human material, as it constitutes the whole historical reality. Secondly, however, 'society' is also the sum of those forms of relationship by virtue of which individuals are transformed, precisely, into 'society' in the first sense* (Simmel and Wolff, 1950, pp. xxx-xxxi)

Thus, he argues that it is the numerous singular relationships individuals form with each other that aid in the determination of the self and the other. At the same time, the totality of these relationships substantiates the society by constructing the network which composes society and which in turn contributes to the self-determination of the individual (Simmel, 1910). Hence,

as human interactions and relationships are what construe society, their exploration and analysis can reinforce our understanding of the social world and how it operates. Hospitality has been characterised as a form of social exchange (Wood and Brotherton, 2008; Lynch et al., 2011), and its main purpose, is to create new relationships or solidify existing ones (Selwyn, 2000). This central role hospitality has in the establishment of human relationships, and thus in turn, the creation of human networks that form society, further supports the significance of comprehending the way these relationships are formed in a hospitality setting.

The encounter is at the core of tourism, both with space and with the host community, where the tourist also encounters themselves (Crouch et al., 2001). These instantaneous, embodied and geographic encounters can be both with humans and with non-human landscapes (Gibson, 2010). This study is examining the former type of encounter in the context of non-commercial homestays, namely the encounter between strangers who are brought together in a guest-host relationship, in the very intimate setting of the home. Gibson (2010) argued a microanalysis of encounters could facilitate the comprehension of moral dilemmas that could transpire during the tourism experience. While the author refers to a wider definition of ethical tourism, this study is aiming to undertake a microanalysis of the encounter in non-commercial homestays, albeit scrutinising ethical dilemmas from a different perspective. Ethical dilemmas in this study are not referring to the, recently receiving increasing academic attention, moral tourists and their attempt to engage in tourism activities that are considered ethical (Conway and Timms, 2010; Lisle, 2010). In tourism literature, when the interaction between hosts and guests is explored, the subjects of research are usually the tourists as transient guests, external consumers of the destination product, and the destination's community as hosts who are affected by the guests' arrival, either positively or, more often than not, negatively (Guttentag, 2009; Gu and Ryan, 2008; Lepp, 2007). Smith (1989) argues that as in all forms of social relationships, tourists and the host communities have to agree on and behave according to specific understandings in order to sustain their relationship, while recognising the conditions that might lead to its termination. In this

context, ethics and ethical conduct are almost exclusively dictating the tourists' behaviour, with ethical tourism providing normative guidelines to them on how to be "good" when they are on holiday, in terms of environmental, social and cultural practices (Lisle, 2010).

The tendency to generalise by "lumping together" all tourists and all members of the host community and viewing them as homogeneous groups has been criticised by Zhang, Inbakaran and Jackson (2006), who highlight the differences in individual characteristics among the members of these groups and the need to take a wider variety of factors into consideration when analysing host-guest interactions. Correspondingly, this research is not looking into the relationship between a generic guest -the tourist- and a generic host -the local community- and how the former should act ethically when visiting the latter. It explores a more intimate encounter between the two on a micro level and the interpersonal ethical dilemmas that emerge when the individual host and guest interact on a much deeper and personal level in the former's home. The desire for such a closer relationship with their destination and its inhabitants is also one of the characteristics often used to define moral tourists, who seek out more authentic encounters that will allow them to experience the local culture and tend to avoid the detached, impersonal, commodified trips mass tourism has to offer (Bialski, 2012; Germann Molz, 2013). Correspondingly, the tourists who choose this type of accommodation, non-commercial homestays, indeed usually fall into the category of alternative and/or ethical tourists (Kosnik, 2013).

Micro-ethics have been researched more extensively in the context of medicine (Truog et al., 2015; Mandal et al, 2015), engineering (Herkert, 2005; Bielefeldt et al., 2016) and care (Browning, 2010; Krautscheid et al., 2017). D'Anselmi and Bitetto (2013) argue that people are faced with micro-ethical issues multiple times per day as opposed to macro-ethical issues which can occur on a few occasions in one's life. Macro-ethics relate to bigger issues; the authors give the examples of stem cells and abortion among others, while micro-ethics are "*Everyman's decision making*" (D'Anselmi and Bitetto, 2013, p. 1669). On the other hand, Truog et al. (2015) who discuss micro-ethics in clinical practice similarly define micro-ethics as "the view from the inside"

which is unique to each case, each moment and the people involved, closely linked to spoken and implicit types of communication. This definition of micro-ethics by Truog et al. (2015) is applicable to this study's concept of micro-ethics and the ensuing dilemmas that often occur throughout these exchanges. Thus, micro-ethical dilemmas are the questions related to the transaction that individuals face which stem from the unique nature of these encounters. Their decisions are based on their own perceptions of fairness, however the way they express their viewpoint is often affected by the complicated power dynamic inherent in hospitality exchanges.

A positive social exchange in non-commercial homestay tourism, which includes the performance of hospitality and reciprocity throughout the exchange, is crucial for the transaction to be successful, even more so than the actual work involved (Mosedale, 2011). Acts of hospitality and reciprocity are essential in the transaction that takes place, a transaction that is not governed by the traditional market's rules, but rather regulated by a moral economy, which prescribes equal benefits for both sides (Kosnik, 2013). However, the social exchange is not always positive, and the experience can be impaired when either side does not follow certain unspoken rules of hospitality. Notably in this type of encounter, where the rules of the exchange are unwritten, unclear and, often, subject to personal interpretation, moments of tension, friction and conflict can emerge at any time. Every act of hospitality contains a certain level of hostility, as the host tends to exert social control over the guest and claim sovereignty over their space when they welcome their guest (Leung and Stone, 2009). Rosello (2001) remarks that there are instances when the rules of hospitality are broken, or, as the author phrases it: "*those problematic moments when hospitality and benevolence create perverse dynamics*" (Rosello, 2001, p.viii).

The way the other is treated during a hospitality transaction is what constitutes an ethical relation (Bulley, 2015). As Selwyn (2000) notes, the main role of hospitality is to either contribute to the forming of a new relationship or to the advancement of an existing one. A moral framework is necessary for the establishment of any relationship and the various performances of hospitality embody this framework in one of two ways, depending on whether the

relationship is existing or new. They either solidify the understanding that both sides are accepting and acting according to this moral framework or aid in the constitution of a new moral framework within which both host and guest will operate during their encounter (Selwyn, 2000). This process of forming an ethical structure, a common value system, based on which a new relationship is created between the host and the guest, is the main focus point of this study. It is closely linked to Smith's (1989) notion of the understanding that must be agreed and acted on regarding the terms of the tourist-host community relationship, albeit on a micro level. Particularly, in the studied type of tourism, the lack of a formal contract laying out specific rules of the relationship, apart from the general rule of the exchange of work for food and accommodation, creates a need for a moral framework within which the new relationship between two hitherto strangers, the host and the guest, will be developed. Through verbal and non-verbal communication, actions and social cues, the two parties negotiate their roles within the relationship and consolidate its dynamic. This negotiation occurs when one party is confronted with a micro-ethical dilemma, a dilemma regarding aspects of the relationship's moral framework, and is unsure of what the framework dictates them to do.

The specific setting in the home is particularly rich in such micro-ethical dilemmas and consequent decision making by the actors. The home setting intensifies the contact between the two sides and the relationship becomes much more intimate, further increasing the need for an agreed upon moral framework to ensure the success of the encounter. Bialski (2011) argues that the arrival of the stranger in the premises, upsets the existing balance and creates the need for a negotiation of spatial and emotional boundaries, while acts of mutuality and compromise during this negotiation can create intimacy between the two parties. The host is forced to abdicate some of the power they have over their home, both in terms of space as well as in terms of individual freedom and routines. At the same time, the guest has to follow the host's rules, while adjusting their habits and behaviour according to the constraints these rules impose on them (Lashley, Lynch and Morrison, 2007; Lynch, Di Domenico and Sweeney, 2007).

The complicated nature of the exchange can create micro-ethical dilemmas for either side, where they are unsure of how to act. Some examples of these potential micro-ethical dilemmas from the guest's perspective could be whether to enter a room if the door is ajar or where to sit on the table when invited for food. Examples of micro-ethical dilemmas and reactions to them found in the literature are available in Table 1. For instance, in two separate accounts found in the literature, WWOOF guests, who were displeased with the food they were offered, demonstrated their dissatisfaction in completely different ways. In first case the guest, as reported by the somewhat offended host, chose to use an excessive amount of sauces in order to be able to eat it (Example 1). In the second case, the guests voiced their frustration regarding the amount and type of food provided and when they were not able to reach an agreement with the host, who appeared unwilling to compromise, they ended up leaving (Example 2). In example 3 the WWOOFer discusses the micro-ethical dilemmas that stem from the complexity of the relationship where employment, hospitality and interpersonal aspects overlap. Example 4 is a quote from an au pair who due to feeling unwelcome to the family table, stopped eating with her hosts. On the opposite side, the au pair host in Example 5 discusses her difficulty to request childcare from her au pair who turned down her hospitality. Finally, in Example 6 an au pair host explains her unwillingness to integrate the au pair into her family and the accruing inhospitable rules of the home and access to common areas.

Table 1. Micro-Ethical Dilemmas and Negotiation

Number	Example	Source
1	*He used a lot of sauces and things [pause]. I like to please with my cooking but here I felt [pause], I thought I won't be able to cater for him [pause]. I couldn't be bothered, I wouldn't start cooking Japanese*	WWOOF host in Kosnik, 2014, p. 285
2	*For a week I stayed with Nicole, a New Zealand WWOOF host, working together with four other WWOOFers who arrived almost at the same time. We lived self-sufficiently off what we harvested. The workload seemed fair: six hours a day working in the garden and one day off. The food was 100% organic and mostly home grown, and we were accommodated in our own modern, eco-friendly house. A WWOOFer's dream and still, after only a few days, conflict arose between the host and the WWOOFers. River, a young man from the US, and two young men from France soon complained about the food they received from our host: Three vegetarian meals a day did not make up for six hours of rooting out blackberry bushes, they thought. Nicole was reluctant to change her diet for her WWOOFers. She argued that many WWOOFers had a detox experience while staying with her and living only on organic food harvested from the garden. This would irritate WWOOFers who were not used to such a diet. Nicole was convinced that quantity and quality of her food was sufficient for the young men and told them so. I realized I was experiencing the detox too – having to live without caffeine for a week my field notes became increasingly bad-tempered.* *The French WWOOFers soon disappeared; their lack of English made it very difficult for them to communicate with our host. Megan, River's partner, told me she felt unwelcome because we were not allowed to help ourselves in the kitchen but had to wait for Nicole to prepare our food, which she seemed to do slowly and reluctantly. I shared Megan's sentiments. The general mood among the WWOOFers was very low when we finally had our day off. River offered to drive us all into town; when Megan asked 'What do you want to do in town?' he answered wryly 'buy salad!'*	Autoethnographic notes in Kosnik, 2014, pp. 283-284

3	*[…] I mean sometimes the categories were a bit harder to see. Because usually like there would be moments where she was my employer in the sense I'd be 'oh what did you want me to get done this week?' And then we'd make a list and we'd go through it and all of that, okay and then when that was over we'd put that aside and then we'd be more like flatmates or friends living together or something like that and then that was fine. […] So I mean it's a bit tricky because it's your employer, but it's your friend, but it's your host, but it's your friend and you're part of the family [...] it's a lot of things at the same time. So depending through which eye you're looking at them, like the employer eye or the friend eye, you think 'I should do this, oh no I have to do that', or 'oh no I don't have to do this.*	WWOOFer in Cronauer, 2012, p. 60
4	*She pointed to how, during dinner, conversations were conducted in Danish and chiefly took place between the mother and the children. Feeling excluded from the sociality around the table, Joy chose not to eat with the family: 'I was not interesting at the table. Why waste my time eating with them?', Joy asked me, rhetorically. After a while, she changed her mind and decided to join the family for dinner again, but discovered that the host mother had only made food for herself and the children. Joy related, "The feeling was like, you are not welcome to eat our food […] I think it is Danish culture, that if you don't ask someone to eat with you, you don't join. And they did not ask me any more to eat for dinner. So, during the evenings […] I just ate chips and chocolate in my room."*	Au pair in Dalgas, 2016, pp. 843-844
5	*We were a bit cautious at first. I thought she [Rosemary] should have a chance to acclimatise. So, I took her out and showed her things in the neighbourhood, where we shopped, and I asked her what she liked to eat, and so on. But she quite quickly made clear that she didn't want to eat with us. I wondered what I would say if I landed in China and had to eat all sorts of strange, mysterious things. We understood. But it hasn't been a particularly good thing because it means the au pair just doesn't create a close relationship with the kids….. I don't really feel that I can ask her to help with the kids . . . I mean, it's easier to ask her to wash the dishes. It's kind of hard to say, 'Actually, I would like you to look after my children, even though you don't really feel like it'.*	Au pair host in Dalgas, 2016, p. 838

6	*I always gave them a big room and I gave them a telly and I'd say to them 'If we're ever in the sitting room don't feel free to come in'. Whereas lots of people say, you know, the au pair deal is that they're supposed to be part of the family and I'd say 'you're not. If you want a buddy buddy family then we're not the family for you'.*	Au pair host in Cox and Narula, 2003, p. 340

Nonetheless, all the examples that are demonstrated, while helpful in illustrating the themes this study is aiming to investigate, are incidental outcomes of previous studies that were exploring different topics and not elicited through a micro-ethical lens. As the existing literature can be a selective and provide a somewhat distorted view of the subject, a first hand, on-site experience and exploration of the encounter is imperative. At the same time, accounts from both hosts and guests in this setting can provide a deeper understanding on their perceptions of the fairness, power dynamic and roles involved in the transaction and thus illuminate their reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on hospitality ethics on a societal level as well as on the micro level, exploring the home as a setting for hospitality provision, with all its complexities. The reviewed studies provide a framework in which this thesis is situated. With the first two parts of the literature review introducing the reader to the particular exchanges through an examination of the existing bibliography, a gap in the literature can be identified. Kosnik's studies (2013; 2014) analysed the WWOOF experience in depth, providing very important insights into the moral economy that governs this type of exchange as well as themes of reciprocity, negotiation, the nature and politics of the WWOOF network. However, what this study aims to achieve is a deeper explanation of the process of reaching a moral framework, what Kosnik (2013)

refers to as negotiation. While Kosnik's (2013; 2014) work is valuable, it views the exchange from a different perspective than this study. This thesis explores the construction of a moral framework of the encounter through an ethical hospitality lens and through an analysis of micro-ethical dilemmas participants face throughout their experiences. Furthermore, it discusses certain assumptions, beliefs and preconceptions that can affect the decision-making process of each side, based on their perceptions of fairness and personal ethics. Moreover, this study is not only looking into the WWOOF exchange but also Workaway and HelpX as well as au pairing, to examine various types of work, apart from farming. As can be surmised from the two first parts of the literature review and will be further explored in this study, the difference in the nature of work required of the guest can result in very differing ethics in their treatment by the host. In this way, this study aims to shed light on how people behave in situations where the rules are uncertain, where their obligations and rights are neither written nor clear and where, more often than not, they have to rely on their own sense of ethics, justice and fairness to decide what they should offer and what they should ask in return.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter presents and justifies the methodology that was employed in this study. Based on a qualitative approach and viewed through a critical theory lens, an autoethnographic experience and semi-structured interviews were chosen as the optimal data collection method for this research. With the choice of critical theory being based on my own ideology as well as the researched topic, the ontological and epistemological assumptions made are discussed in the first part of this chapter. It is followed by an overview of the autoethnographic data collection method, which was undertaken in Spain, where I participated as a guest in a Workaway exchange. In this part, I elaborate on the method and its analysis while also justifying my choice for a covert research and the ethical issues that accompany this choice. Subsequently, I present the interview process that followed the autoethnography, where I conducted 50 interviews with hosts and guests who had participated in these exchanges. After discussing the sampling, the interview process, analysis and ethical considerations of the interviews, this chapter concludes with an evaluation of the chosen methods and a part on reflexivity.

3.1 Research Philosophy

3.1 1 Critical theory

Critical theory is a neo-Marxist theory that was developed in the 1930s, by the Frankfurt School, a group of German scholars, including Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and, later, Habermas, among others (Geuss, 1981). It is mainly focused on the concepts of power, control, emancipation and justice, drawing from the writings of Marx and Freud. Critical theory has been characterised as difficult to define, as there is no singular critical theory, it is constantly transforming and evolving and differentiation between views of theorists are expected and accepted (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000). According to Horkheimer (2002, p. 199) a critical theory of society is, *"…a theory dominated at every turn by a concern for reasonable conditions of life"*. While it was initially based on Marxist views and thus capitalism and the clash between classes was at the centre of the ideology, it evolved to incorporate various facets of gender,

race and class among others (Budd, 2008). The outcome of this development is a distinction between critical theory and Critical Theory, which are often used interchangeably. Yalvaç (2017) indicates the main difference between the two is that lower case “critical theory” generally refers in a broader sense to postpositivist theory that applies a social critique of the mainstream including Critical Theory but also others like poststructuralism, feminism and constructivism, while capitalised “Critical Theory” refers to the classic critical theory connected to the Frankfurt school, primarily to Habermas’ writings.

The philosophy of sciences is not a single concept but consists of various branches, each of which represents certain aspects of the researcher's view in relation to the world, reality and the nature of human knowledge (Benton and Craib, 2011). While there is no single view on the number and nature of these branches, in this part, three of the main ones will be considered, namely ontology, epistemology and axiology.

The branch of philosophy that is concerned with the general assumptions an investigator holds regarding reality is ontology (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). Ontological positions of a specific school of thought refer to the philosophical standpoint on whether social phenomena are objective and exist independently of social actors or if they are constructed by the latter’s impressions and actions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The ontological assumption made in critical theory is historical realism, which argues that everything currently considered as “reality” is previous false perceptions which through time were formed by a variety of factors, socio-economic, cultural and political, crystallised and embedded in society’s mindsets as true and unalterable (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Moreover, what is considered an external fact in positivism, in critical theory is seen as socially performed acts, which have been formulated through the history of the subject as well as the human senses and understanding (Brincat, 2012). Finally, critical theory is not only interested in what currently exists but also deals with future possibilities, which are attainable through changing perceptions and prompting actions of people that will lead to their emancipation (Comstock, 1982).

Epistemology indicates the researcher’s viewpoint regarding the world and the self, as well as the relation between the two (Christians, 2000). It is the branch

of philosophy that deals with the nature of knowledge, its possible scope, limits and general basis (Honderich, 1995) and relates to the philosophy of knowledge, namely what constitutes personal opinion and what is considered a substantiated view (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). The epistemological premise of critical theory is that “true knowledge” cannot be obtained as it is a result of historical circumstances and influenced by current powers, such as the ruling class, society, institutions and the media. These powers determine what is considered as acceptable knowledge, thus they actually produce it, making it an expression of control rather than the actual truth (Cohen et al., 2007). As such, the oppressed people are kept from informed consciousness and their consequent liberation from this control which can lead to a just, egalitarian society (Geuss, 1981).

Finally, axiology, often also referred to as value theory, is the philosophical branch of science that relates to aesthetics, ethics and religion in the context of research (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). It investigates the nature of value itself as well as the various forms the latter can take, such as aesthetic, epistemic and ethical values (Hiles, 2008). The researcher’s values affect many aspects of the research and the decisions made during the process, such as the choice of topic, paradigm, philosophical framework, research design, data collection and analysis as well as presentation of findings (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). The critical theory researcher is not considered a passive and objective observer of the data that they collect. The interrelationship between the investigator and their subjects affects the former’s understanding of the analysed social structure and in turn the research findings (Januszewski et al., 2001). As the involvement of the researcher is quite intensive, their own values affect and are affected by the studied subject and the research itself. This entails a significant amount of subjectivity with the purpose of achieving critical consciousness (Kidd and Kral, 2005). One of the main features of critical theory that differentiates it from other philosophies, is that the investigator has a purpose apart from observing and recording data with merely a theoretical impact. They aim at analysing this information and formulating theories that can be translated into actions, with the purpose of changing the status quo through encouraging

social change, relief from suffering, emancipation and empowerment, which are valuable in themselves (Januszewski et al., 2001; Geuss, 1981).

Critical theory tends to denounce the extremes reached by some interpretivist practices of turning explanation into purely descriptive accounts (Morrow and Brown, 1994). For Horkheimer (1993) in order for a theory to be considered critical it is necessary for it to be explanatory, thus provide an explanation of the problems faced in the researched social context; practical, namely to determine the actors that will initiate the emancipation; and normative, that is to produce definite assessment criteria and pragmatic, feasible objectives to achieve social change.

One of critical theory's main weaknesses, according to its critics, is that an extreme amount of focus has been given on politics and historical accounts, which are compared to a hypothetical, idealistic new reality standard, lacking historical context (Larsen and Wright, 1993). Moreover, this philosophy has often been criticised by positivists as being too subjective and openly having political aims (Mack, 2010). However, as Horkheimer (2002) notes, the possible impacts from the changes suggested by critical theory, the prospect for such a "utopia", as critics characterise it, can be generally estimated by examining the current situation while the value of the outcome can only be measured once the suggested actions have been taken. Furthermore, the criticism of critical theory as biased and one-sided is mainly due to its going against the societal norms that perpetuate the present, outdated state of affairs and preserve social inequality and injustice (Horkheimer, 2002).

3.1.2 Critical Theory and Methodology

The decision taken on the method derives from the researcher's worldview, or paradigm, which defines their ontology and epistemology (Christians, 2000). Philosophical, and thus in turn methodological stances, entail differing suppositions about the reality that is researched, the research design, the data collection and findings (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009). Critical theory opposes the positivist philosophy in social sciences, as it considers empiricist accounts of natural science being inadequate and argues for the recognition of reflection as

a credible type of knowledge (Geuss, 1981). Yet, in terms of practical methodological implications, critical theory neither rejects the quantitative approach to studying a social phenomenon, nor considers quantitative and qualitative methods as being mutually exclusive (Morrow and Brown, 1994). In critical theory, methodology is mainly dialogic and dialectical, in that it necessitates a dialectical discourse between the subject of the study and the interviewer, in order to transmute any unfamiliarity and misconceptions into informed consciousness (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The investigator is not merely an uninvolved and unbiased recipient of external information, but they also affect the research subject through their theories (Brincat, 2012). They do have to be objective, but objectivity in critical theory does not refer to the researcher as being uninvolved, apathetic or dispassionate, it rather entails the investigator acknowledging and demonstrating their own position within the research and their pre-existing ideologies through reflexivity (Januszewski et al., 2001).

The process commences with the researcher investigating the subjects' shared perceptions regarding a social situation and exploring the causes of their origin and perpetuation. It concludes with them providing a critique of these beliefs, resulting from comparison between the actual social context and the interviewees' interpretations of it, aiming to educate the participants with alternative views regarding their circumstances and opportunities for action (Comstock, 1982). The main tenets of critical theory also have specific implications on the data collection methods. Observation is crucial for the process, as it leads to a better understanding of the studied group's conditions, any existing restraints and possibilities for emancipation or social change. This, however, is not an adequate means to obtaining the necessary information, as perceptions and beliefs of individuals are as significant and can be uncovered only through interviewing participants (Budd, 2008). The data is analysed, with the existence of social structures, intersubjective meanings and possible distortions in beliefs, motives and values, as well as the historical processes that lead to them, being considered and any relationships between them being analysed (Comstock, 1982). During this stage, the researcher has to keep ideology in mind, namely any aspects of class, race and gender which they aim

to critique, but which also may be embedded in the subject's belief system and difficult to detect (Budd, 2008). Ethics are deeply rooted in critical theory, as the investigator's role is not merely uncovering information but actively working towards social transformation, emancipation, justice, equality and the eradication of poverty through their work (Januszewski et al., 2001). In comparison with positivist theory, which has specific benchmarks to assess a study's value, the quality of critical theory research in terms of credibility and impact is less explicit. It is based on the interplay between situation and historical context, the decrease of misconceptions and ignorance, as well as the practical impact it has following the application of its findings in terms of social transformation and justice (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

3.1.3 Critical Theory in this Study

As in many disciplines related to business research, in the case of hospitality, research has been largely dominated by the industry perspective, which favours a positivist philosophy, mainly based on quantitative data and statistics, aimed at examining trends and tendencies of the market (Lashley, 2000; Botterill, 2001). In the recent past, however, a turn has been noticed in researchers studying the area with a broader range of philosophical views underpinning their work and a larger variety of alternative methodologies leading their approaches (Lugosi, Lynch and Morisson, 2009). This study is following a critical approach towards the studied issue, based on my own ideology as well as the topic, the aim and the objectives it is focused on.

The core values of critical theory are in line with my personal beliefs, that the reality we perceive around us is socially constructed through time, with systemic barriers imposed upon the more vulnerable and less powerful members of our society, aiming to hinder their informed consciousness and development that can lead to an equitable and just world. For me, the aim of social research is not solely observing and describing the world around us; our role as academics is to highlight injustice in the world, give voice to those who are underrepresented and promote equality among the members of society. Acknowledging and expressing my own ideology is necessary as per critical

theory principles (Januszewski et al., 2001), with the reflexive chapter fulfilling this requirement in more depth by illustrating how my values developed and affected my study.

Moreover, the topic lends itself to such an approach. The power imbalance in the relationship, particularly due to the employer-employee and host-guest aspects of the relationship and the tensions that come with these, are in line with the focus of critical theory on the pursuit of equality. The concept of otherness is central in hospitality research. Derrida (2000) has argued that the guest, the other, is externalised by the host. The externalisation of the guest brings about a power imbalance, constantly shifting from one side to the other. This struggle introduces issues of control, ethics and identity into the relationship. As the focus of this study is on the perception of fairness in this relationship, the negotiation of the rules and the reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas that lead to the construction of the moral framework of the exchange, critical theory is the most suitable philosophical approach to underpin the research. With the research exploring the preconceived notions of fairness, ethics, morality and power relations as well as the participants' justification of these notions, critical theory is the optimal philosophy to lead this study. Furthermore, the concept of the moral framework being constructed through various forms of negotiation, whether direct or indirect, is consistent with Habermas' (1993) concept of Discourse Ethics, albeit on a micro level, which argues that the societal ethical principles are created and developed through various forms of communication.

Through this philosophy, the methods chosen are also validated. According to Laudan (1984), methods evaluate theories and theories justify methods. Therefore, with critical theory leading the study, the choice of autoethnography and interviews follows logically. As mentioned previously, observation and interviews are preferred in critical theory. Autoethnography was chosen as a way to observe the self in the context of the setting that is researched and explore the feelings and thoughts of the guest from within. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were then conducted to give voice to the participants of these exchanges and uncover their own perceptions of the fairness and moral

framework of the transaction. These methods will be analysed in more detail in the following parts of this chapter.

3.2 Qualitative Research

This study is employing a qualitative methodology to explore the topic in question. The choice for a qualitative approach was made for a variety of reasons, with the main one being the studied issue, which lends itself to such an approach. In order to examine this type of relationship and uncover how the two sides of the exchange negotiate the moral framework of their encounter, it is necessary to go in depth into the understanding of individuals who participate in such exchanges and uncover the underlying power dynamics that may affect this negotiation process. Furthermore, the research philosophy that leads this study, critical theory, while not necessarily rejecting quantitative approaches, argues for a dialectical discourse between the interviewer and the participant, further reinforcing the argument for the use of a qualitative methodology.

Qualitative research derived from disciplines like anthropology and sociology as a response to quantitative research, which was argued to be inadequate to explain subjective reality and its characteristics that direct individual behaviour, through statistics and surveys (Holliday, 2007). It is a process that aims to investigate and interpret the ascribed meanings of a person or a population related to a social or human issue. The researcher is playing a significant role, not merely as a collector and presenter of data but as a conveyor of meaning, which is affected by their own personal views, values and perceptions (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Correspondingly, I acknowledge my role and influence on this study, and thus I am exploring how my identity and ideology have led me throughout the process of this study in the Reflexivity chapter (3.7).

The principal characteristics of qualitative methodology are the constant development and modification of the research questions and processes, the accumulation of information usually taking place in the respondents' own environment, an inductive approach to theory building, the interpretation of data and meaning by the researcher and, finally, flexibility in the structure of the written account (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, a qualitative methodology was employed, as it is more suitable and effective in the exploration and interpretation of the individual motivations, expectations and understanding of participants in non-commercial homestays regarding their own and the other side's roles in the host-guest relationship. A multi-method approach was taken; a combination of autoethnography and semi-structured interviews. Using multiple methods as a way to triangulate results, does not have the purpose of validating the processes and outcomes of the study but is rather used to additionally ground the findings by expanding the scope and depth of the research while adding rigour to the inquiry (Flick, 2009; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The specific data collection methods that were used in this research are further analysed in the following parts of this chapter.

3.3 Autoethnography

The first method chosen was an autoethnographic account of my experience as a guest in this setting. It allowed me to sensitise myself to the experience of the guest and comprehend the micro-ethics involved and, through an introspective process and personal reflections, observe my own interactions with the host. The purpose was to record my own thoughts and feelings as a guest, generally, but mainly when I was faced with a micro-ethical dilemma or question with regard to the rules of the exchange. I stayed in two homes as a working guest, where I noted down my thoughts, then elaborated them to my recorder during my stay. On my return from the field, I transcribed and analysed the recordings, the findings of which are presented in chapter 4. In this section, the premise of autoethnography as a method will be discussed, along with ethical considerations, the process I followed and how I analysed my findings.

3.3.1 Autoethnographic method

Early on in my study, I decided that writing about other's experiences in these exchanges while extremely useful, would not be enough. I wanted to understand them from the inside, participate myself and experience the

phenomenon. In this way I could have a deeper insight that would not only contribute to my familiarity with the topic of my research but would also allow me to explore the complex feelings that come with it and in turn be able to find the focus of the questions for the interviews. However, apart from experiencing this exchange for my own benefit and understanding of my topic, I used myself as a research instrument, being the researcher, informant and author (Clandinin and Connelly, 2004 in Tullis, 2013), to examine the exchange from a guest perspective, using autoethnography.

Through autoethnography, social sciences can advance the understanding of phenomena and experiences by utilising deeply personal narratives about the researcher's own life (Sparkes, 2000). Autoethnography is a method that combines the main elements of autobiography and ethnography, by researching the self in a specific social setting (Reed-Danahay, 2013). The process is described by Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) as writing about revelations or insights the researcher has in a retrospective and selective manner or about experiences that emerge through the researcher's identity as a member of a cultural group. However, the authors highlight the need to analyse these narratives, through use of existing bibliography as well as theoretical and methodological tools to distinguish them from a simple account of their experience or an autobiography. Crawley (2014) characterises it as a type of self-interview that does not follow the norms of traditional methods, or conventional knowledge production, but rather drawing data and information to analyse from the researcher's own experience. Autoethnography has been defined as an:

> *Autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of the personal experience; then they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations* (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 739)

In a hospitality context, Lynch (2005) explored the use of sociological impressionism and autoethnography as an alternative to the hitherto mainly

quantitative hospitality studies and a stream-of-consciousness approach to collecting data, which should be done as close to the experience as possible.

3.3.2 Sampling/Finding the placements

I initially researched the various organisations that I could become a member of and chose the one that had the largest number of hosts and variety of placements. I became a member of Workaway in early February 2017 and immediately contacted potential hosts in Spain. There were a few reasons behind my choice of Spain as the destination. The cultural exchange involved is a big aspect and thus I had to choose a country that I was not too familiar with. Therefore, Greece and Germany were excluded due to my nationality. The UK was also not an optimal choice because I had been living in Scotland for almost three years, so I had become acquainted with the culture and, most importantly, I would not be able to find hosts that required help with English, which was my preferred type of work. Moreover, Workaway is very popular in Spain; it was the country with one of the largest number of hosts in Europe (3211 as of 20/5/2017), which increased my chances of finding hosts at a short notice. I also believed that the fact that I speak some Spanish might be beneficial to the exchange, which turned out to be true, as will be exhibited in Chapter 4. And finally, the broad similarities between the Greek and Spanish cultures could help me connect with my hosts with less difficulty and minimise the possibility of cultural misunderstandings.

I was looking for a type of work I knew I was able to do, mainly helping with English practice. Further placements I applied to included childcare and helping out at a dog shelter. I did not apply for placements entailing jobs that I was unsure I could do, such as gardening, farming, building etc, to avoid any unnecessary work-related friction with my hosts. Furthermore, for safety reasons, I contacted hosts that lived in urban areas rather than remote rural areas, like farms in the mountains. For the same reasons, I looked mainly for female hosts or families. This was in line with Tan’s (2010) argument that in peer-to-peer hospitality exchanges, female travellers tend to feel safer with other women as hosts and this applied to me as well.

I created a profile with some information about myself, like my age, occupation, nationality and others, as well as the type of work I was interested in. Then, I looked for hosts who fulfilled the abovementioned criteria and sent them all a message, introducing myself and asking whether I could visit them in a specific timeframe. From the 12 messages I sent to potential hosts all over Spain, only three replied. I had one negative response because they would receive a guest during the time I asked to visit, and two positive responses from the hosts that I ended up visiting.

3.3.3 The autoethnographic experience

After some initial communication, I arranged my first stay for a week with two young women sharing a flat in central Spain and then with a family of four for two weeks in the east of Spain. My role was to help them practise English, and in the first home, help out with housework. In exchange, they provided me with all meals and a place to stay. I did not inform them that I was visiting in the capacity of a researcher as, due to the sensitive nature of the topic, it was imperative that they not change their behaviour towards me during the encounter, because of fear of being judged as hosts. This decision is discussed further in the part about ethical considerations of this chapter.

During my stay in the two homes, I wrote all my observations, thoughts, feelings and questions in a notepad as soon after the event as possible. Then, whenever I found the time, I recorded my reflections on these thoughts in more detail. Both the notes and the recordings were done in Greek, to ensure that if the notebook or the recorder were somehow found by the hosts, they would not understand what was written in them. However, I kept them both with me at all times to avoid that possibility. In my second exchange I had more time to myself to work on my notes and recordings, which was difficult in the first one due to the fact that I did not have a key to the home and thus not the ability to come and go as I wished. The details of my experiences are discussed in more depth in Chapter 4, where I present how my daily life was as well as particular events and observations that were related to the topic of the study.

3.3.4 Analysis

The result of the recordings were approximately five hours of audio, which I transcribed after my return to Scotland. The transcriptions of my autoethnographic notes amounted to 70 pages, almost 40.000 words. I printed them out and did my analysis manually, using coloured pens and highlighters as well as post-it notes. I completed multiple layers of coding. Initially I noted the main theme the quotes were about; work, space, food, interpersonal relationship and some others that I ended up integrating into wider topics, such as privacy and house rules that went into the space theme. Then I coded them by a specific characterisation, such as acts of hospitality, micro-ethical dilemmas, reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas, negative and positive social exchanges. The transcriptions were analysed in the source language, namely Greek, as the literature suggests (Heim and Tymowski, 2006; van Nes et al., 2010; Mossop, 1990).

A number of quotes from the recordings were translated and are presented in the respective chapter to depict the observations more vividly. The quotes have been translated in a way that conveys the meaning clearly in English but still preserves the essence and spirit of my recordings in Greek, the source language (Heim and Tymowski, 2006). Ellis (1991) stresses the value of exploring how emotions are involved in experiences, through introspection, which can be achieved by keeping academic journals, using a blend of ethnography and autobiography. While in ethnographic analysis, it has been argued that the collected data should be speaking for itself in terms of manifestation of the findings (Bryman, 2012), in reality its interpretation is not only necessary but inevitable in autoethnography. The investigator continuously records and edits, reviews and amends their observations, all done through their own lens of understanding the world (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010). Similarly, while I did not alter my original quotes, I added comments in brackets during the transcription process, to clarify or provide further information on certain entries.

In autoethnography there are two main schools of thought that approach the method differently, the evocative and the analytic (Denzin, 2006). The former

uses storytelling techniques and thick descriptions to present the authors' experiences aiming to produce aesthetic and evocative narratives (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). Analytic autoethnography, however, uses more a traditional approach focused on theory, with five main elements: "*(1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher's self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis"* (Anderson, 2006, p. 378). The chosen approach for this study was somewhere in the middle, similar to other researchers', namely *"an evocative, verisimilitude-seeking, firmly "auto"-ethnography that focuses squarely on one's own lived experiences but that also applies critical analysis and aims to formulate theoretical understandings, with the aim of creating understanding beyond the data itself"* (Stanley, 2015, p. 150).

Writing an autoethnography is quite different than writing most academic texts. Thus, my autoethnographic chapter was written in a different way to the interview findings chapter. I used a more literary narrative, illustrating my observations and thoughts, divided by the main elements of the exchange for each encounter that I noticed at the time of my experience; work, space, food and personal aspects. The nature of autoethnography, being a combination of autobiography and ethnography, particularly the former, requires a more creative way of writing. Stanley (2015), however, argues that the division between two ways of writing, academic and creative, is progressively dwindling, with Grant (2010) similarly arguing that the dissolution of boundaries between art and science has been legitimised in postmodern ethnography. In each part of the chapter, I elaborated on moments that created strong feelings or generated micro-ethical dilemmas in my mind, while citing quotes from my notes to exhibit my exact thoughts at the time.

3.3.5 Ethical Considerations

I applied for and received ethical approval through submitting an Edinburgh Napier University Research Integrity form before I started my data collection. The main ethical issue for the autoethnography was the undertaking of a covert

study, which I justified in my application and it got accepted. Covert research has often been controversial in terms of ethical issues (Parker and Ashencaen Crabtree, 2014). The reason I did not identify myself as a researcher was to ensure the authenticity of the encounter as a guest and the behaviour of the hosts. The rationale behind this decision was not the possible difficulty in finding consenting participants. It had rather more to do with the change in behaviour of the subjects if they are aware of the researcher's occupation (Iphofen, 2013). This was a conscious decision after some deliberation and was mainly related to the fact that they would most likely try to convey the image of a "perfect host" and adjust their behaviour accordingly, if they were cognizant of my role. This has been characterised as the Hawthorne effect, where the awareness of being observed leads participants to change their behaviour (Salkind, 2010). Similarly, the Experimenter effect suggests that participants aware of being part of a study may change their behaviour according to what they believe the researcher expects (Salkind, 2010). The choice for covert research has been justified in the literature in cases where the awareness of the researcher's purpose can affect emotions and behaviour of individuals and thus skew any findings (Yegidis and Weinbach, 2002 in Parker and Ashencaen Crabtree, 2014). With the chosen methodology being autoethnographic, and not ethnographic, the focus was on myself and not the others around me. However, had my hosts been aware of my researcher status, their change in behaviour would also affect my own feelings and thoughts.

Throughout my stay I tried to be a "good guest" (Lynch, 2005), not cause any problems to my hosts and only interrogate my lived experience as a guest without interfering or manipulating the behaviour of others with experimentations. Nonetheless, as the researcher never acts in complete isolation (Colyar, 2013), some of the hosts' actions and narratives have been included in order to provide context to my personal accounts. It has been argued that in autoethnographic accounts, as the author describes their own lives and experiences, relational ethics come in play, as it is relatively easy to identify the people mentioned from the researcher's environment, even if they are anonymised (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). In the case of this research, as the hosts were found from the Workaway website, they were not from my

immediate network, thus not identifiable. I further ensured their anonymity by giving them pseudonyms and not specifying the parts of Spain they live in. Furthermore, I refrained from posting any pictures I took with them on my social media or write anything about this experience publicly. Finally, all my notes and recordings were done in Greek to guarantee they would not understand anything in the unlikely chance they would see them; I did however, take the recorder and notebook with me everywhere I went and never left them in their homes while I was gone. The chances of my hosts reading any of my future published work, recognising themselves in it and feeling taken advantage of, are remote. Any publications, whether the PhD itself or any resulting journal articles, will take place much later in the future while their names or any identifiable information have been omitted. Furthermore, the writings focus on my own experience, rather than evaluating or judging my hosts and their behaviour. However, it was imperative that the hosts act as they normally would and not try to exaggerate their hospitality in order to ensure they will be depicted as hospitable in the study and thus the data could have been biased, as my experience would have been skewed.

3.4 Interviews

In the second phase, semi-structured in-depth interviews were undertaken with members of WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX, both hosts and guests, as well as au pairs and host families of au pairs. In this part I will present the non-probability sampling methods that were used to identify participants, the process of the interviews as well as the analysis and ethical considerations that came up during this data collection method. In total 50 interviews with both hosts and guests in this setting were undertaken, mainly throughout the summer of 2017.

3.4.1 Sampling

My sampling method was a combination of purposive sampling methods. Unlike quantitative research, where the sample of participants tends to be large and

statistically representative of the population studied, in qualitative studies, the size of the samples tends to be quite small and not illustrative of the characteristics of the whole group (McGivern, 2006). Thus, the sampling methods employed by each methodology, differ as well, with quantitative researchers usually displaying a tendency towards more probability-driven selection of data and qualitative researchers less so (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In qualitative studies, purposive sampling is widely preferred, as it allows the identification and selection of individuals or cases most suitable to aid the investigator in addressing the research problem or question, with the four main elements influencing this decision being the setting, the actors, the events and the process (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For this study, this non-probability sampling method was utilised initially, in which the participants are selected for displaying certain characteristics related to the studied topic, to allow for the analysis of its main themes (Ritchie, 2003). Some participants were contacted through my wider network. I had never met any of them before the interview apart from two, who I had met once before. Moreover, I contacted one participant through her travel blog, where she had written about her experiences. This approach was attempted with some other travel bloggers but was unsuccessful as some did not reply, and others requested payment for the interview. In a few cases participants were found through snowball sampling, in which participants act as informants and indicate other possible respondents, who share the required characteristics (Somekh and Lewin, 2005). For instance, one au pair sent a message on a Whatsapp group of au pairs based in the region she was in. While she did not personally know all the members of the group, this practice is common among au pairs, as are Facebook groups, as a type of unofficial support where they can communicate and discuss any issues they have with others in the same position. Some WWOOFers contacted hosts or other people they had met through their travels who agreed to participate in the interviews, while one au pair host informed her au pair and she also was interviewed.

The majority, however, of the participants were found through the organisations and agencies who were contacted and asked for help to recruit participants. I contacted a number of online au pair agencies as well as HelpX, Culturegogo

and various national chapters of WWOOF. I received replies from WWOOF USA, WWOOF Australia as well as aupair.com, aupairworld.com and Au pair Ecosse. The initial request was to get access to their member lists and to send out emails to potential participants but none of the organisations agreed to this approach due to privacy concerns. Instead, I prepared a document with a short summary of my study, information about myself and my contact details. Some organisations included the document in their newsletter, others sent out separate emails to their members or posted it on their social media pages. I received a very large number of emails from individuals interested in participating. However, as I expected, some did not reply to my second email, others stopped replying after some initial communication while in some cases the potential participants had a busy schedule and the difficulty in setting up an interview made them lose interest. In this sampling method, which is often used for hard to reach groups, the self-selected sample reaches out to the researcher to participate in the study (Sterba and Foster, 2008), after an invitation is posted online or disseminated offline with the sample being restricted to those with access to the internet (Andrews, Nonnecke, Preece, 2003). While commonly used in quantitative studies, and particularly electronic surveys, it proved ideal for my research as my target group has to have internet access in order to participate in these exchanges and at the same time it reduced the workload of reaching out individually to potential participants.

In the end my sample consisted of 50 participants. 38 out of those 50 were female, an issue discussed further in the limitations section. While some participants were members of multiple organisations, for instance Beth was a WWOOF, HelpX and Workaway host, I used the organisation through which they were contacted to group them. Table 2 provides an overview of the sample, while Table 3 gives a more detailed view of participants' profiles.

Table 2. Overview of Participants

Au pairing		**WWOOF, Workaway, HelpX**	
Hosts	Guests	Hosts	Guests
12	10	14	14

Table 3. Profiles of Participants

Name	Position	Sex	Nationality	Location of Exchange
Anthony	Workaway Host	M	English	Scotland
Sofia	Au Pair	F	Greek	Netherlands, England
Maria	Au Pair	F	Spanish	England
Evangelia	Live-in nanny	F	Greek	England
Ulrike	Au Pair	F	German	Scotland
Morfo	Au Pair Host	F	Greek	Greece
Natasha	Au Pair Host	F	Bulgarian	England
Joanna	Au Pair Host	F	American	USA
Nick	Au Pair Host	M	Scottish	Scotland
Ellis	Au Pair Host	M	Irish	Scotland
Luisa	Au Pair Host	F	Greek	England
Jan	Au Pair Host	M	German	Germany
Marlies	Au Pair Host	F	German	England
Dorotea	Au Pair	F	Hungarian	England
Spyros	Au Pair	M	Greek	Germany
Kasia	Au Pair	F	Czech	England
Mirona	Au Pair	F	Czech	England
Molly	Workawayer	F	Thai	Thailand
Stella	Au Pair Host	F	Danish	England
Ruth	WWOOFer	F	American	New Zealand
Clidna	Workawayer	F	Scottish	Nicaragua, Spain, Hungary
Ekin	WWOOFer	F	Czech	Australia
Amanda	Au Pair Host	F	American	Scotland
Ane	Au Pair Host	F	Spanish	Scotland
Faye	Au Pair	F	Greek	USA
Eve	WWOOFer	F	Malay	New Zealand
Indra	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA

Keira	HelpXer	F	English	Australia
Lara	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Theo and Effie	WWOOF Host	M	American	USA
Erin	WWOOFer	F	American	France, Spain, Portugal, USA
Helen	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Vincent	WWOOF Host	M	American	USA
Niharika	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Philip	WWOOFer	M	American	USA
Frank and Angela	WWOOF Host	M	American	USA
Susanne	Au Pair	F	German	Scotland
Cara	WWOOFer	F	American	Portugal
Beth	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Kelvin	WWOOF Host	M	American	USA
Christine	WWOOFer	F	American	USA
Sean and Irene	WWOOFer	M	Australian	Australia
Kat	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Zoe	WWOOFer	F	American	USA
Rachel	WWOOF Host	F	Australian	Australia
Marianne	Au Pair Host	F	Scottish	Scotland
Timothy	WWOOF Host	M	American	USA
Kelly	WWOOFer	F	American	USA
Brianna	WWOOF Host	F	American	USA
Vanessa	WWOOFer	F	Scottish	New Zealand

3.4.2 The interviews

Interviews in qualitative research are based on a conversation between the researcher and the participant, with the weight put on the former inquiring and listening and the latter responding by not only providing information but also conveying meaning (Warren, 2001; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). In-depth interviews tend to pursue a deeper understanding of the interviewees' responses, which are usually concerned with more private issues, such as a person's values, choices, views, lived experiences and self-perception (Johnson, 2001). Therefore, the aim is to extract interpretations, rather than an objective truth or law, from the narratives. However, the interviewer acknowledges and considers the subjectivity of meanings and the perspectives that are involved, both the participants' and their own (Warren, 2001). The researcher has to allow flexibility in the prepared structure for the variety of themes that may surface as well as the possibility of some of the designed questions becoming inconsequential during the process (Maxwell, 2013). In this research, the interviews were semi-structured, granting the above-mentioned flexibility. While a framework of questions, informed by the literature review and the findings of the autoethnographic account, were prepared to guide the conversation, follow-up questions were employed, where necessary, to clarify or further investigate certain responses by participants. As the issue of constructing a moral framework is closely related to micro-ethics, values, perceptions and experiences, this data collection method is an optimal choice, as opposed to a quantitative technique, such as surveys, which would only allow a superficial illustration of the respondents' perspectives.

After communicating with potential participants, I confirmed the interviews' date and time. For the interviews that were face-to-face, I organised a meeting mostly in cafés of their choice. However, due to the international nature of these exchanges, most of the interviews took place online. I used Skype, Viber and Facebook for many, while in four cases where the participants had weak internet connections, the interviews were conducted over the phone. The interviews mainly took place over three months in summer 2017. Naturally, some periods were busier than others, with interviews being 10 days apart at times, while at other times I had two-three interviews in one day. Due to the

time difference, as participants came from various countries, I had interviews starting as early as 8 am and as late as 2 am. After informing them about my study and asking for consent for the recording, we would start the interview. I always confirmed on record before starting the interview their consent to be interviewed and recorded, as well as informed them they could stop or take a break whenever they wanted.

The questions were developed to cover the aim and objectives of the study. They were based on my observations during my autoethnographic experience and in line with the literature. The aim was to cover the main aspects of the encounter and participants' perceptions of fairness on each aspect. Nonetheless, some more open questions were employed as well to ensure possible aspects of the exchange that were not detected previously would be covered. One example is the question "What else do you think the exchange involves apart from the main transaction (food and accommodation for work)?" which uncovered the importance of the educational aspect in WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters, that I had not considered initially. A list of the main interview questions can be found in Appendix A. These questions were used to guide the interview and while most were used in all the interviews, the sequence depended on the discussion itself. Thus, I tried to cover the main themes of the study but if the participant spoke about issues that I had not asked about, I did not interrupt them. If the issue was relevant, I continued exploring their views and if it was not, I would discretely steer the conversation towards the focus of the study. Thus, while allowing flexibility in the interviews (Maxwell, 2013), I still tried to keep the discourse on the themes of the PhD.

It has been argued that in qualitative interviews the questions can be categorised into three types: the main questions that direct the discussion and constitute its framework; the follow-up questions that are used to clarify or explore in further detail the interviewees' responses and comments; and the probes, which are aiming to prompt a response from the participant and to encourage the continuation of the conversation (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The use of follow-up questions and probes proved beneficial, particularly with participants who were giving short answers or were not elaborating enough on central themes. Quite often I asked the participants to elaborate examples of

their experiences, which would not only help them convey meaning but would also bring their own experiences to life, something that was crucial in this study. Appendix B provides an interview transcript for reference.

The interviews took place mainly in English and Greek. While I offered to do them in German with my German participants to allow them to express themselves more comfortably, they preferred trying in English. This did cause some issues, particularly with one participant whose English level was very basic but insisted on continuing the interview in this language; in the end we switched to German when he faced too many problems in articulating his thoughts. However, all German participants used German words occasionally when they could not find the English equivalent. The interviews were between one and two hours each and were recorded on my digital recorder. I tried to get an impression of each of my participants and adapt my tone to them, being more formal or informal, friendly or distant. Some participants were more open to the discussion, while I sensed some reluctancy and suspicion by one or two, which I tried to appease. I found many WWOOF hosts were very excited to talk about their farms, with some taking me on a virtual tour of their farm with the camera of their electronic devices, others sending me pictures before and after the interview and some sending me links to their websites.

The interviews continued up to the point of theoretical saturation, which has been defined as "*The continuation of sampling and data collection until no new conceptual insights are generated. At this point the researcher has provided repeated evidence for his or her conceptual categories"* (Bloor and Wood, 2006, p. 165). At the moment of theoretical saturation, the researcher is confident that the data has fully described the examined themes in all their intricacy and variety and thus their theorisation has been completed (Sandelowski, 2012). Accordingly, towards the end of my interviews I noticed patterns that were being repeated in the participants' narratives. However, as I wanted to ensure an approximate balance between the various groups that were represented in the sample, I finished the interviews I had already organised beforehand, which also further confirmed that the theoretical saturation had been reached.

3.4.3 Analysis

The 50 interviews that took place added up to approximately 64 hours of recordings. I briefly tried to use a voice recognition software to transcribe them, but the outcome was imprecise. The time and effort it took me to correct the written text was more than simply transcribing the recordings myself, so I returned to manual transcription. At the same time, I felt manual transcription was an important step to familiarise myself with the data. I used the web application “otranscribe”, which ended up being the most convenient one for me. This application gave me the possibility to alter the speed of the audio, pause and resume with the use of a key and enter timestamps wherever I needed in the transcript, which I could return to easily - for instance if I stopped transcribing for the day or if I wanted to return on a later point to this part of the interview and relisten to unclear sections.

The interview transcriptions were somewhat denaturalised. Rather than transcribing in as much detail as possible while using textual symbols to indicate speech patterns as in naturalised transcriptions, in denaturalised transcriptions “*accuracy concerns the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation*” (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1277). In this way, the flow of the narrative is not interrupted by involuntary sounds and accent but is more comprehensible and readable. Accordingly, I transcribed the interviews verbatim, including some non-verbal cues that were necessary to indicate the tone of the narrative, for instance when the participant laughed, sighed, rolled their eyes etc. However, I did not include all conversation fillers (uh-huh, hmm) unless they were needed to convey the participants’ response. Not all my participants were native in the language that the interview was conducted, and thus some grammatical errors did occur, which I transcribed as they were said. Oliver et al. (2005) argue that this hybrid between naturalised and denaturalised transcription is the most commonly used method of transcription, with the choice being made depending on the type of the study. MacLean et al. (2004) suggest that the transcriber influences the transcription, which was true in my case as well as, for instance, the additions I made to the narratives in brackets to clarify meaning, were all from my own interpretation. Moreover, the fact that English is not my first language,

created difficulties when my participants had a foreign or regional accent, used slang, expressions I was not familiar with or specialised language, mostly regarding farming and agriculture. In cases where I was unsure of what had been said, a background noise muffled the reply, or the connection failed in the case of online interviews, I entered "[inaudible]" to indicate that.

The analysis of the interviews, like the autoethnography, took place in the source language to avoid losing meaning in translation that could affect the findings (Heim and Tymowski, 2006; vanNes et al., 2010). The data from the interviews was analysed, following a thematic analysis, specifically Braun and Clarke's (2006) suggested practice, who divided it into six phases, namely: familiarisation with the collected data; generation of initial codes; search for themes; review of themes; definition and naming of themes; and, finally, production of the report. The first phase, familiarising myself with the data, had already been done during the transcription process and with notes I took at the time. In the second phase, the first codes were produced from the data set and grouped. Codes have been defined as *"the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon*" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63) and can be theory-driven or data-driven (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the codes were data-driven, that is they emerged from the transcripts in line with the research objectives. I decided against using a software, such as NVivo, as I believed that manual analysis would allow me to have a closer contact and deeper understanding of my data. For my coding, I copied all the transcriptions into a large Word document and entered the codes as notes. I then exported them into a table which had separate columns for the quotes, the code, the page and line of quote in the original document which I then transferred into an Excel file. There I added further information such as the participants' pseudonym, location and role (au pair host, WWOOFer etc). The advantage of this technique was that in the Excel file I could filter the quotes by code, by participant or by role, which saved me a lot of time during the analysis. Furthermore, printing out my transcribed interviews for analysis was not an optimal choice, as the combined interviews were approximately 700 pages and analysis by hand would have been an expensive, time consuming and unnecessarily complicated process. The initial

codes that came up developed and changed through the process, with some being discarded in the process and others being added. For instance, one specific code “Reaction to micro-ethical dilemmas” was found to be too wide and during analysis was divided with the specific reactions being used as codes. In some cases, multiple codes were applicable to a specific part, and thus these parts were double- or triple-coded.

In the third phase, all the codes were then grouped into themes. Ryan and Bernard (2003) have indicated certain criteria for the detection of themes, namely similarities and contrasts in the narratives, repetitive replies, responses related to the theory and linguistic connectors. Themes can be wide or focused, and in certain cases contradictory, interconnected or even included in other, broader themes (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012). These themes were reviewed and clarified in the following stage, with some further divided, some merged with others while a few themes were completely deleted, with the main criterion being internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009). The final themes were then titled and further refined, by establishing their respective substance and ascertaining which feature of the collected information is captured in each. The themes and the codes of each theme are depicted Table 4.

In the final phase, the report of the finding was written up in a logical and coherent manner that will demonstrate the study’s themes, supported by relevant evidence from the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This is done through the provision of both a “thin” and a “thick” description of the data, namely a straightforward account of the events, narratives and observed behaviour as well as a contextualisation of the data and an exploration of its meaning, respectively (Light, 2010; Holliday, 2007). The written-up interview findings are in Chapter 5, where I present the themes of the study with quotes from participants used to illustrate the theme in question.

Table 4. Themes and codes

Themes	Codes and sub-codes
Motivation and Criteria	Motivation Criteria
Perception of own role	Work Hospitality • Space • Food
Perception of other side's role	Work Hospitality • Space • Food
Education	Teaching/mentoring Learning
Relationship	Interpersonal Relationship Family Narrative Personal Aspects
Reaction to micro-ethical dilemma	Consensus Querying Acceptance Imitation Ingratiation Request Issue Avoidance Microaggressions Defiance Negotiated Compromise Deferred Implementation Commands Exiting

3.4.4 Ethical Considerations

One of the most important aspects of primary research involving interviews are the ethical considerations that should be taken into account regarding the participants. In their view of ethical issues in social research, Diener and Crandall (1978) separate them into four categories: harm to participants, informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception. Similarly, Kvale (2011) refers to the most widely accepted ethical guidelines for social sciences, which are informed consent, confidentiality, consequences of participation and the integrity of the researcher. These guidelines were followed in this study and are elaborated on below.

Informed consent was requested by all participants. The ones I had face-to-face interviews with signed the consent form attached in Appendix C, while all participants were also asked to confirm their consent on record before the interview, at a time when I also reminded them of the purpose of the interview, the possibility to take a break or stop and their choice not to answer a question if they did not wish to.

Confidentiality was ensured in a variety of ways, something I informed my participants of as well. I anonymised them by giving them pseudonyms after the interviews took place and avoided mentioning any information that would reveal their location apart from the country they had the exchange in, to ensure they were not identifiable. Furthermore, I kept all the recordings and transcriptions in password-protected locations, an external hard-drive and my personal laptop, which I was the only person with access to.

Consequences of the interview refers to the potential harm that can come to individuals through their participation in the interview (Kvale, 2011). I ensured that no harm, physical, psychological, social, professional or economic would come to my participants. Regarding physical harm while generally there was no physical threat, I had in mind that if at any point in the interviews a participant seemed overly stressed or anxious, they would be reminded that they can stop the interview at any point, a situation that did not come up. Sensitive, intrusive or invasive questions were not made in the interviews, to avoid potential psychological harm. Social harm can be caused by any information that could affect the participant's place in the society or a specific community through their participation in the research. The participants are not members of particularly vulnerable groups (such as drug addicts, HIV patients), or at least were not chosen on the basis of that. All participants were anonymised, and any identifiable details were not disclosed. Due to the anonymity through the aliases given, even if somebody from their personal network or the Au pairing/WWOOF/Workaway/HelpX community reads any publications or the PhD, the participants will not be identifiable. Later on, if they express interest, they will be able to read the published works and show them to their networks if they choose to. The possibility of professional harm was also mitigated by informing participants beforehand about the approximate time required for the

interview, so that they would not face any problems with their employment, like having to take time out of work. To this end, the day, time -and place for face-to-face interviews- was selected by them according to their own schedules. This also addressed the potential for economic harm, as a further advantage of the interviews taking place at a time and in a location convenient for the participant, was that they could avoid spending money for transport, childcare etc.

Finally, my positionality in this research and the ethical judgements I have made during the process have been elaborated on throughout this chapter as well as the following Reflexivity subchapter, in which I discuss my ideology, personal values and position in this study. It is imperative for a qualitative researcher, especially when the philosophy leading the study is critical theory, to reflectively examine their positionality in the research (Januszewski et al., 2001). Reflexivity refers to the necessity for a researcher to

> […] *reflect on the implications of their methods, values, biases, and decisions for the knowledge of the social world they generate and try to be aware of how personal idiosyncrasies, and implicit assumptions, affect their approach to the study* (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 700).

Weick (2002) argues for real-time reflexivity, highlighting there is a need for reflection throughout the process, claiming that the notion that "[…] *life is lived forwards but understood backwards*" (Weick, 2002, p. 895) is limiting and simply relying on introspection on a later point after the interviews is not enough. Riach (2009) further develops this argument, distinguishing reflexivity from reflection, which refers to looking back to analyse the self at the time of the experience, while referring to a second dimension mentioned by Giddens (1991 in Riach, 2009) that reflexivity should address any type of change in how the researcher sees the world around them. In the reflexivity subchapter of this study I discuss how my background created an interest in issues of power balance, inclusion and exclusion. I also address my identity and how this may have affected this study, through my worldview, personality and ideology. At the same time, I note some of my preconceptions that changed through my discussions with participants as well as certain issues faced by participants that I had not considered due to my identity and ideology. This effort to be upfront and honest about myself aims to expose any personal bias to the reader as well

as indicate how my perspective is the lens of this study through which the data was viewed, interpreted and analysed.

3.5 Evaluation of Methodology

For qualitative research methods the evaluation of the outcomes is not done by following the same criteria as in quantitative studies. One of the earliest attempts to define criteria for qualitative inquiry was done by Guba (1981) who used criteria from quantitative studies to propose the concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as suggested alternatives. These criteria are still often used today, even though the developments in qualitative research have brought forth a debate on the appropriate evaluation of studies, with trustworthiness, however, mostly being in the focus of the evaluations (Shenton, 2004).

Due to its nature, evaluation of autoethnography does not follow the same rules of reliability, generalisability and validity that most studies do, as the terms change meaning in the context of autoethnography (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). Reliability in autoethnography is contingent on the researcher's credibility about the narrated events (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). Generalisability refers to the ability of the researcher to make the reader either recognise themselves and their own experience, or the ones from people in their social circle in the narrative, or to illustrate their own experience in a way that the reader understands a culture they are not part of (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). In terms of validity, autoethnography does not endeavour to make claims of truth but rather to create verisimilitude (Grant, 2010), that is that their narrative is trustworthy and lifelike.

In order to ensure that this study fulfils the abovementioned criteria, I endeavoured to be as transparent as possible with my data, by providing both thick and thin descriptions of my findings. In this way, the study's outcomes and conclusions I reached are supported by direct quotes from my participants, illuminating and illustrating the themes. Correspondingly in the autoethnographic account, I cite quotes from my notes which reflect my

thoughts, choices and feelings at the time of the encounter, while at the same time reflecting and analysing them retrospectively from my current point of view. Furthermore, I acknowledged my personal ideology and potential bias in the reflexivity subchapter to inform the reader of my positionality. Moreover, I elaborated in this chapter the methodology and methods, as well as the particular choices I made throughout the study that may have influenced the process and interpretation of my findings.

3.6 Challenges and Limitations

As any research this study has certain limitations that relate to the chosen data collection method and process. My study and the choices I made throughout its course, as well as some aspects that were out of my control, influenced the experience and the findings, while also creating certain limitations, which can be considered in future studies on the topic.

Autoethnography in the form that I undertook it, is time-consuming and expensive. My focus was not on my existing environment and culture, often the theme of autoethnographic studies, but I rather became a member of a group that I was not part of before my research. Thus, I had to spend three weeks doing the study and pay for my Workaway membership, flight tickets and any expenses there myself. The fact that I was offered accommodation and food by my hosts reduced the expenditure during my time in Spain by a lot, however, I still had costs incurring from transportation and meals when the hosts were unable to offer them, among others. Furthermore, I participated as a guest, and thus only could experience this perspective. Being a host in Workaway comes with certain requirements, financial and spatial, which I did not have. Finally, while I applied for various posts, in the end I only undertook one type of work, English practice. If I had stayed in a home where farmwork or childcare or any other type of work was required, my experience could have been significantly different.

The interviews, on the other hand, came with their own complications and hurdles. At the beginning of the study I had trouble finding participants, as the

UK national chapter of WWOOF did not agree to help with my study. Thus, the initial plan to do most interviews face-to-face was not feasible. With WWOOF USA and WWOOF Australia agreeing to help me, it was inevitable that most of my interviews would take place virtually as it was not possible to travel to my participants' locations. This also influenced the sample significantly, with a big proportion being American participants (21 out of 50).

At the same time most participants were female. This can be explained in part by the nature of au pairing- it is a very gendered exchange, where the majority of the au pairs are female due to the tasks involved, childcare and housework, being considered traditionally female work, something also expressed by some participating hosts. Thus, I was able to only find one male au pair to interview, with the other nine being female. Moreover, most of the au pair hosts participating were women; nine out of 12. This tendency can be attributed to the fact that in these relationships the interactions are mainly with the host mother, who is considered responsible to care for the au pair and generally be "managing" of the guest as a way to compensate for working outside the home (Sollund, 2010; Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007). Indeed, out of the three male au pair hosts, two were single fathers and thus had to manage their au pairs themselves. Nonetheless, the rest of the sample was also higher in female participants compared to males; six male hosts to eight female and two male guests to 12 female. This is in line with what Gosling et al. (2004) argue with regard to self-selected survey samples both online and offline, who found that the majority in both were female respondents, with a smaller difference between proportions in online surveys and a dependency on the topic. And while this study is not based on a survey but interviews, the sampling technique was a similar self-selection for most participants and thus the gender bias could be explained by this tendency.

3.7 Reflexivity

Part of writing a qualitative study, and particularly in a critical theory context, is reflecting on the self. In this chapter I will discuss how my past experiences, identity and ideology may have influenced my perspective on this study. Starting with my background and how it led to my interest in this topic and continuing with my ideology I want to acknowledge and disclose my positionality in this research. Subsequently, I discuss how my identity and personality affected my autoethnography and interviews, and my reaction in various situations.

I grew up in Greece, long before the financial crisis when money abounded, in a middle-class family. While my father was an academic and my mother a doctor, they both came from poor backgrounds. My father grew up in a refugee village in the north of Greece, the youngest and only one of five children who managed to go to University, working various jobs to fund his studies. My mother grew up in post-war Germany, raised by her mother with the support of other family members, as my grandfather died soon after her younger sister was born. And while my parents succeeded in their lives, their backgrounds embedded ideological values in them that were passed on to me; I grew up in a leftist, non-religious, egalitarian home.

Growing up in Greece as a half German had its moments as anyone who knows about the two countries' shared history can imagine. My whole life I had to justify the one country's actions to people from the other. As a child growing up in Greece, I did get the occasional Nazi salute or a sarcastic 'Heil Hitler' either as a 'joke' or simply as a way to infuriate me. Not constantly, but the times it happened it was very hurtful. Even now, some of my personality aspects are attributed to my German heritage by my Greek friends, especially my difficulty to break rules or the fact that I am very strict about littering and recycling. My German part of the family calls us "the Greeks", as in "The Greeks are coming for Christmas". When I lived in Germany as a student early on in the financial crisis, I had to defend Greece, 'our laziness', the situation 'we had put ourselves into' on more than one occasion, notably when I had to justify an image on a newspaper's front page to the owner of the corner shop across the street of my

flat: a Greek person during the revolts burning a German flag and a picture with Angela Merkel's face on it. I didn't know that person nor was I in the country at the time, but the otherwise friendly German owner demanded an explanation from me. I was frequently asked "How are things back home?", often accompanied by a facial expression indicating concern -genuine or otherwise- and in some cases even pity. A German professor told me that the external examiner suggested a higher grade for a paper than he had in mind initially and he agreed thinking "It's fine, it's good to help a Greek person". That comment somewhat hurt my self-esteem, and the pride I had in my good grade.

The question of otherness, belonging and the power relations that come with that was always in my mind. I was the 'other' both in Greece and in Germany, but I was a completely different other. In Greece I was the privileged 'other' who follows the rules, is relatively quiet, does not allow littering - something my friends always make fun of. In Germany I was the poor 'other' who had to get away from the financial crisis – even though I went there to study and not to work. I cannot say I faced discrimination, I never saw it as that, even while I was subjected to these comments. These micro-aggressions did not even come close to what my childhood friends born in other countries, especially Albania, had to face. The main reason for that, I think, was the country; Germany was and is a richer country than Greece and there was a level of awareness of that in all the comments I got. While people in my social circle who were from developing economies, particularly the former Communist countries, had to face actual discrimination, suspicion and even hatred at times.

My own and my friends' experiences made me want to explore these issues of otherness and the power relations that come with it. It took me a while to arrive to that point as my interest in Mathematics led me to study International and European Economics during my undergraduate studies. However, as soon as I found myself having to study Econometrics, I realised my love for numbers had a limit. I moved to Germany to complete a Master's in European Studies through an interest in certain modules in my undergraduate degree, where I focused my dissertation on economic migration to Greece. On my return to Greece I participated in research on Roma and Muslim groups' entrepreneurship and did a short study during a winter school on refugee

experiences. However, my choice to return to Greece in the middle of the financial crisis was less than wise and after two years of unsuccessfully seeking work in my field, I came to Scotland to do a Master's in Tourism and Hospitality Management; the industry that still had a future in Greece. During my studies I found that hospitality could mean much more than the industry itself; and after encouragement from my Dissertation Supervisor, I applied for a PhD on a topic I could explore power inequality between different groups.

While in a completely different context, this study discusses the topics of exclusion and inclusion, power balance and control that have always been areas of interest to me. Exploring these topics from a critical theory perspective, allows me to investigate the power (im-)balances that emerge in these encounters. Critical theory aims to explore and expose power struggles in our society on various levels and empower its underprivileged members, making it an optimal choice for this study. At the same time, the hospitality lens through which I am looking at the topic offers a view into a very complex host-guest exchange in which various other elements are interwoven and add further layers on an already complicated relationship.

My identity as a white woman, heterosexual, cisgender and non-disabled from a relatively privileged background has shaped my life and experiences so far as well as the opportunities I have had. My ideology as a leftist, atheist, feminist, LGBTQI+ ally informs my perspective on the studied topic. I try to use whatever privilege I have to support and empower underprivileged groups to the best of my ability. However, I have to acknowledge that all these aspects of my identity impose certain limitations, as I cannot fully understand the lived experiences of marginalised groups I am not a member of. For instance, when a participant of Asian origin attributed the exploitation she experienced from a host to her race, that possibility had not crossed my mind before she mentioned it. At the same time some micro-aggressions that she faced from another host, a strict Christian, which she laughed off, seemed to bother me more than they did her. I have to recognise the fact that she may not have wanted to admit the extent of her discomfort during the interview, but I can only present her feelings from what she told and showed me.

My autoethnographic part was undoubtedly affected by who I am as a person, my beliefs and values, my personality and habits. Being a “good guest” was crucial for me to take part in this exchange as a researcher, to avoid causing any harm to my hosts. However, I am also mild-tempered by nature and avoid conflict in almost all situations which influenced my reactions and decision making throughout my experience. I was often disappointed by my reactions in situations where I felt I should have been more assertive and do what I considered the right thing, something I have addressed in the Autoethnographic chapter. However, this experience was eye-opening to me and helped me understand aspects of my character through reflecting on my thoughts, actions and choices in the various situations I was in. This encounter where I lived with others in this complex environment, along with the various roles I had to undertake as a worker, guest and friend taught me a lot about myself.

I naturally enjoyed some interviews more than others. I generally tried to adapt my tone in the interviews to the feeling I got from the individual I was talking to. Thus, some interviews were more formal than others, some were friendlier, some ended with a general conversation about our lives after the interview finished. Particularly with WWOOF hosts, I enjoyed watching their excitement to talk with me, show me their farms through the camera or send me pictures afterwards, links to their websites and further information, with many inviting me to visit them and experience myself what we had spoken about after I finished the study. Most of them were interested in my study and why I am exploring this topic, and the majority asked me to send them the outcomes of my PhD.

During my interviews I admit I was bothered by a few somewhat stereotyping or even sexist comments made by some participants - such as a male au pair host mentioning he wanted his au pairs to be “easy on the eye”. However, I stayed professional, did not comment and did not express my personal views when I disagreed with them, although during the transcription process, I noticed how the tone of my voice changed slightly at times. Something that changed throughout the process of the interviews was my preconception of the power balance that was influenced by my ideology and some of the literature that I read before starting my own data collection. I was expecting that I would mentally side with guests most of the time, which ended up not always being

the case. Learning about situations where the hosts were taken advantage of or had a generally bad exchange made me reconsider my assumptions, particularly in the case of an au pair host who had long lasting effects on her mental health from two consecutive very negative experiences.

My background has shaped who I am as a person and what my interests and goals in life are, academic and otherwise. They have also forged certain values that lead my choices in life and, in turn, played a part in my research. While this research topic does not necessarily tackle injustice and inequality on a societal level, it does focus on issues of justice, fairness, power balance and preconceptions on the micro level. Exploitation and oppression are not only occurring on the societal level but also in interpersonal relationships as the literature on these types of exchanges presented in chapter 2 demonstrates. However, injustice should not be overlooked on any scale, no matter how small. The way the other is treated on a micro level often translates into how we treat the general “Other”, the one that is different from us, on a larger scale. Exploring this attitude towards the other, particularly in such an intimate environment like the home, and the thoughts and feelings that prompt these behaviours, can illuminate human behaviour towards the general “Other”. Thus, my personal interest in issues of power relationships, exploitation and social injustice, their roots and possible ways to tackle them led to the study of this topic. As all the above-mentioned issues are strongly related to personal ethics and perceptions of justice, this research aims to add to the discussion from an ethical, or rather, micro-ethical perspective. My identity and ideology will have provided a lens through which I viewed my study throughout the process, which I have to acknowledge. Yet conversely, this research and the discussions with such a wide variety of people also influenced certain preconceptions I had before embarking on this journey and contributed to my worldview significantly.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the philosophy and research methodology of the study. I decided to follow a critical theory approach on the topic as it is not only relevant to the studied themes of power relations, inclusion, exclusion and ethics, but is also consistent with my personal ideology and values. The qualitative methodology that was employed was deemed the most appropriate for this research due to the nature of the topic and the depth needed to explore the perceptions participants had of the roles involved in the relationship as well as any micro-ethical dilemmas they faced during their encounters in relation to the moral framework of the exchange. Thus, in an effort to sensitise myself as a researcher to the topic, I used myself as a research instrument to explore the exchange through autoethnography. The findings from the autoethnography, along with the literature review I had undertaken previously, also allowed me to develop questions for the second part of my data collection, the interviews. I completed 50 interviews with hosts and guests from au pairing exchanges as well as WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX. During my data collection I had various ethical issues in mind that I tried to mitigate to ensure my study followed the ethical principles required of any qualitative study, while acknowledging the challenges and limitations of this research.

Chapter 4. Autoethnography

In this chapter I will discuss my experience as a Workawayer in early 2017. The lack of space and work available that made the option of participating in these types of exchanges as a host unfeasible, meant that I could only undertake a guest's role. It could be suggested that shadowing a host would be an alternative method, to ensure I have a better image of both sides. However, as mentioned earlier, when participants are aware that they are being observed they may change their behaviour, which is called the Hawthorne effect (Salkind, 2010), or knowing that they are part of a study may motivate them to act as they believe the researcher expects them to, namely the Experimenter effect (Salkind, 2010). That meant that the host I would have shadowed -as well as their guests- being aware of my presence, could potentially adapt their behaviour to present themselves in a specific way, which would skew my findings. Moreover, as the focus of this study is on internal processes, such as thoughts, feelings and decision-making, these would be impossible to observe from the outside. Inferring their thoughts behind their actions could lead to inaccurate findings, while constantly asking the hosts to explain or justify their actions in every relevant situation would disrupt the natural flow of the exchange between the two sides and remind them that they were being observed.

Thus, I participated in the exchange solely as a guest. The two homes I stayed at were quite different; one was a shared flat with two women close to my age and the second was a home of a family of four. My experiences were both positive, the second one more so. My observations about my feelings, questions and dilemmas will be presented divided by the main aspects of my own experience of the exchange; work, space, food and personal elements, whether related to myself or the interpersonal relationship between me and my hosts.

Nati and Bárbara

The first home I stayed at for a week was a flat share with two young women, Nati and Bárbara in their mid-twenties, both working in the same company. They lived in the outskirts of a small city, in a big house with three dogs and a cat. They never had a Workawayer in their home before, but they were expecting a few guests after I would leave, while Bárbara had been to Ireland as a Workawayer herself a few years before. This lack of experience with Workaway encounters from both sides, meant we all were figuring out the transaction and finding a balance without having anything to base it on. They needed someone to help practice their English and contribute to the housework.

The house was quite big, with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen and a large living room as well as a very spacious garden and veranda. I was given the guest bedroom, a medium-sized room with a single bed, a wardrobe and a shelving unit. They had also left some towels for me and extra blankets in the wardrobe in case I got cold at night.

Work

My job was to help my two hosts practice their English and contribute to the housework. As it was both their and my first experience, I asked them how it would work, and we agreed apart from the daily conversations, I would correct them, teach them expressions, they would ask me to explain English words and phrases or conversely ask me how to say something in English, but we would not do proper classes. They told me they had been taking private English lessons until recently, when they decided to stop because they believed Workaway would be a more enjoyable alternative. In my opinion it would have been best to combine the two to understand the underpinning grammatical rules of the language as well as practice daily, but I did not mention that to them. Their English level was basic and they had some difficulties expressing themselves but the fact that I speak some Spanish helped us communicate as they started speaking in Spanish when they were getting frustrated, while in some instances, we had to use gestures or translating websites. This meant

that I had to not only use signs and sounds but also simplify my English by a lot, in some cases even being grammatically incorrect to convey what I wanted to say, although I tried to avoid the latter as much as possible.

Initially I felt that the exchange was a bit uneven. Speaking in English is what I do in my daily life, therefore I could not see it as a job and thought what they were providing me, food and accommodation, was much more than what I was contributing in the transaction. It was like staying with friends of friends, just talking to them without doing enough to earn their hospitality, while they were treating me very well and offering me much more than the basics; they were being extremely hospitable and friendly. More than that, I was not correcting every mistake they made. On the one hand, mistakes were quite frequent due to their English level and I thought constantly correcting them would discourage them from trying. On the other hand, I felt that I would appear condescending and I tried to do it discretely as I could, even though it was my job. In the beginning they also were less confident and insistent, but this changed in time.

> *"But I have noticed that sometimes they don't seem to understand me and they just nod their heads, answer to something completely different and don't insist, they don't ask me what do you mean, what did you say, which is something I want to tell them."*

I did that too from time to time. Their accents were a bit strong and occasionally I had difficulty understanding them. After asking them to repeat what they had said a couple of times, I would give up and nod or smile, as I did not want to discourage or embarrass them and make them feel their English was bad. However, this changed when we started feeling more comfortable with each other.

> *"They started opening up to me slowly, telling me about personal stuff, about boys, about a variety of such topics and started talking more, daring to speak in English even if they are making mistakes and being happy when I correct them because they are saying they are learning the right way to say it."*
>
> *"As time passes, I try to ask them more, and they mention it when they don't understand, because in the beginning it appeared that they felt a bit bad for not understanding me but I have shown them in my own way that they can ask me and I explain everything in very simplified English."*

Nati, particularly, was more invested in learning the language, noting down every new word or phrase she learned and telling me she would repeat them to herself every night before going to bed. Whenever she found the opportunity, she used them in a sentence and was excited that she remembered them. On the contrary, Bárbara did not appear to be as interested as Nati. She did not initiate conversations, ask me questions and gave up much more easily when she had trouble understanding me or expressing herself. This scarcity of interactions and interest affected our interpersonal relationship as well, something that is further analysed in the respective part of this chapter.

The second part of my job was to help with domestic chores. Although it was included in the description of the placement, in the first two days I was there, the girls did not mention anything about that. Nonetheless, I offered to do the dishes after we ate both days, as I felt my contribution to the transaction, just speaking in English with them, was inadequate. On the third day, however, they informed me of the chores I had to do, namely washing the dishes after every meal and sweeping and mopping the floors daily apart from the weekend.

> *"On the third day while I was having my coffee and Nati was having breakfast she told me that Bárbara had created a schedule with my chores […]. They had hung it on the fridge, so they did not say "You will do this every day", they hung a scedule on the fridge […]. When she told me, she said "Whenever you can, morning or evening, whenever you have time". She said that many times, that I should do it whenever it was convenient for me, like she felt uncomfortable asking me to do that. I obviously said "Of course" and asked her to show me where everything is, what they use to clean, mop etc. But she did seem to feel a bit bad about asking me. I think that was evident from the fact that they did not simply tell me, they wrote the schedule and hung it on the fridge. And the one who wrote it did not tell me, she had the other one tell me as if to divide the responsibility"*

While I was happy to do the chores they told me to, there were some instances where I was unsure of whether what I had to do should be my responsibility.

> *"Something else I noticed was that sometimes they leave their dishes in the sink even if I haven't eaten with them. For instance, I come back from a daytrip and I see unwashed dishes, I wake up in the morning and they have left for work and there are unwashed dishes. I don't know if they leave them to wash them later or because it's my job that I'm supposed to wash them. So, I wash them anyway"*

> *"Something that bothered me a bit was that Bárbara on the night of the Carnival invited some of her friends to eat. They were eating when Nati and I left to go for a drink. When we came back, I saw everything… the frying pan, the saucepan, the plates, the glasses, in the sink. I understand it is part of my job to wash up but I thought my job was to wash up when we are eating together, when the girls eat even if I am not there, but washing up after she had dinner with so many people? It's one thing helping out with house chores and another cleaning up after her and all her friends. […] Of course, in the end I washed everything before going to bed."*

Space

What can be observed in the recordings is how my level of comfort within the home increased in time. Initially, having just met the girls and seen the house, I did not feel relaxed enough to sit by myself in the living room if the girls were around, for example cooking. I would go in the kitchen and try to have a conversation, ask them about themselves. As the time passed, I felt more comfortable, first sitting in the living room alone, then in my room with the door open and towards the end a couple of times with the door closed. I did, however, try to avoid closing the door as I felt it would signal an exclusion on my part, that I was trying to keep them out.

> Day 1: *"Inside the house, at the beginning especially, I followed them everywhere, I didn't want to sit alone, I didn't want to… like, one of them was going to the kitchen, I would follow her. I didn't want to be alone in the home's rooms because I didn't feel comfortable in the space yet, to sit in the living room, while they were walking around."*
>
> Day 2: *"[…] I sat on the second day alone in the living room for a bit with the dogs. I started feeling a bit more comfortable in the house, not feeling the need to follow them everywhere."*
>
> Day 3: *"When I finished [cleaning] I sat at my laptop, in my room, with the door open so that it doesn't look like I am isolating myself from them. But still, I sat in my room, I didn't sit in the living room with them, it was the first time […]. And the animals where going in and out and the girls could see me, so that it didn't look like I was secluding myself"*
>
> Day 5: *"Something that has changed is that I feel more comfortable now to sit in my room. I usually leave the door open, but I have sat in there with the door closed. But I usually prefer to leave the door open, so they can see me and I can see them."*

With our personal relationship developing, so did my comfort, not only in the space but in general:

> *"What to do, how to act in the home initially I followed what they were doing, e.g. with the food and then I started asking some things, how this, why that, and towards the end I started having the confidence to do things by assuming that's how it was, what I was supposed to do."*

Despite my increasing comfort in the home, certain feelings of unease persisted. I was constantly aware of my status as a guest and my obligations in terms of work. As I mentioned, it never really felt like work to me and I had an ongoing worry that they will think I am there purely as a tourist and taking advantage of their hospitality, even though they never expressed or showed such thoughts. To that end, I tried being present as much as possible to help them practice English, I was proactive with housework which I did even if I was not asked, adapted my schedule to theirs by planning my excursions to their working programme and not beyond, followed them on nights out even if I was tired. Simultaneously, I limited my time in the shower, adapted my meal schedule and avoided walking around in my pyjamas, even if they did.

A significant issue that has been often commented on in the literature is the guest's privacy. My experiences in the two homes were completely different to each other. In the first home, I often returned to find my room door or the shutter of the balcony door open. In a few instances, Bárbara came inside while I was sitting in the room to take something without saying anything, whether the door was open or ajar. Nati, on the other hand, asked me to enter when she needed something, or asked me to get it for her.

> *"Second day yesterday, they had washed some clothes and wanted to take them out to hang them. They have a small garden on the one side and on the other something like a veranda. To go to the veranda, where they wanted to hang the clothes, they would have to go through my room. Bárbara entered my room [while I was inside- the door was ajar], took the drying rack that was in there, took it out and hung her clothes, without telling me "I'm coming into your room" [I found out later that there actually was another way to go out to the veranda, through the garden. This way was a bit more inconvenient, but I wondered, what is more important, their convenience or my privacy?]."*

> *"While I was sitting at the laptop, Bárbara came in twice without even talking to me – I did have the door open though – to take some things she needed from a wardrobe there. That is, without telling me, without asking if she could come in, without even saying "I'm coming in to get something" anyway. She just came in, smiled and opened the wardrobe and took what she wanted"*
>
> *"But when I came back from [city] I found my room door open, which I had definitely closed. I know they go in, but I would rather they closed it, so that the pets don't come in because the pets have come inside many times and played with my things, something I don't generally mind if I am there and I can see what is happening. Now the possibility of the dogs entering and taking something from my suitcase… Because I've seen them smelling my things etc. I didn't say anything."*
>
> *"At some point Nati needed to enter my room and asked me "Can I go inside your room for a minute?". And I said of course you can. So I wondered: Does it depend on the host, if they will ask me to enter, if they consider this space my room? Or because some time passes, it slowly actually becomes my room?"*

From what I noticed, the level of privacy and personal space provided, depend on the host. Later in my stay I again found my door open when I returned from a walk on a day when only Bárbara was home. While in my second stay, my privacy was much more important to the hosts, as I could see from the way they treated the room as my private sphere.

Food

In the Workaway exchange, food is one of the two things the host has to provide for their guest – with very few exceptions. Accordingly, the two girls were offering me three meals daily, which they prepared and cooked each day. When I first arrived they asked me what time I usually eat and whether I have any preferences on what to eat. We ate together most of the time, unless one of them had to work and we mostly sat at the same seats.

> *"When we ate on the second day I sat at the same seat again, which is between them, that is I'm sitting with one of them next to me and one across the table from me. […] On the first day they suggested that, they gave me this place and since then it became my seat, I sit between them, 'inside their circle'. I think they did that subconsciously to show that they are not excluding me."*

I often followed their habits when it came to food. For instance, one day they had cooked three different dishes, and while I would usually mix up the flavours, I saw that they were eating them one by one, so I followed their example. Similarly, one evening when I was with Bárbara and she had prepared a pizza, I followed her example and took only two pieces, even though I was very hungry. I did not ask for more, but as soon as she said she would have another one, I asked if I could also eat one more. My discomfort in asking for food became evident one of the last evenings when Nati and I had gone hiking and then visited a village nearby. We had barely eaten all day and when we returned I was feeling very hungry. However, it appeared that Nati had forgotten about food and we spent some time with her suggesting me possible places to visit in Spain in the future. After a couple of hours, at around 23.30, she remembered, and I was worried she would say it was too late to eat, but thankfully that was not the case. Clearly, while food was one of the two things that I was entitled to in this transaction, along with accommodation, I did not feel comfortable asking for it when it was not provided.

Food was in the centre of quite a few of the micro-ethical dilemmas I faced. Already in the first evening when I arrived, there was an incident very similar to others I had read about in the literature, such as a guest who used a lot of sauces, causing a slight offence to their host (Kosnik, 2014).

> *"On the first day I arrived in the evening, Nati mentioned that the food Bárbara had cooked didn't have enough salt and said that she personally usually adds a lot of salt in her food, while Bárbara said she doesn't. They asked me whether I wanted to add some salt to my food. I said no, again so as not to offend them, but the truth is under other circumstances I would probably add a little salt. […] But it was the first day, I mean the food did taste very good of course, but I didn't want to offend their cooking or something, because they are cooking for me, I can't complain."*

One of my main questions regarded whether and how often I should accept what was offered to me, snacks, fruit, deserts, outside the regular meals. On the one hand I did not want to offend my hosts by rejecting their offers. On the other I was worried that if I accepted too much, they might think that I am greedy or taking advantage of their hospitality.

> *"They are offering me a lot of things to be honest, coffee, chorizos, wine, ice cream and I constantly accept because I don't want to appear rude. On the other hand, maybe it's rude if I accept too much, maybe I should say no? [...] I've told them no a couple of times, for example I told them I don't eat breakfast, that I only drink coffee in the mornings [...] but in general I say yes because I don't want to seem rude. But is it maybe rude to accept everything they give me? Does it look like I'm taking advantage of the situation? I don't know."*

This issue continued throughout my stay, and my uncertainty led to me sometimes accepting food or drinks that I did not want and other times rejecting something I would have liked to try, worrying that I might have said yes too many times before. Another way I responded to this micro-ethical dilemma was by first seeing if they were having what they were offering me as well. For instance, when Bárbara offered me wine, I would ask whether she was planning to have some too or simply check if she had poured some for herself and then accept or deny accordingly. There are usually certain cultural aspects to this issue of whether and how to accept or deny a hosts' offers. However, I was unsure of what the etiquette in Spain was, so I tried to act according to what I perceived as a proper response.

Personal Aspects

Apart from the dilemmas I faced that related to the basic aspects of the exchange, work, space and food, there were instances where the questions in my mind were more personal. Whether they had to do with my ideology and values or with the personal relationship that developed between me and my hosts, I found myself often facing dilemmas, the right answers to which were unclear. In some of them, I was unhappy with my reaction in the moment as well as later when I listened to my recordings, but my personality and my aversion to confrontation obstructed my ability to be more assertive.

An issue I faced early in the encounter created a lot of doubts in my mind at the time and I made a decision that I regretted, but being aware of my personality, I know I would make the same decision again:

> *"[Bárbara] smokes occasionally and she smokes usually in the garden and there is a bin where we can throw the trash and an ashtray. To go to the garden, there is a small balcony and we*

> *smoked there once or twice. She threw her cigarette on the street, which is something I never do. And I asked her 'On the street?' and she said yes. I threw it on the street too, even though the truth is my friends in Scotland and Greece make fun of me for always looking for a bin, that I keep my cigarette until I find somewhere to bin it and they make fun of me, they call me 'German' and so on. So I threw it on the street [...] While I didn't want to do it and I don't even let my friends do it, I didn't want her to feel like I am judging her for throwing it on the street while there is a bin, an ashtray etc. From then on of course, whenever I went out alone for a smoke, I binned it in the trash, I never threw it on the street again."*

I debated the inclusion of this anecdote in the thesis with myself from the moment I started narrating it to my recorder. Having in the back of my mind the judgement I have felt in Scotland for my smoking habit in the past along with the clear passiveness of my decision made me feel embarrassed. My reaction to this dilemma, conforming to my host's behaviour rather than following my own values, was a disappointment but not a surprise to me. I have a general dislike for confrontation and my fear of upsetting my host especially so early in the exchange, increased by the very new setting that I was just discovering, made me make a choice out of character for me; but at the same time very much in character.

One part of my identity I was not willing to let go of was my ideology. While I still questioned what the right thing to do was, I decided to speak my mind in another situation:

> *"There was a conversation yesterday in Spanish. They spoke about a common male friend of theirs who had left a voicemail to one of them, they played it and laughed and explained what had been said. He had made a vulgar comment about a girl, about something that had happened in the past and one of them agreed and said something rude about that girl and the other called her machista [chauvinist]. And they asked my opinion about it. From what I had read in the literature, discussions about political opinions are generally avoided, we spoke a bit about feminism and I told them I consider myself a feminist. But before that there was a conversation between them in Spanish where one accused the other of being a machista and the other was trying to justify herself and there was a small confrontation. I felt a bit bad, it wasn't an argument exactly, but it was a bit uncomfortable and they asked my opinion. And I wasn't sure if they asked my opinion for this case or in general if I am a feminist. I started talking about the situation, but they said 'No, in general' and I said I consider myself a feminist, we spoke just a bit about this. One of them was not talking, the one who was accused,*

> *the other a bit, but it was a 5-minute conversation [...] But it didn't cause any issues and they agreed on some things and the conversation did not last much anyway."*

A week may not sound like a long time, but it is enough for a rapport to develop with a person. A few days after my arrival I discovered my two hosts were very different; Nati was an outdoorsy girl who loved hiking, friendly but quiet and Bárbara was more of a party girl, who had many friends and liked going out until late at night. Their difference would not have impacted me, these are two sides of me that I have experienced in different stages of my life and I would not mind going one way or the other. However, with their interests being so divergent, the way they spent their time and, accordingly, the things they invited me to were very different.

In an effort to spend my time with both girls to at least the approximately same amount, I agreed to go out with Bárbara and her friends one evening despite being very tired. We ended up having a very good time and as a new person in the group, her friends were curious about me and, some, excited to speak English. At some point the conversation turned political. I understood that, unlike herself, her friends were very politically engaged, with a similar ideology to me; albeit a bit more radical. I made a conscious effort to balance the conversation by simultaneously talking with two of her friends about Spanish and Greek politics and the rise of the far right, which I found very interesting, and talking with her about other topics as she rarely engaged in that conversation. At moments I felt bad when I was speaking with her friends and she was talking with someone else in the group as I felt, her being my host, I should be engaging with her more. However, the night went quite well in general. They had a system where each person would buy a round of drinks for everyone and early on I offered to buy the next one which was appreciated both by Bárbara and her friends, that I, in a way, took the initiative to take part in their ritual; a sort of initiation.

As during my time there Carnival weekend was underway, Bárbara invited me to go out with her and her friends who I had met earlier. The night would be long, she warned me that the earliest we would return home was 5 in the morning, but most likely it would be at around 7. At the same time Nati

suggested going for a hike the next day at 9 in the morning. Naturally, I could not follow both girls – although that did cross my mind briefly.

> *"I chose not to go because they would start at 11 and they would come back 5-7 and indeed she came back at 6.30 as I found out later. And I was wondering if she was offended, if it seemed like I chose the one girl over the other because I chose to go out with Nati since the next day we would go hiking, so I thought I shouldn't be sleepless. Her friend came at some point and they were getting ready for Carnival and he jokingly said that I betrayed them. I don't know if Bárbara actually took it like that, that I chose Nati over her. It is a bit difficult if it is not a family and they are two such different people. [...] So I chose to do what I wanted. Maybe subconsciously a bit with the girl I liked more, but I don't know how Bárbara took it."*

Eventually my preference to spend time with Nati and follow her to the activities she suggested became clear to me and possibly to my hosts as well. The truth is, apart from our compatible personalities, I also preferred to discover parts of the region I would not have seen otherwise, rather than go out and drink in the evenings.

> *"I think I do like Nati more than Bárbara and we are more compatible even though I have some surface similarities with Bárbara. [...] I have more fun with Nati, we have spent more time together, going out, going on excursions and so on. Bárbara seems to enjoy it more spending time with her friends."*

I wondered if this depended on the host, with some preferring to continue their daily lives and give guests independence to do what they want, while others wanting to integrate them more in their lives, while also escaping their own routines by doing further things with their guests, like outings, hiking trips, meals etc.

> *"So, what do you do when your two hosts are so different from one another? Do you try to divide your time as much as possible, like I tried to do? Or do you choose the host you like more? Or the activities that you like more? [...] How do you make the choice? Is there a way to not make a choice? Dividing your time precisely? But precisely isn't possible. Definitely someone will be unhappy, what if something you don't participate in is more important to them than something you did?"*

At some point something else crossed my mind. Was my relationship with Nati better because we spent more time doing things together or did we spend more time together because we had a closer relationship? As spending time together

meant more “work” for me - which it never felt like - maybe she felt an obligation to provide me all these things because we practiced the language. I did feel like my better relationship with Nati allowed me to ask her for more things, like a ride downtown or to the train station. In that way, the close relationship increased my negotiation power, as well as hers; we both felt more comfortable to ask the other for favours, which was not the case with Bárbara, as after a point I only asked Nati when I needed something. Yet, I never felt like it was a pure exchange on either part, that the fact I did a task or practiced with her for a while “earned” me a lift for instance; it was much more organic, much more natural than a calculated transaction of favours.

I still made an effort to maintain a positive relationship with Bárbara, despite the distance that had formed between us. It never became a negative relationship, it was just less close than the one I had with Nati. I tried to have conversations, keep eye contact, make jokes, and after one of our trips with Nati I brought her a traditional dessert from the area we visited. It did work momentarily, we chatted, we laughed – and then it was over. She did not try to engage with me much, she did not start conversations. I was unsure if it was because of my better relationship with Nati. I considered it being due to her personality, her lack of confidence in her English or just the fact that her boyfriend had visited towards the end of my stay and she wanted to spend time with him. I also wondered if my choice reflected issues they had between themselves. They had only been living together for three months at the time of my visit and being so different could have taken its toll on them, as I did notice little comments they made to each other occasionally. So, I thought, maybe my choice brought underlying issues to the surface, which was certainly not my intention. In the end, I could not find an answer to that question. Did the distance between Bárbara and me develop because of my relationship with Nati or did it have nothing to do with me?

Pedro and Paz

The second home I stayed at for two weeks was with a family of four in a small beach town in the east of Spain. The father, Pedro, worked from home, while the mother, Paz, worked a few times per week. They lived in a flat with their two children, Santo, aged five and Victoria, nine. They had experience with Workawayers before, as well as people from other similar organisations. My work was only to help the children with their English, practice with them through conversations and games, but not formal teaching.

The flat consisted of two bedrooms, the parents' and the children's, a bathroom, a kitchen and a living room. I stayed in the children's room, who slept with their parents during my stay. It was medium-sized, with a bunk bed, a wardrobe, a desk, a chest of drawers and a shelving unit. The wardrobe had been cleared out for me to put my clothes in and they provided me towels and sheets, which they changed after a week.

Work

My job was helping the family practice English, with a focus on the children. As opposed to my first hosts, the family took a much more active approach to learning the language which I found fascinating. They were talking in English to each other, they were listening to English-speaking radio, watching movies in English and the children had boardgames in English. This immersion meant their level was very high, and to my surprise the 5-year-old son was almost just as comfortable speaking in English as he was in Spanish. Naturally some small mistakes made by the parents were also made by the children. However, due to their high English level, there were instances where I was unsure of the answers to their questions, which made me feel a bit guilty, thinking if I were a native, I would probably know the answer.

My schedule was very relaxed; I had the whole day to myself until the children returned from school. The earliest they came back was 6.30pm as they would go to the park after school, while on some days when they had extracurricular activities, they would return at 8pm. After they came back I played with the children, mostly with Santo as Victoria had homework some of the days, until

about 8.30 when we had dinner and then at 10 they would go to bed. That meant there were days where I had to “work” for less than two hours. This encounter felt even less like a job to me, not only due to the very relaxed schedule but also because of the enjoyable time of playing games, watching movies and generally spending time with the children which was what my job constituted. Even more so, as the children’s high English level rarely required corrections from my side, it was more about expanding their vocabulary and explaining to them new words they were unfamiliar with. And yet my job was not childcare either, which the parents clarified:

> *“When we had a chat with the parents about Workaway they told me they did not want an au pair, that they had thought about this option, but they did not want it. And they told me about me too, ‘It is not your job being an au pair, it is not your job to run after the kids, take care of them etc. Your job is helping us with English, mainly the kids, but all of us’. That is why I don’t have housework to do, cooking, babysitting while they were going out, I didn’t have anything like this.”*

Despite housework not being part of my role, I still felt the need to help around the house as much as possible. I tried to do the dishes, help the mother with cooking -to the best of my limited abilities- and generally do whatever I could and felt comfortable with to help. The parents had divided the housework in an even way, with the mother cooking and the father being in charge of sweeping the house, laundry and so on, possibly even doing more chores as he was working from home. I felt my initiative was appreciated, even though it was not required and, as time passed, I felt more comfortable doing chores or helping out.

> *“I suggested helping her with the food and she said yes, she accepted my help. Okay, I told her of course that I cannot cook really well. I took over the salad and some simple tasks, but I think she appreciated that, as in her daily life, in her routine it’s one of the chores she does all the time and I guess it was a good change for her having someone to help her”*
>
> *“Now I am taking initiative to help with chores. In some cases, I ask ‘Can I help you with cooking?’ or if I wake up before them or if they are gone, I will do the dishes. Okay, I will not do anything extra that I am not comfortable with, like opening cupboards to get the mop and stuff, but I will wash the dishes, I will empty the dishwasher and so on.”*

> *"Now I help her with cooking without her asking anymore. Not that she ever asks me. I go into the kitchen when she is cooking and I ask how I can help. And she gives me easy tasks because I am inept when it comes to cooking."*

And yet, until the very end of my stay it was never considered a given that I would help with the housework as the entry below from my last day demonstrates:

> *"When I was making my coffee this morning they were gone and I washed some dishes and put others in the dishwasher. When Pedro returned he thanked me and said he was planning to do it and he didn't do it to avoid waking me up with the noise. It was like he was justifying himself, which he obviously didn't need to do. And I didn't do it out of obligation or that I saw the dishes and judged them and put them in the dishwasher. I saw it as one of my duties, even if they hadn't asked me to help around the house, to unburden them from some tasks. But the fact that he thought not to make any noise to not wake me up shows that they are trying to be careful while I am there, I am a guest and a friend now."*

Space

When I first arrived, Pedro picked me up from the train station. He drove me home where he gave me a tour and showed me my room where they had made some space in the cupboards for me. He told me to feel like home, gave me the Wi-Fi password, showed me everything in the kitchen and told me to take anything I need and that there was food if I felt hungry. As the children would be finishing school soon, he gave me a set of keys and told me he would be gone until late because their daughter had gymnastics after school. I was very surprised by the trust they showed me, half an hour after my arrival, giving me house keys and leaving me alone for three hours.

During our first dinner together, Victoria wanted her diary from the room. Her dad told her she should ask me if she could enter the room, which she did, and I said of course she could. That was not the only instance of something like this happening. Whenever the children wanted something from the room, especially during the first days before they felt close enough to me to ask me directly, they asked their parents, who would tell them to ask me if they could enter the room. Similarly, when at some point Pedro needed to enter the room, he asked me

beforehand. I also found they did not go into my room while I was gone, as had happened in my previous encounter.

> *"Yes, on the one hand it is their home, but they respect the fact that this space, even temporarily, is mine, they don't go in without telling me, not that I have anything to hide obviously but I like having a space that even just… that I can feel as mine. I just want a space… where I can feel comfortable, where I can be by myself from time to time. Which you feel more when the other side sees it as your space as well and doesn't see it as their space where you are for a little while as well but they will keep coming in and going on with their routines, their lives, coming in, going out, doing what they want, taking whatever they need etc. It gives you a bigger sense of privacy when they show it too that they respect your space and consider it yours for the time you are there."*

On the first evening after the children went to bed at around 10.30, I was unsure what to do. Do I engage in conversation with the parents? Do I go to bed? What I ended up doing was observe what they would do and decide what I should do accordingly:

> *"I went to bed at around 11, I was tired and from what I understood by seeing them sitting at their laptops, although they were talking to me, they probably wanted to have that time after a whole day of work, the kids, a little time for themselves. So while at first I was unsure of what to do after the kids went to bed, when I saw them at their laptops, after an hour, since I also was tired and sleepy, I said goodnight at around 11*."

Similar to my early days in the first home, I was often following Paz around the house. However, the reason behind this was quite different to my discomfort during the beginning of my exchange with Nati and Bárbara.

> *"It is mainly because I like talking with her, our chats are very pleasant, and I am having fun with her, so I like spending time with her. I mean we sit together, I help her with house chores and we talk at the same time. [...] She is a lovely person, friendly, we agree on a lot, our conversations do not get boring and she helps me with my Spanish, which makes me very happy. I am having a great time with her and I pursue spending time with her, not because of discomfort, not that I feel a need or obligation to do it because of my job but because I like it, I enjoy my time with her."*

At the same time, I felt comfortable moving in the space, whether they were there or not.

> *"I also feel more comfortable to be alone, I don't feel the need that I did with the girls to follow them or sit in the living room and stuff like*

> *that. For instance, in the mornings when I have my coffee I sit outside in the sun, or I may go out to smoke, or generally sit outside, apart from the days I go for walks. I also sit in my room, at my laptop, especially in the evenings when the parents sit at their laptops too after the kids have gone to bed."*

In time I developed a routine, which I was enjoying a lot. I woke up, had my coffee, sat with Paz and then took the bike they had offered me to go for a ride. After having lunch with the parents, I would go out on foot to the beach or a café nearby where I took my autoethnographic notes, went home for a nap and got up to spend time with the children before we had dinner and then sat at my laptop, going to bed at around 12. Dividing my day between spending time with the family and going for bike rides or to the beach, working on my notes without stress as well as having time alone in the home made me enjoy my daily life a lot. Although I did almost the same thing most days, I had a variety in my day that was very pleasant.

Despite my comfort, I always had it in the back of my mind that I was a guest. Up to my last days, I informed them where I was going whenever I left the house, for a variety of reasons. Firstly, as a guest I thought it was the right thing to do, rather than just come and go as if I were in a hotel. I also thought maybe they would feel more comfortable knowing where I am, as it seemed they felt a sense of responsibility for me and my safety as a foreign person and their guest. I also noticed certain aspects of my behaviour in the home. As opposed to my home, where I am usually with my pyjamas most of the day, I would get dressed almost immediately after getting up. I preferred taking my showers when they were gone, to avoid disrupting their schedules. If they were at home, I always asked if anyone needed the bathroom as I was going for a quick shower. I noticed I never said simply "shower", I always used the phrase "quick shower" in a way to assure them that I would not be in their way for too long, neither would I waste their water and electricity. Furthermore, while I did use some of the space they had made for me in the wardrobe, I still left some of my things in my suitcase.

> *"As opposed to the other home, I used the spaces they gave me in the bathroom and in the room, the wardrobes. I did put some clothes in the wardrobe in the room. Not all of them, I don't know why [...] I felt more comfortable and I wanted to show that I am comfortable. I*

> *thought also because it's two weeks staying there and taking my things from my suitcase, not putting them in the wardrobe may look somehow like a leaving tendency, a lack of comfort, that I am with one foot here and one out the door."*

Food

As in the first exchange, all my meals were included. Again, however, I informed them that I was happy to just have coffee in the mornings. As opposed to the girls, Paz showed me on the first day how to use their coffee maker, which allowed me to make my coffee alone in the mornings. I may seem unimportant but for someone like me who struggles to operate in the mornings without coffee, it was a huge relief. I generally had fewer food related issues than I did in my previous experience:

> *"Regarding food I accept or deny food, fruit depending on my appetite and I don't think so much about offending them or not taking too much as I did with the girls. Yes, the latter may still be crossing my mind from time to time but the truth is they eat larger portions than the girls and I eat less than them, so on the one hand I don't feel hunger like I did a couple of times with the girls, on the other I feel no need to ask for something further than what they provide me*."

During our first meal together, I was offered a beer. And while I generally do not drink alcohol with my food due to personal taste, it being the first day also prompted me to decline, as I was still in the process of ascertaining this new setting's routines and rituals and simultaneously careful of the image I was presenting. They mentioned a story about a previous guest who, I thought, did not appear to have the same qualms as me; one day during his stay they discovered all the beers missing from the fridge and the whisky from the cupboard. However, the way they narrated this story, as well as one later on about a guest who ate many oranges, a fruit the area was famous for and which I can concur were the best oranges I ever had, was humorous. The children had nicknamed the latter 'the orange man' and everyone was laughing when they told me both stories.

> *"And in the way they said it I understood that it had actually not bothered them, they just found it funny that suddenly everything was gone. And that indeed they did not mind the comfort this person felt and showed in the home, with their things. Subsequently, this helped me feel comfortable with the things there [...] Just from the way they*

> *were saying it and their experiences with their previous Workawayers [...] it shows they are actually looking at it as welcoming someone to their home and it is like the person's home."*

Their approach to this, along with their welcoming personalities in general, made me feel comfortable, much more than in my first experience, to reach into the cupboard and fridge. While the girls in the first home told me from the first moment that I was welcome to anything I wanted, I never took anything. And yet, apart from my morning coffee, I only did it once in the second home:

> *"They told me to feel like I'm home, to take anything I want, they showed me where the snacks are, the food, anything I could need and indeed one day I took some nuts from the cupboard as I was feeling peckish. Nonetheless, I felt the need to tell them afterwards that I took some nuts. I don't know why, I did feel comfortable enough to do it but I also felt the need to inform them that I did it."*

I still remember the doubts in my head on that day. Trying to convince myself that I felt comfortable enough to do it, they were so welcoming, I knew they wouldn't mind. "Just don't say it" I tried to convince myself, "They don't mind, they have told you to take anything you want and either way they will not find out". This attempt to overcome my angst over something so minor in an effort towards personal development failed almost immediately after they returned; the relief I felt when I told them was like a huge weight lifted off my chest. Despite the light-hearted way the anecdotes about the previous Workawayers were narrated, I did not want them to have a similar story about me. And so, when I found the chance, I bought a few snacks to satisfy my sweet tooth whenever necessary.

From the first day I had my designated seat at the table. They never told me, on the contrary they said they do not have assigned seats, but the one I sat at on my first meal, was the one I chose for every meal after that. However, one day Victoria put my plate in another spot.

> *"I hesitated a bit, I am comfortable and used to my seat at the table. It's that habit possibly, from the beginning that I was there, so I considered it my seat. Of course, as the mom had said they don't have specific seats at the table which surprises me, just out of habit doesn't everyone get their seat at the table after a point? [...] So, the kid put my plate elsewhere. I sat there of course, it's not something important. But the next day when I was helping to set the table, I put my plate at my initial spot, where I felt comfort. A bit silly and small*

> *but it's like, how to say it, my place in the family? I think my spot at the table is significant."*

On my first day Paz asked about my dietary preferences and if I had any allergies to which I replied that I ate everything -not entirely true- but I had developed an allergy to bell peppers the year before - sadly true. I was very happy about ten days into my exchange when she mentioned she refrained from adding peppers to the meal in which she normally did, as it showed me that she cared enough to remember. Paz kept asking me throughout my stay if I wanted her to cook something specific, and always informed me what she was going to prepare in case I did not like it, but I never admitted disliking a specific food. Apart from feeling it would be impolite and ungrateful to disapprove of a meal she was planning to cook, I also wanted to try the local cuisine and I ended up discovering that I loved dishes I had never tried before. I only had trouble once – when she cooked chickpeas. It was one of my last days and although since my childhood I had always despised chickpeas and that was the only day I ate by myself and thus could have avoided it, I still had a dish as I was hungry. It seems when they are cooked well, chickpeas are not so bad.

Personal aspects

Pedro and Paz showed a lot of interest in me, asking me about my life in Scotland, about the situation in Greece, my studies, my family. They also shared a lot about their life, the region, local customs and they were happy to help me practice Spanish as well. We spoke about the exchange a few days in, recounting the doubts our friends and families expressed and their concerns for our safety in participating in this exchange. We also spoke about the fact that while in the worst case I was going to have a bad time or just put myself in danger, they were welcoming strangers in their home with their children. We agreed that it takes courage and general trust in people. My feeling was they were participating in these exchanges to get out of them much more than simply language practice; a cultural exchange and a personal relationship with whoever stayed with them while at the same time wanting the person to get out of it as much as possible as well, welcoming them and including them in their family and life.

> *"She urged me to go to the beach because there was a chance for the weather to deteriorate over the weekend and generally, she acts as if I am on a holiday. Not in a bad sense, in a sense of enjoying myself as much as I can, sleep as much as I can, go out in the sun, go for walks, go for a wine. She acts as if I am on a holiday, not there to work. And she tries to show me as much as she can, tells me things about Spain."*
>
> *"When they talk in Spanish in front of me, which is rare, they always translate for me [...] But a few times they talk between themselves as a family and they always explain to me what they said. When they talk about old stories, family friends about something that happened, they explain to me "This is someone I used to work with" etc, they actually try to involve me in the conversation, to include me."*

While the relationship with the parents developed easily, it took a little longer with the children. I did have some experience with children beforehand, but especially during my early days before they felt comfortable with me, I had to try various ways to approach them. On my first day we played a board game with the family. It was a game where the players played against each other and while I understood the rules, in an effort to make the children to like me, I let them win, pretending I had trouble as it was my first time playing. And while it turned out to be quite easy with Santo, who started showing me affection, hugging me, asking me to play games, the daughter was a bit timid.

> *"I am trying with Victoria. I try to speak with her at times, ask her about gymnastics, how school was, she had some tests, how they went etc. At some point we were in the same team during a board game and I was encouraging her when it was her turn "Go Victoria!". I'm asking her when I'm playing with Santo if she wants to join us because sometimes she's sitting alone and reading."*
>
> *"She came back from gymnastics upset because she didn't manage to complete a move which she had achieved before and I tried to comfort her [...] I told her 'Don't worry, I totally understand. It was the same for me when I did gymnastics and all kinds of sports, when I was running track some days were good, others worse. Since you managed to do it once, you will manage again. It just happened that you did not have a great day. Next time try again, work on it, you just need to practice and you will do it'. And she smiled to me, she appreciated it, understood, and was somewhat consoled."*
>
> *"[On an evening I went out with Paz] Victoria wanted to join and whispered to her mom 'But I like Mania' and that made me happy because I was trying with her and it worked out."*

My relationship with the Paz became very close, as we both enjoyed each other's company. Her very good English level made our communication easy.

Our relative fluency with the language meant we could also use humour which I find generally helps with relationships, while our sense of humour being similar helped even further. Our talks ranged from daily things, music and gossip to personal stories from our past and deeper political conversations. I waited for her to start talking about her personal politics and was very happy to find our ideologies were aligned. We spoke about Brexit, Donald Trump, domestic violence, machismo, the rights of trans people, the effects of the financial crisis on Spain, conversations I have with my friends in my life back home, but I never expected I would have during these encounters. I felt this strengthened our bond and after a while I was comfortable enough to start conversations of this nature myself. She invited me to many things during the exchange, apart from the day trips we took with the family. On my second day we went to an Irish friend of hers who she was doing a language exchange with, practicing her English while he was learning Spanish. We also went out one evening with another friend of hers for food and beers, we took bike rides together and went into the town nearby. Her open and welcoming nature reduced my discomfort almost immediately after my arrival and throughout my stay I felt like I was staying at an old friend's home.

On my last day, I chose to leave with a more expensive train that was going to take more time, travelling a longer way than I initially wanted to. As it was on a Sunday, I would have had to wake them up earlier than they normally got up on the weekend to take me to the station and I preferred not to inconvenience them on their day off. When I was leaving the home, the children gave me a drawing of us three and wrote our names in Latin characters as well as Greek ones that I had taught them a few days before, which I found very touching. Paz took me to the train station and teared up a bit when she said goodbye.

> *"I like her a lot as a person, I think we could have become friends under other circumstances and maybe that will happen after all [...] They told me 'If you ever come to Spain again, come see us' but most probably that will not happen and I had it in the back of my mind and that made me sad."*

I enjoyed my stay there more than my first experience, which was a surprise to me as I expected an encounter with two women closer to my age would be easier than with a family. Not so much that the age difference would have an

impact, it was more about the family life, different priorities, schedules. And yet my stay there was one of the happiest periods in my life. I am still unsure if this was because my hosts were more hospitable or because my comfort levels increased due to it being my second experience. I also considered their higher English level and thus easier communication, our more compatible personalities, especially with the mother, the location near the sea, the sun, my less hectic programme and more time by myself, which I appreciated a lot. Maybe the fact that they had previous experience with Workawayers meant they knew how to act around me and make me feel comfortable. Or maybe a combination of all the above. Either way the strong bond that developed with the family and the sense of happiness that I felt throughout the two weeks still stay with me to this day.

> *"I feel very well, I feel happy. I don't know what it is, it is the sun, which is very important, is it the holidays, as in a way it is holidays what I am doing along with work. Is it this exchange? Is it the country, the fact that I have a big love for Spain? Is it the people who have welcomed me with open arms in their home? They treat me like a friend, which is very important. And indeed, I felt that this exchange… the first one was a bit more stressful, while in the second one I am more relaxed, happier, I am doing things. As I said, I don't know what this is about, is it about the people, is it about the place, as I am next to the sea with sun. Maybe the fact that they have experience, so they know how to act, while for the girls it was the first time they had someone home. Generally, that I had more time to myself -very important- I had my time to do things, enjoy myself, go out in the sun? I don't know."*

Studying the exchange from the inside allowed me to have a deeper insight into the nature of these experiences. As a guest I enjoyed the hospitality offered in the two homes, but I also faced a variety of micro-ethical dilemmas in relation to different aspects of the encounter. Exploring my own feelings, thought process and reactions to these situations, was a demanding task that required constant cognitive and emotional awareness on my part. However, it also allowed me to have a deeper understanding of the exchange, its nature and its various facets and exhibit those to the reader through my personal experience. Apart from the value of the rich data that came from using myself as a research subject and sensitising myself to the encounter, a further benefit came from the

autoethnographic account. Drawing from the findings of the autoethnography, in combination with the literature review findings, led to the formulation of a set of questions for the following part of my data collection, the interviews. The interview questions had similar themes to the autoethnographic account - space, food etc along with general questions- a structure used to guide the conversation that was not, however, strictly adhered to in order to allow a natural flow of the conversation. The findings of the 50 semi-structured interviews are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 5. Interview Findings

In this chapter the findings of the 50 semi-structured interviews will be presented. The structure of this chapter is different to the previous one due to the very different nature of data collection. It starts by introducing the reader to pre-encounter expectations, that is participants' motivations and the criteria with which they choose their hosts or guests respectively. Perceptions of fairness in the various aspects of the encounter participants identified as important are presented in the following part. These aspects are work, hospitality, interpersonal relationship, education and cultural exchange and are analysed separately for the two encounters; au pairing and WWOOF/Workaway/HelpX exchanges. The chapter concludes with an overview of reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas and how these influence the moral framework of the encounter.

5.1 Pre-encounter Expectations

5.1.1 Motivations

The motivation to participate in such an exchange is crucial as what individuals aim to gain from the transaction is closely related to their perception of what it should entail, what their and the other side's role is as well as what can be considered fair in the transaction itself. It links to the expectations that the individual has from this transaction and forms the criteria for the choice of their host or guest.

The majority of hosts decided to participate in the exchanges due to a need for help with a particular job. While there were various secondary motivations cited, the main reason that au pair hosts chose to invite au pairs was the need for help with childcare, while the most significant reason for WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts was the significant farmwork or a specific project they needed help with. For au pair hosts their busy lives and, particularly for UK based hosts, the expensive nature of alternative options for childcare were the main motivators to have an au pair, even more so for single parents. A further

commonly mentioned reason was for their children to learn a new language and come in contact with another culture. For expat hosts, having their children practise their native tongue or the language of the country they had moved to, was often a necessity. For WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts further motivations apart from work included contact with other cultures, having company if they lived on an isolated farm, as well as the wish to educate people about organic farming and a sustainable lifestyle. The following tables (Table 5 and Table 6) provide some examples from hosts discussing their motivations and highlight the main themes that surfaced:

Table 5. Motivations to participate - Au pair hosts

Motivation	**Example**
Help with childcare	
Financial motivation	*It was mainly after I had my second child. The childcare in UK is appallingly expensive and I just hated to have all my salary given for childcare and with the 2nd one I had to go to work a lot earlier than I wanted to and I really didn't want her to go to nursery […] because obviously living out nanny wasn't an option for us, that was as expensive as nursery. And at that point we already had the possibility to spare a bedroom, so we thought well, let's give it a go.* (Natasha, au pair host)
Single-parent household	*I had two young children. My wife died about 12 to 18 months prior and I was looking for somebody to just take some of the responsibilities away I suppose and help. […] But I just wanted somebody in the house, so if I wanted to go to the pub on an evening, I could go to the pub. You know? Not that I did very often, but I could. Yeah, they gave me the feeling that I wasn't ehm, I suppose trapped is the word.* (Nick, au pair host)
Language teaching	
Second language	*We have French-speaking au pairs every year. And finding a person who is French-speaking in Greece was very hard […] So learning a foreign language easily which I also relatively easily learned, through games and learning it with a good accent without trouble and without having to study, for me this was the only way.* (Morfo, au pair host)
Language of new country	*We wanted someone that's a native English speaker. Because when we moved in here last year the kids didn't speak a word of English and we wanted... I mean they learned at nursery but at home we still spoke German because there was no reason to switch to English. But now with her we were forced to speak English and the kids, well they are spending the afternoon with her, so they had to learn it and it went really well.* (Marlies, au pair host)

Table 6. Motivations to participate - WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts

Motivation	**Example**
Labour	
Specific Project	*We were looking around, we realised during the building of our house that one of the things we needed was not necessarily lots of skill, but extra pairs of hands. And then I started to think about these voluntary organisations and Workaway was the one that was... We tried HelpX first. And Workaway was the one that actually yielded a lot of responses.* (Anthony, Workaway host)
General Help	*Well, we bought an abandoned piece of property in 2014, which needed a lot of work. We're in our 50s and we needed strong backs and we wanted to develop a permaculture site, a site where we would be farming organic and we knew that a lot of people would be interested in learning about that. And so our daughter informed us about WWOOF and so we signed up.* (Frank, WWOOF host)
Education	*And ours is a mom-and-pop operation, we don't have any employees but part of our mission is education, so we really enjoy teaching young people and, well, people of any age, but particularly young people about the organic methods that we use and encouraging them to go on to do something in the field if that's an interest of theirs.* (Helen, WWOOF host)

Social Aspect	
Company	*And on top of that there's a little bit of social excitement of having people come to visit and there's also, it's just- it's second nature to me. Having people home. Also, I don't have a husband and children that I'm trying to, you know, trying to have a relationship with and interact with and the people are an interruption for me. Not at all. I just don't feel that way. So, I welcome them.* (Kat, WWOOF host)
Cultural Exchange	*And then, so I'm raising my boys together with my husband in a town that is very, it's pretty homogenous, you know, it's a rural town. […] (W)e're close to a lot of urban, multi-cultural areas but we live in the country side because I work in agriculture and my husband works in a community college that serves the agricultural area. […] And both of us, we both travelled a lot, we both enjoyed travelling. So, raising our boys in this kind of place where there's not a lot of mixing of cultures, it was important to us to find ways that our boys don't grow up in isolation and think that everybody looks like them, you know*. (Niharika, WWOOF host)

For guests the motivations can vary. In general, the wish to travel is a significant factor for their choice to participate in this exchange. However, as these are quite alternative ways to experience a new place, there were further motivations suggested by the guests for their decision. Some of them were saving money, experiencing the local culture in more depth, learning the local language as well as having the feeling of safety connected to having a place to stay and people to live with.

For many of the interviewed au pairs, having a gap year before or after their studies was a catalyst to becoming an au pair. Au pairing was considered an attractive option, as there were the benefits of living in a new country, practising their language skills and having accommodation, food and pocket money for what they initially believed to be an easy job. Liking children was an essential part of the decision, as most au pairs mentioned it as one of the principle

reasons for choosing this exchange. Examples of motivations for au pairs are demonstrated in Table 7 and again highlight major themes. It was found that, for most, multiple motivations influenced their choice, while the wish to travel and live abroad came through in most of their narratives. For WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers, again the desire to travel or explore a specific region was one of the strongest motivators. With this way of travelling being seen as a cheap and comfortable way of experiencing a region, further aspects of the exchange motivated participants as well. Learning about organic farming and “giving back” by helping the farmers and the environment in general were factors mentioned by some guests. Furthermore, the perception of this transaction as a more authentic experience, that would allow them to engage in a meaningful cultural exchange motivated a number of individuals. Table 8 provides examples of motivations, where, again, an overlap of a variety of factors connected to this type of encounter, can be observed.

Table 7. Motivations to participate – Au pairs

Motivation	**Example**
Education Language and Cultural Experience	*Because I couldn't start studies, I was about to start, I'm studying this year. So, I just saw a friend who went au pair on summer and I thought "Ok. I love English and I would love to have a good level of it because it's really important. And the job is easy because I've worked with kids for a half year at McDonalds, I took care of kids in general. I though ok, I can do it, I don't want to waste a year. I just tried, I think it was in two weeks, I already had this family. That's how I found it. The main point was the language because I wanted to see the country, there's a lot of known things here, a lot of known cities, London, Bristol. A lot of cities that I need to see by myself.* (Maria, au pair)

Personal Development	
Assets for future	*Because I also acquired the assets that I needed to live abroad through this, so that I can eventually go abroad alone, without needing this as a stepping stone. Linguistic, communicative, social assets, it cultivated all this in me. I mean I know now how to go about in a foreign country. And before this experience I didn't know it. It was also one of the main reasons I wanted to go. I mainly wanted to live abroad in general, to travel, new experiences, the whole package. The typical things we all want at times.* (Sofia, au pair)
Becoming independent – Rite of passage	*Because I didn't really know what to do after school, I didn't really feel ready to be on my own and so... and because I always liked children. I just thought that might be a good idea to do, to gain more experience, become more independent and that's why I decided to... […] Because I don't have that much self-confidence, that was also one point why I wanted to do it, because I thought that I'd gain more self-confidence maybe in myself. And I thought that it might be difficult for me to like live with strangers and... […] Yeah, to be with strangers, to talk freely with someone I don't know and to get to know people better.* (Ulrike, au pair)
Comfort and Safety	
Comfort	*I think it was mostly because I finished my Bachelor degree in Prague and I was just thinking what to do next. And I always wanted to live in the UK and this was like the easiest way to go basically, cause I knew I'm gonna have a place to live. Like I will have food and will get money, so yeah* (Mirona, au pair)
Safety	*To travel. In the sense of travelling and learning things and live in a country and not just go as a tourist. So, staying with a family where you can have a personal relationship, you can basically be a member of the society and they can tell you where to go, what to do, how to acclimatize how to be part of a society is much more human first of all. And much safer, in a sense* (Faye, au pair)

Love for children	*I worked as a babysitter in my country and I came from a big family, so I've always known that I love to be with kids and work with them. And I needed an opportunity to go abroad. And it was a really good solution because you are more independent, I lived with my parents before I moved here, so you're more independent than back at home with your family. But it's still not completely independent, so it's a good balance* (Dorotea, au pair)

Table 8. Motivations to participate – WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers

Motivation	**Example**
Financial Motivation	*I just like, going for travelling for a long time, so is a way to save up money in the accommodation and like a way to be somewhere, not too touristy place* (Molly, Workawayer)
Ideology Social and Environmental consciousness	*Well, actually in that programme it really opened my eyes to a lot of different social issues, environmental issues and a lot of things I hadn't known. So, I had heard about WWOOF there, it had been in the back of my mind and then graduation came a year later and I was like "Oh, shit. Like, what, what do I do now?". So I kinda just used WWOOF as a way to uhm, I guess travel on a budget and also while travelling on a budget, contribute to [pause] bettering society? I think that the food system is extremely broken and, especially in the US in factory farms and I think that, uhm, working on small scale organic farms would make me feel, I guess, good about what I'm doing, until I come home and then have to face reality and find a job.* (Christine, WWOOFer)

Education	*I decided to WWOOF not only as a need at the time but also I'd like to own my own land, to develop my own community and farm, self-sustainable. And use that as a demonstration farm and a leadership training farm where we could train other leaders to lead a community very similar in other countries like Haiti. So my idea was to go around and pick out as much knowledge as I can attain from different farms and how they're operating different things on their farm.* (Philip, WWOOFer)
Authentic Experience	*It was easier for me to travel while WWOOFing. It's also so much cheaper, I do not have to spend a lot of money because I'm staying with them. And anything is- because you were staying with the family itself so you get to experience what they do in their daily lives. That was really amazing, I couldn't have bought it even with money. So yeah. And then, why I really wanted to do WWOOFing was actually, the main reason was cause I wanted to make friends with the local. I was travelling solo, so one thing to make friends with the local was what advised me to do WWOOFing. After that then I realised like 'Oh, actually, I wouldn't be spending a lot of money on this as well'.* (Eve, WWOOFer)

The motivation to participate in the exchanges appeared to be similar for each group of interviewees. It can be argued that for hosts the main motivator to participate in the exchange is the need for help with either childcare for au pair hosts or farmwork for WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts. Secondary aspects such as the cultural exchange, the education and language practice had varying levels of importance for the different hosts. On the other hand, for guests, experiencing life abroad with reduced expenses, whether for longer term in the case of au pairs or in the form of a trip for WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers, was cited as the principal reason to participate. However, other aspects of the exchanges, such as living with locals and learning about their culture in more depth, learning the language and having a feeling of safety

during their time abroad were also reported to be significantly influencing towards this choice.

5.1.2 Criteria

When it came to what criteria they used to choose their hosts or guests, some of the participants had clearly set ideas for who and what they were looking for while others did not. The former was more common for hosts, many of whom had interviews with their guests to ensure they were appropriate for the job they needed doing and compatible with them as people. The criteria used by participants to decide on a host or guest can be quite telling of their perception of the exchange.

The criteria for the hosts to choose their guests were various. However, the main thing they were looking for was an individual able to do the job they needed help with. Nonetheless, most hosts did not expect formal experience from their guests in the area they needed help with. The difference between au pair hosts and WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts was that in the former exchange it is mostly the families who contact the au pairs if they like their profiles and invite them after interviews. On the contrary, most WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts receive requests from individuals interested in visiting their farms and have the choice to accept them or not. Apart from the criterion of being able to perform the tasks, further ones mentioned were the guest's personality, motivation to participate in the exchange and expressed excitement about it. Demographic characteristics mainly age and, in the case of au pairs, gender, were also deemed significant as well as additional characteristics if they needed something further from their guest, such as language practice, driving or specific farming tasks. For examples of au pair hosts' criteria see Table 9 and for WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts' criteria see Table 10.

Table 9. Criteria – Au pair hosts

Criterion	**Example**
Personality Compatibility Personal Traits	*Mostly it was just a question of whether or not they clicked with the children, clicked with us. I mean there's a certain chemistry, I keep comparing it sometimes to online dating, you're trying to find someone that's going to be reasonable, that fits in, that's going to have a certain degree of flexibility, that you can talk to.* (Joanna, au pair host) *I wanted to see as many as possible pictures, because this is what your first impression is. And what I would look for would be for warmth and kind of caring expression. If I see over-confident girl, I would be cautious and I probably would dismiss her straight away. So the first thing I would look at would be pictures and a face that I can trust. And then I would start reading. Then it depends what they have put down in their profile*. (Natasha, au pair host)
Au pair's motivation	*So, I ended up wherever I saw a profile "It is my first au pair experience and I want to see the world through this" I was not bothering any further. That is, if they don't truly want through this to live with a child- everyone wants to but not everyone knows what this means* (Morfo, au pair host)

Demographics	
Gender	*After filtering [the au pair profiles], I decided I didn't want a male. And that wasn't anything other than I got two young daughters in the house. And I'm not suggesting anything but you have to filter criteria […] Also I guess that there was going to be a degree of domesticity about the role as well. There would be kind of washing, possibly a bit of ironing if they had any skills, cooking involved as well. So in a way, not wanting to sound too traditional but that these skills were more likely to be inherent in a female rather than a male. And also that there would have to be a caring element to it as well. A natural instinct for care for these youngsters. So in a way although these are fairly headline criteria, I was filtering people on the basis of those kind of factors. But one thing I decided straight away, it had to be female. Age profile didn't matter. In some respects when I started to look, I thought maybe older is better, maybe more motherly, maybe more skilled in terms of the domestics of the household.* (Ellis, au pair host)
Age	*I didn't want a young woman because I wanted a more mature woman. So I was looking for somebody late 20s-early 30s because I didn't want another child to look after basically. I was concerned that I would be, you know, sitting up at night waiting for her to come home and, you know, I was worried that I would become a surrogate father and I didn't want that. So I purposefully chose a more mature young woman.* (Nick, au pair host)
Other	*Had to be easy on the eye. I didn't want, you know, uhm, well, not putting it delicately [laughter]. Yes, but you got the picture* (Nick, au pair host)

Table 10. Criteria – WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts

Criterion	Example
Safety	*We try to do a kind of homemade background check. I turned some down after running their name through local court systems and found some strings of offences. I don't tell them why, I just tell them we're full. […] But we do look and try to see if they have a Facebook page and just kinda get a general feel for them.* (Effie and Theo, WWOOF hosts)
Communication Skills	*Maturity, good communication skills. So we have guests on a regular basis, we're not just a farm, we have customers. They gotta have good interactive skills […] What we don't take so much is people right out of high school that we don't quite see them as they're ready for a full-fledged business. Like this person might be better off just on a farm where there's a lot of work going on. This is a business.* (Vincent, WWOOF host)
Demographics	*I've decided after quite a few years not to have anybody below 23. I'm trying to get women as well. Men are good but I think they want, some want a free holiday and someone to cook their meals and provide their food and their internet. I'm not the free holiday. […] But I don't want to have anybody under 23 because I end up being their mother. And I don't really want that. Because I teach, well I've done it for just 5, but I teach school and I'm always around teenagers, I don't want to... It's alright if it's my daughter or son, which I don't have. And their common sense, some of them when they're 18, 19, their common sense is not very good. And they're there to see the world so sometimes I'm not up to being the person to help them do that [laughter].* (Rachel, WWOOF host)
Specific Skill	*Well, just I would tell them what kind of things we need done. And one of the big things is weeding, there's always lots of weeding. […]. So that's our criteria that they'll be able to handle like our weed eater cause we have that. Mowing if it needs to be done.* (Indra, WWOOF host)

In the previous part of this chapter, it was suggested that the main motivation for the guests to participate in these types of exchanges is to travel. It can be surmised that their criteria to choose a host would be affected by this desire to visit specific parts of the world and experience the local culture. Apart from the location, which is significant in all of the exchanges, some aspects of the job were also reported to have significance, according to the preferences and skills of each participant. However, certain criteria set by guests were related to the specific nature of their encounters. For au pairs, as the stay lasted longer in general, aspects of the relationship with the potential hosts were more important than for WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers who were more interested in having a good accommodation, food and reading positive reviews about the farmers.

Au pairs being motivated by the desire to travel appeared to look for hosts in specific countries or cities they wished to live in. Another commonly mentioned criterion was the age of the children they would be taking care of. The majority of au pairs preferred not to take care of babies and very young children, therefore looked for families with children in an age they felt comfortable with. Some of the participants also considered the number of children they would be taking care of, usually preferring up to two. Few of the au pairs mentioned certain criteria that had less to do with the workload or the location and more with other aspects of the exchange, such as compatibility and their safety. For examples of au pairs' criteria see Table 11. As WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers tend to choose this type of exchange generally to facilitate their travels, the main criterion is usually the host's location. The type of job involved in the exchange was deemed important as well, with guests looking for particular posts with jobs related to their interests or abilities. Another condition was the accommodation as guests can stay in the host's home but also be provided with anything from an outside area to set up their own tent to a separate private building. As individuals interested in organic farming and permaculture, many of them had applied certain environmental or ethical values in their personal life as well, being vegetarian or vegan and thus looked for hosts who could accommodate their diets. Further criteria included shared

interests, a possibility for a social exchange as well as the hosts' reviews (see Table 12).

Table 11. Criteria – Au pairs

Criterion	Example
Location	*I wanted to be near London, because I knew that I wanted to spend some time in London as well, so I was looking for this.* (Kasia, au pair)
Work-related criteria	*Yeah, it was mainly the location and then of course it was the children's age. I didn't want to have to deal with babies for example, I wanted them to be at least five to six years old, to understand certain things. Also, I liked if it was family who were interested in speaking Greek or English to their child or if the child knew some of these two languages already. Because I like teaching, it is something I have kind of done but I would like it.* (Spyros, au pair) *Also the fact that they were divorced, because it gives you a lot of time. Criteria were mainly the age, them living in a big city, I liked Rotterdam as an area […] The other criterion was the work schedule because I wanted to have enough time to combine it with travelling.* (Sofia, au pair)
Social Aspects	*It was in my mind, I came from a quite religious background. I wasn't like I really want a religious family because sometimes it's not good but I wanted a family who have kind of the same values or moral stuff. And it was just in my mind that maybe a Jewish family would be a bit more good for me. So I looked for a Jewish family even though I'm not Jewish*. (Dorotea, au pair)
Safety	*The first criterion always was being able to speak with previous au pairs, being able to meet at least the last girl, which in many cases I could do and I spoke with her. Then it was definitely the financial criterion. And third the distance from the airport. And the distance from the Capital and the distance from the closest Embassy. For safety reasons.* (Faye, au pair)

Table 12. Criteria – WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers

Criterion	Example
Location	*It was more location and timing because we just kinda wanted to keep going. So we started in France and then just worked our way south. It was more fitting into our chronological time, really.* (Erin, WWOOFer) *Then the locality, where it is, because of my travelling. So, I didn't want to do it in the other part of Australia. And because travelling in Australia is a bit hard sometimes because the places are quite far from each other and there is no transport, so it was important also if she can pick me up from the bus and the transport was really easy.* (Ekin, WWOOFer)
Accommodation	*Ah, well after the first two places, we went to two very different places one straight after the other, very different in terms of accommodation, in terms of the relationship with the hosts. Just almost the opposite. So from then on, we knew what we wanted, so we knew that we wanted a certain type of accommodation, we knew that we wanted to be involved with the family or whoever the host were, not be quite separate or anything.* (Irene, WWOOFer) *In Nicaragua I wasn't very happy because we were told we would get a private room. We're a couple, obviously, when we got there it was a 4-bed dorm. And we had a double bed and then it was two single beds. […] Well after Nicaragua we were 100% we were not gonna do it unless it was a private room.* (Clidna, Workawayer)
Work-related criteria	*I had filtered out looking for farms that were specifically vineyards at the beginning but that was pretty challenging, so I just kinda decided I'll go to [region in USA] wine country. That'll be as close as I get. And of course it was, there were vineyards everywhere I looked there.* (Christine, WWOOFer)

Dietary Requirements	*The other thing is the diet. So we're both vegetarian, so a lot of them say what sort of diet they have. So most of the meat ones we obviously steer clear of. But that's just... I'm sure it's a great place but we just don't choose it because what's the point? [laughter]. We got to eat* (Irene, WWOOFer)
Reviews	*I'd also, just really good reviews. Good location, not too far so we were in the middle of nowhere and couldn't actually still travel and explore. And just the reviews were really important, they really swung it for us* (Kira, HelpXer)

It can be argued that the criteria used by hosts and guests are divided into two categories; the common criteria that could apply to any case and the personal criteria that were specific to themselves. The common criteria for hosts were connected to demographic characteristics, interest in the post and a basic level of skills related to the job. Personal criteria were related to things that the specific host was looking for from their guests, such as knowledge of a certain language or farming skill or personality type. For guests, again, common criteria were the location, accommodation, the type and hours of work. Some of the personal criteria mentioned were the values of the host, the food provided according to their dietary requirements and certain safety standards they were trying to keep.

5.2 Perception of Fairness

In the interviews the guests and hosts discussed in various contexts what they considered their own role to be and what they believed the other side's role was respectively. As this exchange is quite complicated in nature, that role is not limited to the working relationship. There are aspects of the encounter that are related to the hospitality involved, the family and the personal relationship as well as the educational dimension and the cultural exchange. Their perception was uncovered by either a clear account of the work tasks, house rules and similar explicit responsibilities or certain narratives that implied their own understanding of each role. This part is divided into two sections; the perception of roles in the au pairing exchange and the perception of roles in the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX type exchanges from both sides' view, hosts and guests.

5.2.1 The au pair role

5.2.1.1 Work

The main job of an au pair is childcare and this was the case with the interviewed au pairs as well. They had to care for the children when the parents were at work, cook for them, take them to school and extracurricular activities. However, almost all au pairs had duties beyond that. In some cases, they had more educational roles, like Sofia who was helping the child with homework in the second exchange and Spyros and Faye who had to teach the children Greek. Similarly, interviewed hosts mainly expected childcare from their guests but also in some cases language teaching and taking the children to extracurricular activities and playdates.

In terms of housework, the general rule is that the au pair will contribute to it as much as any family member. They mainly have to do chores relating to the children such as doing their laundry and preparing their meals. Nonetheless, many mentioned that, while it started this way, they ended up having to do more work, like doing the whole family's laundry and dishes after meals, cleaning floors, ironing etc. Some of the participants, like Susanne, mentioned they did not need to do much cleaning, as the family employed a cleaner, but she still

had to do other types of housework, like cooking and tidying up. Mirona's host family also had a cleaner but they still gave her more cleaning than childcare duties. Hosts also mentioned expecting some housework from their guests, mainly related to the children. A common parallel was that they did the work a big sister or any family member would. The chores ranged from ones related to the children only, like cooking for them, keeping their rooms tidy and washing their clothes to general household jobs, like cleaning common areas and doing the whole family's laundry. Nonetheless, some admitted giving the au pairs the jobs they enjoyed the least, like Nick whose au pairs did the ironing.

Au pair's duties involved preparing lunch for the children and while for some the food was cooked by the parents, others had to do it themselves. In some cases, au pairs had to cook dinner for the whole family, in others just for the children. Kasia had to cook only when the mother was working late and was unable to cook. Susanne believed that the parents appreciated it when she cooked and said they always thanked her, but she felt they took it for granted after a point. For Maria having to cook occasionally, after having informed the hosts that she was not willing to do it, was one of her biggest complaints:

> *I'm ok with most of it but for example I said that I wouldn't cook and sometimes I have to. Which is simple things, they're things that I can do. But just because I know how to do it, it doesn't mean- I shouldn't have to do it, just because I know how to. But I have to think like, the main thing is cooking. I said no to cooking, I said I will have- and sometimes I have to do more than I want to.* (Maria, au pair)

Despite not always requiring housework, hosts generally said they appreciated if their au pair knew how to cook, to relieve them from that task either daily or on occasion. Ellis mentioned he preferred if the au pair knew how to cook but did not mind if they could not. Natasha had an au pair who could not cook either but was willing to try and help when needed. Natasha, by her own admission, did not seem to have the patience to deal with that:

> *But then it would take her five minutes to peel a carrot. And that would annoy me as well [laughter]. So yeah, I would end up actually being more annoyed at her messing with my things [laughter]. So eventually I actually stopped asking her because I realised that her own presence really annoys me because she was so slow with everything. And I always kept trying to tell myself "The fact that I like*

> *everything to be done quickly doesn't mean that everybody should be this way. Or maybe I'm actually overdoing it, I'm too stressed person, I have to have everything done quickly".* (Natasha, au pair host)

The number of hours worked by each au pair depended on the age of the children and the needs of the family. Indicatively Ulrike worked between six and seven hours a day, Spyros six hours and Evangelia four hours per day. Au pairs usually work Monday to Friday but most of them worked at least one day on the weekend. On the other hand, hosts decided on hours depending on what they needed and/or considered reasonable. Ane required the fewest hours from her au pairs, which amounted to 20 hours per week. On average 25 to 30 hours were required of the au pairs, with the maximum being 40 hours per week by Natasha who reduced the hours when her children grew up. Many of the hosts, however, could not explicitly say how many hours their au pairs were working. Some offered the same flexibility, like Stella who did not count hours either when it came to her au pairs' days off or holidays. All au pairs acknowledged the need to be flexible due to the nature of the work:

> *Generally, when you are an au pair you are a bit flexible with your work hours. And it's a family, you can't put hours on it, it's about kids, at some point they will get sick, they won't go to school. It needs a relative flexibility, something could occur with the parents.* (Sofia, au pair)

An unsurprising complaint by the au pairs was the ease of the parents to call them and require further tasks, sometimes after their workday had finished. The nature of the work along with the fact that they live in the family's home, with the overlap of home and workplace, blurs the lines between work and contributing to the house as a family member. Dorotea was happy with the extra work as she argued she loves doing favours for people in general, and that was what she saw the extra tasks as. Spyros and Sofia who had a good relationship with their hosts, mentioned that they did not mind the extra work as the flexibility was mutual and their hosts allowed them days off whenever they needed them. Maria, on the other hand, was wondering whether she should ask to be paid for the extra hours she worked. While most of them did not always mind this from the children, they were not pleased if the parents asked for further work:

> *Yeah when for instance the work was finished theoretically and I was in my room and they would call me for something sudden to come back down. Which, alright, you can say what was it, like 10 minutes work. But I was thinking okay, now if I had been off and didn't live here, I'd be fine at home. This. That they called me whenever they wanted whatever the time was. […] From the parents it bothered me a bit because I was thinking "Come on, I was downstairs all this time couldn't you do it, did you have to do it after I finish work?" But okay then I was thinking that since I'm live-in, of course I am there 24 hours for anything they need* (Evangelia, live-in nanny)

For participating hosts, the need for more work from the au pair than what was agreed upon or at hours outside their normal working schedule, the understanding of the exchange differed as well. The most common circumstance requiring extra hours from the au pairs was babysitting; some hosts considered it part of the au pair's job while others saw it as extra work. The latter either allowed the au pairs to switch hours with another day, get an extra day off or even pay them in some cases. Some, like Jan, Stella and Joanna, also offered to hire babysitters if the au pair was unavailable.

> *If there were some evening works or weekend works, we ask them and they're always safe to say, they always can say yes or no and if they say no, we check some babysitter or so. But actually, we had the attitude to give the evenings free and the weekends free, because they work during the week. But actually, they say "Why do you need a babysitter? I'm here for the family". So maybe there's also a bit wrong communication, yes?* (Jan, au pair host)

Occasionally au pairs were particularly unhappy with a specific chore. However, they rarely expressed dissatisfaction with a chore or refused to do it. Kasia gave the example of having to iron the host mother's boyfriend's shirts as something she perceived as unfair. Yet she did not protest and accepted this task. Spyros, who admitted he was not a dog lover, did not enjoy walking the family's dog but as soon as his hosts realised it, they stopped asking him to do it. Unsurprisingly, most of the hosts could not remember an instance where their au pair had expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of work or a specific task. However, Ellis spoke about one au pair occasionally complaining about various issues, like the children's behaviour or being the only one doing any housework, which he tried to deal with diplomatically by letting her vent but not actively trying to change anything. Stella also mentioned an anecdote of her first au pair feeling

overworked and discussing it with the family, which suggests further possible reasons for an au pair to not speak up:

> *Like [au pair] when she'd been here a while and when the baby got older then she said she felt like she had too much to do. And I think that was quite awkward for her to say. But we had a good relationship and she talked with her mom about it first. And her mom was quite, I think she came from a quite old school, conservative style French family, like "do your work" [laughter]. So her mom had said "Yes, but you know it's a good family and that's the most important thing. You can try and talk to them if you feel that they are...". Because she felt like she had a good relationship with us. So she did talk with us and then we sorted it out.* (Stella, au pair host)

5.2.1.2 Hospitality

Au pairs start the exchange knowing that they will be staying in a stranger's home for the following months of their lives. While generally the intensity of this feeling fades over time when they become acquainted with the family, it rarely disappears completely. For most of the au pairs it took weeks or even months to feel comfortable in the house. Spyros was the only au pair that argued he was comfortable from the beginning of his stay, but the rest of the participants felt that they needed some time to adapt to the new situation. Dorotea described her feeling during the first few months of her exchange: "*At the beginning it was weird to live in another person's house. To move into a family. They have their own routine and everything*". She recounted how early on she waited to hear silence from outside her room to go to the kitchen, prepare something to eat and go back quickly. It took Maria two months to stop seeing her experience as a job purely and start feeling like "*part of the family but I work for them*", after she noticed her host family cared about her and tried to improve her experience. Conversely, Ulrike mentioned she neither felt welcome in the home nor safe in her own room during her first exchange, because of the strained relationship with the mother: *"I didn't feel... Like, felt welcome. I didn't feel like they wanted me to be there, so it never felt like home. […] Yeah, in the first family I felt kind of like a parasite".* Susanne elaborated on her complex relationship with her hosts' home:

> *Because every time I would say to the kids "Let's go home" or text the mom "Oh, I'm home" at the beginning I would always, every time I would say it in my head I would be like "Eh, no that's not home". What I would more prefer to say "at the house" because I was- I am really close with my family at home and I was like "Mmm, this is not home for me". […] Not in a bad way, it's just because it's not nearly coming as close as my actual home.* (Susanne, au pair)

Having a stranger live in their home can disrupt a host's daily routines and sometimes cause discomfort, at least initially. Interviewed hosts expressed varying levels of difficulty to adapt to a new person in the home. Most mentioned the initial discomfort subsided with time, while for hosts that had multiple encounters, previous experiences also eased their worries for the following ones. Joanna mentioned she did not feel as if she had a stranger at home, a sentiment Ellis also conveyed, arguing that it was more like welcoming a new friend in the house. Luisa acknowledged the basic concerns of inviting someone unknown into one's home and the fears that can come with it, which, however, diminished over time. Stella expressed this development of feelings: *"Yeah, in the beginning it does feel a little weird. A little bit like you're not sure you can completely relax the same way. And then at some point you do of course".* This difficulty to relax Stella spoke about, was mainly connected to the feeling of comfort in one's own home which is disrupted by the arrival of a new person, something expressed by other participants too. Marlies mentioned similar concerns, noting she had to generally be aware of the au pair's presence: *"I mean you have to remember that you don't wander around naked or so [laughter] [...] Yeah I mean it just, you don't think about it. And then, yeah, you suddenly have to think you have to close the door to your, like, bedroom"*. Natasha spoke about how her routine was disrupted by one particular au pair, who did not appear to be adapting of the programme of her host:

> *Most of them were quite sensible and they would try to work around you rather than the other way around. But like this Italian one, she always was getting, the minute I start to get ready for bed and I head for the bathroom, then she would get in there. And it was like "Ok, you are all day alone at home, why do you have to go exactly before me to the bathroom? Tomorrow you have the whole day to you. I really need to go to bed now". And then I end up waiting for her. So that was just... I think she just didn't bother to look around her. She was so self-involved.* (Natasha, au pair host)

Notwithstanding their personal feelings towards the home, au pairs had access to the whole house with little to no restrictions space-wise. This is not only contingent on the hosts' hospitality but largely connected to the nature of the job. With housework being part of their role, au pairs need access to most, if not all, of the home's areas. Outside of their work, however, au pairs had different approaches to how they moved in the space. All of them mentioned that, while they had to go into the host parents' room for work, they avoided staying for long or looking around. Similarly, the room mentioned by all hosts that au pairs avoided was the parents' bedroom. Whether it had been instructed by them, implied or not even discussed, au pairs did not enter the bedroom unless it was work-related.

Shared spaces, like living rooms, were also available to au pairs, yet they rarely spend any time there. Sofia and Mirona were comfortable to move around the home only when their hosts were gone. Maria had to change her previous routine of showering at night to avoid bothering her hosts when they were preparing to go to bed while Evangelia argued that she was careful of how she was dressing when she was moving around the house. Dorotea mentioned an occasion when her friend had visited, and they were in the kitchen speaking Hungarian. The host family appeared uncomfortable and left the room, with the mother later telling her: *"We want you to feel home but it's still our home".* Hosts also reported allowing their au pairs access to all the shared areas in the house "*Otherwise you never feel at home*", according to Luisa. However, only a few au pairs spent their free time with the hosts in the living room. Ane, for instance, watched movies with her au pair in the evenings, something she enjoyed. Not all hosts were happy to have their au pairs in the common areas. Natasha had such issues with one au pair:

> *And the main thing with her was, it was really strange, she was the only one I had like that, she would be all the time in the living room. So, whether we would have, like me and my husband wanting to do something when the kids go to sleep or just watching movie, she would always be there but never do the things we do. So, she would just curl up on the sofa and read her books, always being there but never engaging in the conversations. [...] this girl was always present physically but never engaging with us. So it felt like I had something there that I felt obliged to engage* (Natasha, au pair host)

Avoiding the shared areas was often a result of their need for privacy. All interviewed au pairs revealed they went into their rooms after their work was finished to spend time alone. Their rooms were perceived as a safe haven for them to get away from the family and recover. In general, their hosts respected their space, avoided entering and instructed their children not to go in uninvited. However, some au pairs shared stories where they felt their privacy had been violated. Mirona mentioned an instance when she was away for a weekend and returned to find her belongings moved and the window opened in her separate studio flat in the home's garden. The hosts told her they had gone in to clean and Mirona was not pleased with this invasion of privacy. Likewise, Maria recalled a story from her early days in the home, when she realised someone had entered her room while she was gone. When she asked the parents about it, they told her they had gone in to clean the carpet and that forced her to change her habits: "*And I'm like 'Ok. Your room, your house but I'm living in there'. But it had happened just a few times. It is true that from that moment I just had my room really clean, just in case they entered".* Interviewed hosts understood their guests needed privacy as well. They avoided entering their rooms unless it was necessary and many instructed their children to knock and not enter the room unless invited. Nonetheless some hosts expressed a wish for their au pairs to spend more time with them:

> *They do tend to be very, I think there's an au pair discussion group where they all talk about the fact that they do dinner with the family but then kind of make yourself scarce. I don't know why, cause I'm quite happy for ours to...* (Amanda, au pair host)

The homes au pairs stayed at had their own routines but also rules. These rules were mostly related to the children and their schedule but also to specific issues only concerning the au pairs. In the home Spyros was staying in, having dinner together as a family was expected by everyone including the au pair, a rule the two German interviewed hosts, Jan and Marlies had as well. Dorotea's hosts also had rules related to food, as the family was Jewish and kept kosher, she had to be mindful with the meals she cooked for the children. Faye was told a few general rules such as no excessive drinking, no smoking and no shoes in the house. However, she commented on one particular rule, no male company, noting how heteronormative it was: "*It was written down. And it was the first*

time that I saw it and I'm like 'Ok, not that I am- how about female?'". Mirona on the other hand, who had issues with the father of her host family, spoke of a rule about her private space. The studio she was staying in was in the garden of the home with the interior visible to the outside due to the large windows. She was told to keep the curtains open every day from 9 o'clock to sunset and mentioned feeling watched as the family often spent time in the garden. On a day off when she slept in, the father woke her up and opened the curtains without telling her a word. When Mirona protested that she was off work and needed her privacy, the reasoning the father gave was simply: *"It's my rule. My house, my rules".* Participating hosts also enforced rules such as curfews and having visitors -mostly forbidding boyfriends- while some rules arose from a need to teach the children certain habits, like not using their phones during meals, a rule mentioned by Ellis. Communicating these rules was not done in the same way by all participants. Natasha preferred to do it throughout the exchange: "*Somehow it always worked. I don't know, probably you just kind of manage to communicate it across as we were going along. I was just kind of finding it too intimidating to tell them house rules at the beginning*". On the contrary communicating rules later in the exchange was challenging for Stella:

> *And so in a sense it does get more difficult really. Because then you've got all this personal relationship going on and then you have to start saying "I want you to change something". And then you are sort of reminding both of you that we are still also employer-employee.* (Stella, au pair host)

5.2.2 The au pair host role

5.2.2.1 Work

Au pairing relationships generally tend to be closer and more personal compared to WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX. This intimacy is due to a variety of factors such as the longer duration of the encounter and the caring nature of the job. The au pair hosts who participated in this study, while acknowledging it, often tried to downplay their employer role in the exchange, mainly focusing on the family or personal relationships that they developed with their au pairs. Despite the hosts trying to downplay their employer role, au pairs

are almost constantly aware of this aspect of the exchange and the power dynamic that comes with it. Being conscious of the employer-employee part of the relationship influences au pairs' behaviours and perceptions of the social element. Sofia disclosed that regardless of her positive relationship with the host father in her first experience, she kept a distance because she wanted to have clear boundaries between her work and personal life. She argued that the cohabitation with the family she worked for and the deeply personal relationship that develops with the children blurs the lines between work and private life, which consumed her:

> *You can't get away from all this, it's not like I go home and leave everything behind me. You're always inside this. That is what I saw as very negative […] In the end it exhausted me. I wanted that, a normal job. To be able to leave.* (Sofia, au pair)

As the overlap between roles is central in these exchanges, hosts had to acknowledge it as well:

> *When you are paying the other person there will always be an employer-employee relationship. That you are trying to smooth out. Because what is the purpose of au pairing? To come and get to know the country, get to know how a Greek family lives and get some pocket money to live from. So I want to believe it is somewhere in the middle.* (Morfo, au pair host)

Not all hosts try to deemphasise the working aspect. In some cases, they appear to be solely motivated by it and not afraid to express that to their au pairs. Mirona's hosts provided her with accommodation outside the home, did not include her in the family and gave her more cleaning tasks than childcare. She mentioned this made her feel like a cleaner rather than an au pair. On the other hand, Ulrike, had many issues with her first family as well who made her feel like they just wanted to *"have a low-paid worker in their house. That they can always depend on*". She believed they did not understand what being an au pair entails:

> *In the first family I always thought that they kind of expected a little bit too much from an au pair. They always said that I had to be professional and I don't know but I was living with them and it's kind of difficult to be professional then. So I always thought that they kind of expected too much from an au pair. That's not like a proper job where you... you have to be professional.* [...] *They, they always*

> *expected me to be perfect and do it like they want me to do it, exactly like... always smiling face and just being a robot kind of.* (Ulrike au pair).

The payment that is involved in au pairing, not considered a wage but pocket money, also differed between hosts. With the blurry and vague nature of the exchange, the payment is usually suggested by the agencies and decided by the hosts, as au pairs are not covered by labour law in most countries. Many of the participating hosts recognised that the pay was quite low but adding up the costs of accommodation, food and various other expenses incurred, they generally felt it balanced out. Joanna revealed that according to the relevant US laws, she was required to pay the au pair approximately $200 per week with an additional $500 towards their education. However, for the rest of the hosts who lived in European countries, the regulation was not as straightforward and they were able to decide on what they perceive as fair. Marianne and Stella paid their au pairs approximately £350 per month each. Ane and Luisa paid the highest reported amount, £500 per month, which Luisa increasing to £800-£900 over the summer holidays when the children were home and the au pair was busier. She argued that if she were to pay the au pair £75 a week, as the suggestion was, she would not have done it; she thought it would be embarassing for her and unfair to the au pair. Ellis, a single parent, mentioned the difficulty of paying for an au pair in a single income household. He paid his first au pairs around £300 but his fourth -and last- one negotiated her stipend up to £500. Ellis wondered: "*How do you value these things? Is 500 pounds fair? Is 1000 pounds fair? It was all about what was affordable to me"*. For interviewed au pairs the payment varied as well, with the average being around £80 a week. Evangelia who was a live-in nanny, without a contract and minimum wage, was the one getting the highest payment, a bit less than £200 per week. Spyros, the only male au pair in the sample, received the lowest payment of approximately €260 per month. Mirona, who was paid £75 per week, considered it to be quite low but did not try to negotiate with the parents. When she found out the next au pair was being paid £120 per week for the same role, she was not happy but admitted to not being able to question her hosts at the time as she was not aware what the normal rate was.

With regard to the au pair's responsibilities, hosts had different ways of communicating them. Some preferred to be upfront about the tasks they expected from the beginning, so the au pairs knew exactly what they had to do. This took the form of a list of jobs during the initial communication or a conversation at the beginning of the encounter. However, in all cases things changed during the visit and tasks would generally increase -and rarely decrease. Luisa had a different strategy. She delegated some work to her au pairs and in time increased their duties, as they started learning and being more comfortable with the job. She believed that this approach helped the au pairs gradually settle in their role and feel comfortable with their responsibilities. However, this was one of the participating au pairs' most common complaints; that the tasks they are assigned almost always multiply as time passes. Kasia mentioned the bags with the clothes she had to iron getting gradually fuller with clothes not only from the children and the mother but also the mother's boyfriend. Mirona said her host parents wrote her duties on a notebook every day rather than telling her. Susanne and Maria complained they were often unsure about their tasks as their host parents did not directly tell them what they needed. Susanne argued she had issues with the lack of directness from her hosts:

> *And then I was also like "Am I doing enough?". It would be easier to just say what they want from me. I think it also depends on your mood, how everything is with the parents, when they do like sneaky comment about something. And you do a lot for them that you don't have to do.* (Susanne, au pair)

Not all hosts admitted to being unhappy with the way their au pairs did the chores they had been tasked with. However, a few of them mentioned instances to demonstrate such situations. According to Natasha one of her au pairs was not proactive with doing housework. She tried various ways to make her au pair understand when certain things needed to be done:

> *And it just got to the point when for example this Italian one, she wouldn't remember, I had to remind her that it's time to clean. And I would be like embarrassed that my house turns into a mess and I felt like obliged I need to clean in front of her because I was feeling embarrassed. And I said "Ok, you know, it's enough" […] I was trying to show her that I was annoyed. She didn't pick on that [laughter].*

> *But sometimes I would tell her "Do you mind cleaning? Because it's time to clean". And I would just call it quickly on the door "Do you mind actually cleaning the floor today?". So I would say just the floor. Then I would notice the bathroom is for cleaning "I think it's time for the bathroom to be cleaned" and I will just tell her like that because at the end of the day I thought really, it's unfair for me to pay her this much money but for all that... I mean it's not a lot of money but at the end of the day she's still hardly doing anything* (Natasha, au pair host)

From her account it is evident that Natasha was annoyed by the lack of initiative shown by her au pair in terms of housework and went progressively from more passive – or even passive-aggressive - to more direct ways of expressing her requests. Noticing that the au pair had forgotten a task, initially she deliberately cleaned in front of her in hopes that the au pair would pick up on it, possibly feel guilty about forgetting the chore and do it. It can be suggested that Natasha did not feel as comfortable as an employer simply asking an employee to work, resorting to more indirect ways of prompting the au pair to do her tasks. When this did not work and Natasha became increasingly frustrated, while simultaneously keeping in mind the fact that she is paying her guest and thus felt she was in a way "owed" this work, she started openly asking for the tasks to be done. However, this does not necessarily mean she was completely comfortable doing that, as, in her own words, she often did it in passing, while she was at the door and not confronting her au pair directly about it. Natasha's inability to confront her au pair for not doing what she expected was not unique to her. Ellis appeared not to mind taking over certain tasks the au pair had not done: "*And if I saw something that I thought maybe the au pair could or should have done that, I had to look at this from the big picture. 'It will take me 30 seconds to do that, just do it', sort of idea".* While according to Ellis it was a matter of practicality and speed, he did avoid confronting his au pairs about not doing their tasks. Similarly, Marlies recounted how she often did tasks that she expected the au pair to do:

> *[…] if I go into the kids' room and I see, oh, this is not worth, I just do it myself. And my husband says "Talk to her, talk to her, tell her, she's supposed to do it". And I just do it myself [laughter].[…] I just feel silly to go and say "Look, you didn't do that". I mean, I just let her know afterwards to say "Yeah, can you please in the future do this*

> *and that" because yeah. In the moment I just do it myself [laughter].* (Marlies, au pair host)

As they are adapting to the new environment and work, au pairs occasionally make a few mistakes or misunderstand their hosts' requests. Most of the hosts, according to the au pairs, try to correct them in a gentle manner, explain to them what to do differently and give them positive reinforcement. Dorotea, for instance, argued it is very easy to work with her host mother as, when she wanted her au pair to do something in a different way, she always showed her how and explained the reason behind it. However, this gentle approach was not taken by all hosts. When Mirona's host father was unhappy with her ironing, he simply put back the shirts on the pile of clothes she had to iron rather than telling her. Spyros spent the most time with the host father, as the mother was often away for work. The father was not comfortable in communicating complaints; he told the mother who had a good relationship and frequent communication over the phone with Spyros, who in turn conveyed the complaints to their au pair. While the mother was always friendly in explaining the tasks or correcting him, Spyros recounted that the few times the father did it, he was blunter:

> *And I understood that in a way he had reached his quote unquote boiling point with how I was folding the clothes for instance. You know? And only then he would tell me. While he could have also told me from the first moment he saw it, why did he have to wait a month and a half to tell me?* (Spyros, au pair)

Faye, who was also happy in general with her hosts, recounted an occasion where she had told the child to go to bed and the father said she could stay up, followed by "Who is the boss in the house?". However, the mother supported Faye, telling the father it was the children's bedtime, prompting the daughter to say "Mom told daddy off". The situation was seen as funny, although Faye appeared somewhat annoyed recounting this expression of authority that undermined her.

5.2.2.2 Hospitality

As prescribed by the au pairing guidelines, the participating hosts offered accommodation to their guests and the majority provided a room in their home. Morfo was the only host who had a separate flat for her au pair, in walking distance from her house. Some hosts who had the option offered their au pairs rooms on a separate floor, like Marianne and Joanna, while others had a bathroom for them as well, like Jan and Nick. Most of the interviewed au pairs also had a room in the home, except for Mirona, Faye and Ulrike in her second experience, who were given separate accommodation. Mirona stayed in a studio flat in the family home's garden, Faye in a guest house over the home's garage and Ulrike in a flat attached to the family home.

Au pairs tend to spend a lot of their free time in their rooms after their work is over. This led to hosts generally not being overwhelmed by the presence of their guests and many argued that they did not have a need for privacy while Jan and Stella argued that, on the contrary, they had expected to spend more time with their au pairs. On the other hand, having au pairs increased the host's privacy according to Morfo, Luisa and Amanda, as they had more free time away from their children. However, hosts alluded to needing privacy or spoke about it openly in other points of the interview, when they were not asked directly. In moments where they desired some alone time, hosts either went to their rooms, like Ellis, or went out, like Nick. Natasha spoke about the one au pair who often made her uncomfortable:

> *We would rather retreat to our room. And it was strange because as soon as we go to our room, she would go to her bedroom. And it's like, then it was feeling weird for us to go down in the living room [laughter]. Because it would be really horrible, like we are trying to avoid you but we didn't tell you. We felt childish about it.* (Natasha, au pair host)

Participating au pairs recognised that their hosts needed alone time or family time without them. Dorotea pointed out how, when she first arrived, the family asked for privacy over the weekends, which she said made things 'a bit weird'. Evangelia and Sofia mentioned the family's need for privacy, apart from their own, as the reason for staying in their room after work. Sofia argued she avoided shared spaces when the host parents were at home: *"While they were*

there I also did it out of discretion, to give them their space. She's coming home from work, she may not be in the mood to talk or have someone [there]. She wants to feel that she is at home and to have her privacy". However, Sofia admitted her first hosts wanted her to be more present which she tried to do:

> *I didn't mind because it's a setting that can't be separated, you can't separate completely the professional from the personal life, the working hours from the free time. There is no clear distinction. Because it's about kids and you want them to be happy, you want them to feel close to you, you know?* (Sofia, au pair)

Apart from the space offered to the guests, the hosts' role involves providing food as well. Most hosts cooked for the family and their guests, with some sharing the task with their au pairs. Luisa cooked the previous day, so her au pairs would have lunch, but most hosts had the ingredients available for their guests to prepare their lunch themselves. They invited the au pairs to ask for any food they wanted, however au pairs generally did not require many things. Jan allowed his au pairs to ask for food unless it was snacks or very particular things, which they had to procure themselves. Joanna, likewise, directed her Japanese au pairs to shops with Asian food where they could buy specific ingredients, but she also reimbursed them for the food occasionally. While interviewed au pairs were generally satisfied with the food they were provided, this was not always the case, whether throughout the experience or on specific occasions. Evangelia, with her complex role between live-in nanny without a contract and au pair, was the only one whose food was not part of the agreement. Nonetheless, even the au pairs whose host parents cooked had to prepare their own lunch and quite often the children's lunch, as the hosts were usually at work during the day. Kasia and Mirona mentioned they appreciated when their hosts kept leftovers in the fridge for them to eat the next day for lunch.

Commensality can contribute to the family feeling that is promoted as part of the au pairing experience. Most of the interviewed hosts' au pairs had to have lunch alone as the host worked during the day, but dinners were shared when the schedule allowed it. For some hosts this was difficult due to their busy programmes and they tried to make it work whenever it was possible. Luisa's

and Ellis' au pairs had mostly dinner with the children due to the host parents' working hours, while Joanna and Marianne shared dinner with the au pairs. Stella gave her au pairs the choice of eating with the family or alone: *"[...] we did said to [au pair], I remember, 'If you wanna eat by yourself, it's your choice, we would love to have you eat with us'. And she just said 'No that would be weird'. But we wanted to give her the choice if she for some reason would want to eat on her own".* Others, like Jan and Marlies, had sharing meals as a house rule; Jan shared his reasoning behind this:

> *After the first au pairs, we say it's important to eat with us the evening meal. Because it's the only meal we spend together [...] We made the first rule about supper because otherwise we don't have any possibility to talk with her about the kids, about her living at home, about her parents, to know her better. Cause [morning] is very tight and at the evening is the time.* (Jan, au pair host)

The busy schedule of the interviewed au pairs' hosts usually only allowed dinner -and in some exceptions breakfast- to be shared. As mentioned earlier, for Spyros sharing dinner was a house rule but the rest of the au pairs had the option to eat with the families or alone and most opted for eating with the family. Maria mentioned how she changed her eating schedule to eat with the host family:

> *I'm used to dinner at 9-10 in the night and here is their dinner at 4.30. They don't force me, of course they don't, but I changed so it will be more comfortable for me as well to eat with them instead of eating alone in the night. Because by 10 in the night they are all already in bed [laughter]. Would be weird.* (Maria, au pair)

Mirona stopped eating with the host family as they did not inform her when it was dinner time or engage with her during their few shared meals, while expecting her to wash the dishes and clean the whole kitchen after the meal. She recounted a story of one of the few times she ate dinner with the family, which also discouraged her from joining them:

> *And also, once it happened that they cooked, like, some kind of dinner like meat with potatoes and vegetables and they didn't have enough for me left, so they just gave me a soup that they just heated up in the microwave. So, I was at the table and they all had their roasted dinner and I had a soup. And that was quite low. So, after that I was like nah [laughter].* (Mirona, au pair)

While most guests were content with the amount of food offered when they shared meals with their hosts, the rest of the food was not always adequate. In fact, some participants complained there was rarely enough food available for them to have meals during the day or the variety was very limited. While usually having the option to request food from their hosts, au pairs rarely did it due to discomfort or worries of burdening their hosts; if they wished for a snack or food outside the main meals, they preferred to buy it themselves. Ulrike described how the food available for her during her stay in the first home changed as her relationship with the host mother deteriorated:

> *But when they just cared about me less and less, they cared about my... the stuff they buy me for eating less and less. So they just got me the same things over and over again. Just pasta and noodles and stuff like this. [...] in the first family I sometimes didn't had anything to eat so I had to buy my own food. That's not really the purpose of the money that I'm getting [...] Also in the beginning they bought me like nice food, from Waitrose or something, and in the end I only got ASDA food [laughter].* (Ulrike, au pair)

Apart from their preferences, however, some au pairs followed a specific diet, different to the hosts. Joanna and her family, who are Jewish, while not keeping strictly kosher, did not eat pork or shellfish. She did, however, allow the au pairs to have it, as long as they used separate pans to cook their meals. One of Stella's au pairs who was unable to eat seafood or dairy, informed her just a few days before her arrival, which Stella was not too happy about. Despite saying she would have picked her anyway, Stella admitted they had to adapt their cooking that year. While hosts like Amanda and Jan mentioned they would not mind having a vegetarian au pair, even though it did not come up, for others a vegetarian or vegan au pair was not an option. For Natasha, it was not so much about the disruption of their routine but about the mentality that she believed comes with being a vegetarian, from her experience with vegetarian friends:

> *It's not the fact that they wouldn't eat the meat or it would create issues for me, no. Because I can clearly say to them "*Whatever*. Eat whatever you want, you can cook for yourself". But the way they think and why they do it, because they're so strongly opinionated, I just don't wanna live with that. [...] I find it, why would you impose your views on anybody else? And when it's my house, I wouldn't like*

> *somebody else to come and judge me. So this is why I would think twice if I have a vegetarian one.* (Natasha, au pair host)

Following a different diet did not appear to be a significant issue for interviewed au pairs as one side was always willing to adapt or accommodate the other, at least to a certain extent. The family Maria was staying with was vegetarian but they allowed her to cook meat if she wanted to. Evangelia and Ulrike were both vegetarian. For the former it was not an issue as she provided her own food but Ulrike was relying on the hosts to buy her food mainly. While it worked out well with her second family, in the first one she had issues after a while, when they stopped buying her anything more than very basic staples. She described their attitude towards this: *"Just, they didn't really care about what I want to eat and stuff like that. Just 'At least it's vegetarian, be happy with it.' [laughter]".*

Au pairs also had access to the fridge and cupboards for anything they wanted between meals, according to the hosts. Unless it was something that would be used for cooking, participants argued they gave complete access to their guests. Nick allowed his au pairs to take anything they wanted, even his alcohol. Natasha's au pairs felt comfortable to take anything they needed, which she was pleased by. Similarly, most hosts told interviewed au pairs they could take whatever they wanted and while the levels of comfort differed between au pairs, none of them were completely comfortable to do so. Kasia, for instance, would make herself a sandwich with ingredients available but would not take snacks and biscuits: *"[...] you just feel like I don't want to take it from them, even though I'm sure she would be okay with it. But I always felt like I'm taking their food, it's like, you know [laughter]. Would she think…? Yeah so I was not comfortable in this way at all"*. Susanne had similar thoughts. Regardless of her hosts' openness, she did not want it to appear that she was taking advantage of them: "*The host parents really don't care I think, they're like 'Use it' and everything but it's just you and sometimes you feel awkward using the kitchen. And at home you would be like 'Yeah, I do that, I'm still hungry'. And there you're like 'Mmmm am I eating too much? Am I eating this or that?'. So you sometimes feel awkward but it's just you"*. For Ulrike, a previous experience deterred her from taking from the food available. A snide comment from the host mother when she ate children's cereal because it had "*like cookie things and they look like*

kids' " made her stop eating it but did not prevent the host mother from blaming her whenever the children's cereal was finished.

5.2.3 Interpersonal Relationship

All of the hosts stated they tried or managed to integrate the au pairs into their families. Yet the type of family relationship that the hosts mentioned having with their au pairs differed. The au pairs were often referred to as "part of the family" and "family member" but the definition of these terms appeared to differ between hosts. While some participants used these vague terms to describe the au pair's role, with this lack of specification making the role more fluid, others were more specific. A common characterization was big sister to the children. Being a "sister" to the children, nonetheless, did not necessarily mean the au pair was a "child" to the parent. Some hosts, like Luisa, welcomed the opportunity to take over a parental role, while others preferred to avoid the responsibility of taking care of a further individual. Nick actively looked for older au pairs to avoid becoming a surrogate father who had to worry about them. Still, when asked to describe his role, he characterised it as paternal and added that he believed his au pairs saw him as "another dad".

In many cases the au pair hosts considered their guest as another child in the family, with a need to protect them. Morfo felt with one of her au pairs like having two children as she had to care for her like her own child, reminding her to take her things, use sunscreen etc. She also wondered about the au pairs' parents' ease to have their children go abroad without sufficient information:

> *I was always thinking how her parents send this girl without knowing who we are and without, 19, 20 years old, ever having a parent communicate with us, telling us "Guys, we'll send you our daughter. Let's exchange a few words, know your phone number, who you are, where you are etc".* (Morfo, au pair host)

Likewise, some hosts, particularly ones who viewed themselves as host parents, spoke with their au pairs' parents before or early into the encounter. It appeared that perceiving these young people, and more so if they were women, as a "child" or "girl" as they were referred to, affected the dynamic significantly.

These hosts believed it was best to talk to the parents and reassure them about their child's safety, a conversation usually initiated by them. While being a young adult, often taking the first step to an independent life far from their parents, the au pair is still treated as a child whose parents need to be informed and reassured. This approach, despite the, often, good intention behind it, can reduce the au pair's agency, as will be evidenced in some of the au pairs' narratives. Stella was aware of that, as with one of her au pairs who she saw more like a child and felt the need to take care of, the relationship was more "top down", not as equal as with the other ones and she could not relate to her as much.

On the other hand, when au pair hosts perceived their guests to be their friends, like Ellis characterized one of his au pairs, or their own sisters, with Natasha and Ane mentioning that was how they saw one of their au pairs respectively, the relationship was more egalitarian. In these cases, however, the relatively small or no age difference was mentioned to play a big part as well. On the other side of the spectrum, the big age difference was mentioned by Joanna as a factor of the lack of closeness between her and her au pairs, who she saw as distant family. Natasha elaborated on why she thought the au pair she saw as a sister was her favourite:

> *[…] she was the best one I ever had. She was actually my age and that was the only one that we became, like, proper friends. It came to the point that I felt I was at University again sharing- we would exchange clothes, we would talk about personal things. With neither of them I became that close. Maybe because this one was exactly the same age as me, I don't know, it's possible. But anyway she was really reliant and she would help me with cooking, cleaning without me even needing to ask*. (Natasha, au pair host)

The success of this endeavour, however, also depended on compatibility of personalities, as some mentioned certain au pairs did not fit in their families as much as others. Particularly hosts who had had multiple experiences mentioned that some of their au pairs became closer to the family than others mainly due to their personalities but also depending on their ease of working with the children, their work ethic and initiative and their willingness to spend free time with the family. While her husband had a more fun and sibling-like

relationship with the au pair, for Marlies the relationship was a bit more complicated:

> *It's difficult, sometimes, I mean we're not that much, like, the age gap is not that big but sometimes, just it's like, when she gets out, like, "Let me know when you get home" or "Where are you going?" it's just like, you feel like a bit of mum, even though I'm only 14 years older than her, so… And I don't know I think it's maybe like a sister or, it is difficult to describe, she's definitely, she's, she's part of the family. I cannot, like, place her, it's eh… Yeah, my husband always mocks me that I'm, like, being her mum [laughter]* (Marlies, au pair host)

Amanda and Stella decided to test out living with an extra person in the home before having au pairs. Amanda invited a distant relative for two months and Stella her niece for a year. However, they both realized that the au pair being an actual family member can introduce further complications to the relationship. Amanda mentioned a certain level of dependence the au pair had on the family and her own feeling of obligation to entertain her; a need she did not feel with her other au pairs. Stella on the other hand, worrying that her niece would not take the role seriously and do her job properly, by her own admission went too hard on introducing her to the job. This led to her niece perceiving the exchange completely as work related and not spending any further time with the family.

For the au pairs, the family narrative came up but not as commonly as it did from hosts. The au pairs generally expressed feeling welcome and comfortable in their hosts' homes but not always part of the family, whether their hosts tried to make them feel as a family member or not. Only Dorotea said she felt like a family member explicitly. Many of the au pairs had been told by their hosts that they were part of the family but they did not feel that, with some recounting stories that made it obvious to them this was not the case. Whether it was work or space related issues, au pairs were occasionally reminded they were not family members, despite their hosts' assurances. The host parents trying to accommodate the au pairs and make them feel welcome sometimes inhibited the family aspect of the relationship. Ulrike, for instance, explained:

> *Now in the family, I feel, not as a part of the family really but almost. I feel like they're really kind but they, like they kind of treat me special. It's more like a guest and not like really part of the family. Which is*

> *nice but it doesn't really... It takes a little bit distance between us. And I'm also like, little bit a person that doesn't get... It takes time for me to get close to people. And I think just half a year is not enough for me to get really close to them. I like them and everything but... I wouldn't say I'm really part of the family*. (Ulrike, au pair)

The au pairs who felt like members of the family used this term without specifying the relationship to the parents. Some felt like big sisters to the children but not such a strong connection with the parents. Susanne expressed her thoughts about the relationship, the lack of clarity that came with the role and how she divided it in her mind:

> *I think you are a mixture of family and employee. And it's also that it's so much in your private life. You can't really separate between that. You never know when is it like doing this family stuff, when is it this employee. I think you can kinda say when am I alone with the kids and when are the parents home. But you can't really separate that. Because your hours end when the family is home so everything you do then extra, it's like family, you do it kinda for them. And when they are gone you do it because you have to, because it's your job. I think that's what you can kinda separate there.* (Susanne, au pair)

Maria was an example of an au pair being perceived as a child by the parents. Maria said while she did feel close to them, it was not like her own family. However, she said the host mother treated her as her own daughter, telling her to take her jacket when she goes out in the winter. A story that Maria recounted illustrates certain issues that can come up when the au pair is treated like a child. Maria, being Spanish, was used to eating small meals throughout the day as opposed to the two large meals her host family ate. The host mother became worried about the amounts Maria was eating and mentioned it to her. When Maria did not change her habits, her host mother warned her that she would call her parents and tell them about it. This is an indicative example of the au pair being infantilized and removing her feeling of agency as a responsible adult, which led to Maria finally deciding to react and telling her host mother that, while she appreciated her concern, she wanted these comments to stop.

Sofia, on the other hand, purposefully chose two single parent households. Engaging in this exchange in her late 20s and having lived independently before, she did not want to integrate in the families and preferred having a certain level of freedom. Elaborating on her first experience, apart from her own

desire to be independent, she felt she could not become a member of the family due to the circumstances. With the father working many hours she believed the family feeling was lost in the home already. Furthermore, being the first au pair after the parents' separation gave her a difficult role that created a rift between her and the children who thought she was there to replace their mother. Nonetheless, Sofia said in the end the children got used to her presence in their father's home and the relationship became smoother. In her second experience, she echoed Natasha and Ane's feelings that the small age gap between her and her host facilitated a friendship between them.

5.2.4 Education

The educational aspect in au pairing is not particularly strong, although the experience is often presented as educational, with the au pairs being expected to learn the local language and culture. American law requires au pairs to take college classes during their stay, paid by the host. However, European au pair laws are not as structured, so the au pair is not required to take classes and the host is not expected to pay for them. Most of the interviewed hosts' au pairs did not take language classes, whether by their own choice or not. Nonetheless, most au pair hosts believed their guest's language skills enhanced significantly through the interactions with the family.

Stella tried to convince her au pairs to take English classes, successfully in some cases and others not. Ellis was the only host who provided English lessons to one of his au pairs, reading books with her, while Joanna's au pairs, with the exchange taking place in the United States, were taking the compulsory college classes either to learn English or other courses. Some of the hosts, like Amanda and Marlies, believed her au pairs benefited from learning cooking skills as part of their duties. Others considered the au pairs learning about childcare through their work was a significant asset for their future.

The au pairs themselves did not highlight the educational element notably either. Only two of the interviewed au pairs took educational courses during their stay; Kasia who took English classes which she paid for herself and Faye

who had to take college courses due to au pair regulations in the United States. However, the ones staying in the UK appreciated practicing and improving their English knowledge by talking with the family. Maria was one of the au pairs who welcomed every teaching opportunity she could get from her experience. She was happy to advance her English through conversations with her hosts, learn about the British culture, maturing and becoming more responsible through working with children as well as learning housekeeping skills. Dorotea, who had a previous interest in Jewish culture and chose her family with that in mind, was grateful she could experience the culture from within, try the food and practice her Hebrew language skills.

5.2.5 Cultural Exchange

With au pairs coming from a different country than the hosts', cultural exchange is a significant part of the encounter. Both hosts and guests argued that a certain level of openness to other cultures is necessary to participate in these exchanges. Naturally au pairs are the ones who usually adapt to the family's culture and customs as mentioned by au pairs but also by some hosts. Joanna, however, was among some of the hosts who somewhat adapted to her guests' culture to make them feel welcome. As she had exclusively Japanese au pairs, she followed the Japanese hospitality custom of buying new towels for each guest rather than providing towels she had in the home. Other hosts mentioned buying food from the home country of the au pair to ease their integration into the new environment.

Many hosts were motivated to invite guests exactly for this cultural exchange, with Morfo for instance wanting her children to learn the French language and culture. They characterised it as an enriching, educational experience that exposed them and their children to people from different countries. From the au pair's side while not all were motivated by the cultural experience, quite a few ended up enjoying it. Participants from both sides mentioned having discussions about the history, culture, traditions and sometimes politics of their respective countries. Faye, a Greek au pair staying with a Greek-American

family was surprised to discover Easter traditions that she was unaware of. Maria was very excited to learn about British culture:

> *But the thing that I'm taking with me is the culture. Because I learned English but- now I can talk better of course. But I can understand things that you cannot learn. You cannot learn culture things. You cannot, they cannot teach you at the school why do they do this, why do they do this this way. […] Cause you learn things about their cultures as well. I know things about Italy for example, or from the USA just from the TV or from the internet I couldn't understand the real meaning or the real way it is.* (Maria, au pair)

The cultural exchange created, reinforced or resulted from certain stereotypes. Hosts often chose their au pairs based on their nationality or made assumptions about them due to their background. Au pairs from Mediterranean countries were expected to be warm and loving, au pairs from Germanic countries efficient but also cold and so on. Nonetheless, au pairs also attributed certain behaviours of their hosts to their ethnicity, with Susanne being German and characterising her Scottish/American hosts as more spontaneous than herself, something that caused issues to her wish to have a more organised work schedule. Sofia perceived the reactions of the host parents to some situations with the children colder than she would have liked, attributing that to their nationality.

For this cultural exchange to be possible a personal relationship has to develop, and the exchange has to be reciprocal. Au pairs who had a strained or distant relationship with the parents did not report benefitting from learning about their host country and its customs. However, some au pairs also refrained from developing such an exchange with their hosts as in one of Stella's encounters, where the au pair did not reciprocate the interest her hosts showed in her country:

> *That's probably a part of why we didn't feel like it was a great match, just because even though we were the host family, we can feel rejected too [laughter]. You know? It can feel like "Ok, so we're not...". Because I think it's a cultural exchange, it's not one way, either way. Yes, we love to hear about Germany, we ask about what do you eat, what do you do? And when you never ever get a question back, you do feel like a little bit "Okay..." [laughter] "We could be interesting too".* (Stella, au pair host)

5.2.6 WWOOF, Workaway, HelpX: Guests' Role

5.2.6.1 Work

Most of the interviewed guests stayed in farms and did farm related jobs with a few exceptions. The most common task asked of the guests was weeding, a job that did not require a particular skill or knowledge and thus was often delegated to the untrained guests. Other tasks included feeding and caring for animals, planting seeds, picking fruits and vegetables. Nonetheless, a few of the participants undertook other types of work, such as dog walking, house chores, language practice or in some cases helping the hosts with their own jobs, like cleaning houses or tending to customers, preparing meals and cleaning the rooms for hosts who had hostels or Bed and Breakfasts. The type of work most interviewed hosts demanded from their guests was related to farming. Hosts had various types of estates, spanning from houses with big gardens, non-commercial farms to commercial farms and Bed and Breakfasts, agritourism businesses etc. Correspondingly, the jobs their guests undertook were varying. While most were related to organic farming, some hosts required their volunteers to help with housework, paying guests, building and maintenance work.

The official websites of the organisations indicate that a typical working schedule was between four and six hours a day, five to six days a week. The length of guests' workday differed significantly not only between individuals but often between experiences of the same person. The minimum hours of work mentioned was three while the maximum was nine hours per day but most participants worked between four and six hours daily. If the stay was longer than a week, they had either one or two days off weekly. Some of them were given the flexibility to switch days off or work more hours in a day to get more free time on another day, but this was not always the case. Interviewed hosts required between four and six hours per day for five to six days a week, but many were flexible with having them work more hours on a day to get time off on another. A few of the hosts did not keep track of the hours worked, as long as the tasks were completed. Timothy, for instance, gave his WWOOFers projects and allowed them to work at their own pace. Kelvin mentioned most of

his WWOOFers worked more than the four hours he asked them to, until they were done, often going on for a full day. He did, however, require them to keep a work log when he was away so he could know what chores had been completed.

The majority of the participating guests had little to no prior experience with farming before their travels. The prospect of learning about farming and sustainable living or even just trying an alternative lifestyle appealed to them and in many cases their expectations were met. Working with animals, planting and harvesting, while living in conditions completely different than what they were used to and meeting new people was a very enjoyable undertaking. According to Vanessa:

> *And I was like, "I don't mind what you have me do. I just want to do something in the sunshine". It was mostly like weeding and picking things up. I was outside most of the day, so I think I got a tan and I was like "Ah, summertime!". […] I just really wanted to be somewhere outside for a little bit. And that was nice.* (Vanessa, WWOOFer)

A small amount of housework was required by all guests, whether that was doing the dishes after meals or keeping their own quarters clean and tidy. However, in some cases housework was a central part of the jobs the guests had to do. In Clidna's case this was her job in a Workaway exchange in Spain, while for Cara one of her tasks was kitchen duty, on rotation for all the WWOOFers, which included preparing meals, doing the dishes and cleaning up after everyone. Irene, who was WWOOFing with her boyfriend Sean, was not too happy in one of their encounters where Sean was given "*all the boy jobs and whatever*", as she sarcastically remarked, while she was tasked with vacuuming, washing and making lunches. Not only did she feel unfulfilled with the lack of proper WWOOFing tasks related to organic farming in general, but she was also displeased with the fact that she, as a woman, was given all these chores that made her feel like a 'housemaid'. While most interviewed hosts expected their guests to clean after themselves and help with the dishes after eating, some expected further housework. Indra wanted her guests to help with cooking and cleaning, something she had entered in the role description on her WWOOF and Workaway profiles. Brianna preferred discussing with her guests

to establish everyone's preferences and divide the chores like cooking, doing dishes etc. Cooking was not necessarily always required but a welcome help, especially if the guest had knowledge of a different cuisine than the host was used to. Niharika mentioned how some guests cooked for the family as an act of gratitude:

> *And usually almost everyone who comes cooks something. They like to do that we've noticed- and we don't require it but usually at some point they would offer "Could I make dinner for you tonight? There's one thing I know how to make. It's an omelette and I'd love to make you my special omelette". And so usually we do that once.* (Niharika, WWOOF host)

Being unhappy with a specific type of work was not uncommon for the guests. Sean and Irene, both vegetarian, avoided undertaking tasks that were against their ideology. Weeding, a repetitive and tedious task that needs no skill, was quite often assigned to the guests. Apart from Kelly who was the only one claiming she enjoyed weeding, many of the other participants were not pleased. Vanessa, who was given this duty due to her lack of prior farming experience, felt deprived of the chance to learn about organic farming. Christine complained that she got bored and her hands were hurting from weeding and after a while asked her hosts to give her another task instead. Philip spoke about his experience with weeding:

> *[...] usually the moment that you know it's coming is when a farmer says "I will never ask you to do anything that I wouldn't do myself". Which is a great saying to actually practice. But when a farmer is saying that what they're actually saying is "I'm about to ask you to do something that I am never gonna do myself". So that will usually entail weeding their garden by hand. If you decided not to do the weeding yourself and walked off and the farmer had to do it himself, that's when you would see a weed eater come out. Or you would see money come out. They would pay someone to do it. [...] Those are kind of the tasks that really upset me. Cause I know I'm doing something no one would ever do themselves*. (Philip, WWOOFer)

It appears this phrase Philip mentioned is indeed common in hosts' narratives. Kat argued that while the jobs may be demanding, she would neither ask her guests to do something she would not do nor expect them to keep up with her. Likewise, Helen said she never asks guests to do anything she has not done a "*hundred times (her)self*". Nonetheless, occasionally, interviewed hosts had

guests who were displeased with a particular task that they delegated to them. Anthony mentioned that when the relationship between him and his guests was good, they felt comfortable enough to tell him when they did not enjoy a task. Some hosts, like Kat, tried to accommodate their guests by giving them a different project, whereas others were stricter. Niharika, who acknowledged the tedious nature of weeding, asked her WWOOFers to do it as it is necessary work but tried to balance it out with other types of work. Rachel gave an example of a guest who refused to work and she felt she had to draw the line:

> *Yeah, there was one girl who said "I don't wanna do any more of this" and I said "Well, I'm gonna have to say to you I can't give you any food if you don't do something to help for the food". And that was a really uncomfortable position but I just needed to draw a line for her. She wanted a free holiday. And she stayed and kept going, we just needed to have that very clear conversation.* (Rachel, WWOOF host)

Working more than the expected hours was not always a grievance for the guests, as long as they did not feel taken advantage of. Most enjoyed the nature of the work, and felt accomplished performing hard manual labour, learning new skills and finally managing to carry out tasks they initially had trouble with. In some cases, having started a project and the prospect of seeing the finished result kept them motivated to continue after their agreed upon hours, even if their hosts did not require them to. Working more was also a way of showing gratitude to their hosts for their hospitality. Ruth and Eve gave similar examples of situations when their hosts were away and they cleaned their homes to thank them. Christine argued she worked harder on one farm to ensure her hosts did not think she was abusing their hospitality, after they told her a story about the previous WWOOFers who were not working hard enough, while Sean and Irene argued that when they got along better with their hosts they were likely to do more work, as they knew they would get more out of it with it being a reciprocal relationship. WWOOF host Indra gave the example of a Belgian couple, who, similar to the accounts of Ruth and Eve, worked longer to show appreciation for the hospitality offered by their host: "*Like the couple from Belgium we kept having to ask them to have a break, or 'You should be done for the day'. Cause they were very hard workers and they feel that they're here eating food and staying in the camper that they should work hard.*"

Nonetheless, guests were not always happy to work more than what had been agreed on. Eve decide to cut her first encounter short when she realised her host, who sought WWOOFers to help with her job cleaning houses, started reducing the amount of work she was doing and had Eve do the majority of the cleaning. Vanessa mentioned feeling overworked in one of her experiences while Philip had often endured exhausting conditions and excessive hours in his four year-long WWOOF travels. Cara, who was working quite long hours compared to the average, even when being put on her favourite task, gardening, argued that after eight hours "*of being hunched over, watering and harvesting and all of that [...] I didn't have the same, kind of bright-eyed motivation that I had initially".* However, the feeling of exploitation was not confined to the situations where the work was too much. Molly felt she was being taken advantage of by her host who was running a commercial hospitality operation relying completely on Workawayers, without any paid staff, thus profiting directly from their labour. The lack of interpersonal relationship, among other things, made Clidna and her husband feel like the housekeeper in one of her experiences and Ruth feeling like 'the help'.

Many interviewed hosts also experienced situations with individuals who tried to take advantage of the exchange in the hope of getting a free holiday. While this did not change their positive view of the programme, it affected the particular experiences negatively. Frank mentioned an instance of a hippie bus that arrived on their property with 12 people instead of eight, as they had told him beforehand. He said while a few worked, others did no work at all, used their electricity, Wi-Fi and tools. Lara also mentioned having guests who slept late and then had trouble working later in the day due to the heat, while Brianna recounted an experience with two guests who struggled to work, which, as she found out eventually, was because they were partying until late every night in a nearby popular destination spot, the actual reason they chose to go to her farm.

5.2.6.2 Hospitality

Being able to live for a short time in a stranger's house is a prerequisite for anyone wanting to participate in this exchange. The level of comfort with this condition differed between individuals with it being a non-issue for some and others facing obstacles stemming from personality differences, behaviours from the host or the state of the accommodation provided. While a small number of participants argued that they felt at home in the places they stayed at, others indicated the temporary nature of the stay and thus an inability to develop the feeling of being at home. Eve explained that while she felt like being at home in her encounters, she was constantly looking for the next place to stay, thus highlighting the transient nature of the experience and the shifting feeling of home in these short exchanges. Irene mentioned that the initial nervousness had subsided and turned into excitement whenever she and Sean visited a new host. However, she claimed: "*I mean in everyone's house, we say we're comfortable, but you're always still in someone's house [laughter]. You know, you can't fully, in most places, you can't fully relax and, you know, walk around in your pyjamas or you know"*. Zoe did not necessarily mind the discomfort: *"And it's nice just to come in to someone's- so you have to kinda get used to that, to come into someone else's living space and live on their terms and not know anything that's going on and just kind of be comfortable in that discomfort"*. Having a stranger in the home comes with complications but many interviewed hosts argued they were used to it and had no issues. For some of the hosts, like Helen and Kat, having experience for years, whether with these exchanges or other types of commercial and non-commercial hospitality created an openness that allowed them to welcome their guests with few or no concerns. On the other hand, Anthony and Indra mentioned having some initial doubts before they invited strangers in their home, but their apprehension waned in time.

The freedom to move around the home depended on the hosts' rules, whether verbal or implied. The majority of guests had access to most rooms apart from the hosts' bedroom and while this was not always indicated by hosts, participants recognised that it is an unspoken rule and common sense to respect their privacy. Sean considered it easy to figure out where they could

go: "*Usually there's been good boundaries between their space and the sort of communal space*". Ekin and Molly who were allowed everywhere, did not want to make their hosts uncomfortable by going to certain parts of the house. Philip mentioned that many hosts told him that specific areas were restricted, such as rooms, attics, basements etc. Most common areas like living room, kitchen and bathroom were open to the guests if they were living in the home. However, they had to adapt to the hosts' schedules and often the access to shared spaces was restricted by their routines. Naturally, participating hosts who provided room in their home for their guests shared more space than ones who offered separate accommodation. When their quarters were independent, guests were usually invited to the house for meals, social exchanges or access to the bathroom when needed. Several hosts who had their guests in their home as well as some who offered separate accommodation, allowed their visitors access to the whole house. Nonetheless, almost every host mentioned that guests were respectful of the private spaces, mostly referring to the bedroom. Helen decided to change the rules after an early experience with one of her guests:

> *She was here for a month and I realised after that, that I don't want people using my bathroom. So now I tell them, any volunteer who's living here, if they're just coming for the day, it's different, I tell them I would prefer if they just used the upstairs bathroom and not my bathroom. That's all. And that's like laid out in the very beginning. So that was the only instance where I felt like my privacy was being intruded on. I wanted to have that bathroom for myself. Cause I think I wanted to do something and she was in there. Now if my partner [name] is in there, I can just walk in. You know what I mean? But not a stranger* (Helen, WWOOF host)

One common issue that came up in the hosts' interviews regarding shared space was access to the living room, quite often due to the Wi-Fi not reaching the guest's room or outside accommodation. Guests often wanted to spend time in the evenings on their electronic devices and the only way they could have internet access in some homes was in the living room. While most hosts who encountered this issue tried to be as accommodating as possible, sometimes they felt overwhelmed. Frank and Angela set a rule that guests could stay in the living room until 8 to use the internet so that they could have their space afterwards. Brianna, on the other hand, told her guests openly when

they were spending too much time in the living room after work, that she needed to go to bed. Anthony recounted a story of a guest who did not appear to understand the social norms of this situation:

> *We had one very very awkward young man who I think had... what is it? I think was maybe slightly Aspergic. He just didn't pick up social cues. So he would do things like, on his, on his laptop, he would play funny comedy series and sit there snorting with laughter to himself and some of it was quite rude. I mean it was quite funny when we ended up watching it, but he would be having a private experience in a public space of a small living room [...] He was kind of young enough and wrong enough for you to say: "Listen. This... no. You need to do things a bit differently. Would that be ok, can we agree on that?"* (Anthony, Workaway host)

Privacy is a complicated issue in these exchanges. The level of involvement with the host is mostly up to them and guests are rarely able to change that. When the accommodation offered was inside the home, the guests had to find ways to spend time alone. The most common method was going into their own quarters. When they were staying with other volunteers, they went outside to be alone, but generally the participants did not seem to mind cohabitation which they saw as part of the experience. Interviewed hosts also recognised that their guests needed privacy. Most tried to avoid entering their space unless necessary and always after asking for permission. Guests also had the option to spend their spare time separate from their hosts and they often left to explore the surrounding area. Vincent left the choice on the guests: *"We let them know they can be as private or as public as they want to be. So they can have their own borders"*.

Workawayer Molly, nonetheless, was uncomfortable staying in the same quarters with men, while Clidna and her husband were unhappy being given a room in the hostel they were working at that was shared with paying customers, rather than the private room they were promised. Kira, on the other hand who was sharing a space with the hosts' son, while enjoying his company, mentioned feeling watched and thus having to adapt her behaviour: *"Especially because when we stayed in the cottage the son was there, so it kind of, we never would have done anything anyway but because he was there it added an extra incentive to behave [laughter]"*. Hosts appeared to mostly allow the guests

their privacy and not enter their quarters. Philip, however, had encountered issues with hosts not respecting his privacy:

> *There's been many points where after a week or so you finally feel like you're kinda settling in, you may have hung a picture [laughter] or brought something extra out of your vehicle into the home that you wouldn't normally do that unless you were comfortable. And then all of a sudden, you're out in the field working and you come back in and the farm owner's mom or sister is in your room. And you're like "What are you doing? Why are you in my room?" and like "Uh, this isn't your room". […] Those places automatically, someone walks in without knocking or someone walks in and I'm not there, I've immediately felt fully violated. It's like someone breaking in your home. A lot of places are that way too. They don't believe in that. They just view things as "These are mine and you're in MY house. So I get to walk in, do whatever I want, any time I want".* (Philip, WWOOFer)

Every house has rules and rituals, whether spoken or unspoken, and the hosts' homes are no exception. These rules may apply to everyone in the household or just to guests. The most frequent rules mentioned were about environmental conservation techniques the hosts practiced, as many participants in these types of exchanges are employing sustainable practices not only in their farming but also in their way of life. Thus, guests often had to ensure they save water when showering or washing up, limit their use of electricity and recycle. While this was expected and appreciated by most, as they tend to share these values of sustainability, Zoe expressed surprise with one of her experiences:

> *I remember at the first place they have their own kind of small water pump or tank or septic system. So at the toilet, you can't flush toilet paper down then. And they want you to be very frugal with toilet paper. So kinda upon first entering the house, they're essentially kinda telling you how to wipe your butt [laughter]. You know, that at first it's like "Well, this is a little odd. Okay".* (Zoe, WWOOFer)

Hosts acknowledged the need to set up house rules to ensure a smooth experience for both sides. These rules were often a result of the host noticing something they disliked, like in Brianna's case, who found she had to clarify them from the beginning of the encounter: "*There were people that made me do these rules super clearly. Like, that didn't work. And I tried to tell them midstream, but once you start doing something it's hard to stop*". The most common rules were no smoking, drugs or excessive alcohol, which were also

seen as something expected, and many farmers had rules related to conservation of water and energy. Nonetheless, every farm had its specific needs and thus farmers often had particular rules for their guests. Niharika, for instance, asked her guests to avoid staying outside and making noise at night as it would be heard not only by her family but also her neighbours. She also mentioned a rule that applied to her family as well, not eating in the living room as she would have to clean after them. Helen did not allow her guests to leave their personal belongings on the porch, where customers passed, while Anthony restricted the shower time for guests. However, guests adjusting to the hosts' routines and way of life, not only due to the rules set by hosts, was appreciated. Effie was particularly happy with a guest who she felt was especially aware of the social norms in this situation:

> *And I personally really enjoyed that experience because her level of maturity and even things like, she was so aware, like there's some things- she didn't want to take my seat at the table or she didn't, I forget what it was. But she was so attuned to the fact that this was our house and she was a guest and there was a level that I think her age made a difference on that. And it was kind of nice for me that she had that awareness more so than a really young person would have.* (Effie, WWOOF host)

5.2.7 WWOOF, Workaway, HelpX Hosts' Role

5.2.7.1 Work

Some hosts mentioned initial hesitation in participating in these exchanges, fearing that the size or type of property they have may not be appropriate for it or interesting to volunteers. Frank and Angela as well as Niharika for instance had houses with a large garden as opposed to a proper farm but after starting the exchange they found that people were still interested in visiting them. A few of the hosts, like Anthony and Niharika, had the farm as a side project while working in other jobs. Others, like Vincent, were operating further businesses like Bed and Breakfasts on their properties, but for most farming was their main occupation. Many of the hosts bought their farms after retiring and some, like Kat, had been farmers for most of their lives. The interviewed guests, on the

other hand, described a variety of different types of places they stayed in, from family homes in Thailand and small organic farms in France to religious communities in the USA and from hostels in Nicaragua to large cattle stations in Australia. Most of them had multiple experiences during their travels and met diverse hosts. They appeared to appreciate hosts who were passionate about their job and did not see their farms just as a business, as these mostly saw the encounter from a social and educational perspective rather than just a work exchange. These hosts were usually the most involved ones, teaching and encouraging their guests while appreciating their help rather than treating them like cheap labour. It has to be noted that when guests were asked about hosts that stood out positively, they mainly focused on the social aspect rather than the work aspect, often not minding being overworked or staying in basic accommodation, if their hosts were friendly and welcoming.

Many hosts considered working with their volunteers as part of their role. Acknowledging the fact that their guests were not necessarily knowledgeable about farming, they worked alongside them to supervise, direct but also educate them. In a few cases, hosts were not able to work as much as their guests due to age or ability. Hosts like Effie and Theo and Kelvin appreciated having young and strong people helping them, as they did not have the energy they had when they were younger. Indra, while still being young, had certain mobility limitations and was not able to work as much as she did in the past. Nonetheless, her mother was working alongside their guests and Indra herself was supporting her guests as much as she could. Effie and Theo stated they prefer to work alongside their guests and occasionally, when they felt comfortable with their knowledge, let them work by themselves, while Niharika believed the outcome of the work is much better when they work together as she is able to spot any issues in time. Kat considered it part of her role not only to educate her guests and show them how to do the tasks but also to set the work ethic:

> *On the other hand, what I find is that, and this is another really important thing for all WWOOF hosts to recognise, is you're the one who sets the work ethic. If you say "Ok, you go do this and this and this" and I sit in the house at the table and I'm looking at Facebook then I'm screwing up right then and there. Because I'm not showing*

> *them that actually this is the time of day we get some work done.* (Kat, WWOOF host)

With the motivation to learn, most guests enjoyed encounters where the host worked alongside them, demonstrated and explained what needed to be done, rather than just giving them responsibility and leaving them to it. The guests did not want to be micromanaged, but they appreciated guidance and feedback. Eve was appreciative and amazed by one of her hosts who was half paralyzed, and yet worked alongside her and engaged with her outside of work. However, while most of the guests' encounters were generally positive with guidance offered by the farmers, it was not always the case. Ruth and Philip came across farms with WWOOF managers, who were WWOOFers themselves working for the hosts long term and in charge of the other guests. In these cases, the contact with the hosts was minimal as the teaching and supervising duties fell on the managers. It appeared those hosts were not willing to socialise much with their WWOOFers, defying the purpose of the exchange and turning it into a simple labour relationship. Or, in more extreme cases like in Erin's, a feeling of doing 'slave labour':

> *Yes, the place in Portugal I guess there was a little premonition, we ended up leaving and we left with the other two, there was an American and a Spaniard, we left early, we left together. The farm itself was a bit opportunistic, it started feeling like we were slave labour. [...] But it went beyond of what we felt was acceptable in terms of what time we're gonna put in the farm. And we were there to enjoy ourselves as well. But they crossed that line.* (Erin, WWOOFer)

When it came to asking their guests to do something further than their regular duties or work for longer hours, hosts approached the issue in different ways. A common response was negotiation of the hours, allowing the guest to take more time off on one of the following days. Other hosts argued that they did not count the hours and neither did most of the guests, so it was not an issue. Beth and her husband had chosen to pay their guests for any further tasks they undertook. However, almost all hosts conveyed that they were asking their guests in a polite way, rather than requiring it, and generally allowed them to refuse, even though refusal on the part of the guests was rare according to hosts' accounts. Naturally guests also preferred when hosts asked them rather

than demanding it. Erin argued that, while she understood a farm has certain needs, in the context of these transactions it should be her choice if she wants to work more and not her host's. Zoe's second host always checked in with his guests and reminded them they did not have to do anything they felt uncomfortable with or was too much for them in terms of time or physical effort. Vanessa recounted a comment by her host when she had completed her working hours on of one of her first days WWOOFing:

> *I think maybe my first day or my second day and I was just like "Is that not up?" and she was like "Well work isn't finished, let's finish". I think some of them just like take it for granted that here is stuff, there are people helping them and the fact that there's free labour really and just kind of work you for what they can get.* (Vanessa, WWOOFer)

Philip had numerous WWOOFing exchanges and met hosts with various ways of either asking or demanding extra work; he believed it depended on their personality. However, he had a specific strategy to avoid being overworked by his hosts, an issue that echoes au pairs' narratives:

> *I specifically search out WWOOF farms that my room is not in their home. And that's mainly because if my room's in your home, I never get a break. I never get a break. If I sit to start to read a book, I get one paragraph in and "I have something for you". It overloads me to a point where I'm ready to explode, like if I have to do one more thing, I'm not gonna be here. That's usually the only time they'll finally stop asking you to do things. Like when they ask you one more thing and your whole face turns red [laughter].* (Philip, WWOOFer)

Communication is quite important in these types of exchanges and most hosts acknowledge that. They try to be clear when expressing their requirements and explaining the tasks, and they expect the same from their guests for the exchange to be successful. Brianna mentioned she feels quite confident in her ability to explain and create a situation where people are not afraid to ask questions or make a mistake. Niharika felt that it was easier for her to work with women than men. She highlighted she did not consider it a result of sexism but felt the men interacted better with her husband and did not like taking directions from her, while the women exhibited more enthusiasm and interest in working in the garden with her. Lara believed her negative experiences helped her develop communication skills which she then employed in her following

conversations with potential WWOOFers, to ensure that she received people fit for her requirements. Similarly, guests found good communication crucial, particularly when it came to work and house rules. They preferred having a clear idea about their tasks, work schedule, free time and routines of the home, particularly as they were often encountering this work and lifestyle for the first time. Cara mentioned an instance of miscommunication between her hosts and some other WWOOFers who made a mistake planting some peppers for which they were reprimanded; the guests believed it to be the hosts' fault for not communicating how to properly perform the task.

Despite the efforts for good communication on behalf of the hosts, mistakes were not uncommon due to misunderstandings or the lack of experience from the guest's side. Typically, hosts were understanding, tried to be gentle with their corrections and give positive reinforcement. Kelvin perceived himself to be bad at critical feedback unless the issue was too severe and the mistake was costing him money, although generally he preferred to be positive to ensure a good experience for his guests. Anthony took people off a task if he was unhappy with their job:

> *Yeah, sometimes if it was just not good enough, you would have to say... Maybe you'd make a joke about it and say "Look your pointing on the wall is just shit and we'll have to do it again tomorrow. But you're not doing it, you are moving rocks or something." [Laughter] Unfortunately, you had to be a bit... yeah. Get better at it or do something that's not even worse. Which is awful but that's... It would just generally be whatever else we had for people to do.* (Anthony, Workaway host)

Kat was taking a different approach:

> *You know I try to be as gentle as possible around that. Because you know we're mostly talking about newbies here. They haven't done this stuff before. So you wanna be as diplomatic as possible, not "Oh my God, I can't believe you effed that up!". You don't wanna be that way.* (Kat, WWOOF host)

Some of the hosts took the responsibility of their guests' mistakes upon themselves. Acknowledging that their role involved teaching them, failure to demonstrate or explain the tasks properly to their volunteers, was perceived as the source of the issue for Vincent and Kat. Effie and Theo found that they were

often underestimating their guests' inexperience and were therefore very careful with their reactions if something went wrong. As Theo argued: *"Sometimes the level of inexperience, you don't realise how much it is. You take things for granted. If you tell them to go down to the tomatoes and do something, you forget to tell them what a tomato looks like without tomatoes on it".*

Guests also found hosts to be largely sympathetic and forgiving when they made mistakes as they understood their guests did not have prior experience in farming and were eager to learn. As Irene argued *"Unless you say you're a carpenter or you're a whatever, I think they realise that, well the people we've been to anyway, I think they know, you know we're just here to learn and help out as much as we can".* In Molly's view, her Workaway hosts did not have the right to complain as she was volunteering and not paid for the job she was doing. Other guests, like Cara, were more empathetic, understanding that their hosts' livelihood depended on the work being done correctly. In most cases, hosts were simply demonstrating the tasks again when their guests made some mistakes and often explained the reasoning behind their techniques. Zoe's second host, for instance, recognising that none of his WWOOFers were trained farmers, if they made a mistake he just told them not to worry and showed them how to do the task, which as Zoe argued, never made her feel like she was chastised.

5.2.7.2 Hospitality

Interviewed hosts offered various types of accommodation to their guests, depending on their ability and space. While many provided a room in their home, alternative types of lodging are not uncommon and often seen as part of the experience. Caravans, studios, cabins, converted barns, tents and camping areas were some of the available spaces hosts had for their guests. Some accommodations had facilities for the guests while in others they had to use the home's facilities. Anthony, who had various types of accommodation over the years, argued he preferred the separate accommodation as it made things easier in terms of privacy. Kat argued this was the solution to a common problem:

> *They might hear the couple arguing or disciplining their children or other personal things. And I think it's safe to say one of the best things we can do is give them their own separate space. That way you don't get too close to one another. Everybody needs their privacy.* (Kat, WWOOF host)

Similarly, Rachel, was considering providing her WWOOFers a caravan rather than a room in the house after a few uncomfortable experiences. However, many hosts appreciated the company and social exchange that came with sharing space with their guests and chose to have them in their homes. While often describing them as 'rough', interviewed guests recognised the various types of accommodation as part of the adventure they had embarked on. Thus, complaints were rare, as long as the host had been honest about the type of accommodation beforehand. Despite having generally moderate standards, however, in some situations the participants were extremely dissatisfied with the accommodation or its conditions. Kelly left one of her farms after a few days due to hygiene concerns; she had found a dead rat in her room and the outside kitchen they had for her was full of rats and droppings. Kira also left early from an experience where she felt unsafe in the accommodation, an isolated building on the property with no windows and an outside toilet for HelpXers with cockroaches and white tip spiders coming out of it.

Privacy was significant for hosts to different extents. Many hosts participated in these exchanges to benefit not only from the work but also from the company that visitors offer and thus had fewer privacy concerns. Nonetheless, issues with privacy came up from time to time in various forms, whether a general need to have some time away from the guests or in specific instances, such as the examples Anthony spoke about: "*Even if you had a bad day or you've had a row with your partner, you still kind of present to your guests as things are more or less ok".* More mundane disruptions in the daily life of the host also occur when the guest arrives. Niharika elaborated her thoughts on this:

> *So, it's maybe a small inconvenience when you have people around that are not your family. Me like having to- my bedroom window looks out into the garden which is lovely. And normally I don't worry about if I'm changing my clothes but if I have a guest in the barn, it makes my room quite dark, so I shut the curtains, you know? Yeah, it's a*

> *small... So, there's a tiny bit of freedom that you give up, right?* (Niharika, WWOOF host)

Guests tried to respect their hosts' privacy as much as they could, avoiding going into spaces that were considered private, such as the bedrooms. However, hosts had their own ways to indicate when they needed privacy. Eve believed the hosts' choice for offering outside accommodation was due to their wish for privacy from their guests, something that was confirmed by Workaway host Anthony. Not all hosts had the need for privacy. On the contrary, Philip and Ekin felt in some instances hosts expected their guests to keep them company, as if it was part of their job. Philip was not enjoying this emotional aspect of the job and avoided farms where he would stay in the home, giving the following reasoning:

> *[...] those places usually end up being a place where the farmer doesn't want any time away from the WWOOFers. It's more than a social experience for them, it's "I have no one around. I need you to be* here *for me". And for me it's just too draining. Because I've worked my entire day physically with you, emotionally with you, I've supported your farm and your being. And I'm tired and I need to tend to myself at this point and I don't have time to.* (Philip, WWOOFer)

Despite their occasional need for privacy, hosts made efforts to make their visitors feel welcome. Kat recognised the sensitive power dynamic that comes with hosting people and tried to balance it to the best of her abilities:

> *The other thing is, let's face it, one of the real factors is I try to be as egalitarian as possible, but the fact of the matter is, no matter how I feel about this socially, I'm still, the power dynamic is still such that I'm the farm owner and they are just here on the farm. So I try to recognise that and make sure that they feel like respected guests.* (Kat, WWOOF host)

The food provided by hosts is a significant part of the exchange. It was either shared meals or ingredients given to guests to prepare their own meals, usually when their schedules differed. Brianna ensured to provide the best possible food to her guests with produce from her farm, meat and eggs from local farmers, organic fruit and vegetables bought at the town's farmers' market. Indra, on the other hand, offered the basic staples for her guests to have for breakfast and dinner, which caused some issues with the WWOOFer she had at the time of the interview as the latter had a different view than Indra on what

constitutes staples. Most guests also stated they were offered meals, often prepared with fresh ingredients from the farm. The meals were either cooked by the hosts or guests for everyone or, when there were multiple guests at the same time, they were provided with the ingredients and prepared their own food. In rare cases, the hosts gave a stipend to guests so they could buy groceries and cook for themselves. Clidna believed there was a reasoning behind the choice of who cooks: "*whether you made their dinner or they made your dinner, I suppose that is some kind of power play as well*". However, not all hosts offer food. In Molly's first experience, her host did not offer food at all, which Philip mentioned he had encountered a few times, and they had to supply their own meals.

Usually hosts chose to eat with their guests as a way of strengthening the social bond. Perceiving it as part of their role, cooking and sharing meals was a way of offering hospitality and becoming more involved with their guests. However, breakfast and, in some cases, lunch were not always shared as the farmers tend to wake up earlier than their guests who thus had to prepare their own meals. Vincent was one of the hosts who did not eat with his guests but rather offered them the ingredients and let them cook and eat at their own time, while Beth prepared the meals and left them available for the guests to eat whenever they preferred. On the other hand, occasionally, it was the guests choosing to eat by themselves and the hosts accepted that. Timothy tried to respect it when his guests were more private than him and liked to eat alone. Kelvin, however, was disappointed when he had to miss that part of the exchange:

> *I like to. A lot of times they don't want to. They just, I think they feel like they're imposing too much [...] So you know, they are cooking and then it naturally comes out we eat together that's no problem, it works great, and if I'm cooking for a few meals that's fine. But a lot of times the WWOOFers have wanted to just cook separately. [...] I was actually bummed so I'd sit there and eat alone and just I didn't have the company.* (Kelvin, WWOOF host)

Most of the guests also enjoyed sharing meals with their hosts, having discussions with them and getting to know them better. Eve mentioned eating together was a rule in one of her experiences, while Zoe preferred it when she was eating alone in her second farm: "*It just kinda gave you a little breathing*

space and alone time if you wanted it. And to eat what you want". In one of Ruth's farms her host had visitors on the first day Ruth and her friends arrived. When dinner was ready a friend of the host invited the WWOOFers into the main house for dinner, rather than the host herself. Ruth described what happened when they entered the home: "*It was interesting trying to have dinner with them because she was just like "Here's the food" and they were off eating in the formal dining room and we were kinda just standing there in the kitchen eating and it was a little weird".*

Most guests were happy with the amount of food provided to them by hosts. They stated they were being fed well, mostly with food made with fresh ingredients produced on the farm. This was not always the case, however. Erin mentioned how the food she was offered on the farm in Portugal was so meagre that she had to buy more food and her only option was a place nearby selling chicken, which she resorted to despite being vegetarian at the time. Kira felt in one of her experiences the portions were too small and the food was not nutritious enough but did not say anything to avoid hurting her host's feelings. On the other hand, Philip recounted a story about a farm he stayed at where they had a dedicated WWOOFer garden guests were supposed to maintain and only eat from, rather than the hosts' garden where, according to Philip the food was falling on the ground and rotting in the soil. Philip described the WWOOFer garden:

> [...] *this one small, probably 10 foot by 10 foot plot. And what we had in this garden were onions and beets. Those were the only things available. So, I learned that I do love beets, I never knew that [laughter]. I learned how to make beets in so many different ways for breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert.* (Philip, WWOOFer)

Most of the hosts had encounters with individuals who were following specific diets. Their responses varied, with some being happy to accommodate different diets, others asking guests to prepare their own meals according to their needs and some requiring the guests to buy their own ingredients if their diet was too different from their own. Some hosts discussed the preferences and diets in their initial conversations with potential guests to be prepared and acquire anything the guests may want before their arrival, or to inform them to bring

anything extra they need. Other hosts found a way to accommodate their own and their guests' diets at the same time. Helen was one of the interviewees who prepared a meal that her vegetarian guests could eat and she would add meat to her portion, while Kat would prepare ingredients for burritos allowing her guests to choose what they added according to their preferences. Interviewed guests accepted that they could not only eat food they enjoyed and rarely complained to the hosts if the food was not to their liking. Most food issues that came up, however, were either a choice of diet based on values, like vegetarianism, veganism and religion or due to intolerances/allergies. Vanessa, who is lactose intolerant, had problems with one host, who constantly forgot - or ignored as she implied- her issue and added cheese to the meals. A number of interviewed guests were vegetarian or vegan. Sean and Irene, both vegetarians, made sure to inform their hosts before their visit and choose farms that could accommodate their diet, something Kira, who was also vegetarian, did as well for the most part. However, in one of her farms she faced some comments about her diet which made her feel uncomfortable and although she decided to ignore them, the discomfort revealed something to her: "*Especially when you're in this person's, either their home or their (inaudible) and you kind of feel a bit like it's your home. Actually, it's theirs. You do see that, and it makes it a bit uncomfortable".*

Access to food between meals was allowed by some participating hosts. They had snacks and fruit available in the cupboards and fridge, which guests could take whenever they felt hungry. Many argued this was not necessary as they were offering large and filling meals. Anthony and Helen encountered instances when they felt their guests were taking too much of their available food, which prompted Anthony to restrict access to food outside meals. Frank and Angela mentioned most of their guests felt like they needed permission for anything extra, while Lara noticed women were more likely to ask if they could take something as opposed to men who felt more comfortable to simply do it. Niharika opted for having a separate fridge available for her WWOOFers, which she stocked with the essentials. However, after a few days when both sides were more comfortable with each other, guests were welcome to the fridge in the main house. Participating guests appreciated being allowed to take

anything they needed, as it made them feel more welcome in the house. Nonetheless they were not always able to do it. Christine clarified her choice of not taking food outside the main meals: "*I mean I felt pretty comfortable. I didn't snack too much. I tried to just eat at meals. Uhm, I didn't wanna seem too aggressive, like, taking their things".* Ekin also avoided taking food even though her host had told her she was welcome to it. She explained: "*I was more comfortable to take food that was on the table that we bought together than to just go to the fridge to take something. Maybe it's me, maybe it's that it was not too open as she said".*

5.2.8 Interpersonal relationship

The relationship between the two sides can be very deep but it appeared that the extent to which the social bond would develop mainly depended on the host. Guests who had hosts not willing to have a social relationship with them, were often left disappointed, as they considered it as a large part of the experience. They ended up feeling exploited if the hosts denied them a social exchange and perceived the encounter as a calculated transaction. The majority of participants, hosts and guests, appreciated the interpersonal relationship that developed and many argued they formed lifelong friendships through these experiences. Many hosts mentioned inviting former guests or visiting them as friends, rather than through these organisations.

Some hosts used the family narrative to express how they treat their guests. Commensality was a prevailing example of communicating a family atmosphere and welcome: "*And let's face it breaking bread with people is a really great way to feel like you belong and feel like you become more of a family than just a bunch of strangers"* (Kat, American WWOOF host). Sharing food as a simulacrum of a family relationship was not only used in the context of home cooked meals. Effie and Theo gave the example of paying for their guests' meals when they went out: "*We treat them like family and we pay for their meals if we go someplace because that's just what we would do if they were part of the family. So, we just treat them like family."* (Effie, WWOOF host).

Frank and Angela also stated that their guests, especially the younger ones, felt like family to them. Angela, in particular, admitting she has a soft spot for young people who are trying to find their path in life, tries to encourage and support them, treating them like family, because, as she said, they are like her own kids and that is what she would do for them. Being perceived as family is not always positive. Some of the female hosts, like Niharika and Helen, argued that being seen as a mother by their guests could create a negative dynamic, where the guest would exhibit a defiant attitude towards their host. While Niharika observed this more with young men, Helen described her experience with a 30-year-old woman: *"It was transference, she was rebelling against me like I was her mother [...] She was in this adolescent rebellion against me and she was very snotty. You know, like a teenager with a parent".*

From the guests' side a similar notion of the family feeling can be detected. Many of them used the term to describe hospitable and welcoming hosts, even if the exchange was quite short and little to no contact was maintained afterwards. Christine had such a close family connection to one of her hosts that she sent her a card on Mother's Day, while Clidna mentioned that during their stay in Hungary her and her husband felt like members of the family as opposed to other stays, where in some cases they felt like the help. She said that was her favourite experience and, described the host as "mumsy" to illustrate her caring treatment of her Workawayers. Sean and Irene were looking for hosts who would include them as a part of their family, which, as they found during their two-year WWOOFing travels, made their experience much more enjoyable. Kira, talking about an encounter where she felt like a family member, gave examples of gestures made by the hosts that contributed to this feeling, quite similar to the examples given by the interviewed hosts, such as commensality and invitations to activities outside work. Feeling a part of the family also reduced the sense of work for Kira, as, when she was asked to wash the dishes or help with cooking, she felt it was more like pitching in rather than being asked to do a chore. She described how her experience reminded her of a family setting:

> *Yeah in the second one I definitely did, I think my partner did as well. It was quite funny because there were times when we might get a bit*

> *annoyed at each other or at them like you would with your family. So, if somebody changes the TV channel or does something really silly. And that was nice because it made me definitely feel a little less homesick, cause there was another family there.* (Kira, HelpXer)

5.2.9 Education

Many of the hosts engaging in such exchanges, and particularly ones who operate farms, are motivated to participate by their desire to educate and teach people about organic farming. This wish was expressed by quite a few hosts during their interviews. Many of them had a teaching background and were previously or currently working in education; Anthony was teaching at a University, Timothy was a retired school teacher, Niharika was volunteering in local schools and so on. This experience helped them acquire teaching, mentoring and communication skills that they often applied to their WWOOFing experiences. But all hosts acknowledged the necessity of wanting and enjoying teaching in order to take part in these experiences:

> *You know, you have to be a teacher. If you're not gonna be a teacher, it's not gonna go well. Because you're gonna get people who are new to what you're doing, you're not gonna get experienced help. WWOOFers are not experienced help. Generally speaking, they're just dipping their toes in the water, they've never done anything like this before and you will need to guide them the whole way through* (Kat, WWOOF host)

Vincent, who took his role as an educator quite seriously and mentioned he related to his WWOOFers as 17-year-old students, also took accountability for any mistakes the WWOOFers did. Kat also believed that if a host does not take time for teaching their guests, they cannot get angry if something goes wrong. With that in mind, hosts said they preferred to employ positive reinforcement and encouragement when teaching their guests. Quite often hosts appreciated learning from their guests as well, with Indra learning from her WWOOFer who has a horticulture degree and Kat exchanging horse riding lessons with ukulele lessons from her guest.

However, with teaching being often a long and tiring process, some hosts required their guests stay for a longer time, with Lara asking for a minimum

commitment of two weeks and Vincent of one month. Feeling that their time and energy spent educating them was significant, they wanted not only to get enough work in return but also take breaks from constantly demonstrating and explaining the farming chores. Moreover, the guest showing a motivation to learn about the work and farming in general, was appreciated and said to make their job more enjoyable. A lack of interest in the farm, the work and the lifestyle by some guests appeared to bother the hosts, who felt their enthusiasm and effort to teach was being wasted, a significant complaint that Beth had about her WWOOFers.

Learning about organic farming and sustainable living was a big factor in participating in this exchange for many of the guests. Naturally, the educational aspect of the exchange was discussed and appreciated to a greater extent by the participants who were more interested in learning these skills than just travelling with little cost. Zoe, whose second farmer was an educated botanist and taught her a lot about plants and farming, recognised that the role of the student has to be accepted in these encounters:

> *Adaptability and willingness to not know what you are doing. You have to take on the place of being the unknowing child. You don't know the work, you're not familiar with it, even though you're, like, an adult who probably feels capable in whatever they're doing outside of WWOOF. Going there you're new to everything. Being ok with, you know, being corrected and instructed and all that.* (Zoe, WWOOFer)

However, the learning opportunities are not always available, even when the guests are willing and enthusiastic about certain aspects of farm life. Philip, a long term WWOOFer, contended that "*A part of your work trade is work in the farm for room, board and education*". From his experience hosts that go into WWOOFing for the educational and the social aspect are more likely to be good hosts as opposed to the ones motivated by the prospect of free labour who generally don't treat their WWOOFers well. Vanessa, who had no previous experience, wanted to learn about gardening and farming, yet one of her hosts just had her do weeding. Rather than teach her new skills, which was the purpose of her stay, they had her work on a repetitive task that required no skill and education from their part. Nonetheless, her outlook remained positive:

> *It involves new experiences. New ways of working. Learning new skills, most of the time. Finding out about how you can do sustainable living, living green, living off the land, that sort of thing. And also learning about other people and how they do it. That's generally why I did it in the first place anyway. Like I want to learn more about this and how to grow my own vegetables and things like that.* (Vanessa, WWOOFer)

5.2.10 Cultural Exchange

Participants argued for the necessity of being open and accepting of other cultures and traditions in order to participate in these exchanges. For many, coming in contact with people from different countries was a central reason to become a host or a guest. Rachel, for instance, was partially motivated to become a WWOOF host due to her inability to travel as much as she did in the past. When the relationship was close, guests and their hosts exchanged information, history, recipes, music and other aspects of their cultures with each other. Hosts welcomed offers from their guests to cook meals from their home countries and discussions about their culture. At the same time, for guests this was often one of the main reasons to participate in such exchanges; an opportunity to experience the local culture and life through staying with natives.

> *I think that's a benefit of it to be honest with you. I like about Workaway is that you're straight into a local culture. We found out so much about Nicaraguans and Nica life, just living on that beach area in Nicaragua. […] I like that part of it, I like the cultural awkwardness or differences that you need to learn to make it.* (Clidna, Workawayer)

Guests who believed their hosts were only motivated by cheap labour, felt that the cultural exchange was neither desired by the other side nor attainable by them, due to the lack of a social exchange. Moreover, cultural differences occasionally caused miscommunications as Kira, an English HelpXer in Australia, narrated:

> *I find as a whole in Australia people are quite blunt and it's just because a lot of people we met just say it exactly how it is. Whereas especially typical British stiff upper lip, you never really say anything of what you're actually thinking or what you mean. So it took a while to get used to people just being very to the point, very "Do this, do that. That's wrong, that's right. This is my opinion". So that took a*

> *little getting used to. [...] I kinda thought "Why is everyone speaking to me like this? This isn't how it would be at home, people are so polite, people are so gentle". And then actually by the end of it I really liked it and you appreciate that they are so straightforward, there's no mixing in communication, it is just, they say exactly what they mean.* (Kira, HelpXer)

As Kira's story illustrates, openness to other cultures, a characteristic described as essential by almost all participants, was not only necessary to embark on such an experience but also developed throughout the encounter. Cultural differences were mostly appreciated and created bonds between the two sides, as long as both sides were open to it. Niharika, gave an example of one of her guests' habits that her family found amusing:

> *Nothing big but yeah the French guy, it's so funny […] And we all noticed "Wow he gets, he does his work outside and then he always showers and puts on a clean shirt before dinner and cologne" [laughter]. So, you know, we just noticed it, either that's his culture or he comes from that kind of family. Because we're very casual and we might work outside and come inside and be all sweaty when we're sitting at the table or whatever. But it was just, it was actually quite nice. It made us feel special, like "Wow he dresses for dinner" [laughter]. Even though it's just us, he dresses for dinner so [laughter].* (Niharika, WWOOF host)

5.3 Micro-ethical dilemmas and Moral Framework

So far, with the motivations, criteria and perceptions of roles of participants that were elaborated a number of micro-ethical dilemmas emerged from their narratives. In this part certain micro-ethical dilemmas that participants faced during their exchanges, how they reacted and how these reactions influenced the moral framework will be analysed. These micro-ethical dilemmas were faced with varied reactions by participants. To create a better understanding of these responses, they will be presented separately, by examining examples given by participants and interpreting their reaction to situations where they were either unsure of what to do or tried to find a way to negotiate their position and role to their favour.

When both sides are in agreement on the rules of the exchange, the micro-ethical dilemmas faced by participants are easy to answer. Being aware of an agreed on moral framework and following with what it dictates, indicates a **consensus** between the two sides, allowing the participant to proceed without doubting their decision significantly. This consensus exists usually in the very beginning of the exchange, during the initial communications where the two sides tacitly agree on what the terms are; although they usually change over time. An example given by WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX guests referred to the sustainable practices their hosts applied in their homes. Many of the farmers participating in these transactions, employ organic farming methods but also sustainable and eco-friendly techniques in their daily lives. While this meant that guests had to adjust their habits and routines, most were interested in this way of living, wished to learn about it and were therefore happy to adhere to these house rules. Cara was grateful to learn new ways of conserving energy and water:

> *And especially as an American, we don't think of energy conservation the same way, which is annoying and frustrating cause we should. But because everything was run off of solar power, so if you need to charge your phone you can but try to do it during the day and only leave it in until it's charged and then immediately unplug it. Same thing obviously for leaving lights on, just don't do that. And then water conservation, so washing dishes, there was a whole different method for that that I had to be taught how to do. [...] It was easy because it just kind of became second nature and they only had a few outlets for the WWOOFers to use outside, so it was kind of like if you see a plug that's free, put it in when you can and then immediately take it off. It wasn't difficult, no.* (Cara, WWOOFer)

Being unsure of what the proper action was in a situation was often faced by **querying**. Openly asking the other side what is allowed or expected was a relatively simple and direct way of figuring out the answer to a micro-ethical dilemma. An example given by hosts was asking their guests about food they liked, their diets and their preferences to avoid dissatisfaction with the food. While some hosts did not adapt their own diets to that of their guests, most were happy to provide something they knew their guests liked or avoid something they disliked:

> *When I contacted them or they contacted me on the email first, one of my questions back to them is "Are you vegan, vegetarian, lactose? Do you have a specific allergy?". […] But now I definitely in my advertisement I say "All types of diets catered for" because that's really important. People don't feel well if they don't eat food that's okay with them. So I'm okay to try what they ask me to cook and I'll cook that. Not every night but I will do that. And then if they wanna cook, they can have a go at cooking, that's no problem.* (Rachel, WWOOF host)

Acceptance is a common reaction by participants when faced with a micro-ethical dilemma in situations where they are unsure of the appropriate response. However, acceptance could be a result of a different range of thought processes. Three different types of acceptance were observed; **compliance**, when the participant was faced with a new situation or request and accepted it as part of their exchange or part of the other side's rights; **tolerance**, where the individual was not satisfied with the situation but deemed the issue in question of too low a significance to challenge it and possibly create any discomfort in the relationship; and **reluctant acceptance**, when the participant was doubting the fairness of a situation but hesitantly accepted it as they felt too powerless to change it.

Compliance is mostly performed at the early stages of the exchange. When two sides are unfamiliar with the rules and each other, in the formative period they are often more accepting of the conditions laid out. At the same time, certain aspects are seen as the other side's right throughout the exchange. Guests reported complying with the house rules laid out by hosts out of respect to their household. Compliance on the side of hosts came in the form of respecting their guests' privacy. As discussed, au pairs prefer to go to their rooms after work to enjoy their privacy and provide the family the same. While hosts may wish to spend more time with their au pairs, most of them accepted it as the latter's right to remove themselves from the common areas. Ane, who generally spent a lot of time with her au pair in the evenings, even after the au pair's duties had finished, understood she needed time alone occasionally:

> *Some days when I arrived at 5 o'clock she just put the kid with me, [child's name] with me, and she just went to her room. Sometimes. And she disappear a lot of time in her room but just was some days.*

> *And I thought it's normal. Because I also sometimes I need it. To run away from everything [laughter]* (Ane, au pair host)

Similarly, Jan who wished the au pairs would spend more time with the family, respected their wish to retreat to their room after work to reset, which all but one did:

> *Yeah, actually we thought that the au pair will share more time with us. But actually after the work with the kids, they gone, they were go to their room and they stay there and actually maybe they also need the quiet and the silence and to be reset. Yeah, but... And also the weekend activities, they seldom share with us. They actually like to stay in their room. [...] Actually, we wait sometimes if they come to spend time with us, but seldom they come. Actually, no. Only the short time at the au pair from South Africa, she was more in the living room than the others.* (Jan, au pair host)

Tolerance on the other hand came up when participants were somewhat dissatisfied with a situation, feeling that the other side may be getting more out of an aspect of the exchange compared to themselves, but despite that, chose not to dispute the circumstances. A frequent example of tolerance that was narrated by individuals, both hosts and guests, pertained to the personal exchange. Participants recounted instances where the other side focused conversations on themselves rather than seeking an exchange of information, opinions and experiences or simply evade communication completely. Molly joked about a host who had the tendency to talk about himself only:

> *Yeah, yeah, yeah we talk a lot. The first host is a bit older, he's around 60 something and he talk a lot about what he did when he was young and how he get to be at that island, like that. [asked if she spoke about herself] No, because he talk more, so I'm just like listening more. You know how old men like to talk.* (Molly, Workawayer)

Stella, on the other hand elaborated on her experience with an au pair that avoided communicating with the family more than necessary:

> *But she would never ever ask me a question about anything. I got my first book deal, I had a book published last year and she was here when I got the email. And I was actually on the phone with my dad when I got this email. And I was running around, completely happy, you know? All over the place. And her response was like "Oh, congratulations". You know, not a question about anything. So in the beginning it was fine, she was a young girl out of her normal- so we*

> *would just ask and tell and ask and tell. But for a whole year you get past the being polite and it just gets quite heavy for you to keep sort of dragging a conversation. And there was lots of things. I think [husband] got like a commendation at his work or something. Like stuff happened, where it was just glaringly obvious that, you know, this is a normal place to say "Oh, what did you get that for?". Or any little question like that. And it never ever happened. And that just got a bit... Maybe I should have said to her, maybe it would have been my duty as a host mother to say "You know what, it would be really nice if you sometimes asked us questions". But I felt that would have been really awkward somehow [laughter]. So I guess it's some sort of, because you know, they're adults. And still they're not. And then what's your... How far do my or [husband's] obligations go as parents, because we're not parents but we are sort of parents.* (Stella, au pair host)

On the guests' side, as has been demonstrated, opposition to their hosts' wishes was rare. Guests tend to feel obligation towards their hosts due to the hospitality offered to them, often thinking that they owe it to their hosts to accept their wishes, even if they believe the request is unreasonable; resulting in reluctant acceptance. Maria explained why she had trouble protesting when she felt her host family were asking too much of her, a sentiment echoed by many other au pairs:

> *I know I shouldn't be like this but I still like, I... They are giving me food for free, a room to live, they are paying me. So sometimes, I know I shouldn't be like this, I know for sure, but I feel like I owe them for those things. But I know I shouldn't be like that. So that's why I'm shy. I know they wouldn't kick me out of the house, I know [laughter]. But I felt like- what if I complain about something and I make the things uncomfortable? Cause I have to be here, I cannot leave, I cannot leave. So that's probably why I haven't complained about little things.* (Maria, au pair)

Maria's claim, that her hosts were giving her "food for free" along with accommodation and money indicates that she did not value her work as being worth what she was receiving in return, despite acknowledging that she should not feel that way. Evangelia echoed Maria's sentiments:

> *I knew for instance from the beginning that my job was whatever had to do with the girls, for example I'm washing their dishes. Slowly she started making me wash their dishes or things like that. But okay, of course I didn't say anything. What was I going to say? I was living in their home [...] I mean I went to England, I had nothing there, I had*

> *no money, no home and these people were there to welcome me into their home, so I couldn't say anything.* (Evangelia, live-in nanny)

Mirona, on the other hand, was less sympathetic towards her hosts who she had a very negative experience with throughout the exchange and yet begrudgingly accepted their demands:

> *Uhm also, like, one week they left for a week somewhere, I don't know where. But they told me like, either I can stay and not be paid for a week or I can stay and get money but I have to clean the whole house. And I was like "Wow, ok". […] But it was deep cleaning the whole house. I spent, like, seven hours a day cleaning the house. From every single drawer in the kitchen, just take it all out and clean everything and even the fucking garden. It was Autumn and it was leaves on the garden so they told me like to do [everything] […] Yeah, in order to get paid the same. Because I didn't have the kids that week.* (Mirona, au pair)

Imitation, an infrequently mentioned but commonly used tactic, is mostly employed by guests to accustom themselves to the routines and rituals of the home. By observing the hosts and their habits and decoding social cues, guests can often deduce how the house operates and what they are supposed to do when faced with a micro-ethical dilemma. Participants did not elaborate in depth about this approach but mentioned it occasionally during the interviews to explain how they adapted to a new home. In the examples that follow, two WWOOFers narrated how, when entering a new home, they tried to observe what their hosts did to decide how they would act:

> *So, that was like a funny thing I noticed on the first kinda days getting up and going into the main house and getting coffee and kind of figuring out like "Ok, how do we do the morning thing, are we chatting or is it people are doing their own thing?". And it's just so funny how comfortable they were. Like in the mornings we didn't really talk, everyone just kinda had their coffee and read their books. How, clearly they were just so comfortable to, like, strangers were just kind of filtering through their house.* (Zoe, WWOOFer)

> *The moment you enter the house, you see the family, you have to also be adaptive to their culture and how they live their daily lives. So sometimes, of course as much as possible you want to be yourself, but you also have to see how things are being worked out in the family. So if they think, maybe you know what? They don't really like people talking too much during dinner time, maybe you just don't talk so much [laughter]. Yeah, things like that. Being*

> *adaptive to the family is also important. […] I would observe how things are.* (Eve, WWOOFer)

As evidenced by the two quotes, Zoe and Eve observed their hosts' routines and modified their behaviour accordingly. Zoe, being unsure of her hosts' morning routines and the level of contact they desired to have with their guests at that time of day, faced this micro-ethical dilemma by watching her hosts and following their lead, thus spending time privately. In Eve's words, being adaptive to her hosts' culture and daily life was her duty as a guest, disregarding, even, her right to be herself, thus giving up a bit of her agency. By observing her hosts being quiet during meals, Eve adapted to their customs and imitated their behaviour. As opposed to Zoe, who perceived it as a habit to follow, Eve appeared to see it as an obligation, a demonstration of respect towards her hosts, acknowledging that it did not allow her to be herself fully and, possibly, be more talkative and social during meals. Nonetheless, imitation is not solely performed by guests. Morfo changed a habit, cultural according to her, to please her guests:

> *What I see with the French girls is that they are very formally polite. I mean they say thank you and you're welcome for everything. Which we [Greeks] don't have, not from lack of courtesy, we say it but not in every move and every turn we do. So, I remember she told me about the Dutch that they were really nice for always saying thank you in the beginning. And there I understood that for them it's important. And so, I started, with the last one and the current one, every night when she's leaving telling her 'Thank you for coming, thank you for the help' etc. There are some small things that due to cultural difference I might not have realised. Whatever I realise I try to fix (*Morfo, au pair host)

Ingratiation (Jones, 1964) was a further way for participants to swing the moral framework towards their standpoint. This reaction to a dilemma related to the conditions of the exchange, whether consciously or subconsciously, was used by individuals to sway the other side's opinion of them to a favourable one. Two of the discussed ingratiation techniques, mainly employed by guests, were **conformity in opinion** and **rendering favours**. Imitation, that was mentioned previously as a way to adapt to the family while giving up a part of themselves, was taken to even further limits by some participants, who misrepresented themselves to the other side to avoid discomfort or confrontation. Ulrike, who

had a remarkably negative first au pairing experience, wanted to ensure she would fit in with her hosts the second time. To that end, she not only followed their habit of going to church, despite her uncertainty about her own beliefs, but she also portrayed herself as a religious person:

> *The family is really religious, and I am- Not that I'm not religious at all, but I have my... my doubts about it. And eh... Just not really that much. I go with them to church because I think it's a nice thing to do to get closer to the family, but... I wouldn't say that I believe in God. I would like to believe in God, but I think it's very difficult, so... But I never told them because I... I'm afraid [laughter]. What they'll think of me. I just pretend like that I'm really believing in God [laughter].* (Ulrike, au pair)

Rendering favours, on the other hand, to improve the opinion of the other side was a technique used by guests as well. However, often the purpose is not solely to ingratiate themselves just in the interest of a positive perception but also to be able to gain negotiation power in relation to the terms of the transaction. Whether the favour was requested or not, Dorotea was happy to do it for her hosts:

> *I really like to do favours so I'm like, yeah, you can ask them, if they ask me something even if they are like mentioning something that it must be good or it could be good. It's like if they say even once, I mostly do the same day. So it's like, when they come home it's done. You know they're happy, I'm happy. Perfect! […] I think when I do a favour for them, I feel like it's working like reverse. Cause I feel like, yeah, I can ask things.* (Dorotea, au pair)

One of the most upfront reactions to feeling the other side was not holding up their part of the exchange was **requesting** what they needed. That was done through clear and open communication; by either simply asking for what they felt was fair to ask or questioning the existing situation. This direct approach was not always appreciated as it could be perceived as antagonistic. However, in Evangelia's case questioning a situation that had been a problem for her in the past and she had not challenged up to that point worked in her advantage:

> *When they were going to leave for a week on holiday they told me "You will not stay in the house at that time, right?". So basically it was like they were telling me "No, you will obviously not stay in the house while we are gone". [...] And I planned it and went for a trip for a week [laughter]. Then, another time they were gone, I went and*

> *stayed with a friend. And then the third time they had planned to leave for two weeks over Easter, I told them it is not possible for me to leave the house again because basically whatever money I was getting from my salary I was spending afterwards to stay somewhere else whenever they were gone. And I said it wasn't possible for me to leave the house again and they told me "Alright, okay, if you want to stay home, stay".* (Evangelia, live-in nanny)

Requesting was not only coming from the guests' side. Hosts often needed help or favours from their guests and rather than demanding, some of them tried to appeal to their guests, like Luisa in the anecdote she describes below:

> *We had some problems initially because the kids were still young. We had problems at school, such as [my daughter] not wanting to go to the school toilet, she was scared, you know how kids are. And the kids were not playing with her and she wanted [the au pair] to stay with her. And she grumbled to me a bit at first "But I want to do things and all day [I have] this". She was very upset to tell you the truth, it was stressing her a lot. But I said, on the other hand I understand her, I said to her 'Please be a bit patient' [...] I told her "Help me a bit with this, help me to help the kid. It won't take over a month". And she helped her a lot, she helped her and she got over this problem.* (Luisa, au pair host)

When the micro-ethical dilemma is significant and there is a difficulty in deciding what to do, some individuals choose to just avoid it if possible. A common example was expression of personal and political ideology, where **issue avoidance** was a reaction resorted to by many participants, both hosts and guests. If the one side realised there was a difference in ideology, mostly on topics of politics and religion, they often refrained from discussing it in order to avoid unnecessary tension. Maria explained why she would not discuss topics related to ideology with her hosts:

> *For example with the attacks, with the Muslims, with the terrorist attacks, which is kind of religious as well. It's like I don't want to say exactly what I think because I know they don't think like me. So I try to don't bring that up and talk about "Oh my God, there was an attack. Many dead" bla bla bla. We don't go that that deep. Or when they do, when the dad says "Oh well", or could ask me whether- I just like smile and ok like, no, short answers like "Yeah, I don't know". I don't want to go deep. If there's any kind of comment that I feel that I think the opposite, like really really, that I think racist or sexist, I try to don't go deep. Just say my opinion but don't have any discussion at all. Always try to avoid. Like I don't really mind what they think about it. That sounds rude but [laughter]. I just avoid any kind of*

> *discussion. It's their home, I know what they believe. They have a really really deep belief in this. [inaudible] and stuff. I know how important it is for them, so why would I make it uncomfortable?* (Maria, au pair)

Similar to Maria's narrative, Faye, had very different ideology to her hosts. Her issue avoidance took a toll on her:

> *And with the family, they were a traditional Greek family, quite religious, quite what we call "Homeland, religion, family". I'm not like that, I am more of an anarchist. But when you are working and you are in this setting, you have to try and keep the balance. So after a point that wore me out, that I couldn't be 100% myself. It wore me out so much. It exhausted me so much. Because I felt I had to bite my tongue all the time. […] Which I fought by going for walks. I started very strong power walking in the US, which I couldn't do for 1.5 month because it had snowed a lot, it was very cold. And [the host mother] told me "Faye, I will feel safer if you don't go, I am really scared". And she was right. She was right. So I was staying in and it resulted in me becoming depressed. They took me in February on their own initiative to the doctor and he diagnosed me with depression.* (Faye, au pair)

When asked why she decided not to express herself and her views, Faye elaborated:

> *I think we would probably not find a solution either. Not a solution, we would not find, I don't know, an understanding. I didn't want them to see me as something lower. Because they had that, they did see some people in a sense lower. [...] Native Americans for example. Whoever wasn't Greek. African Americans. Atheists. They didn't say it, but I had figured it out, I could see it. Because then we would enter a process of discussing things and I didn't want that, there was no reason.* (Faye, au pair)

Microaggressions were also reported as a way of communicating grievances. Naturally none of the participants openly admitted to resorting to this type of reaction. There were, nonetheless, complaints of having faced microaggressions, most often in the form of insinuations and snide comments from the other side. These microaggressions may be a way to avoid direct confrontation but they can cause more irritation to the other side than honest communication, as in Susanne's example below:

> *And then if they would do a sneaky comment about you one time doing something, like one time I didn't find the boy's dummy. I had it*

> *in my bag and I went swimming and then the dad had to lay him down and he didn't have the dummy, so it was quite tricky and I apologised for that. Another time it was also that we couldn't find the dummy and it was kinda my fault and then the dad, especially the dad made a sneaky comment about it. I think he said something like, I just came downstairs and I was like "Sorry, I think [child] had his dummy, I don't know where it is" […] And then he said something like "Yeah, this happened the second time", something like "Annoying" or something. And then in my head it was just like "Excuse me? I am cooking for you because you always want fancy food. Then afterwards I have to do the dishes. The mom is playing with the kids now. You're just sitting at the table doing nothing. And you dare to complain about me?". After that I was like, it's also me being, when you're like furious and you're going to your room. That was also one of the only times when I was like I could cry right now. Like don't dare complaining about me. I feel sorry, it is my fault but...* (Susanne, au pair)

Eve, who was a young Sikh woman from Malaysia, stayed with a Christian family in New Zealand with quite strong beliefs. She recognised but chose to ignore the microaggressions that were directed towards her and viewed them as funny anecdotes she could share with her family on her return:

> *But yeah, that was pretty interesting because the family told us, so every night at dinnertime all of us would hold hands and they would say their grace and then- It was also funny because he was asking me like "Where are you from?" so I said "I'm from Malaysia" and he's like "Are you Muslim?". They were like pretty staunch and I was like "No, I'm not Muslim" and he was like "Oh, thank God!" so I was like [makes face - laughter]. That's racist! And then, uhm, so every day before our dinner time he would give us like sermon, he would talk about religious matter. So I was the only one who's not a Christian. So he would just like literally look into my eyes and… [laughter] [...] But it was interesting cause I knew I wouldn't be there to tolerate this for long. You see? So I knew "Eh, it's fine. Something new, something different for me". So yeah. It was interesting so I was like picking on all the small small details, like one thing to tell my family when I get back home like "This is the kind of people I stayed with" [laughter]* (Eve, WWOOFer)

When the individual felt the situation was unfair or unpleasant enough for them, they often resorted to **defiance**. The majority of those reactions came from guests, who felt they were in a disadvantaged position in terms of the power dynamic but eventually had to challenge their hosts' wishes if they were too

unreasonable. Maria described a situation, which was briefly introduced earlier, where she decided to confront her host mother:

> *They, at the beginning, that's another thing, they were quite worried about my eating, about my diet. Which at the beginning was quite annoying to me to be honest. Until the point I had to ask them "Please, this is how I eat, this is the amount I can eat. If I don't eat more it's because I cannot or I don't really want to, so...". Actually I forgot that, yeah, there was a point we have to talk about because they- they weren't complaining, they were worried about me not eating enough. Because the dinner is different, in Spain you take one dish and then fruit or dessert. Here you eat like two big dishes. So, my stomach is not that big. So, they were worried about me not eating enough. But we solved that out finally. [...] because it just like reached or get to a point that the mom talked to me like really really serious, like "Maria I don't want to have to talk to your parents or something but I'm really worried about you not eating". So I just had to tell them my parents really know how I eat and they know that I eat small dishes but more times through the day instead of two times only or three times only. So I had at some point try to become serious like "I'm so sorry, I'm really thankful for your worrying, for your, you know, I really appreciate it. But please leave that. Leave it". So they understood. […] But after that, they are really really nice. They understood. So they haven't been like that anymore.* (Maria, au pair)

Maria's decision to react came from a feeling of frustration when her hosts tried to control her eating habits. Even though she generally accepted her hosts' demands on work related issues, this matter regarding her agency over her body was the limit. Her reaction and request for the comments to stop were respected by her hosts, affecting the boundaries of her hosts' control over her. Nonetheless, guests were not the only ones who had to resort to defiance towards situations that made them uncomfortable. Particularly in the context of WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX some hosts came across guests who were trying to take advantage of the nature of the exchange and get a free holiday for little to no work. Timothy had a situation with a guest who appeared to have misunderstood the nature of the WWOOF exchange, to whom he made it clear that he would not accept her terms:

> *I just had the one princess I told you about. It's not really negative, it's just I understand that she did- I just tried to help her grow as a person [laughter]. That was kinda a pain. [...] She wanted me to make her bed and stuff like that. You know what I'm talking about? I*

> *said "You can do your own laundry and your own bedding, thank you" [laughter].* (Timothy, WWOOF host)

Negotiated compromise came up in many different shapes and forms in the participants' narratives. That was no surprise as the whole experience is based on a transaction between the two sides, where the rules are decided between them and offering or receiving something in exchange for something else, whether related to work, space, food or personal issues was a common occurrence. The most prevalent instance of negotiated compromise taking place was related to work. Hosts needing their guests to undertake a task after their working hours were finished or guests wanting to take some extra time off and negotiating this with the other side, was a frequent example given by participants in the interviews. Rather than expressing their wishes as demands and creating tension, they chose to negotiate. Extra work was often exchanged for more time off on another day or even money, as narrated by Brianna and Beth:

> *Well the one person we had a workshop on a Saturday and it was all day and I talked with her way ahead of time and I said "This is coming up. Would you like to be a part of it? And if so, why don't you take Friday off? Or, you know, like another weekday off?". And she said "Oh God yeah, I wanna be part of that". So she took a week day off and then she worked that Saturday. And she did work longer but it was so much fun, she was fine with it. And I said "Well, we'll just take another half day off another time to make up for it".* (Brianna, WWOOF host)

> *Uh, we usually offer paid work if there's extra stuff that need to be done. So once they've done the minimum, if they're ok, there's a job here, like my husband needs a solar installation or repairs you don't have to, so just paying work and if someone's confident and willing to put any hours, we'll offer them work.* (Beth, WWOOF host)

A difficulty to respond to a micro-ethical dilemma due to personality or high levels of discomfort often led to **deferred implementation**. Rather than facing the issue, individuals often chose to temporarily tolerate a situation but ensured they would avoid it in their future encounters. Thus, they did not react to the dilemma when they came across it. Instead, they adapted their criteria or brought up the topic during early communications in the next encounter to ensure they would not face similar problems. Hosts often created new rules for the following exchanges to that end. Anthony explained why he had to change

the conditions of his exchange gradually rather than mid-way through the encounter:

> *So, as we adjusted the way we approached it with every new set. One thing as I said [partner] is very keen not to have them for more than three weeks. Cause, as she puts it, they get too comfortable. And to be clear about... perhaps the 'rules' is putting it a bit strongly, but be clear about our expectations, perhaps that is the best way if putting it. [...] Initially we learned from some big mistakes I suppose, yeah, like that. Cause you don't want to let them do something and then say actually I'm changing it. Or we felt we didn't want to. [...] we hadn't mentioned that we didn't want them to help themselves from the fridge. So the next lot, we'd say "Please, don't help yourself from the fridge. If you do, we don't know what we have and haven't got."* (Anthony, Workaway host)

Deferred implementation could also happen within the same exchange. With the levels of comfort increasing as the personal relationship develops, for some participants the answer to a micro-ethical dilemma changed over time. Kira, for instance, spoke about a host who, rather than providing the food, asked HelpXers to shop whatever they needed and then provide the receipt, which created a dilemma for Kira, that she reacted to differently towards the end of the exchange:

> *They told us some horror stories about people that brought ridiculously expensive cheese and crackers and chutneys and they just spent hundreds and hundreds of dollars on a week's shop. So we were really careful. To start with we bought the minimum of everything and we actually got some stuff out of our own money as well, a bit more like dips and anything that wasn't really essential. Then towards the end we kind of spend a bit more, sometimes we might get something like ice cream or... Within reason. You do worry when it's someone else's money you're spending, you do kind of think "Oh, are they gonna be annoyed if I buy this? Will they go through the receipt and check everything?". You get a bit paranoid. And you suddenly think "Actually what is essential? What is essential to me to them it could be completely different". Other people were spending a lot more than we were so we kind of felt, not that we should spend more, but that we could have something a little bit nicer. And they wouldn't kick us out.* (Kira, HelpXer)

If the individual felt what they wanted was their right per the rules of the exchange, they sometimes employed **commands**. These were more commonly enforced by hosts, due to the power dynamic as being the owners of the home and a type of employer to their guests generally gave them more

control over the transaction. They often characterised it as honesty or open communication of expectations, and most of the examples that were given pertained to situations where they were unhappy with their guests' work. In the following examples Nick and Natasha talk about instances where they had to resort to commands:

> *You know, I like my shirts ironed, hanged up on a hanger and if it weren't done like that, then I would say this is how I want it done and that's how it's done.* (Nick, au pair host)

> *I know, with the Spanish one there was only once a moment where we almost argued. But we were both sensible enough and... That was when she started having a weekend work, because I always told them "If you want to have an extra job that's absolutely fine, I'm not going to stop you from doing that". [...] And once I remember I needed her for something for the children and she said "Oh, but I have arrangements with [workplace]". And then I just said "No, your primary arrangements are with us". I just said that. She got annoyed, I saw that she got really angry but she swallowed it. And I felt horrible telling her that, but I really needed her. And she said "Ok, don't worry, I'll sort it" and she changed it.* (Natasha, au pair host)

Apart from the direct commands that were described above, house rules set by hosts communicated to their guests can also be described as indirect commands. Kat, for instance, informs her guests on arrival what the house rules are to avoid problems:

> *Well, yes, absolutely. There's a bunch of house rules and I let them know during orientation when there's certain things that, you know, like for instance, I try to have them, I encourage them to eat here. I say "If you have to snack, I want you to be, you have to be really clean about it. So you can't be leaving scraps around because I don't want rodents in the lower place, I'm not down there to trap them".* (Kat, WWOOF host)

In the most extreme cases, where micro-ethical dilemmas can be persistent and develop into something more severe, if a common moral framework cannot be agreed upon and neither side is willing to accept or compromise, the reaction can be **exiting** the relationship. While some terminations came from a completely negative encounter or falling out, which participants felt were irreparable, in some cases the discontinuation of the exchange was a result of inability to agree on the nature of the transaction. Rachel recounted an

experience where an increasing number of uncomfortable situations with a guest led to an early termination of an exchange. This guest, a young woman with no awareness of cultural and social norms in Australia, tried to dictate the rules of the encounter, something Rachel was not willing to accept:

> *She'd never travelled outside China before and I didn't have the house, so it was fairly rough accommodation. And she arrived and she was very very stressed. And I put on, this is an example, I put on some music, just calming music, and it was the Dalai Lama chant and she started yelling at me. "We look after the Tibetan people and you put this music!". So this was just within the first 10 minutes so I was a bit shocked. It was very difficult with her, she would not allow me to talk while we were having dinner. She was what they, I found out later, that she was one of what they call little princesses. So she demanded I cut her hair. I said "No, I don't feel comfortable cutting your hair". She was very angry. She used a lot of toilet paper which was really strange. It was just quite a few things, Mania, and in the end I said "Look, I think I'm gonna have to ask you to leave" because it was just so exhausting.* (Rachel WWOOF host)

Sean and Irene had an experience at a farm where the work Irene was given was not what she felt WWOOFing was meant to be and they left earlier than planned. However, they understood the hosts needed this work done and thus did not complain:

> *We stayed for three weeks actually and [Sean] was helping out with all the school stuff and the kids and I was just vacuuming, washing and making lunches and not really WWOOFing, not organic- I think we did a day of weeding. And we helped with some fencing and things like that but I was pretty much a housemaid [laughter]. I was really over it. We might have actually left a few days early because of it. It wasn't- not what I was up for. WWOOFing needs to be farming. But it was sort of a situation I couldn't really say anything* (Irene, WWOOFer)

The moral framework of the exchange is a result of the various responses to the micro-ethical dilemmas faced by participants in the duration of the encounter. Its construction is based on their chosen reactions; whether spoken like querying or unspoken like imitation; whether straightforward like requests or indirect like microaggressions; whether active like commands or passive like acceptance. All these choices made by participants at the moment they are

faced with a dilemma that pertains to the rules of the exchange shape the latter to various extents. The power imbalance of the exchange can be reduced or increased and the direction of the change emerging from the reaction, is not always to the individual's favour as some of the narratives suggest. Feeling powerless and avoiding confrontation through choosing certain types of passive and indirect reactions can lead to the persistence of the issue faced and thus to a moral framework the individual continues to be unhappy with. On the other hand, assertive reactions can create tension but more often than not resolve problems and empower the individual to strive for a moral framework that they feel is fair and a more enjoyable exchange in general.

Chapter 6. Discussion

Although the host-guest relationship has been studied in various settings as well as particularly in WWOOFing and even more so au pairing, previous work has not specifically addressed the particularities of constructing the moral framework of the exchange. Selwyn (2000) argued for the necessity of reaching a common moral framework in hospitality encounters according to which the two sides will behave. Studies have explored the negotiation that takes place in these settings to create the rules of these unclear transactions, yet the micro aspects of these interactions have not been thoroughly studied (Deville, Wearing and McDonald, 2016). Riconda (2019) also suggested bringing together au pairing and similar encounters that are part of the sharing economy such as Workaway. These exchanges that have been described as part of the moral economy, having the aim of both sides gaining the same benefits rather than one profiting from the other (Kosnik, 2013). Nonetheless, what each side understands as fair to offer and receive and how, in turn, they express it, according to these perceptions has not been given particular attention in academia. The purpose of this study is to illuminate these micro aspects of the encounters, namely how individuals reach the moral framework through various interactions and micro-ethical dilemmas, their responses to which create the foundations of the transaction.

This chapter brings together the main findings that came out from the analysis of both the interviews and the autoethnography to explore this process of creating the moral framework of the encounter in relation to the existing bibliography on and around the topic of the study. The chapter is divided into five parts; Perceptions of fairness in the encounter, Politics of Identity, Power Dynamic, Responses to Micro-ethical Dilemmas; and Moral Framework of the encounter. In the first part, perceptions of fairness in the encounter, the discussion revolves around the various aspects of the encounter that shape the understanding participants have of the experience and the fairness involved in it. Specifically, in line with the Interview findings chapter, it looks into perceptions of work, hospitality, education, cultural exchange as well as the

interpersonal relationship that is created between the two sides. It is followed by Politics of Identity which discusses how various demographic characteristics and preconceptions related to them can affect the behaviours of either side. All these factors influence the power dynamic, with expressions of control from hosts or guests being discussed in the third part. The perceptions of fairness, politics of identity and the consequent power dynamic affect the way the individuals react to the various micro-ethical dilemmas they face during the encounter, elaborated in the following part titled Micro-ethical dilemmas. In the last part, the way these reactions feed into the moral framework of the exchange, that is the shared understanding of what the transaction entails, will be elaborated. With these revisions of the Moral Framework that introduce new rules in the transaction, the perception of the participants changes as well, and this circular process continues throughout the encounter.

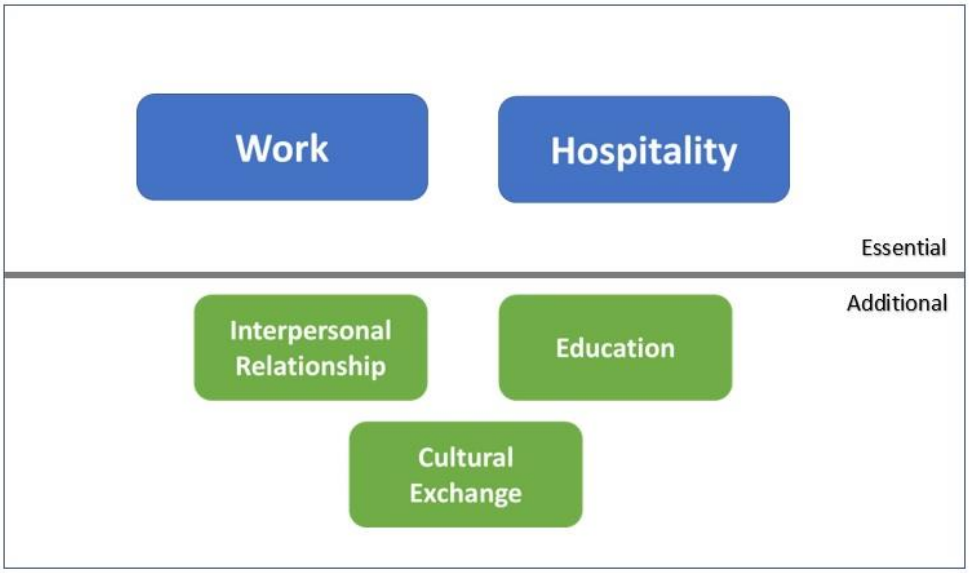
6.1 Perceptions of fairness in the encounter

The participants' interpretations of the fairness involved in this transaction form their perceptions of the transaction itself and the roles involved in it. However, roles are not permanent or static but they rather emerge through interaction with others and are constantly negotiated, produced and reproduced. Through these interactions and certain ritualised behaviours, some roles can be perceived as superior or inferior to others (Goffman, 1959). Accordingly, in these exchanges the understanding of a role can develop throughout the stay, with the introduction of new rules, encounters with different people and negotiation.

Cox and Narula (2003) characterised au pairing as a combination of work, homestay and cultural exchange. However, from participants narratives five main aspects of the encounter were found; work, hospitality, education, interpersonal relationship and cultural exchange (Figure 1). The first two are essential for the encounter to take place as they are the basis on which it is built. The host must provide hospitality and the guest must provide their work in exchange. If either of the two is missing or the respective side is unwilling or

unable to offer it, then the transaction cannot take place. The three remaining aspects education, interpersonal relationship and cultural exchange are additional elements that are not required for the encounter to occur, but they are crucial for it to be positive. However, not all three are always present at the same time. A cultural exchange does not always take place; WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers often travel through their own country and au pairs are sometimes staying with expat hosts from their own country. Moreover, in some cases, for example, education can take place in the context of WWOOF during work without a significantly strong interpersonal relationship developing. Or an interpersonal relationship can develop, without any education taking place, like in certain au pairing experiences. Nonetheless, the cultural exchange is the only one that is contingent on the other two. There needs to be an interpersonal relationship for the cultural exchange to exist. At the same time, most participants placed the cultural exchange within an educational context, giving it as an example of what they learned through their experiences. Thus, every layer of aspects in Figure 1 requires the one above it to take place.

Figure 1. Aspects of non-commercial homestay encounters



6.1.1 Pre-encounter expectations

In order to discuss what participants understand this encounter to be, it is imperative to view what they expect before the experience itself. Their motivation to participate in such a transaction and the criteria they have for their hosts or guests respectively can illuminate their perceptions regarding the exchange. While their motivations and criteria before their first experience generally indicate what their understanding of the transaction entails before participating in it, these often change. Through positive or negative social exchanges, individuals' motivations and criteria can shift. For instance, they may wish to have more cultural experiences after meeting people from other countries, or they may adapt their criteria to avoid previous uncomfortable or negative situations.

Studies have found that hosts are often motivated to invite guests to avoid the high cost of childcare in terms of au pairing (Stenum and Dahl, 2011) and farm labour in WWOOFing (Mostafanezhad et al. 2014; Guthman, 2017). Similar comments were made by hosts in this research. Particularly, almost all au pair hosts from the UK mentioned the issue of costly childcare in the country as a main motivator to invite au pairs, along with other benefits of the programme. WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts also argued that they faced financial difficulty to employ farm workers, especially for tasks they considered unskilled labour, while many argued that they hired professionals whenever certain expertise was required. However, none of the hosts named the lower costs as their sole motivation and for some they were not even the main motivation. Having their children learn or practice another language was an added benefit for many au pair hosts while the cultural exchange was appreciated by hosts in all types of encounters. For many WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts, educating people about organic farming, conservation and sustainable living was a significant factor in choosing to participate in these exchanges. Whether they had an educational career before or they were passionate about environmentalism, hosts often wanted to pass on their knowledge and ecological values to the next generations.

In terms of criteria, Bahna (2006) found that the overwhelming majority of au pair hosts preferred female au pairs, something mentioned in a variety of other studies (Dalgas, 2014; Anderson, 2007). Gender appeared to be a significant criterion for many of the participating au pair hosts, with only one having hosted male au pairs as well, an issue that is discussed in more detail in part 6.2 of this chapter. Appropriateness for the job they needed, personality, guests' motivation to participate and willingness to learn and work as well as compatibility with the hosts were also cited as significant criteria by hosts in all exchanges. Mellini et al. (2005 in Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007) argued that previous encounters and preconceptions of au pairing created expectations that affect the relationship between au pairs and their host families. This was found to be the case for hosts of au pairing, WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX participating in this study, where some of them developed further criteria after positive or negative experiences and occasionally limited the invited guests to specific age groups, nationalities or personality types.

The findings of this study indicated that guests were motivated from the opportunity for low cost travel and engagement in a cultural exchange in both types of stays. However, the exchange type chosen was connected to further reasons specific to the characteristics of each encounter. In au pairing the guests wanted to experience in depth a foreign culture, learn the language and way of life with the comfort of having a home and job waiting for them. This safety net was preferable as it was often their first step towards independence, the first time away from their family before or after studies. Bagnoli (2009) characterised these types of trips as rites of passage for the young people, who are often motivated by further advantages such as learning English. The skills au pairs collect for their future, mostly language skills, have been found in the literature to be a strong motivator for participation (Geserick, 2012; Bagnoli, 2009), something highlighted by participants in this study's interviews as well. It has to be noted that the background of interviewed au pairs in terms of ethnicity and class was a big factor in their motivations, which were not necessarily financial as opposed to au pairs from developing economies who are sometimes undertaking this role to gain money and support their families back home (Parreñas, 2000; Dalgas, 2015). On the other hand, WWOOFers,

Workawayers and HelpXers are similarly motivated by the opportunity to travel to their desired destination with reduced expenses, while many of them were also excited to learn about organic farming and sustainable living. This finding was not in complete alignment with McIntosh and Bonnemann's (2006) findings whose WWOOF participants most cited motivation was learning about organic farming, followed by the cultural exchange and the opportunity to travel. It has been argued that with the increase of their popularity in the recent years since McIntosh and Bonnemann's (2006) study, more people with a variety of motivations join to enjoy the experience and benefit from the advantages of this economical type of travel as opposed to individuals mainly wanting to learn about farming (Deville and Wearing, 2013).

On the other hand, guests' main criterion was often the location of their hosts' home as travelling was one of the strongest motivations. Whether it be in a specific country, city, or just in the route of their travels for WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers, guests usually filtered potential hosts by location. Further criteria were mostly connected to work, such as the age and number of children in au pairing and the kind of work involved in the other exchanges. For WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers the type of food and accommodation often played a big part as well, due to the large variety in type and quality of meals and quarters offered by hosts.

At the same time participants spoke about the other side's motivation. If they felt the other side was solely motivated by benefitting from the aspects in the first layer of Figure 1, that is hosts who only want cheap labour and guests who only want free accommodation and food, they argued the encounter was not genuine or positive. Due to the nature of these transactions, while the basic exchange of work for food and accommodation is necessary and the main motivation might be either one, being exclusively motivated by those was frowned upon. There were various examples from au pairs who felt their hosts wanted cheap houseworkers, WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts who had guests refusing to work or put minimum effort in and so on. These participants saw the other side as taking advantage of the exchange rather than genuinely being interested in all its dimensions.

The motivations and criteria of participants give a clear overview of what their expectations are prior to the encounter. These expectations, whether they become reality or not during their actual experiences, indicate participants' understanding of these exchanges in general. Moreover, their criteria expose certain preconceptions related to characteristics of the other side, mostly from hosts, which can create issues of discrimination and tensions, as the treatment and behaviour towards the other side can be affected by the stereotyping of their gender, age group or ethnicity.

6.1.2 Ethics of Work

Work demands

The nature of these exchanges is quite similar, with work being exchanged for food and accommodation, however, the types of work available are quite varied. Au pairing is focused on childcare and domestic work while WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX exchanges require mostly farmwork. While the latter two organisations include hosts who request a variety of jobs, such as language practice, dog sitting, social media management etc, the majority of jobs required, both generally as well as in this sample, are related to farms. All the hosts interviewed were looking for help with their garden or farm, while out of the 14 guests, four undertook different types of work, such as help with cleaning homes, working in hostels and dog walking. Nonetheless all of the participating guests worked on at least one farm during their experiences. These significantly different roles create different expectations to both sides. In WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX work tends to be physically demanding, with long hours of working outside. Guests are generally not expected to have any prior knowledge or experience in farming but to be willing to learn and work hard. Au pairing on the other hand, is revolved around children and housework, which can also be physically demanding but with the care work component being more prevalent. However, the distinction is not that clear. As will be discussed further in this chapter WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX entail a similar type of care labour, albeit not as intense as au pairing in most cases.

One complaint made by all interviewed au pairs was that the chores they were asked to do were many more than initially agreed upon and kept increasing throughout their stay, in terms of time and amount of work. This is not uncommon in au pairing, studies have shown this is the reality for an overwhelming majority of cases (Elden and Anving, 2016). Despite feeling overworked, many au pairs argued they still felt their work was not enough to equal the hospitality offered by their hosts and thus did not express any complaints they had. This is often the issue with domestic work and childcare being seen as non-work (Berg, 2015) and even more so in au pairing, due to the family and cultural exchange narratives that do not construe the encounter as a work exchange (Cox, 2007). These perceptions appeared to have permeated the au pairs' understanding of their role in some cases; with Maria and Evangelia, for instance, arguing that they were not able to complain about work issues as their hosts were 'letting' them stay in their home and giving them food. This feeling indicates a devaluation of their own labour, an internalisation of the common perception of their work as non-labour, even though both expressed dissatisfaction during the interviews about the amount of work they were given. These feelings were also expressed by guests in the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX setting. While the nature of the work involved is quite different, the hospitality offered often creates similar feelings of appreciation and duty towards their hosts, hindering guests' ability to complain about the hard labour or long hours of work. At the same time, many of the guests used work to express their gratitude towards their hosts, often working longer hours and taking up more tasks. I personally had similar feelings throughout my stay in both homes. I considered my work not to be intensive enough to grant me the hospitality I was offered by my hosts. I made a conscious effort to work as much as possible, spend time with them and contribute in other ways, such as housework, to feel I was not taking advantage of them. And, similar to my participants, I never felt able to complain about any small grievances due to constantly being aware of my status as a guest in their home.

On the other hand, for many hosts the work provided by guests is crucial. Au pairs' work allows -mainly female- hosts to be in employment (Berg, 2015), while WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers are often necessary for the

operation of farms, particularly for hosts who cannot afford regular employees (Mostafanezhad et al., 2015). And yet, the majority of hosts refused to define themselves as employers and made a conscious effort to downplay this aspect of their role; highlighting other aspects like the personal/family relationship, the educational element or the hospitality offered. While acknowledging the work involved -and their need for it- most described the exchange as anything but a work exchange. This allowed them a justification to require work from their guests under the guise of educating them or as a 'moral obligation' of a guest/family member. Not treating the work involved as labour had an effect on guests as well. They occasionally reported feeling underappreciated, with au pairs arguing their work was not recognised and WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers being given tedious and repetitive jobs such as weeding, due to their lack of expertise.

Au pairing has increased in the past few years with the increase of women in the workforce (Berg, 2015). With more women working, the need for childcare services and domestic work has grown and countries often subsidise au pairing making it an inexpensive option compared to other types of domestic help (Stenum and Dahl, 2011). The employment of the host mothers and the unaffordable alternatives for childcare were often cited as reasons to get an au pair in this study. Most of the hosts appeared appreciative of the au pairs and their work overall. Small grievances related to work were expressed by most hosts but in general the majority were satisfied with their au pairs in terms of work. However, the previously mentioned devaluing of au pairs work was not only expressed by themselves, as the following quote from au pair host Amanda indicates; a response to a previous au pair communicating her fear she may not be able to do the job: *"I was like 'Well. Welcome to the real world. You've been playing dolls all day, it's not really that hard'."* Amanda's reduction of the au pair's work to playing with dolls, exemplifies the deprecation of domestic work and childcare and its reduction to non-work. The au pair Amanda had at the time of the interview, Susanne, also participated in this study and revealed her taking offense at her host, being a woman with a successful career, constantly belittling her friends who were stay-at-home mothers. Apart from Susanne's own mother being one too, she argued her experience as an au pair

gave her a new appreciation for stay-at-home mothers and the hard work involved in caring for children while managing the whole home.

While many studies have found WWOOF hosts are not typical farmers but rather 'bohemian' farmers operating their farm as a hobby (Yamamoto and Engelsted, 2014; Mostafanezhad et al., 2015; McIntosh and Bonneman, 2006), this was not the case in this study. Indeed, a minority had further jobs and farming or gardening was a personal interest that did not yield any income. However, for the many interviewed hosts the farms were their only occupation, while for some, further activities related to the farm such as workshops or agritourism enterprises supplemented their income. Thus, their dependence on the guests for the farm chores often put them in a position vulnerable to exploitation by individuals who only desired a cheap holiday. Hosts found guests were often unprepared for the hard work involved in farming, underestimating the effort needed. Terry (2014) argued the WWOOFers' lack of skills can create additional costs to hosts due to the need for training and mistakes made by guests. However, most interviewed hosts argued they were appreciative of the help, no matter how little, and were happy to train and educate their guests on agriculture. Some mentioned in cases of a guest not being able to do a specific task they would simply delegate another job to them, while others took the responsibility for any mistakes and blamed them on their own wrong or insufficient directions. Thus, WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts appeared to believe the advantages of this exchange outweighed the disadvantages that come with unskilled labour, as the encounter offers much more than simply cheap labour.

Housework: work or 'chiming in'?

While in au pairing, domestic work is part of the guest's role, quite often the biggest one, it is not as central in WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX; however, it is also commonly requested by guests in these exchanges. Housework is often not presented as work at all but rather as a part of being a family or household member, something that has been widely reported in the au pairing literature (Hess and Puckhaber, 2004; Williams and Balaz, 2003; Anderson, 2000) but also in WWOOF studies (Kosnik, 2013). Similarly, hosts in this study

often used expressions such as 'chiming in', 'giving a hand' and ‘helping out’ to express their expectations on housework rather than presenting it as work. Using such expressions diminishes the work aspect of house chores, undermining the labour involved and blurring the lines between work and moral obligation. This uncertainty gave hosts the opportunity to request work from the guests during their time off. Almost all au pairs were unhappy about their hosts expecting them to work in their free time, with the most common example being having to clean up after meals when they were off duty. This constant state of being ‘on call’ has been noted in au pairing research, largely due to the overlap between the public sphere of work and the private sphere of the home (Williams and Balaz, 2003). WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers were also often expected to help with meals, washing up, cleaning and similar chores, mostly not presented as part of their duties as a worker but as part of being a guest. Nonetheless, not all of them appeared dissatisfied; guests rather enjoyed being invited into the family life, while for many housework was a way of expressing gratitude for the hospitality offered as Hess and Puckhaber (2004) found au pairs often perceived these tasks before starting their experience.

For au pairs and WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX guests who were unhappy to undertake these tasks, however, expressing their frustration and complaints was not easy. Refusing to fulfil these “moral obligations” could make them look like a bad, ungrateful guest rather than a worker unhappy with their duties. However, some hosts also demonstrated difficulty in coming to terms with the complexities of housework. While some considered these duties as the guest’s responsibility towards their host family (Yodanis and Lauer, 2005), others had apprehensions on this issue and felt discomfort to demand housework. Instead of asking their guests to complete certain household tasks, they often did them themselves or used indirect ways to communicate their expectations, to avoid the unpleasantness involved in giving commands related to cleaning especially. This was noticed to be the case mostly with hosts who made an effort to present themselves as egalitarian and the relationship as equal. The difficulty of hosts expressing their housework-related expectations was something that I also observed in my own experience. An example of a more indirect approach to inform me of my household duties was when my first hosts, rather than

communicating directly the household chores I was responsible for, doing the dishes and cleaning the flat, left a note on the fridge for me.

From my side, I was happy to contribute to the household chores which were part of my role in the first home. The feeling of my work, assisting with English practice, not meriting the hospitality I was offered was balanced out with engaging in these household tasks, something interviewed guests also reported. However, similar to some participating guests' comments, at times I felt discontentment with the chores, especially in two instances. The first was when I had to wash the dishes after one of my hosts had invited friends over for dinner in which I did not join and the second when I was asked to clean the terrace, a task that had obviously not been done in a very long time. Again, like most of the guests interviewed, I did not relay my issues to my hosts. Nonetheless, in the second home where I was not required to do any housework -and was constantly reminded that it was not my role there- I was more than happy to contribute due to my comfort in the home and my positive relationship with my hosts. In this case I did indeed perceive my contribution as a way to express gratitude to my hosts, and, in a way, a moral obligation as a guest (Yodanis and Lauer, 2005). Thus, it can be asserted that when the moral obligation is not forced by the host, but genuinely felt by the guest, the latter often perceives it as an act of generosity or appreciation on their part rather than an 'obligation'.

Emotional labour

Emotional labour, a term coined by Arlie Hochschild (2012, p. 7), refers to *"… the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value*". Hochschild (2012) distinguishes emotional labour from emotion work or emotion management, which are similar concepts, performed in a private rather than employment environment, such as with family and friends. Hochschild explored this concept in depth in the family context (Hochschild, 2003). In the setting of these exchanges, whether (poorly) paid, like au pairing, or not financially compensated, like the rest of the encounters, offering or receiving work is still the main component. And, despite the little to no financial

remuneration, the work provided is exchanged with hospitality and, thus, perceived as a type of employment. Therefore, emotional labour is a more applicable term than emotion work. Looking into flight attendants' work Hochschild (2012, p. 5) argues "*the emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself*". That is appearing to love their job or even making an effort to actually love it, is not only an expected component of their work but also an indicator of the quality of their performance. Hochschild (2012; 2003) distinguishes between what she characterises 'surface' and 'deep' acting. Surface acting is using "*display acts*" (Hochschild, 2003, p. 100); that is using the body to communicate feeling through facial expressions, body language, gestures, sighs etc. Deep acting, on the other hand, is not merely an effort to appear to have an emotion but actually producing an emotion, changing how one feels. Deep acting can be done in one of two ways; by actively prompting a feeling or through trained imagination, by utilising previous experiences to evoke a similar feeling to the one the person wants to convey.

In the context of this study, surface acting was utilised by participants, both hosts and guests. Examples include Anthony's effort to present a good mood to his guests even when he had a bad day or family disputes, and Ulrike's mention of her first hosts' expectations of her having "*always smiling face and just being a robot kind of*". However, deep acting was also employed; participants tried to suppress feelings of anger, disappointment and frustration to avoid discomfort. Natasha, the au pair host who often felt frustrated by one of her guests, mentioned occasionally trying to convince herself that it was her anxious nature and not her au pair's behaviour that was the issue in an effort to avoid being angry and calm herself down.

Since Hochschild first published her work on emotional labour in 1983 the concept has been widely popular and applied in various contexts such as teaching (Isenbarger and Zembylas, 2005), television (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008) and nursing (Yang and Chang, 2007) among others. However, the theory has also been a subject of criticism over the years. Hochschild's emotional labour concept has been critiqued for being absolutist in viewing commodification of emotion as alienating and it has been maintained that emotional labour can even be satisfying for the worker (Woulters, 1989).

Moreover, the clear divide between private and public emotion management, has been characterised as oversimplifying (Barbalet, 2001) while the equation between physical and emotional labour processes has also been criticised (Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Barbalet, 2001). Bolton and Boyd (2003), for instance, similarly to Hochschild (2012), explored cabin crews' emotion management at work and offered an alternative way of viewing it. Their findings suggest that more than one emotional management category exists and that the cabin crew are often skilled emotion managers who have agency and occasionally adapt their emotions depending on the context and their motivations. Thus, the employer or organisation is not solely in charge of the emotions displayed; the social actors are often the ones deciding the emotion they want to present and regulate these emotions to simply conform to the requirements of their job (Bolton and Boyd, 2003).

Emotional labour has been a prevalent notion in the au pairing literature (Bikova and Isaksen, 2010; Anderson, 2000; Parreñas 2001). With the work involving childcare the emotional aspect was extensively mentioned in the interviews. A number of au pair hosts expected their guests to not only be good at their jobs, working with and taking care of the children. They also wanted them to feel and show love for the children. This expectation is not only about completing practical tasks of cleaning, managing the household and childcare, as an employee would. It also involves further skills such as empathy and expression of affection (Rohde-Abuba, 2016). Bikova and Isaksen (2010) argued that this work expected by au pairs is often perceived as 'labour of love' by hosts rather than the emotional labour they have to produce. Indeed, hosts mentioned au pairs who openly expressed emotions towards and developed personal bonds with the children, were preferred even to the au pairs who were more capable and efficient in performing the tasks asked of them. Au pairs also argued for the importance of developing strong bonds with the children, more so than with the parents usually. However, many reported feeling the pressure to be always positive, happy and willing to play with the children in their free time. This requirement uncovers the expectations laid on the au pairs of not only being good at their job; they were expected to manage their emotions accordingly to present a constantly pleasant, joyous image. Some did not mind exactly

because of the bond they had developed with the children; others chose to leave in their free time to avoid any additional labour – physical or emotional.

In WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters the social aspects similarly play an important part; both hosts and guests expressed their wishes to meet different people through these exchanges. In some cases, empty nesters mentioned they wanted to have young people in their home after their own children left, while some farmers who lived in isolated areas appreciated having company. This insight also chimes with the findings of Lans (2016), who connected WWOOFing to care labour, due to the existence of the interpersonal relationship, the emotional connection and sense of duty felt by guests towards their hosts. Some guests conveyed enjoyment in these deeper relationships and meaningful encounters. Nonetheless, the constant contact and expectation of providing company was overwhelming for some guests who applied a variety of techniques to reduce the time spent with their hosts, such as retreating to their rooms or leaving the home after completing work. The most conspicuous examples were Ekin, who said she felt like paid company at times with her host, and Philip who avoided hosts offering a room in their home as he felt they needed WWOOFers to reduce their feelings of loneliness, which he found emotionally draining. It can be argued that for some guests, despite them enjoying and often being motivated by the potential human connections, there was a limit to their willingness and ability to offer emotional labour.

Similar to guests' narratives above but to a much lesser extent, I also felt tired of the social aspect of the exchange at times. During my stay in the two homes I enjoyed the interactions and cultural exchange with my hosts immensely. Nonetheless, the many hours I had to spend with them, especially in the first home, were taxing at times, when I felt the need to have some time alone. Having become accustomed to spending a lot of time by myself due to my long hours of studying during the PhD, when I found myself having to invest most hours of my day to my hosts, I felt overwhelmed and often tired. Despite my hosts not necessarily asking me to do so, I felt it was my obligation to be present and engage with them, particularly as my role was to help them with English practice but also as an expression of appreciation and friendship.

6.1.3 Ethics of Hospitality

The home setting

The home has deep and personal meanings to its inhabitants, offering more than the physical building; safety, protection and emotions (Abdelmonem, 2012). For Russo (2012) the fundamental significance of the home is related to the bonds and relationships that are forged in it. When a stranger enters the home and, as in these exchanges, is meant to stay for a longer time the balance that has developed over the years gets disrupted. Guests in these encounters enter in an established structure of relationships and rules in the home and have to create their own place in it. The home that until then symbolised the separation of the public and private arena for the host (Russo, 2012), suddenly comprises an overlap of the two for them. Bulley (2015) argued that the way we treat the other that enters our home constitutes an ethical relation. With the guests essentially being strangers trying to find their place in their new temporary home and the hosts making an effort to maintain a certain level of sovereignty while being in control of the home's operation, the home becomes a site of negotiation and, in some cases, conflict.

One way for hosts to ensure the exchange runs smoothly and according to their expectations, was to create house rules that dictate spatial boundaries and behaviours in the home. These rules were what Derrida (2000) characterised as conditions of hospitality; in order for the host to be able offer hospitality to their guests they tried to maintain sovereignty over the home's spaces and routines. The home is a space where rules are commonly employed by parents to control their children and ensure a steady functioning of its routines, thus making it appear as an area appropriate for rules to be imposed on guests, especially au pairs who are commonly treated as children of the family (Cox and Narula, 2003). Hosts had different preferences as to when they would inform their guests of the house rules. Some preferred to inform them at the beginning of the exchange as they found it difficult to change things as time passed, while for others it was too intimidating to lay down a set of rules for their guests upon arrival and chose to tell them when issues came up. These rules ranged from simple and somewhat expected guidelines related to

smoking, drug and alcohol consumption in the home to more restricting and authoritative demands. The guests argued they generally did not mind the former type of rules which they accepted as common sense and/or reasonable requests. However, there were certain rules that were deemed excessive by guests, especially when they restricted their freedom or privacy. On the other hand, hosts argued that certain rules were in place for the guests' safety, such as rules relating to sun and heat protection or operating heavy machinery. Cox and Narula (2003) argued that while hosts may employ house rules for practical reasons, they are generally not applicable to everyone in the household and as such tend to create hierarchies and inequalities between them by outlining their roles in the home. Along the same lines Anderson (2014) discusses how creating rules on issues of space, behavior and daily routines can highlight power balance and power relations within the home. The findings of this study suggest a similar tendency for hosts, particularly in au pairing exchanges dictating rules to their guests that were not followed by themselves. Au pairs often mentioned the rules by host parents in terms of children's habits -screen time, bed time, diet etc- which they tried to follow and teach the children, but their work was undone by the parents who allowed their children everything they had instructed the au pair to control. At the same time rules about access to food, visitors and daily habits were often imposed on guests but not followed by hosts.

Space

For guests their quarters were often considered a safe haven for them to retire to after the work was done. For au pairs their rooms had a deeper meaning, as many commented that these spaces were the only areas of the home where they felt completely comfortable and free to act as they wish. Some expressed their comfort by decorating their room or adding personal items, like Dorotea who brought teddy bears to make it feel like home. This was either a personal feeling or indicated by their hosts, like in Mirona's case where the hosts made it clear that she was a temporary resident in their space: "*They didn't tell me this is my home. This is your room. Yeah [laughter]*". Nonetheless, for some of them their rooms were not completely under their control either. Hosts dictating

the cleaning schedules of their private quarters, going in without asking when the au pair was gone, or even demanding to have a full view of the room throughout the day reduced the feeling of comfort and privacy that guests felt in their space.

While WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX guests did not necessarily have their own room, often being provided with caravans, tents and outhouses, these spaces served a similar function. They went there to rest after a long day of hard work or to get time away from their hosts. A few of them similarly reported returning to their space and finding things moved, or in Philip's case, their hosts inside the room arguing that it is their house and they can enter at any time. These expressions of control by hosts, demonstrating their sovereignty over the home have been discussed in the literature, particularly in the commercial home context where hosts do so in an effort to maintain a sense of privacy and power over their home (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007). In terms of privacy my own two experiences were also quite different. In the second home I appreciated the fact that my hosts always asked to enter the room that was temporarily my space and even taught their children to do so. Conversely, in my first encounter, finding the door open on my return or having Bárbara enter while I was inside without knocking made the room feel less like my own space and reminded me of my status as an outsider temporarily residing in that room.

At the same time, hosts often dictated access of guests to common areas. However, as Cox and Narula (2003) argued, this expression of spatial boundaries did not necessarily have to be upfront, with hosts often using tacit ways to indicate them. While interviewed au pair hosts generally denied in any way confining the areas available to their guests, apart from their own bedrooms, au pairs still were uncomfortable to use the shared spaces extensively in their free time. This feeling was mentioned to be stronger at the beginning of the encounter when they often tried to limit their time in the bathroom, to use the kitchen when hosts were away and to avoid sitting in the living room altogether. Most au pairs retired into their rooms after their work was finished, according to the reports from both the participating au pairs and hosts. While the hosts expressed a wish for their au pairs to spend more free time with

them, they were mostly understanding about their need for privacy, with the exception of Mirona, whose host father demanded constant visibility into her quarters, even on her days off. Removing themselves from the common areas and going to their room was often justified by either the wish to give hosts some family time or simply wanting to get away. Burikova (2006) argued this can be related to the feeling of au pairs that their presence in the common areas when the family was there "*was something that detracted from the ideal of the nuclear family*" (p.115).

For WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers the situation was similar, if not more conspicuous. Hosts in these exchanges generally felt more comfortable to restrict access to certain areas or at certain times as reported by guests but also by interviewed hosts. The temporary presence and often constant rotation of strangers in the home allowed the hosts to be stricter with boundaries. This disruption of the home's balance due to the stranger's arrival, has been suggested by Bialski (2011) to be addressed through the creation of emotional and spatial boundaries by the host, as found in this study. In family run hospitality establishments the permeability between work and personal life for hosts is often managed to an extent, as they have control over their space and are able to create these boundaries (Seymour, 2007). Guests in these encounters do not have this option, as they work and live in their hosts' space. Similar to Cox and Narula's (2003) findings, au pairs were often asked to work when they were in the common areas, a further reason for leaving straight after work. Nonetheless, it can be argued that despite the overlap between the public and private arenas in these exchanges, the guests still tried to manage a separation on the micro level of the home, where each room had a specific meaning; their bedroom being their home and the rest of the house, or specific rooms in it, being the workplace. As reported by Evangelia: "*The living room was, let's say, the work area. The rest of the house was fine*". This separation between the various public and private spaces evokes Goffman's (1959) notion of 'back' and 'front' stage, which guests utilise to make sense of the blurry lines between them in these encounters.

For au pair hosts, similarly, their only completely private space was their bedroom, where the au pair was only allowed in for work related purposes, like cleaning or doing the laundry. As opposed to au pairs, however, the privacy of these rooms was not encroached by the other side without consent. Moreover, if they wished to spend time in the other areas, they had the option, which for their guests was not always the case. Apart from au pairs generally avoiding these areas, even a slightest indication of discomfort of the host would be understood by the guests who were always aware of their status and would remove themselves immediately. On the other hand, in WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX a number of hosts expressed a stronger wish for privacy compared to au pair hosts. They employed a variety of techniques to ensure they could enjoy time by themselves or with their families. Such methods to create boundaries included offering sleeping quarters outside the home, like in outbuildings, caravans or tents or limiting the time guests could spend in common areas. Hosts who were more open to their guests and preferred the prospect of including them in their daily lives to having more privacy, offered rooms in the home, if possible, shared meals and allowed them to move around the home freely. Nonetheless, the hosts' bedrooms were overwhelmingly mentioned as the one area of the house guests would not go in, no matter the level of openness. Yet hosts, often reported having to give up a certain level of freedom and privacy when they welcomed people in their home. This relinquishment of control by the host has been discussed in the literature relating to commercial homes (Lashley, Lynch and Morrison, 2007; Lynch, Di Domenico and Sweeney, 2007; Seymour, 2007), but was also evident in this study with hosts suggesting they would retire to their room to enjoy their privacy, be mindful of their attire while walking around the home or adapt their diet to their guests. However, as the power relationship in itself is asymmetrical, it is the host who generally dictates the rules (Cronauer, 2012) and rules regarding space and access are central in these encounters. Thus, they were able to restrict certain behaviours or mobilities by employing such house rules.

Food

Food plays a big part in these exchanges. Apart from being one of the basic provisions made by hosts according to the rules of the transaction, it is also often used as an expression of welcome and hospitality by the hosts, while commensality can further strengthen the bonds between the two sides.

Kosnik (2014) found that different preferences regarding types and amount of food, diets and eating habits can create tensions in the encounter. In this study a varying degree of willingness to cater to the other side's preferences, diets, allergies and intolerances was found. In terms of diets, some hosts were open to having vegetarian or vegan food for the time of their guests' stay or even prepare separate meals for them. Others were willing to host individuals with different diets as long as they were happy to prepare their own food, while a few said they simply did not invite people who followed restrictive diets to avoid the inconvenience. However, when it came to expressing personal preferences, guests were not generally comfortable to complain about the flavour of the food or request certain meals. In my own experience as a Workaway guest I also avoided commenting on the food and expressing dissatisfaction on the rare occasions the food was not to my taste. This issue has been discussed in Burikova's (2015) study which noted au pairs having trouble communicating issues related to taste of food. These problems were overcome in encounters where the guest was involved in the decision about meals or cooking themselves. Hosts appeared more flexible when the food restrictions were due to health concerns, such as allergies and intolerances, with many asking their guests before their arrival; my Workaway hosts also avoided cooking meals with bell peppers after I mentioned my allergy to them. Regarding eating schedules, guests had to adapt to their hosts or eat alone if that was not possible; hosts were not open to changing their routines often citing work or farm duties as the reason.

Contingent to these eating schedules was commensality. It has been found that sharing meals creates closer bonds and indicates a more equal relationship both in au pairing exchanges (Cox and Narula, 2003) and in WWOOFing (Lipman and Murphy, 2012). Commensality was preferred by most participants

but was not always possible due to schedules and routines, with au pair hosts often working long hours and farmers waking up much earlier than their guests. However, there were also participants who did not wish to eat with the other side, mostly in WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX exchanges, arguing they preferred the privacy of eating alone after spending the whole day working with their hosts or guests respectively. For the rest, shared meals were a chance to socialise, converse and in the case of au pairing, share updates about the children's day.

Cooking is also a big part of the power dynamic. As the host’s role involves offering hospitality, a basic component of which is food, it can be expected that the preparation of the meals will be their responsibility. However, not all hosts were willing to perform this task, instead including it in the guest's chores, usually as part of domestic chores or general contribution to the household. Delegating the cooking tasks to guests and thus reneging this hospitable act, could be perceived as an exertion of power and establishment of dominance by the host. In some cases, the hosts supplied the ingredients and required guests to cook for themselves and eat alone. They argued that offering the ingredients was where their obligations ended which, in a way, indicates an understanding of food as currency rather than an expression of welcome, thus reducing food to its components and ignoring its deeper meaning. Cooking has been discussed in the literature, particularly in au pairing, but it is mostly viewed as one of many household chores that the au pairs undertake but don’t necessarily enjoy (Busch, 2015). This was a common complaint of guests, particularly au pairs. Au pairs were either expected to cook for the family or at least contribute to the preparation of the meals. From the interviewed au pairs a few mentioned they were only responsible for their and the children's meals while the parents would cook for themselves. On the other hand, in WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX exchanges it was more common for hosts to cook for their guests and occasionally ask them to prepare a dish from their home country or simply provide staples and request the guests to prepare and eat the meals whenever they wished to.

Access to food outside of meals was also an indication of equity in the home. All interviewed au pair hosts mentioned they granted access to the fridge and cupboards of the kitchen to their au pairs, something that au pairs said as well. However, despite the freedom to take anything they needed none of the participating au pairs felt comfortable to do so. Most of them would either just take staples provided by hosts for meals but buy their own snacks and specific food they wished for. For WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters having full access was rare but appreciated. Many hosts argued that their guests were provided enough food throughout the day and did not allow them to take anything further and thus guests often had to buy further food. Nonetheless, it has to be noted that the understanding of “enough food” often differed between the two sides. As Cox (2015) noted regarding au pairing, food provision is a requirement, but the amount of food is not defined and thus up to interpretation. The majority of guests who participated in this study avoided complaining if the food quantity was not enough and simply bought anything extra they needed. The only exception was a small number of WWOOF guests who faced this issue and relayed it to their hosts; au pairs never mentioned to their hosts if they felt they were not receiving the amount of food they deserved. Anthony, a Workaway host and the only one who mentioned dissatisfaction in terms of food quantity by a guest, rather than finding a middle ground, responded to the complaint that this is the amount of food offered and the guest should appreciate it.

6.1.4 Influence of Interpersonal relationship

The interpersonal relationship that develops between the two sides during the encounter is, mostly, a welcome addition and in some cases the main purpose of participating in such exchanges. These meaningful encounters can neither be foreseen nor requested (Mosedale, 2012), while a lack thereof can create a negative perception of the exchange, particularly to guests who may feel exploited (Nimmo, 2001). Similar arguments were made by participants in this study, the vast majority of whom wanted to develop bonds with the other side. In a few cases where the other side exhibited disinterest in a personal

connection, participants argued it affected their whole encounter, particularly as the human connection and cultural exchange in these types of exchanges are promoted as the main appeal. Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi (2007) explored how au pairs constructed their role through work and non-work interactions with the family, especially the mother, while Smith (2015) found that the au pairs' experience as a whole was defined by the relationship with the family. Similar to this finding, the perception of the participating guests' place in the home and in the family was closely connected to the interpersonal relationship and, accordingly, their treatment by the hosts. Guests reported not minding doing hard work for hosts they felt close to, while being more sensitive to smaller work-related issues if there was no personal connection involved.

In order to create a positive social relationship based on equality, various factors come into play. One of the most important factors is reciprocity; an even exchange of favours and personal information in discussions according to the findings of Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi (2007). They argued that "*These reciprocal exchanges are symbolic of not only fairness and equality but also family exchanges*" (Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007, p.54) and this is in line with what this study found. Guests who reported feeling more like employees or the help whether they were au pairs, WWOOFers, Workawayers or HelpXers, mostly attributed it to the disinterest and lack of interpersonal interactions with their hosts. However, while the authors elaborated on au pairs' perceptions of these situations, a number of participating hosts in this study expressed similar attitudes. When their guests showed indifference towards their hosts and their personal lives, the latter felt similarly rejected, creating a distance between the two sides. Thus, when the interpersonal relationship did not develop significantly, the whole encounter was usually affected negatively and hosts often mentioned these as their least favourite exchanges.

Both hosts and guests argued that a positive interpersonal relationship facilitated the exchange and the negotiation of its rules. When the two sides were on good terms it was easier to discuss their expectations openly and honestly. However, after a point the interpersonal relationship can interfere with the work aspect, with some WWOOF and Workaway hosts limiting the duration

of the encounter to avoid such issues. Hosts mentioned their difficulty requesting work from their guests after a longer stay when a stronger friendship had developed, while guests felt more comfortable asking for things they needed, such as more free time or food. Simultaneously, guests who had a positive social relationship with their hosts were more willing to compromise on issues of work, at times even work more to express their gratitude to their hosts. I had a similar experience in my own stays. In my first home, I recognised how the difference in my relationship with the two hosts affected my negotiation power. I felt more comfortable to ask favours from Nati, the host I had a better relationship with, whether that was a ride to the train station or my preference about the activities we would undertake together, like hiking or visiting nearby villages. While the contrast in my comfort to ask for favours was starker in my first stay as it was a simultaneous encounter with Nati and Bárbara, retrospectively, I compared my two experiences and noticed that in the second one my level of comfort was even higher and so was my ability to express my own wishes to my hosts.

Family narrative

The family narrative is commonly used in these types of exchanges. Whether to indicate the place of the guest in the home or their treatment by the host, participants often used family as an analogy to the relationship. However, as studies have shown, the family narrative can often create complications and hierarchies between the two sides. The ‘family relationship’ narrative in au pairing has been debated widely in literature. It has been argued as aiming to de-emphasise servitude and highlight mutual responsibility, through creating a type of fictive kinship (Anderson, 2014; Sollund, 2010). Particularly in au pairing, referring to the guest as a family member, big sister and step sister, among others, was quite common. Through the use of these terms, hosts were able to highlight the moral obligation of their guests to perform work tasks. However, in some cases, the hosts themselves argued that they were not willing to take up the role of the host parent and the responsibilities of care that come with it, employing techniques such as inviting older -and presumably more independent- au pairs. Thus, they created this fictive kinship mainly in relation

to the children, through the use of the analogy of a sibling rather than to their own child, sibling or friend. In this way, the moral responsibility created was a one-way street; the au pair had to care for the children and contribute as an older sibling would, but the host did not have to reciprocate the care as a host parent. These hosts, however, did take over the 'parent' role when it came to setting house rules limiting the au pair's freedom under the pretext of their own benefit, such as curfews and restriction on inviting boyfriends. Cox and Narula (2003) argued these rules are often more applicable to teenagers, denying the au pair an adult status and thus infantilising them.

The analogy to family made in WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX encounters mostly referred to the hospitality offered to the guest. The word 'family' was used by both hosts and guests to indicate a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, shared meals and positive social relationships. In some cases older hosts and empty nesters compared their younger guests to children, to express feelings of care and responsibility as well as a wish to provide guidance and direction from their side. Moreover, hosts who lived in isolated areas, often single people, appreciated expanding their household with temporary members to enjoy the feeling of family, a need also found in Kosnik's (2013) study. Furthermore, as other research has pointed out (Cronauer, 2012; Kosnik, 2013) hosts with families appreciated introducing different cultures to their children and in this way opening their worldview, as mentioned by WWOOF host Niharika.

6.1.5 Education

Education plays a big part in the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX experiences, less so in au pairing. While the latter is often presented as an educational experience, au pairs do not always take language classes either by their choice or due to time constraints. The exception is au pairs in the United States who are required by law to take language or college courses as a prerequisite to participate in the exchange. For WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers education is a large component of the encounter, albeit in an informal way. They

learn about organic farming, permaculture and sustainable living from their hosts in most situations when the encounter takes place on a farm. WWOOFing, the most researched of these exchanges, has often been characterised as an educational exchange in the literature (Mostafanezhad, 2016; McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006), with education being central in its values since its beginning in 1971 (WWOOF International, 2019).

WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts were often enthusiastic to teach their guests about organic farming, sustainability and environmental ethic, which is in line with Yamamoto and Engelsted's (2014) observations. Many of the participating hosts had previously worked in education while for some their wish to pass on their ecological values to younger generations motivated them to participate in such exchanges. Naturally, they expressed a preference towards guests who exhibited interest in learning about farming. It was noted in both hosts' and guests' interviews that guests who were motivated to learn were usually more enthusiastic, open to following instructions and sometimes even accepting lower quality living conditions as part of the rural experience. This drive made them work harder and complain less, which reduced the possibility for tension in the relationship. On the other hand, participants who were less willing to learn about the farm life and work, were more likely to be unhappy with the hard conditions and work. However, this dissatisfaction was not necessarily relayed openly to their hosts, often harbouring hostility towards the other side, thus creating discomfort and misunderstandings. At the same time hosts often used the pretext of education to add to the workload of their guests by showing them how to do certain tasks and then asking them to practice, often during their free time.

In au pairing, on the other hand, the role of the educator can be taken over by au pairs, who often have to teach children a language or help them with homework. Au pairs are supposed to learn the language of the country they are staying in or, as stipulated by law in the United States, take a college class as an alternative. However, only one of the interviewed au pairs took formal language classes with the rest relying on everyday conversations with the family to practice the language. Yet, they considered these language skills they

acquired crucial for their future careers, in line with other studies' findings (Geserick, 2012; Bagnoli, 2009). What some au pairs and hosts also mentioned as education was the guests learning skills related to cooking, childcare and domestic work. For au pairs who wanted to work with children as a career, the childcare aspect was often seen as a chance to boost their curriculum vitae with relevant experience for potential future jobs. Perceiving these duties as education often made the au pairs more tolerant of the work and less likely to be unhappy with the chores, similar to guests in the other exchanges.

In my own experience in Spain, I did not acknowledge the educational part as much. While my job was to help my hosts practice English, which is in a way an educational role, it did not feel as such. That was mainly because speaking in English was something I did in my daily life in Scotland and simply correcting, translating or explaining words and phrases to them was done in an informal way rather than a formal teaching setting. On the other hand, I mostly perceived what I learned about Spain as a cultural exchange rather than education.

6.1.6 Cultural Exchange

All of the encounters are presented as a cultural exchange in the official narrative and the respective websites (Council of Europe, 1969; WWOOF, 2019; Workaway, 2019; HelpX, 2019). Guests are often being motivated to choose such experiences with the purpose of learning about the local lifestyle and hosts wanting to meet people from different backgrounds, as participants in this study argued. Moreover, for hosts with children, contact with different cultures was considered an enriching and educational experience that would be very useful for their worldview. In fact, many participants, whether hosts or guests, placed the cultural exchange under the broad educational aspect of the experience, and mentioning it as one of the main things they learned and benefitted from.

The cultural exchange is a large part of these types of encounters as literature suggests (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006; Cox and Narula, 2003). Guests were the ones who mostly had to adapt to their hosts' culture, whether that was

routines and habits or food. Studies have found this to be the case in most home-based hospitality interactions, while differences in perceptions can create tension between the two sides (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007b). When discussing the cultural exchange involved, many participants connected it to food. With guests eating their hosts' meals, often new to them, but also occasionally cooking or sharing recipes of dishes from their own countries, the main context in which cultural exchange took a tangible form was food. At the same time, the guests mentioned having to adapt to eating schedules and portions of their hosts, which was also the case in my own experience.

Moreover, culture was one of the most commonly mentioned topics of conversation between hosts and guests that was not related to work. For instance, hosts who wanted a to get to know their guests, often mentioned asking about their background, their country's history and so on. Culture was seen as a generally easy, mostly non-controversial topic of conversation which did not necessitate a deep emotional connection between the two sides. Thus, it was often discussed in the early stages of the encounter, when the two sides are unfamiliar with each other as a way to create closer bonds.

Despite the cultural exchange being perceived as a benefit, cultural differences occasionally caused miscommunications. Geserick (2015) also found misunderstandings and tensions were occasionally blamed on cultural differences by au pairs and their hosts. From different ways of expressing expectations to unintended faux pas, a number of participants mentioned uncomfortable situations they experienced or caused. The tension created usually subsided with time or after discussions with the other side. Nonetheless, participants occasionally mentioned having very significant cultural differences that could not be overcome which led to an early ending of the exchange. Two WWOOF hosts recounted negative experiences with "Chinese princesses", as they characterised them, who had very different expectations from the exchange than them. Timothy's guest wanted him to make her bed and do her laundry while Rachel's guest demanded her host gave her a haircut and did not speak during meals, completely different understandings than their hosts in terms of the encounter. In both situations these cultural differences caused

tension and arguments while in Rachel's case the relationship was terminated earlier than initially planned.

Moreover, stereotypes about certain nationalities were mentioned, mostly by au pairs and au pair hosts. These stereotypes either affected their criteria or even the exchange itself through certain expectations of the other side due to their background. The preconceptions and ascribed characteristics of certain groups of people according to their background and how they affect the power dynamic are discussed in more detail in the following part of this chapter.

6.2 Politics of Identity

It was noticed that the participants' understanding of fairness in relation to the five aspects of the exchange that were discussed above were not the only influencing factors of the power dynamic. Due to the nature of these encounters, the work and the relationship involved, personal identity characteristics of each side can affect the power balance. As opposed to the previously discussed aspects of the exchange that an individual can influence with their behaviour, they have little to no control over these preconceptions. Levinas (1969) argued that recognising and accepting the alterity of the stranger that enters the home and the relationship that develops with them is the essence of ethics. And while the differences between the two sides are often welcome as a way to enrich one's life and expand their worldview, this is not always the case. Assumptions about gender, age, class, race and religion can significantly shift the power balance by defining the person as an eternal 'other' due to personal characteristics they cannot influence. In turn, the moral framework of the exchange is influenced, as the ascribed characteristics of the person can affect their treatment by the other side. For instance, a guest may have a strong work ethic, try to develop an interpersonal relationship with their host and be interested in learning from them. However, the host may make certain assumptions about the guest due to their gender -which the guest cannot influence- and treat them accordingly, by giving certain amounts of food, heavier or lighter tasks, more or less housework etc. While there are further

personal features that can affect the power balance, such as ability, education level and sexual orientation among others, the most commonly mentioned ones by participants in this study are discussed in this part of the thesis.

Gender

The gendered nature of au pairing has been widely discussed in the literature. While the au pairing programmes are available for everyone who wants to participate and the language used by agencies tends to be gender neutral (Yeates, 2012) the majority of au pairs are female (Dalgas, 2014). Hosts predominantly prefer women to men for a variety of reasons, usually citing appropriateness, particularly if they have female children (Anderson, 2007). Nonetheless, the underlying reason for choosing women is more nuanced than it simply being more appropriate. Domestic work and childcare have traditionally been perceived as a female role, connected to 'mothering' (Hess and Puckhaber, 2004; Yeates, 2012). Out of the 10 participating au pairs in this study one was male, and out of the 12 participating hosts, one -Joanna, who was mainly looking for language practice and a cultural exchange rather than childcare and domestic work- had both male and female au pairs in the past. Participating hosts defended their choice of female au pairs mentioning perceived inherent elements of women; 'domesticity', being 'motherly' and having a 'natural instinct for care'. The language used by hosts and au pairs when talking about au pairs broadly, rather than specific individuals, was similarly gendered with uses of 'she', 'her', 'girls' or 'young women' and so on.

While in au pairing housework is usually part of the role description, it is also often required of guests in WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX encounters, where its delegation can be gendered as well. Research has uncovered that in WWOOFing both household and farm tasks are commonly assigned to guests depending on their gender (Mostafanezhad et al. 2014; Kosnik, 2013). This was also a complaint from some female guests who felt they were often given more household tasks than their male counterparts. The most prominent example was Irene, who was WWOOFing with her partner Sean and was unhappy on one farm where she was tasked with doing domestic work, while Sean was

given “boy jobs” as she called it. This type of gendered delegation of tasks can create tension and an unpleasant environment for female guests who are motivated to participate in these exchanges by a desire to learn about organic farming. These guests are put in the difficult position of either accepting the situation as it is or challenging the host’s preconceptions about appropriateness of work according to gender. In Irene’s case the solution was ending the relationship and leaving early from the farm rather than confronting her host.

However, the gendered nature of care and housework does not only apply to the working guests as literature suggests that this division exists on the hosts’ side as well. Despite their entrance in the workforce and men’s increasing contribution in the household, studies suggest that women still perform more domestic and childcare duties than men (Sollund, 2010). As it is the mothers who are considered responsible for this type of labour, they are generally also responsible for its delegation. Thus, in au pairing it is usually the mothers that assign tasks, perform hosting duties and generally are responsible for the au pairs (Sollund, 2010; Mellini, Yodanis and Godenzi, 2007; Anderson, 2007). In this study the findings suggest a similar tendency with most au pairs referring to the mother as the person they worked with most; the only exceptions being Sofia who stayed with a single father in her first experience and Spyros who stayed in the family where the mother travelled a lot for work. From the 12 participating hosts, only three were male, out of which two were single fathers.

Similarly, in WWOOFing studies suggest that, when it comes to hosting the guests and preparing the home for them, it is more often a task performed by the women in the family (McIntosh and Bonnemann, 2006; McIntosh and Campbell, 2001). Wilbur (2014) found female WWOOF hosts were often unhappy with the motherly role they were given, that somewhat reduced the feeling of empowerment that they felt from working on their own farms. The author indicated this was not always the case, however, something that was also noted in this study. Female hosts expressed varying degrees of satisfaction with the hosting and care aspects of their role. While some were happy being alternative parent figures or temporary substitute mothers for their younger guests, providing them advice, guidance and nurture, others were not

willing to take up this role. The findings of this study also suggest that female hosts in a family setting, occasionally had difficulty to establish authority over male guests, who were more open to take directions from the male hosts when it came to farming. Single female hosts reported similar experiences having young men defy their guidelines. Thus, they argued they found it easier to work with women as they were more open to take directions from them and enthusiastic to learn compared to their male counterparts, with one female host arguing that male WWOOFers were more likely to simply look for a cheap vacation. At the same time hosts argued women tend to be more attuned to the fact that they were guests, giving examples of them being more likely to ask for permission to use things in the home and avoiding sitting in their hosts' seats at the table.

Race/Ethnicity

Many au pair hosts expressed a preference for specific countries of origin, ascribing specific characteristics to people from those countries. For instance, German au pairs were seen as more organised and efficient, Spanish as more passionate and vibrant and so on. These perceptions often affected their choices, while negative experiences with au pairs from a particular country could deter the invitation of a future au pair with the same background. This is consonant with what MacDonald (2011) found about parents looking for caregivers for their children and heavily basing their choices on the individual and the perceived characteristics of their ethnicity or race. Williams (2012) reported similar stereotyping of ethnicities by au pair hosts, however, the participants in Williams' research were more verbal and open about the reasons behind their prejudice against certain groups, which was not the case for most hosts in this study. Out of the participating au pair hosts from Europe, only one had au pairs from non-Western countries -the "Third world" as he characterised it- and he also expressed certain stereotyping views about them. He assumed his guests, as opposed to Western au pairs, only decided to participate in this transaction to improve their CVs and save money but were not interested in learning about the local culture or seeing the country. However, this did not stop

him from inviting them as opposed to Williams' (2012) hosts who expressed quite negative feelings towards certain ethnic groups, particularly from non-Western backgrounds and refused to invite au pairs from those countries. In general, Eastern Europeans were the most preferred group by Williams' interviewed hosts, a group which was not prominent in this study, as the most common au pair nationalities hosts referred to were Spanish, Italian and German. And yet, despite most hosts having au pairs from European countries, certain assumptions were made about people from specific countries, apart from the stereotypes mentioned earlier. Ellis argued having a Greek au pair would be ideal due to some ascribed characteristics but also because of "*where Greece was economically".* In a way Ellis, alluding to the financial crisis, assumed the perceived dire situation of Greeks and consequent need for employment would motivate Greek people to take up such a position, sometimes considered demeaning due to its nature. This perceived need creates a certain power dynamic; as a person in need rather than someone who chose to participate for the cultural exchange, the guest is assumed to be more dependent on the host and, thus, more likely to tolerate harsh conditions. Anderson (2007) found similar narratives by hosts who employed au pairs from developing economies and felt that in a way they were helping them out of their situation and providing them an opportunity to escape their previous lives. This understanding of their role indicated an effort to downplay the servitude involved in these exchanges and create the image of a 'white saviour'.

The fact that most of the hosts' au pairs in this research were from European countries may also be related to visa issues and restrictions, as one au pair host noted. She wanted to invite a Filipina au pair to the UK, who she had already communicated with and chosen but was unable to do so due to the complex visa process. Elden and Anving (2016) also found that Swedish hosts generally prefer to avoid going through the arduous process and lengthy paperwork necessary to invite au pairs from non-EU countries and tend to choose the less complicated solution of EU nationals. In this study the interviewed au pairs were all from European countries, despite the fact that the au pairing agencies that helped out with the study were directed to a global audience.

In WWOOFing, Workaway and HelpX, as these exchanges are more short-term and closer to a holiday, they tend to be less restrictive in terms of visa requirements and thus, more open to international travellers. For Niharika, an American WWOOF host with Indian heritage, participating in the exchange was prompted not only by the appeal for free labour but also by the opportunity for her children to meet people of different ethnic backgrounds, in their mostly homogenous white neighbourhood. And yet, literature on WWOOFing suggests that it is a predominantly white population that chooses this type of holiday (Guthman, 2017). While hosts reported receiving people from all over the world, out of the 14 participating guests only two were from non-Western countries, namely Molly who is from Thailand and Eve from Malaysia. The former engaged in a Workaway exchange in her home country, while the latter travelled around New Zealand through WWOOF. Eve felt stereotyped in one of her exchanges where she believed her host saw her as easy to exploit due to her Asian heritage. Sean and Irene, an Australian couple travelling around their home country through WWOOF reflected on how being a young white Australian couple with a car gave them an advantage in terms of being accepted on farms and having a positive relationship with their hosts, as opposed to foreign nationals they had heard of who had been exploited. When Irene argued being Australians may have facilitated discussions with their hosts, Sean added: "*Yeah. The majority of the people where we've gone and stayed with are from a sort of white background, probably really similar to us or our parents really, so...*".

Social Class

Helen, an American WWOOF host, recounted having a South American guest who, in Helen's understanding was probably the first person in her family to have a technical degree and work and appeared bothered by being asked to do farming chores. The host believed that her guest, not far enough removed from manual labour, was trying to pull herself up from the employment and lifestyle of her working-class family. Whereas, according to Helen, "*somebody in the middle class, who doesn't have a parent who's a manual labourer, they*

don't have a problem, they wanna do it cause it's novel to them". The guest ended up leaving early and going to New York as a regular tourist rather than a WWOOFer. Helen's understanding of the situation is in line with what studies show. Guthman (2017) found that the majority of WWOOFers are from a middle-class background who longed for the feeling of connectedness with the earth and the food they eat. Fullagar and Wilson (2012) and Mostafanezhad et al. (2015) similarly suggested these types of tourism are popular among middle-upper class young people, who wished to experience authentic encounters and a lifestyle that is closer to nature, influenced by the rise of social and environmental tourism. This profile was generally what hosts described the majority of their guests to be, although many reported having older guests as well. The participating guests were in their vast majority young people, either just having finished their studies or taking a break from work life to travel and explore the world. The only exception was Philip who was WWOOFing for four years with the aim to learn as much about farming as possible as he planned to eventually buy land and start his own community and farm. Their interest and enthusiasm to learn about and integrate in the farm life, perceiving these encounters as educational and cultural rather than work-based, eased their relationships with their hosts – as long as the latter had similar motivations to participate.

In au pairing, on the other hand, class has been discussed in research widely. Au pairing, as any type of childcare, live-in or otherwise, is attainable mostly to middle- or upper-class families, due to the costs involved. Nowadays, more mothers from these classes are able to enter the workforce thanks to women belonging to other classes, who undertake the 'mothering' tasks for low salaries (MacDonald, 1998). Hosting au pairs as opposed to hiring domestic workers, is often preferred in societies where the population considers itself egalitarian, such as Australia (Berg, 2015) and Nordic countries (Isaksen, 2010). And yet, Stella, a Danish au pair host living in the UK, said she does not openly talk about having an au pair in Denmark as much as she does in the UK, where she believes it is more socially accepted. She informed me the reason she wanted to participate in the study was to dispel the negative image au pairing exchanges have, mentioning Filipino au pairs whose exploitation and

experiences have been widely reported (Sollund, 2010; Parreñas, 2000; Dalgas, 2015). Stella's fear indicates that while au pairing may be perceived as more equal, the connotations that come with employing any type of domestic help, can have a negative image in a society that considers itself egalitarian.

Furthermore, selecting au pairs from similar social classes is a quite common choice due to the perception they will be more able to care for and educate the children (Geserick, 2012) as well as due to fears of negative perceptions within the community, considering it more culturally acceptable than having an au pair from a lower social class (Berg, 2015). Evidently this is not the norm for all au pair hosts. Ulrike, a German au pair in the UK, faced significant issues with her first family, particularly from an emotionally abusive host mother. Ulrike felt the host mother was looking down on her because she came from a poor family and mentioned she was asked to be more professional on various occasions. Ulrike was subjected to various microaggressions throughout her stay. She recounted how the mother told her children that the au pair was there only for the money and they should not tell her secrets as she would tell other people, while towards the end of the exchange, the mother also accused Ulrike of stealing change from the kitchen. As many au pairs had either just finished school or their studies, they either saw this type of exchange as an opportunity to learn and experience new things or as working below their qualifications, often seen as a downward class mobility (Bikova, 2015). These perceptions were mainly connected to their treatment by the family and work conditions offered.

Age

Age is one of the most significant factors that affect the power dynamic between the host and the guest in these exchanges. In the majority of au pairing exchanges the au pairs are young people, particularly as national legislations often impose an age limit on au pairs. The European Agreement, for instance, dictates the age of the au pair as being between 17 and 30 years (Council of Europe, 1969), Australian laws group au pairing exchanges under Working

Holiday visas and require them to be between 18 and 30 (Yodanis and Lauer, 2005) while American law stipulates that they have to be between 18 and 26 (IRS, 2019). In many countries the age limits are guidelines rather than strictly enforced rules. While there have been exceptions and some of the participants in this study reported having older au pairs, the majority were in their early 20s at the time of the exchange. Similarly, WWOOFers are mostly -but not exclusively- younger people often travelling before or after their studies, taking a gap year etc (Guthman, 2017).

The age difference between the host and the guest can affect the power dynamic significantly. A smaller age gap generally fostered friendships as the two sides were seen as more equal. However, a large difference in the ages of the host and the guest could create a level of inequality. Being treated as children was not necessarily seen as negative; a few WWOOF guests argued the word was used in an affectionate manner, and they enjoyed being ‘the kids’. There were more potential positive outcomes with WWOOF hosts feeling protective and nurturing of their guests, seeing them as students and thus being enthusiastic to teach them about organic farming. Some hosts and guests reported enjoying spending time with people from other generations, while a few hosts who were empty nesters said they liked having young people in their homes again, since their children had moved. At the same time being young can also come with certain ageist stereotypes, which some hosts expressed; being irresponsible, inexperienced, lazy or lacking work ethic. The characterisation ‘Millennials’ was used in some narratives, to talk about individuals in their late teens or early 20s, accompanied by the abovementioned traits. The Millennial generation has been found to be particularly negatively perceived by older generations, with studies showing the most common perceptions of them by non-Millennials being ‘lazy’, ‘spoiled’ and ‘entitled’ (Barton, Fromm and Egan, 2012). These preconceptions naturally affected the way individuals were treated, as a number of WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX hosts mentioned that they enforced a minimum age limit on the people they would invite.

I experienced a related dilemma during my own first experience as a guest. Staying with two women who were younger than me, albeit only by a few years, I felt uncomfortable when they paid for me in our outings and when we went grocery shopping. While I recognised that their work must have been better paid than mine, as they worked in a well-paid field, I still felt somewhat uncomfortable. I had a similar feeling in the second experience but in the first one, it was exacerbated by my age difference with my hosts.

Similarly, au pair hosts, ascribed certain characteristics to younger au pairs and other characteristics to older ones, with the latter being seen as more independent, responsible and 'motherly' in the case of women. Thus, some mentioned they refrained from inviting au pairs in their late teens or early 20s to avoid becoming surrogate parents and having the responsibility to take care of them. However, the majority of au pairs tend to be young, and this was the case with most of the interviewed au pairs. Maria, a young Spanish au pair who generally had a positive relationship with her host family, mentioned an instance where her host mother felt she was not eating enough. After many concerned comments that the au pair ignored, her host mother threatened she would call Maria's mother to let her know, which was the only occasion Maria confronted her and defended herself. Likewise, many of the participating au pair hosts mentioned calling their au pair's parents to ease any potential concerns. Morfo, a Greek au pair host, stated *"I was always thinking how her parents send this girl without knowing who we are and without, 19, 20 years old, never having a parent communicate with us and saying 'Guys, we are sending you our daughter. Let's say five words, know your phone numbers, who you are, where you are' etc".* While the intentions of all these hosts may have been good, they still tend to infantilise these young adults who are often taking their first step towards independence away from their families. Cox and Narula (2003, p. 341) argue "*More authoritarian employers can infantilise au pairs by exerting the sorts of control over them that would be more appropriate for young children or teenagers*". However, this was not necessarily found to be the case in this study, as many of the hosts who perceived their guests as children did not always act in an authoritarian way towards them. While some patronising behaviours were reported, in general they tended to be protective and nurturing

of their guests. On the other hand, the most authoritarian hosts, according to au pairs who experienced this, were the ones that treated them as employees and preferred to keep a distant relationship.

Religion

The majority of participants in this study claimed that they refrained from discussing sensitive topics such as politics and religion to avoid tension in case of differences of opinion. This observation is similar to Kosnik's (2013) findings that personal beliefs and ideologies are generally not common topics of conversation in order to maintain a positive social exchange. Participants in this study mentioned that, at times, they tried to establish the other side's beliefs and if they noticed congruence in values, they would initiate discussions. Nonetheless, in some cases religion played a central role in the power dynamic, being the source of micro-ethical dilemmas for either side. Some of the most conspicuous examples were the accounts from guests who recognised a difference in views with their hosts. The majority chose to simply avoid or change the topic when it came up in conversations to hide their own beliefs but there were exceptions. Ulrike, the German au pair who presented herself as very religious to her strict Christian hosts while being undecided about her own beliefs, did so to create a more favourable image of herself with her religious hosts. This behaviour can be placed under Jones' (1964) definition of a type of ingratiation, conformity in opinion, which is discussed in section 6.4. Eve, a Malaysian WWOOFer during a stay with a conservative Christian family was asked if she was Muslim and her negative reply was met with "Thank God!" by her host, something Eve found racist. And despite her not being Muslim, her host employed various microaggressions throughout the encounter, such as keeping intense eye-contact with Eve, who is Sikh, during prayers at the dinner table. On the other hand, some hosts reported talking about the Bible with their WWOOFers or requiring their au pairs to join them every Sunday in church. It is clear that the power of the host in this setting can establish a dominance of their own beliefs over the ones of the guest, with the latter reacting to these

situations in a variety of ways, from accepting to ignoring or, more rarely, challenging the other side.

6.3 Power Dynamic

Despite the narratives of equality in the relationship and family membership, in these types of exchanges it is the host who tends to have more control over the transaction. Derrida (2001) argued that the way others are welcomed into one's home and the way they treated, as own or as a stranger is a matter of ethics. Accordingly, with hosts not only receiving the guests but also having more power in these encounters as a type of employer, the way they treat their guests is an expression of their own ethics. Whether they acknowledged this power, used it to their advantage or tried to offset it, the choice was made based on their perceptions on fairness, justice and ethics.

Power has been the subject of various philosophical debates over the years; questions of its definition, its nature, who owns it and how it is legitimised have been the topic of numerous arguments. Weber (1947, p. 152) defined power as "…*the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in the position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests*". In Blau's view (1964) the source of power asymmetry in social exchanges is a direct result of the imbalance of obligations. He gives a broader definition of power as:

*"…the ability of persons or groups to impose their will on others despite resistance through deterrence either in the forms of withholding regularly supplied rewards or in the form of punishment, inasmuch as the former as well as the latter constitute, in effect, a negative sanction". (*Blau, 1964, p. 117)

A perspective useful to acknowledge is Foucault's view on power. Foucault (1977; 1980) argued power and knowledge are interconnected, in that neither is possible without the other; it is not possible to exercise power without having knowledge or for knowledge not to generate power. Similarly, Lyotard (1984) asserted that knowledge is power and thus control of knowledge and

information will be the source of power in the postmodern era – whether institutions, governments or corporations. Whoever is in power is able to legitimise knowledge and decide who has access to this knowledge. Thus, knowledge has been given value beyond its innate worth; it has been commodified and it is perceived as a type of wealth that gives power to whoever possesses it. Thus, Lyotard's analysis of power and knowledge is very much epistemological, in that it explores what constitutes knowledge and who decides that.

Foucault (1980) discusses the "micro-physics" of power, which view power not as property of an individual that can be acquired or possessed but rather as strategy that is exercised not only by governments or dominant classes but by every individual throughout society. According to Foucault (1978, p. 93) power is omnipresent: "*Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere*". That is, power is not only a one-way exchange, exercised by the powerful towards the powerless. It is rather a network where power circulates between members of this network. Thus, power relationships exist everywhere, and every individual is in multiple positions either exerting the power or being subjected to it. With power being omnipresent, Foucault (1978) argues power can be explored on the micro level, in daily interactions between individuals. As such, the philosopher views oppression, exploitation and power relationships to be on an interpersonal level rather than a wider, societal level, as critical theorists do. Lyotard (1984) similarly views power as a net, with people being nodes who are simultaneously part of a variety of power relationships. Seymour (1999) maintains that Foucault's approach on the micro level as well as the perception of power as a dynamic process rather than a static characteristic, that is power understood as something exercised rather than owned, allows the analysis of power as being employed variably by the different actors as opposed to a dichotomous view of actors as powerful or powerless.

However, Foucault (1988) highlights the difference between power and violence. Violence implies the use of force aiming to diminish any possibility of choice for the other. Power, on the other hand, while still aiming to alter the behaviour or action of the other, does allow them the possibility to choose. In

Foucault's (1988, p. 83) words: "*The characteristic feature of power is that some men can more or less entirely determine other men' s conduct - but never exhaustively or coercively*". Therefore, the power exerted by individuals in their relationships -in every level-, while intending to modify behaviours towards their own goals, still allow the possibility for autonomous action, however small. For the philosopher, as opposed to most Marxists, power is not always repressive; he believes it to be mainly productive, in that it produces reality (Foucault, 1977) and it produces subjects (Foucault, 1980). Blau (1964), on the other hand, views coercion as an extreme case of power; whether that is physical coercion, other types of punishment or even just the threat of them. Continuous reward is also a type of power as suspension of the receipt of the reward can be perceived as a form of punishment. Therefore, for Blau (1964), both coercion -or its threat- as well as repeated reward -or the threat of removing it-, are two forms of power which force the individual to comply with the will of the person holding the power. Moreover, for Blau (1964) the negotiation is constant as a balance in power is not easily attainable. Having power means having a certain amount of control over the other and individuals, in an effort to avoid being in debt to the other side, tend to reciprocate in any social exchange to either achieve equality or, usually, to be in a superior position.

Humans are multifaceted and the various aspects of their identity can have different effects on their power in the relationship. Utilising only one aspect of a person's identity and its socially constructed roles and power or lack thereof, to analyse the complex relationship between the two sides would be too limiting. Intersectionality has been defined as "*the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations*" (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). Thus, intersectionality views multiple aspects of a person's identity -including all the previously discussed ones such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, social class and religion among others- as interconnected. These overlapping categorisations can create combinations that increase or decrease the power an individual has as well as the discrimination they can face. Following Foucault (1978) and Lyotard (1984) in viewing power as a network with people being the nodes who engage in numerous discursive practices simultaneously, the various aspects of their identity are allowing them

to exercise power or subject them to the power of others. Power is what creates these identities and, thus, if power shifts so do identities and social practices (McWhorter, 2004).

In the context of this setting, for instance, the power balance between host and guest tends to be in favour of the former. This power dynamic can either be reinforced or counteracted by the various characteristics of each side. For example, Ulrike, being a female guest from a lower socio-economic background than her first host family had limited power in the relationship, which her host mother exploited. Therefore, a number of overlapping aspects of her identity decreased her bargaining power in the relationship and its dynamic. At the same time a number of female WWOOF hosts mentioned their difficulty to manage young, male guests. Thus, the latter's gender and age could be seen as reinforcing their negotiation power in the relationship and counterbalanced or even surpassed the power of their hosts. However, it cannot be determined whether the age, the gender, a combination of the two or even a completely different characteristic such as their personality was the source of this power. This is in line with Seymour's (1999) findings on the negotiation position of partners and the variety of "socially constructed bargaining tools" they employed during their negotiations. Seymour, thus, in line with Foucault's theories, viewed these bargaining tools as personal or socially constructed resources that individuals drew from variably during these negotiations to gain a resolution to the issue that they deemed acceptable. Yet, as Seymour notes, it is not always possible to identify which of the resources are effective in each case.

Whereas this thesis draws from Foucault's, Lyotard's and Blau's understanding of power relations, in its discussion of the different agencies and lines of powers, in this study systemic power is understood as overarching and proper in defining the last instance of social praxis. Knowledge is regarded here as determined and produced by those who hold the power; thus used as an expression of control towards oppressed people, constraining their informed consciousness and consequent liberation from this control (Cohen et al., 2007; Geuss, 1981).

Studies have found that in most home-based hospitality encounters the host tends to have more power than the guest, as the latter have to adapt to the former's house rules, daily habits and routines (Lashley and Lynch, 2013). At the same time, the host has to relinquish some of the control they have over their space and routines (Lashley, Lynch and Morrison, 2007). In this setting a different understanding of socially accepted and appropriate behaviour between the host and guest can create friction (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007b). Due to the overlap of the public and private arena there is a necessity to negotiate spatial and emotional boundaries (Bialski, 2011). Apart from the general power of hosts in home-based hospitality, in this particular setting the hosts are also the ones who decide the rules of the transaction and, usually, lay those out on their profiles. Thus, they decide the amount and hours of work and free time, delegate the tasks, and offer what they perceive fair in terms of bed and board as studies have found in au pairing (Yodanis and Lauer, 2005) and WWOOFing (Cronauer, 2012). Anderson (2014) argued that rules regarding space, behaviour and daily routines convey and emphasise power balance and power relations. Some of the participating hosts used rules to establish their control over the space and routines of the home. Others, however, in an effort to maintain a friendly relationship with their guests and ensure a positive social experience applied a variety of approaches to express their wishes and expectations. Some of these approaches were more direct and upfront, while others were more indirect and unassertive. It has to be noted that a number of hosts in this study acknowledged this power dynamic between themselves and their guests. While some tried to compensate for these imbalances by being hospitable and generous to their guests, taking them to trips in the surrounding area, giving them gifts and engaging with them on a personal level, others enjoyed the benefits of their power and used the situation to their advantage.

As opposed to the previously mentioned studies, Kosnik (2014) found that guests in WWOOFing have a certain level of control over the exchange and were able to shift the dynamic and rules of the exchange. This was found to be true in some cases reported by participants in this study as well. The power of guests on the relationship was either used to create positive changes, such as

achieving a closer personal relationship through efforts to communicate, share meals and socialise, or negative with some guests taking advantage of their hosts' hospitality. This was done by either not working hard or long enough, using up their limited resources such as warm water and internet or trying to force the host to adapt to their understanding of the rules of the exchange. Their tourist status gave most of them the option to leave if they were unhappy and move to another farm, which was acknowledged by hosts as well, giving them a certain level of bargaining power, especially if their hosts were in urgent need of labour. For au pairing, however, the situation is different. Au pairs tend to be in a more precarious situation, vulnerable to their host's wishes (Berg, 2015) and thus are not comfortable to demand what they believe is fair to receive. Generally, au pairs tried to express their wishes in indirect ways and rarely complained about work or hospitality issues. They employed different techniques to communicate their wishes or achieve their desired conditions, as discussed in the following part of this chapter. Nonetheless, there were situations which they felt they could not accept and they either defied their hosts, such as Maria's example when her host mother tried to control her eating habits, or decided to end the relationship, like in Faye's first encounter. Listening to my participants narrating their discomfort to complain about issues faced during the exchange or simply ask for things they felt they were owed made me discern the imbalance of the host-guest relationship during our conversations. However, I had a very similar mentality during my own encounters, where, despite the welcoming attitude of my hosts, me being a guest in their home, offered accommodation and food, put me in a position of disadvantage in terms of negotiation as I felt indebted to them. Nonetheless, as my comfort increased and my relationship with them became closer, I felt more able to negotiate the terms of my experience with them, albeit never in a very assertive manner.

6.4 Micro-ethical Dilemmas

This part of the study explores how participants reacted to the various micro-ethical dilemmas they were faced with during the encounter. Micro-ethics in this context refers to the unique issues participants faced on a frequent basis in relation to the various aspects of the exchange. Their reactions were based on their own perceptions of fairness in the exchange as well as preconceptions on identity and the existing power dynamic. A continuum of all the reactions observed is presented to illustrate the sequence from the most passive reactions to the more antagonistic ones.

Truog et al. (2015) argued that micro-ethics are the “view from the inside”, with micro-ethical issues depending on each case, spatial and temporal dimensions as well as the individuals involved. They state that micro-ethical decisions can be tacitly or verbally communicated again contingent on each separate occasion. What the authors characterise as the uniqueness of each situation, depending on the context, the people involved, the time and space is, in the context of non-commercial homestays, the various elements discussed previously in this chapter, including perceptions of fairness, the interpersonal relationship and politics of identity. Furthermore, what Truog et al. (2015) view as micro-ethical decisions are the results of the micro-ethical dilemmas individuals face, which are the focus of this study. The studied reactions to these micro-ethical dilemmas, are not focused the outcome of the micro-ethical decision but rather on the way it is communicated, which is a micro-ethical dilemma -and decision- in itself. Awareness of the power dynamic, having their own understanding of fair and just conditions in the encounter, combined with any possible preconceptions about certain facets of the other’s identity, influence the person’s decision on how to communicate their expectations.

The various reactions to the micro-ethical dilemmas observed in the Chapter 5 can be placed in a continuum between the most passive and the most confrontational responses of participants. The more passive reactions tend to illustrate powerlessness that derives from the existing dynamic and the personality of the individual. On the other hand, the confrontational reactions are often used to express power by the individual if they feel they are owed

something during the encounter, which the other side is denying or has failed to provide. Through these reactions, participants shape the moral framework of the encounter. However, as will be observed, they rarely reach a common moral framework, with both sides being in complete agreement on the conditions of the transaction (Selwyn, 2000).

The continuum, from the most passive to the most confrontational responses to micro-ethical dilemmas that were noticed in the participants' narratives is presented in the following table:

Table 13. Continuum: Reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas

Issue avoidance	The most unassertive of all the reactions, issue avoidance is when the individual chooses to refrain from acknowledging or bringing up the topic in question. This often derives from a wish to maintain a positive relationship with the other side or a feeling of incapability to change anything due to lack of power.
Deferred implementation	Similar to issue avoidance, in the case of deferred implementation the person does not try to address the issue in the moment it comes up. However, they try to ensure they will not have the same problem in future encounters, using various approaches, such as changing their criteria, having discussions before exchanges or, in the case of hosts, implementing new house rules.
Imitation	This approach is mostly, but not exclusively, chosen by guests. Being unsure of what is expected by them, the person observes the other party and imitates their behaviour. A common example is the routines of the home, particularly in the early days of the encounter, where in an effort to ascertain what to do, the guest simply follows the lead of the host.

Acceptance	Accepting the other side's demands has been found to occur in one of three forms, compliance, tolerance and reluctant acceptance.
-Compliance	If the person accepts what the other side suggests or requests, they comply with the expectations that are set. In this case, they permit the other party's understanding of the transaction to become part of the moral framework without expressing their own views. This is quite often the chosen response to a micro-ethical dilemma that is not of much importance to the individual.
-Tolerance	Tolerance is the type of acceptance where the individual is dissatisfied with the circumstances as they are but considers the issue of too low significance to object. Despite their disagreement, they do not complain or discuss the problem, and allow the situation to continue as it is, in order to avoid friction.
-Reluctant Acceptance	In the case of reluctant acceptance, the person is acquiescing to a situation they may be dissatisfied with or doubting its fairness. Thus, they reluctantly accept the other side's views because they feel unable to make any significant changes due to the existing power balance.
Ingratiation	Jones (1964, p. 11) defined ingratiation as "*a class of strategic behaviors illicitly designed to influence a particular other person concerning the attractiveness of one's personal qualities*". Two of the behaviours that Jones classified as ingratiation were observed in the participants' narratives, namely conformity in opinion and rendering favours.

-Conformity in opinion:	Similar to imitation, conforming to other side's opinion by misrepresenting themselves is a technique some participants used to create a positive image of themselves. However, as opposed to imitation which is simply following the other side's lead, in this case the individual creates a different persona to ensure a smooth encounter. Taking over an adaptive persona that conforms to the opinion of the other resembles Goffman's (1956) theory of self-presentation taken to extremes.
-Rendering favours:	In an effort to create a positive image of themselves, some participants resorted to rendering favours to the other side. In this way they can also gain negotiating power by somewhat indebting the other party through the provision of these favours.
Consensus	In cases when the two sides agree on what the expected or right thing to do is, there is a consensus about the rules of the exchange. Consensus is in the middle of the continuum as it is neither passive nor confrontational. It may be discussed or implied but in either case being in agreement on the issue in question is the closest status to a common moral framework.
Negotiated Compromise	When an individual is feeling they want something more from the other side they can address the micro-ethical dilemma by compromising; reaching an agreement after negotiating, with both parties offering something in exchange for something else. An example very often appearing in the interviews was providing more work on one day in exchange for a day off on a later date.
Querying	In situations when the person is unsure of the correct decision openly asking the other side what is preferred or expected of them, is one of the most upfront ways of communication. Nonetheless, this approach can give control to the other party to decide on the rules and routines of the encounter.
Requesting	When the individual feels they are not getting what they think is fair to expect they may ask the other side to provide it. Whether that is work for the host, or adequate space and food for the guest, the person can request it in an upfront way.

Microaggressions	At times, rather than addressing the issue directly, snide comments and insinuations are employed to communicate expectations or grievances. These microaggressions were naturally mentioned by the receiving side, as people generally would not admit to employing these types of reactions. While microaggressions are used to avoid direct confrontation, they can create more tension than an upfront and honest conversation about the issue in question would.
Exiting	When the situation that creates a micro-ethical dilemma cannot be resolved, one or both sides sometimes decide to end the relationship. While this type of behaviour is very definitive, it is not always necessarily argumentative as participants admitted to not always informing the other side about the reasons they end the relationship to avoid creating tension.
Defiance	When the one side is feeling they are treated unfairly or being taken advantage of, usually after built up frustration, they would sometimes resort to defiance. This approach was mostly taken by guests as they usually have the least control in the encounter. However, hosts, especially in the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX encounters have reported being taken advantage of and having to challenge the existing situation.
Commands	The most confrontational of all behaviours on the continuum is employing commands. Rather than communicating with the other side, simply telling them what they had to do, was a reaction mostly chosen by hosts, due to the power balance in the home. However, the hosts did not always acknowledge or understand the sensitive dynamic and thus attributed these behaviours to honesty and open communication.

The way an individual reacts to micro-ethical dilemmas depends on a variety of factors. Moderate reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas may allow a smoother working and interpersonal relationship. Conversely, more antagonistic behaviours can create tension between the two sides. At the same time, the reaction chosen illustrates the person's intention; expressing power and control or compromise and openness. These various reactions feed into the moral framework of the exchange, that is the rules according to which the two sides will behave. Through their reactions, individuals express their power -or lack thereof. With hosts generally being the side which has more control over the encounter (Kosnik, 2013; Cox and Narula, 2003) and thus the moral framework that guides behaviours, they tend to be the ones more commonly using assertive or confrontational expressions of their expectations. On the other hand, guests, being aware of their status, are mostly employing more passive reactions, as was noticed with participating guests, but also myself in my autoethnographic account. The implications on, not only these types of encounters, but hospitality in general are significant. According to Bulley (2015) treatment of the other during a hospitality encounter is what constitutes an ethical relation. Yet, this study found that it is not only the micro-ethical decisions that are made that are important; the way of expressing one's perceptions, expectations and control is also a matter of ethics. That is, not only what one says or does but also how they say or do it in this context. The most effective and well received reactions were the ones in the middle of the continuum; consensus, negotiated compromise, querying and requesting. Through the use of these reactions, the individual was usually able to convey their views without creating tension in the relationship. Using a positive and welcoming manner of expressing one's wishes mostly had a positive effect on the issue in hand but also the experience overall. For instance, as it was mentioned by guests, they did not always mind being overworked; as long as they perceived the overall encounter as positive and fair and the expectations were expressed in a pleasant manner. On the other hand, expressions of power and control, could create tension between the two sides, even if they were in agreement over the issue. Susanne, the au pair who in a previously presented quote acknowledged her mistake of losing the child's pacifier, was significantly

upset by the host father's choice of micro-aggressions to express his discontentment.

6.5 Moral Framework of the encounter

Hospitality has been argued to create and foster relationships between strangers through creating an agreed moral universe, or a common moral framework according to which the two sides will behave throughout the encounter (Selwyn, 2000). Both sides have to accept their respective obligations (Telfer, 2000) while acts of mutuality and compromise have been found to contribute to a positive social exchange (Bialski, 2011).

The aim of this study is to explore how the moral framework is constructed in these encounters. While Selwyn (2000) argues for a common moral framework, the findings of this study indicate that in this type of hospitality transactions, the resulting moral framework is not necessarily a common one, that is, the two sides do not always agree on the rules of the transaction. With the power dynamic being unbalanced, it is often the case that one side merely accepts or tolerates the conditions laid out by the other, due to their perceived lack of control in the relationship. As the previous section on micro-ethical dilemmas demonstrated, the way the moral framework of the encounter is reached can be through open and honest communication of expectations, such as in the cases of consensus and negotiated compromise, which can lead to the construction of a moral framework that is indeed common. In these cases, the two sides share the perception of fairness in the transaction, either by being in agreement on the outset or negotiating a just balance of duties. However, for the relationship to work, the moral framework does not have to be common. Throughout the encounter both sides often have to make compromises and tolerate situations they are not in complete agreement with, in order to make the transaction possible. Thus, the moral framework can be common, but it can also be accepted, tolerated or negotiated, among others.

The construction of the moral framework is not a linear but rather a circular process. If the one side initially accepts or tolerates certain rules or conditions of the exchange as laid out by the other side, this does not mean they will do

so throughout the encounter. At some point, they may defy the existing situation and redefine the moral framework of the exchange. An example is Maria's case, the au pair who reported tolerating her host mother's concerned comments on her eating habits, until the latter threatened to get Maria's parents involved. Once Maria expressed her frustration and made it clear to her host mother that she would not accept any further comments about this topic, reclaiming her agency over her own body, the situation changed, and the remarks stopped. This example indicates how a reaction to a certain micro-ethical dilemma can shift the dynamic of the whole transaction. Thus, the process of constructing the moral framework is an extended circle, in some cases lasting for the whole encounter. Situations where one or both sides are not willing to compromise or negotiate to reach an agreement on the moral framework can lead to an early termination of the encounter.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the various aspects of the exchange, beliefs and personal characteristics that can affect the perceptions of fairness in the transaction as well as the power dynamic between the host and the guest. The understanding of what the transaction entails before participating in it, the perception of the various roles individuals take up as well as certain preconceptions on personal elements can significantly influence the transaction. Entering the encounter with their own impressions on roles and fairness, which may not necessarily be aligned with the other side's opinions, often creates micro-ethical dilemmas for participants. The way they react to those and their willingness to find a middle ground in order to agree upon the moral framework of the exchange, shapes the nature of the encounter as well as the relationship between the two sides.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

7.1 Summary of findings

This study explored how the moral framework in non-commercial homestays is constructed throughout the encounter. To that end, a combination of autoethnography and 50 in-depth, semi-structured interviews was employed. The findings explored perceptions of fairness in relation to the five main aspects of the encounter; work, hospitality, interpersonal relationship, education and cultural exchange. By doing so, the study brought to light micro-ethical dilemmas faced by participants and myself in my own experience. Moreover, issues of identity that can affect the perception of the other with preconceptions on certain personal characteristics were discussed, including gender, race/ethnicity, social class, age and religion. All these elements created a certain power dynamic between the two sides in the context of which they were trying to establish the moral framework of the encounter. The construction of this moral framework, in a setting with unclear rules and a sensitive power balance was a process that took many forms. Participants reported various ways they reacted to the micro-ethical dilemmas they were faced with, from passive to confrontational behaviours. These reactions fed into the moral framework of the encounter, which, depending on the reaction chosen, could either bring the individual's view across effectively, create friction, or allow the other side to control the rules of the exchange.

7.2 Contributions to Knowledge

The findings of this study have provided both theoretical and practical insights that contribute to the existing knowledge on the topic of non-commercial homestays. In this part the theoretical and practical contributions are discussed in more detail.

Theoretical Contributions

The purpose of this study was to provide a view into human behaviour in uncertain situations where the rules are unclear. It explores the perceptions of

fairness of the two sides of the exchange and how they express them in a situation where power relations are involved. The findings aim to contribute to the wider discussions of power relationships and their negotiation by analysing the exchange from an ethical perspective with a hospitality lens. Thus, the research serves as an investigation of the intersection between micro-ethics and power dynamics as well as the various reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas. Being a qualitative piece of research, this study does not purport nor aspire to be generalisable. Generalisability is not the intention of qualitative research; Guba (1981) argued that the equivalent of the quantitative criterion of generalisability is transferability, which refers to the supposition that findings of a study in a particular context can be applicable to an essentially similar context. While this research is situated in a very specific setting, its findings could be tested in a variety of areas where the power dynamics are more prominent and the rules of the relationship are clear, such as in employment relationships, or less so, like in interpersonal relationships, families etc.

In line with Riconda's (2019) suggestion, this study brought together au pairing with Workaway but also WWOOF and HelpX. While there are certain differences between these encounters -the main ones being the nature of the work and the pocket money given to au pairs- the basic exchange of work for hospitality is present in all of them. The negotiation that takes place between the two sides has been mentioned in a variety of studies both in this context (Kosnik, 2013; Cox and Narula, 2003) but also in other types of hospitality encounters (Bialski, 2011; Lashley, 2000), however, the ways the two sides perform this negotiation has not been given much attention. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by viewing the negotiation between hosts and guests in more depth in relation to the main aspects of the encounter as indicated by participants; work, hospitality, interpersonal relationship, education and cultural exchange. The continuum of reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas provides an insight into participants' ways of responding to the lack of clarity in these encounters. While in most of these encounters, the two sides discuss their expectations at the beginning or even before the exchange takes place, not every single aspect of the transaction is deliberated. Thus, individuals are often faced with micro-ethical dilemmas throughout their experience. Rather than

relying on openly discussed negotiation to construct the moral framework of the exchange, there are different ways of reacting to uncertain situations employed by participants, as the continuum indicates. The more passive reactions tend to allow the other side's preferences to prevail and dictate the moral framework. On the other hand, the more confrontational reactions express the individual's views but can create tension in the relationship, due to this demonstration of power. These expressions of control have been explored in the literature, mostly in the au pairing context and are overwhelmingly used by hosts. Through employing rules that impose control on the au pairs, their habits and, in extreme cases, their bodies, hosts assert their authority (Anderson, 2007; Hess and Puckhaber, 2004). It was found that the reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas closer to the centre of the continuum allowed the individual to express their perceptions of fairness in the encounter without creating tension. Thus, they were effective in shaping a more balanced moral framework, without either side feeling they were being controlled or treated unfairly. This study's findings suggest that these types of exchanges cannot be understood as barter, a characterisation given by McIntosh and Bonnemann (2006) due to the imbalance of power. Bartering, generally, is a transaction on a level playing field, as both sides exchange their goods or services after coming to an agreement. However, as opposed to barter, in this setting the power imbalance does not always allow each side to express what they perceive as a fair exchange, that is what they feel they should offer and receive in return. This difficulty of expressing one's views is evident by the continuum presented, with many participants resorting to various degrees of assertiveness in the communication of their views and, as a result, varying degrees of satisfaction with the outcome.

The negotiation of rules and the various approaches to this negotiation taken by individuals, as seen in the continuum, can affect the moral framework of the encounter. Selwyn (2000) argued for the necessity of a shared moral framework in hospitality encounters. The findings suggest that the moral framework is not always common or shared in this hospitality setting, as the sensitive power dynamic can be exploited and participants often found themselves accepting conditions they were not necessarily in agreement with. Yet, the study explored

ways in which the two sides can actually reach a common moral framework; through expressing their views in neither passive nor confrontational ways but by trying to find a middle ground through open and honest communication.

The setting of this study, non-commercial homestays, was selected due to its distinct absence of rules regulating the encounter and, as such, constituted a suitable context to explore the construction of the moral framework between the two sides. However, the resulting continuum might be applicable to a variety of contexts, in hospitality settings and otherwise. In situations such as this where there is a lack of clarity on the moral framework between two sides, the way in which participants express their views is as significant as their views themselves. Moreover, even in settings where the rules are specific, not all aspects are clearly defined. An example of such a scenario could be doing favours in a work environment. While the rules at work are usually set, taking on work from a colleague, for instance, is a situation that is ruled by a moral framework and the personal perception of fairness of each side. This case could be similarly negotiated by both sides, in line with the continuum presented in this study. The co-worker could demand, request or negotiate the favour while the other side could respond with compromise, acceptance or defiance. At the same time, the existence of a certain power dynamic may prevent the free expression of one's point of view when faced with micro-ethical dilemmas. Thus, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a specific situation is not always expressed and, as such, can perpetuate the existing moral framework and power imbalance, which either side may disagree with. Another scenario where the findings of this study could be relevant is the delegation of domestic work and childcare in the home. As the parents' relationship and roles are not defined by set, clear and written rules, the negotiation of expectations and obligations of both sides can take various forms. At the same time, in the case of heterosexual couples, perceptions of traditional gender roles can create a power balance that affects this negotiation and either side may use various of the negotiation and communication techniques that were mentioned in the continuum.

Thus, in line with Guba's (1981) argument about qualitative research, this study's findings are not seen as generalisable but rather as potentially

applicable to scenarios comparable to the one they were based on; situations with uncertain rules, where the two sides have to rely on their personal ethics and notions of fairness to negotiate the moral framework of the relationship.

Practical Contributions

The findings of this study can be useful to au pairing agencies, the WWOOF, Workaway and HelpX organisations and their members. The agencies and organisations could try to match members depending on which of the aspects both sides place more importance on. Alternatively, they could allow members to indicate the level of their interest in specific aspects on their profiles; for instance, a WWOOF host who is more interested in a cultural exchange than teaching about farming would be able to inform potential guests in their profile. Furthermore, their expectations and perceptions of fairness could be matched as well; a clear indication from each side on what they believe the transaction should entail would increase the possibility for any prospective encounters to be successful. Accordingly, members should be encouraged to discuss these issues in their initial conversations to ensure a smooth experience for both sides. In this way the companies will increase the possibility of positive exchanges and thus, the satisfaction of their members with the organisation overall.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicate that discontentment can be expressed in a variety of ways. As such, the organisations that facilitate these exchanges, especially au pairing agencies that tend to be more involved in the experience, should keep this under consideration when reviewing the success of the encounters. They could utilise the continuum to identify issues that may not be clearly discussed in their members' narratives and advise them to avoid behaviours in either extreme of the continuum, for their own and the other side's sake.

7.3 Revisiting Research aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the construction of the moral framework in non-commercial homestays.

The aim was addressed by completing the study's objectives:

- To critically review the existing literature around the studied topic
- To explore the main aspects of the exchange and participants' perceptions of fairness in relation to these aspects
- To investigate further aspects that influence the power dynamic
- To examine the reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas that they face during this exchange
- To discuss the theoretical and practical implications of this study

In this part all the objectives are revisited and discussed one by one to indicate how they were addressed throughout this study.

Research Objective: To critically review the existing literature around the studied topic

The first Research Objective was addressed in Chapter 2, the Literature Review. Studies on and around the topic were presented to set the scene for the research. The first two parts of the chapter discuss the context, that is non-commercial homestays. Research has largely been focused on WWOOF, while Workaway and HelpX have not been studied as thoroughly. Academics have looked into WWOOFing from an alternative tourism perspective, exploring its nature, benefits as well as aspects of the relationship that develops between the host and the guest. Au pairing on the other hand has received academic interest due to its unique nature and the vulnerable position au pairs are often in, due to the overlap of work and home. With the encounters being based on the provision of hospitality, the following part of the Literature Review explored the Ethics of Hospitality as discussed by philosophers and academics alike, mostly on an international context. However, as these encounters take place in the Home, its meaning to the dwellers and its nature as a setting of hospitality encounters is presented in the following part. Finally, the last part, Micro-ethics of Hospitality is discussing the relationship between the host and the guest on a micro level and presents reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas found in the literature.

Research Objective: To explore the main aspects of the exchange and participants' perceptions of fairness in relation to these aspects

The findings of this study suggested that the main aspects of the exchange for participants were the following: Work, Hospitality, Interpersonal Relationship, Education and Cultural Exchange. Work and Hospitality are essential for these encounters to take place as they are the basis of the transaction; the host offers hospitality in exchange for a few hours of daily work from the guest. As long as these two elements are present a non-commercial homestay exchange is possible. However, as narratives from participants revealed, if it is only this exchange that takes place, the encounter does not fulfil its purpose and is rarely enjoyable. The three further elements, the Interpersonal Relationship, Education and Cultural Exchange were valued benefits of participating. Not all three needed to be present simultaneously and it depended on personal preference and motivation to participate which ones were favoured. However, for the Cultural Exchange to take place, the existence of an Interpersonal Relationship and the Educational aspect is crucial. Participants' understanding of fairness in these aspects was presented in detail in the Findings and Discussion chapter.

Research Objective: To investigate further aspects that influence the power dynamic

It was found that, apart from the five main aspects of non-commercial homestays that participants highlighted and are able to influence, there are certain further issues that are largely out of their control. Preconceived notions about certain identity characteristics such as gender, race/ethnicity, social class, age and religion can influence the perception of the other side through ascribed characteristics related to their personality, abilities, work ethic, appropriateness of tasks etc. These assumptions do not only affect the choice of a guest or host but also influence the way they are treated throughout the encounter, thus creating a power imbalance between the two sides. The most commonly mentioned characteristic that affected the dynamic was gender, with au pairs being overwhelmingly female due to domestic work and childcare being traditionally connected to femininity and motherhood. However, female

WWOOFers, Workawayers and HelpXers also reported being treated differently than their male counterparts while female hosts occasionally argued having difficulty to get male guests to follow their directions. While participants have the ability to affect the five aspects presented earlier, they can rarely change preconceptions about their identity and characteristics.

Research Objective: To examine the reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas that they face during this exchange

Each participant in these encounters has their own expectations and perceptions of fairness. However, the way of communicating one's views was considered important by everyone involved. While the existence of a negotiation of the rules of the exchange has been discussed in the literature (Kosnik, 2013; Cox and Narula, 2003) this study has provided a view into the way the host and guest construct a moral framework. With the two sides finding themselves facing micro-ethical dilemmas throughout the experience, they employ various approaches to communicate their views and expectations to the other side. These approaches were placed in a continuum that depicted them from more passive to more confrontational reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas. While broadly the more passive reactions were employed by guests and the more confrontational ones by hosts due to the power imbalance in these encounters, this was not always the case. At the same time, neither extreme of the continuum was completely effective. Passive expressions allowed the other side to create a moral framework according to their preferences and perceptions of fairness while confrontational reactions often led to discontentment from the other side and, occasionally, friction.

Research Objective: To discuss the theoretical and practical contributions of this study

This study's findings have both theoretical and practical implications that were discussed earlier in this chapter. In terms of theoretical contributions to knowledge this research has added to the existing literature on the area in a variety of ways. The aspects of the exchange that were found to be the most significant ones, work, hospitality, interpersonal relationship, education and cultural exchange can help define these encounters through their elements.

Personal characteristics that can potentially affect the power dynamic were discussed as well. Finally, the continuum of reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas that was created provides an insight into an important aspect of the negotiation that takes place in these encounters, and, potentially, encounters of a similar nature. In relation to practical contributions, findings of this study can help agencies and organisations match potential participants by ensuring they place importance on the same aspects and their perceptions of fairness are similar to an extent. Moreover, members of these organisations can try to avoid unsuccessful encounters by not only finding guests or hosts who agree with their views on the exchange but also by using more balanced reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas throughout the encounter.

7.4 Limitations and Future Research

As in most academic research, this study faced certain limitations. These limitations should be considered in any future research on the topic and can possibly open avenues for further studies in the area.

My autoethnographic experience, while providing a significant insight into these types of exchanges took place in a very specific context. The type of work that was required by my hosts was significantly different from most of my participants' requirements and as such were not directly comparable. While I did make an effort to find participants with a larger variety of jobs and a number of guests did take up posts that required language practice, dog walking etc, the majority undertook or requested farmwork and childcare. An in-depth study on different types of work through these exchanges could uncover further important aspects of the encounter; it was noticed after all that the type of work affects the experience and the resulting power dynamic significantly. As the context of this study, non-commercial homestays, are mostly but not exclusively, international exchanges, participants in this study were from various parts of the world. However, due to language barriers, only certain national chapters of WWOOF could be contacted. Out of those, only WWOOF USA and WWOOF Australia replied positively to my request for help with the

study, with the latter yielding two participants. Members of WWOOF USA showed a significant interest in the study and therefore the sample consisted of many American participants, skewing the nationality balance. Future studies could benefit from having participants from a larger variety of non-Western nationalities or a focus on a different part of the world, particularly as home routines and hospitality ethics often differ between cultures. At the same time, due to the participants' location and the refusal of WWOOF UK to assist with my study, the majority of interviews could not be undertaken face-to-face. There were a few benefits in conducting many of the interviews online, such as saving money, time and getting access to more participants from various locations in the world. Nonetheless, having the interviews face-to-face could have allowed me to build rapport and provided me with more non-verbal cues that are not always easy to pick up during an online interview. Moreover, the sample overwhelmingly constituted of female participants. While in the au pairing context, the gendered nature of the work involved justified this to a certain extent, in the rest of the exchanges a more balanced proportion of participants would have been preferable.

Finally, the findings of this study represent my own experience as well as the ones of my 50 participants. With a different sample, the main aspects of the exchange could be found to be different. With varying expectations and motivations to become a host or guest found in the literature, a different sample could indicate other important facets of the encounter that were not mentioned by participants in this research. Moreover, the continuum of reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas could be applied to different hospitality situations, commercial and non-commercial, and its relevance could be tested in different scenarios. At the same time the continuum is by no means complete; further studies could uncover different techniques of communicating one's expectations and, thus, contribute to the expansion of the continuum. Finally, some participants alluded to the role of culture in reactions to micro-ethical dilemmas which was not explored in depth in this research. A study focused on how cultural differences can affect expression of expectations could offer an interesting insight from an intercultural communication perspective, that could illuminate potential ways to understand and overcome these issues.

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Appendix A. Interview Guides

HOSTS

General

1. How did you decide to become a Workaway/WWOOF/HelpX/au pair host?
2. Did you have any doubts at the beginning? Did that change? How?
3. Did you consider alternatives (workers/nannies etc)? If yes, why did you dismiss them?
4. What was the arrangement between you and your guest? (Probe: What did you offer and what did you get in return?)
5. What were your criteria in accepting a guest? [if replies skills] Was there anything you looked for, apart from their skills? Did you ever turn anyone down?
6. Can you describe the first interaction when your guests arrive?
7. Were you happy with the exchange?
8. Do you think your guests were happy with what you provided?
9. Did any issues come up in the exchange? Did you have any problems with anyone of your guests?
10. Was there any particular guest that stood out to you? Negatively or positively. How?
11. Was there any instance where you thought your guest felt uncomfortable for any reason? How did you handle that?

Work

1. Was there a specific work schedule for your guests? Please describe it.
2. If you needed them to do something further, how did you express that?
3. Were you happy with the work your guests did?
4. Did you let them know if you were not satisfied with their work? How?
5. Was there an instance when your guests seemed unhappy with what they had to do? How did they show it? What did you do?

Space

1. How did you feel having a stranger living in your home?
2. Was there anything that caused you discomfort? How did you deal with it?

3. Do you think your guests felt like “home”? How did you make them feel welcome?
4. Do you think your guests had enough private space in your home?
5. How freely could your guests move around your home? Did they have access to all the rooms? How did you signify this (tell them/show them somehow)?

House Rules/routines

1. Did you set up any house rules for your guests? Please give me some examples.
2. Did they follow them? If not, how did you react?
3. Did you have to adapt your daily routine when your guests arrived? How easy or difficult was that for you?
4. Did your guests have to adapt their routines?

Food

1. Were you all eating together?
2. Did the guests eat what you provided or did any issues come up (preferences/vegetarian/allergies)? If so, how did you handle them?
3. Was there any point where a guest expressed their dissatisfaction with the food (quantity/taste/time of meal)? How did that make you feel?
4. How did you react?
5. Were they allowed to take everything you wanted from the fridge/cupboards etc?

Provisions

1. What else do you think the exchange involves apart from the main transaction (food and bed for work)?
2. Was there anything else you or your guests provided?
3. Why did you provide these things?
4. Was there a time when the guest asked for something and you said no? Why?
5. Was there a time when you asked them for something and they declined?

Interactions

1. How was your personal relationship with your guests?
2. What about the rest of your family?

3. Did you talk a lot about non-work related topics?
4. Were there any topics you avoided talking about with them (probe: Did you discuss religion, politics etc.)?
5. Did you keep in contact with any of them?
6. Do you think there is a cultural exchange involved? How is that?
7. Did any cultural differences come up during the exchange?

Independence/Free time

1. Do you think your guests had enough free time off work?
2. At that time, could they come and go as they wished? Did they have a key?
3. What did they usually do in their free time?
4. Did you spend any of their free time together?
5. Was there any point where you wished you had more free time?
6. What did you do when you felt the need for privacy?

General

1. So, in general, what would you say is an important personal trait to have in order to become a host in such an exchange? A guest?
2. Do you think there are people who you wouldn't advise to participate?
3. Do you think the exchange is "fair"? What you provide and what they give back?
4. Was there any point where you felt it was not?
5. In general, how would you describe/characterise the transaction?
6. What is the most important aspect of the experience for you?
7. How would you describe the relationship that is formed?
8. Thinking back, is there anything you would have changed/done differently?

Questions for me / Anything to add

GUESTS

General

1. How did you decide to become a Workawayer/WWOOFer/ HelpXer/au pair?
2. Did you have any doubts/hesitation at the beginning? Did that change? How?
3. Did you consider alternatives (job/au pairing/hostels etc)? If yes, why did you dismiss them?
4. What was the arrangement between you and your hosts? (Probe: What did you offer and what did you get in return?)
5. What were your criteria in contacting a host?
6. Can you describe the first interaction when you arrived?
7. Were you happy with the exchange?
8. Do you think your hosts were happy with you?
9. Did any issues come up in the exchange? Did you have any problems with anyone of your hosts?
10. Was there any particular host that stood out to you? Negatively or positively. How?
11. Was there any instance where you felt uncomfortable for any reason? How did you handle that?

Work

1. Was there a specific work schedule? Please describe it.
2. If they needed you to do something further (apart from your general duties), how did they express that? What did you think at the time?
3. Were you happy with the work you had to do?
4. Did you let them know if you were not satisfied with the work? How?
5. Was there an instance when your hosts seemed unhappy with your work? How did they show it? What did you do?

Space

1. How did you feel living in a stranger's home?
2. Was there anything that caused you discomfort? How did you deal with it?
3. Did you feel like "home"?

4. How did your hosts make you feel welcome?
5. Did you have your own space/ room?
6. If so, did it feel like it was yours? Do you think you had enough private space in the house?
7. How freely could you move around the home? Did you have access to all the rooms? How did they signify this (tell you/show you somehow)?

House Rules/routines

1. Did your hosts set up any house rules for you? Please give me some examples.
2. Did you follow them? If not, how did they react?
3. Did you have to adapt your daily routine when you arrived? How easy or difficult was that for you?
4. Do you think your hosts had to adapt their routines?

Food

1. Were you all eating together?
2. Did you eat what you provided or did any issues come up (preferences/vegetarian/allergies)? If so, how did you handle them?
3. Was there any point where you expressed your dissatisfaction with the food (quantity/taste/time of meal)?
4. How did they react?
5. Were you allowed to take everything you wanted from the fridge/cupboards etc? How did that make you feel?

Provisions

1. What else do you think the exchange involves apart from the main transaction (food and bed for work)?
2. Was there anything else you or your hosts provided?
3. Why did you provide these things?
4. Was there a time when the host asked for something and you said no? Why?
5. Was there any time when you asked for something and they declined?

Interactions

1. How was your personal relationship with your hosts?
2. Did you feel like a member of the family?
3. Did you talk a lot about non-work related topics?

4. Were there any topics you avoided talking about with them? (probe: Did you discuss religion, politics etc.)?
5. Did you keep in contact with any of them?
6. Do you think there is a cultural exchange involved? How is that?
7. Did any cultural differences come up during the exchange?

Independence/Free time

1. Do you think you had enough free time off work?
2. At that time, could you come and go as you wished? Did you have a key?
3. What did you usually do in your free time?
4. Did you spend any of your free time with your hosts?
5. Was there any point where you thought they needed privacy?
6. What did they do when they felt the need for privacy? How did they show it?

General

1. So, in general, what would you say is an important personal trait to have in order to become a guest in such an exchange? A host?
2. Do you think there are people who you wouldn't advise to participate?
3. Do you think the exchange is "fair"? What you provide and what they give back?
4. Was there any point where you felt it was not?
5. In general how would you describe/characterise the experience?
6. How would you describe the relationship that is formed?
7. Thinking back, is there anything you would have changed/done differently?

Questions for me / Anything to add

Appendix B. Sample Interview transcript

Stella - Au pair Host

M: Hello.

S: Hello.

M: I would like to remind you that this interview is for my PhD which is looking into the relationship between au pairs and their hosts and I wanted to find out a bit more about your own experience as a host. Can I please confirm that you agree to participate and be recorded?

S: Yes, I do.

M: Thank you very much, thank you. I would also like to remind you that we can stop at any time, we can also take a break if you need one. If you don't want to answer a question you can just let me know. And that all your data will be anonymised and stay with me in a safe location.

S: Okay.

M: Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

S: No.

M: Good. Then let's start with a general question. Why did you decide to get an au pair?

S: That actually came about because we used to live in Denmark and then my husband got a posting for [work], he's in the military. And we were advised from people who've been here or were told about how expensive childcare is in Britain and we're not really used to that in Denmark because there's much more public funding of childcare. And some people said, you know, it's better to get an au pair. So, we decided to do that. And then we really enjoyed it and it's been a big help for us. So that's how it- that's how it all started really.

M: Okay. So, how long have you had au pairs now?

S: I'm not really counting our first au pair, cause she was not really an au pair, she was my niece that we had brought along with us and she was sort of an au pair. But the year after, which must have been, yeah, 2014, summer of 2014, a

French girl and then the year after a German girl and this year we've had a Spanish girl. And she's coming back to us after she'd done some holiday in Spain, but she'll come back to us and do another year. So 3 years.

M: So the others stayed the whole year?

S: Yeah.

M: And now the Spanish one is coming again for another year?

S: Yeah, so she'll do 2 years with us.

M: Okay, good, good. And you found them through an agency?

S: No, we used a website, I think I was contacted by you through [online au pair agency 1] which I think we used for the French girl. And then we changed the year after to [online au pair agency 2].

M: Why did you change your agency? Were you unhappy with the first one?

S: No that was actually the French girl, [name], she said cause she was in a lot of websites and she said she found [online au pair agency 2] to be easier to match families with that one. So we changed and I think I agree that it's just a better website.

M: Good. Did you have any doubts, any hesitations at the beginning? When you were thinking about it?

S: Oh yeah! [laughter] It's a big decision, isn't it? Because you invite someone into your family and... Oh yeah, we had lots of worries. I think the first time we weren't that experienced and we only spoke to… I think we only did Skype interviews with two girls. And the first one we were quite sure we didn't want. And then we talked to [French au pair] and had a good feel of her, but her English was very- it was quite weak at the time. She had her boyfriend helping her at the interview. So it is a bit of a gamble really. So yeah, we did have lots of worries, you know, whether she would- basically will they fit into the family? Will we feel comfortable with each other? Uhm, yeah.

M: Yeah. And why did you feel the first one, for example, wasn't suited for your family?

S: [Exhales] That was things like, in the first interview she asked if… What was it? She asked things like if there was a hotel nearby where her friends could stay [laughter]. We just felt like she didn't [pause] take it that seriously. Like she really didn't have a… Like it is- You know, you're interviewing with a host family but it's also type of a job interview. And we felt like she wasn't really taking it seriously, what she would be doing, but more thinking "How can I party with my friends in London?" [laughter]. So that's why we didn't… It's a long time ago and I can't remember exactly but that's one of the things that we thought was quite peculiar. And then we wrote to her afterwards and said "Thank you for the conversation. If you have any questions... We've got some other interviews". And then she wrote back and she said she did have another question: "Do you have Wi-Fi?". Which we also thought was a peculiar, you know, we've just started, let's get a bit closer to... So those were the sort of things where... You try to get a feel for people's personality and their [pause] social skills, I guess, and their attitude. And so… It didn't feel right.

M: Okay, good. So what was the arrangement between you and the au pairs? What were they supposed to do and what would you offer in return?

S: Uhm, so… Yeah. It's been a little bit different. So, with [French au pair] we asked her to do... Ok, so when [French au pair] came I had a 3-months-old baby. So, she helped a lot with him but I was with him mostly. So, she drove the older children to school, because it's quite a long drive - we do a lot of driving. And we had her do the cleaning, which at one point when the baby started not sleeping so much, she felt like she had too much and then we hired a cleaner. And looking back on it, I mean we just fixed it, she came she said, you know, she felt bad saying it but she felt like she had too much to do and I think she was right, so we got a cleaner and it sorted itself out. And then after that our au pairs haven't done cleaning, they have done things like... I think [German au pair], the German girl, I think she had- she did hoovering. But other than that, it's mainly childcare, helping with the kids in the afternoon, helping with the driving. [Spanish au pair], the Spanish girl we have now, she helps with bedtime as well, otherwise we've mostly done bedtime and stuff like that ourselves.

M: Yes, okay. And what did you offer in return for that?

S: So, I think we pay 350 pounds if that- Is it money you're talking about?

M: In general.

S: Yeah, so… Okay, I mean we've… This is probably not- Not probably. This is not following the rules that you read in a website. We've always talked with our au pairs and tried to find someone who would not count hours because that's just kinda the way. Yeah, I know, it doesn't sound nice but in return for that we don't count our hours either. So for example holiday or if they need time off, if they want their family... They've all had family visiting and staying with us for example. If they want days off, they get it. [Spanish au pair] is right now in Spain on paid holiday and she's taking 6 weeks and she's had lots of holiday, you know, she had 3 weeks for Christmas, and she's had bits and pieces everywhere. And we don't count that. We do continually talk with them about if this is what they want. And it seems- it works out quite well. I think for her, she prefers to be able to go to Spain, spend lots of time with her family and then when she's here, she doesn't have that many other things to do anyway, so it's quite, yeah. And then she goes to school as well and obviously she needs time for that so we just work it out.

M: School?

S: Yeah, she does a language course. She's finished with that now but when she comes back, she'll start doing... Because before she came here she needed to finish her final project in University in Spain so she's talked with her Spanish University. Because when we asked if she would maybe be interested in staying longer, we talked about that she needed to go back to University really because otherwise I would feel like we took a young person out of University for 2 years and she needs to finish it. So she's been to Spain during Christmas and during Spring and talking to her University, so she's organised it so she can write her final- her dissertation, she can write that here while she's being an au pair with us. Because our little one will start full time nursery in September, so she will have more hours during the day for that.

M: That's good, that's good. And did they have their own room? Food is included?

S: Yeah, yeah. And food is included and they have more or less their own bathroom. Except when we have people visiting. Cause it's all on the top floor.

M: Did you have any specific criteria when you were contacting a possible au pair?

S: Well, they needed to have a driving licence. And [pause] I don't know actually. I think we tried to... [pause] No I don't think we had specific, other than driving licence, I think that was really it. I think we were quite, you know, we tried to get someone who seemed like they would be, I don't know how to express it but, like very good girls, you know? Girls who like their family and do sensible things in their spare time. And someone with hobbies, I think we quite liked if they did something. Like [Spanish au pair] does horse-riding and [French au pair] was a scout, you know, things like that. So, we got a feel for them being quite down to earth kind of girls. I think more like that. The only thing I remember was a very specific demand we had was the driving licence because we needed them to drive.

M: You said the first time you only had two interviews. From the second time on did you try to speak with more people?

S: Oh yes [laughter]. We had lots and lots of Skype interviews, yeah. Not because we were unhappy with [French au pair], because we loved [French au pair], it was actually… And we still see her, we still see her every summer. But just because we realised that it was really, we were just lucky. So, the second time we did lots of interviews. And it was difficult. And the third time we did as well.

M: Ok, good. And could you describe to me the first interaction when the au pairs arrived? How was the first time meeting the person who would stay with you a whole year?

S: Uhm… Is there any, do you want me to pick one of them or?

M: You can talk either about all of them or something that stood out with one of them.

S: Yeah. Ok, I'll tell you about [French au pair] and [German au pair] then because they were quite different. So with [French au pair] it was a bit of a crazy

thing when [husband’s name], my husband, had to pick her up at King's Cross. And he had to also pick up a rocking chair that we bought on Ebay. For some reason we managed to get all this, and we wouldn't be able to fit everybody in the car to go in there. And I wasn't sure I could carry and do the whole rocking chair thing. And I didn't want him to go on his own. Because I didn't want a young girl to be picked up by a man she didn't know. So, we sent our oldest son as well [laughter] so he had a child with him so it felt safer for her. And then they did the whole crazy rocking chair, went and got that. I can't remember if he got that first, I think he got that before maybe. Or maybe he got [French au pair] first and then she was in- and that was a bit crazy. And then they came here. And she actually fell asleep in the car so she must have been so nervous and so relieved to actually be there. And at first we show them around and we say welcome. You know, cup of tea, show them their room. And then I remember having a conversation in the kitchen with [French au pair] where I said to [husband] afterwards "Language-wise it is going to be really difficult". Because she was- her English was very weak at the time. But at the same time you could tell that even though I felt like I was more, like, pointing to things [laughter] when I was trying to introduce her to anything really. You know I would say "Ok so, about the laundry..." and I could just tell, she had no idea what I was talking about [laughter]. So it would be a lot of pointing and... But then I could tell that she was- when she got what I meant she was like "Oh, I can do it!" [excited tone]. And then obviously she improved quickly. But I think a lot of host families- cause she told me later, when her English got better, we got really really great relationship and she told me that she'd actually had problems, and she is a great girl, anyone would be lucky to have her as an au pair. But she told me later that she had problems finding a family because a lot of families want people to speak English. They want their au pair to speak at least fairly good English and they put as a criteria on the website. So they sort them by how good their English is. So she didn't get many replies because her English was just not good enough. Which I feel like, what's the point of being an au pair if you, because the language is such a big part of it. I don't know, I'm a teacher originally, I don't teach anymore but I quite enjoyed it actually, to be honest. Although it was a bit, the first day I was a bit [sharply inhales] "Wow. We've got a lot of work ahead of us". But then you look at how they are with the kids and

you can tell quickly I think. So that was with [French au pair], that was mainly… Like the language was a bit of a shock but other than that we felt like this is gonna be good. And then we had the German girl, [German au pair]. And that was a less happy experience. And so we picked her up from the airport and I think already when we picked her up I felt like she was very- she seemed almost, [pause] not on drugs, that sounds wrong, but she was almost like in a haze of something. And she told us when we got home, so I tried to chat with her in the car. And I mean I think [husband] and I are both very friendly and we can, you know, her English was very good, so there was no language barrier at all. But it was really difficult to get her to talk. Or she would say something but then the conversation would just stall quickly. And I got a bit worried already. And then I think "Oh, she's just really really nervous". And then she told us when we got back that apparently, and she was only 18 or 19 when she came, maybe she had just turned 19 I think. And maybe she was just not a very mature 19 year old I think. And then she told us that before she left, her whole family had, it had been a whole big drama and everybody had been crying and very sad and they didn't know how they could live without her and that kind of thing. So, I think she was sent off in not a good way. I mean I felt like her family should have said "Hey! Adventure!" you know? And "We're just on the other side of the English Channel", you know. So, she seemed like, I don’t know, a deer caught in the headlights. And I thought "This will- It will blow over, she will find out that we're nice people and it'll all settle down". And then it didn't really. It took a couple of months for her to be just fairly settled. She cried a lot in the beginning, and she was very homesick. And then it got better, we had lots of chats about it and hugs in the kitchen. And it did get better. But we never really got... And I think it was just a personality thing really. We never really got sort of the easy relationship with her that we had with [French au pair] and that we have with [Spanish au pair] now. And we do still see her and she came to visit us in January, I think? And we write letters to her and the boys write letters to her. But when she did come back to visit us I had the same feeling of, you know, we chat and we catch each other up on everything that happened and then the conversation took a [thumbs down]. And it's just a personality thing really. And we did talk about it, after about 3 months [husband] and I did talk about is this working out? Because she didn't seem overly happy and it was affecting us too.

And I think because when you have someone in your household who's quite, sort of, I mean maybe it was the way she was or maybe it was because she was not happy, I don't know, but she was quite sort of [sighs] about everything. And it did affect us. Because like our au pairs are part of the family, they eat with us, they don't sit in their room or, you know, they are part of the family so it was a bit of a... And we did talk about, should we talk with her and say "This isn't working out?". And then we couldn't make ourselves do it because I don't think she would have found another host family, I think she would have gone back to Germany and she would have felt like a failure or it didn't work out. And, yeah, we felt it was better for her and for us maybe that she stays. I still don't know if it was the right experience but I think she feels like she had a good year. And she did mature a lot over the year. It was not- it wasn't a perfect fit.

M: Yes, I understand. So you felt she wasn't really independent?

S: Yeah, that was interesting. When we hired her and found her [husband] talked to a German colleague, because he obviously worked with all nationalities as he works for [workplace], and he said "What part of Germany is she from?" and [husband] said "The North-West". And he said "Oh, they are quite...". She came from the North-west coast, not far from Denmark really. Well he said they're quite not so independent. And it was just funny, cause that's exactly the experience we had. Because when [husband] came home and said that, I said "No, that's silly. I know lots of German people. They're fine". But she was quite reliant on her, you know, she would ask her mom about everything. And so if I asked her something about the laundry, how she wants something washed, she would call her mom and ask her and she was... There was a lot of things like that, where I felt she was not really with us. She was on Skype with her family and then in the morning she would come down. I don't know. It could be just a per- and that's why I think that's been the most important thing for us really. Cause she was a great girl, she did everything we asked her to, she was good with the, especially with the little one of our boys, she was very good with him. So I think sometimes maybe you know, it's just not the perfect match. And it's hard to know beforehand.

M: That's true, that's true. Did you feel that it improved throughout the year? You said you felt it got a bit better.

S: It did. Like I said, the first couple of months were quite worrying. And then it did get better. And then I felt that towards the end of year it got a bit worse again. But I think she seemed quite like, [pause] I think maybe mentally she was going home. And it's ok, it was not a bad experience, it was just not... And maybe for us too it was a bit, it was not easy, I think, to be the au pair who came after [French au pair], because it had been so great. And when she left, we were all very upset. I mean, as in crying for hours. And it felt like we'd really, like we'd lost a daughter or... So I think maybe it wasn't the easiest thing to follow. Not that we were negative towards her, but we were just really heartbroken for the girl we'd lost. So, there was maybe a lot of things.

M: Did you discuss it with her throughout the year?

S: Yeah, we talked about some things. Like the homesickness and how to... We talked a lot about, well not a lot, but we did talk quite a few times about how to create a life here. But I mean you can't really… Like one of the things… Maybe we should have talked to her about it, but it does feel a bit, I don't know how I would have done that. Because I think one of the things that for me made it really difficult was that she would talk, like if I asked her questions she would answer readily and tell me about it. So, if I asked her "Oh, what about this and that? Your friends?". She didn't want to go to school, that was another thing, she didn't want to take an English course or anything like that. So, it's quite… I felt like I had to do, a lot to get her to meet with other au pairs and make some friends here. And we did really try to convince her to take an English course because I feel like it's nice for an au pair to have something that's theirs and it's not related to the family or the children. But she didn't want to. She said she'd given it a lot of thought and she didn't want to. So, in that sense she was also here a lot. And then I think one of the things I found a bit difficult with her was I would ask her questions, we would sit down to lunch together. And I would ask her questions and she would answer and tell me about things. And then the conversation would go quiet. And I think that was maybe just a lack of social skills she didn't have. But she would never ever ask me a question about anything. I got my first book deal, I had a book published last year and she was here when I got the email. And I was actually on the phone with my dad when I got this email. And I was running around, completely happy, you know? All over

the place. And her response was like "Oh, congratulations". You know, not a question about anything. I mean, in the beginning [interrupted by her mother]. So, in the beginning it was fine, she was a young girl, she was out of her normal, so we would just ask and tell and ask and tell. But for a whole year you get past the being polite and it just gets quite heavy for you to keep sort of dragging a conversation. And there was lots of things. I think [husband] got like a commendation at his work or something. Like stuff happened, where it was just glaringly obvious that, you know, this is a normal place to say "Oh, what did you get that for?". Or any little question like that. And it never ever happened. And that just got a bit... Maybe I should have said to her, maybe it would have been my duty as a host mother to say "You know what, it would be really nice if you sometimes asked us questions". But I felt that would have been really awkward somehow [laughter]. So I guess it's some sort of, because you know, they're adults. And still they're not. And then what's your... How far do my or [husband's] obligations go as parents, because we're not parents but we are sort of parents.

M: What did you think it was? Why do you think she wasn't asking questions?

S: I felt like she wasn't that interested. But she would, I mean... Sometimes I just thought "Ok, I'm just gonna tell her" [laughter]. You know, tell her about my life, the children or... It was a little bit better with the children, she still wouldn't ask but she was a bit more interested I guess because they were sort of her, like, what she dealt with through the day. But yeah, I guess it did feel... That's probably a part of why we didn't feel like it was a great match, just because even though we were the host family, we can feel rejected too [laughter]. You know? It can feel like "Ok, so we're not...". Because I think it's a cultural exchange, it's not one way, either way. Yes, we love to hear about Germany, we ask about what do you eat, how do you at Christmas, what do you do? And when you never ever get a question back, you do feel like a little bit "Okay..." [laughter] "We could be interesting too". I don't mean to sound childish but, yeah.

M: No, I understand what you mean.

S: So it was an ok experience, it was not great. Then we had [Spanish au pair], the Spanish girl. And again the language, not as bad as [French au pair's], but it was definitely not great when she arrived. And she's older, she was 24 when she came. And you could just instantly tell that this is gonna work out. This is gonna be good. Yeah, she's great. And I think we've relaxed as well. Because even when my niece was here we were sort of "I don't want you to have like 4 friends visiting. You can have one friend at a time, if you want them to visit". Now we're a bit "Ok, you've got 2 cousins and a friend coming, fine they can stay here. Just sort it out yourself up there" you know. So, I think it does open up the family. So this whole, sort of… These years have... And [German au pair] even had her family visiting while we were away on holiday. And she wanted to see her family. And we ended up organising it so that we went on holiday without her. Normally we take our au pairs. But she wanted her parents. And we couldn't overlap it so that we met each other. I don't know, I guess it had to do with their holiday, our holiday, I can't remember. So, she had her parents staying in our house while we weren't here. So, we've really sort of relaxed a lot and our house has become very sort of open. And we laugh about it sometimes. Because sometimes they arrive late. We know they're coming, it's not like we don't know who they are but we know when [Spanish au pair] has people visiting. And sometimes they arrive late at night or something and we don't see them. And then [husband] will say "Ok, and then I walk down into the kitchen and I open the fridge and its full of Spanish meat". Because they always bring us lots of presents because yeah. And then he's "Ok, we've got lots of Spanish people now". I don't know, I think I've gone off topic, sorry. But it's changed us as a family too. And I think because we used to live in a little flat and we had 2 children when we moved here. And we were quite sort of controlled and everything had to be square and in order and we both had full time jobs in Denmark. And we didn't have that much money either so we've just been through this transition. Because when you move to another country, and you probably know that, but then you also start having lots of people visiting you. So yeah, we've changed a lot as a family, I think.

M: So in general are you happy with the exchange?

S: Oh yeah, yeah. We love having au pairs. It's a great experience, I think.

M: Do you think your au pairs were happy with what you provided them?

S: I'm sure they were. I'm absolutely sure that [French au pair] and [Spanish au pair] were and are very happy. We had a very open relationship and we talked about what it means to be an au pair. And we had lots of conversations like that about how is it and very open about things, you know "Are you comfortable with the fact that we do it this way? We don't count the hours but you get time off whenever you want". Because we know other host families and au pairs as well obviously and so our au pairs will come back and say "Oh in that family, the family prefers them not to eat with them" or whatever, weird stuff like that. So, we have lots of talks about that. I mean [German au pair] will always be more difficult for me to... But she seemed like she was happy. And the letters she wrote for goodbye and the presents and she still, you know, like I said she came and visited in January. So, I think she was happy. I think she feels that was a good experience. And maybe for her it really was quite a good experience in the sense that she did mature and she did get- I feel maybe she didn't get enough out of it but that's me [laughter]. So, I think, yeah, I think she was happy. I'm sure that she loved us.

M: Apart from the issues you told me about with the German au pair, did any other issues come up with your au pairs?

S: [pause] No. I don't think so. I don't think so. We've never had any issues like we felt like, I don't know, that they came home drunk late at night or... I mean not that I would mind as long as they weren't driving the next day. No, we've never had any... They've all been very sensible I think. I think maybe- and that's something we're gonna talk about with [Spanish au pair] when she comes back but it's not really her... She's a bit more on her phone than the others have been while she's with the kids. And that's not something I in any way blame her for. Because I do it, [husband] does it. But we've got, our little one is 3 and at the nursery they think his attention span is not great. So over the last 2 weeks or so we've got a report on him and we've been talking through a lot of things about what- and we've been on holiday with him, so we've been able to watch him all day and talk about a lot of things. And I think one of the things we want to do is get rid of the phones while we're with the kids. Because it's just, well it’s plain rude really to the children that we're sitting there with the phones. And I

think attention wise, it's not good for him that we keep going "Ah yeah, I'll just answer him something quickly and then we go back into our own little world". [interrupted by kids] I mean most young people do it with the phone and I think we need to get rid of it and we've talked about that, when [Spanish au pair] comes back we're gonna ask her to also do it less. But it's a tiny thing.

M: So how did it feel in the beginning having a stranger in your home?

S: I'm trying to think back. This is 3 years ago now, isn't it? Well we sort of practiced because we had my niece living with us for a year. And even though she was not a stranger, we were still not used to having someone with us. Yeah, in the beginning it does feel a little weird. A little bit like you're not sure you can completely relax the same way. And then at some point you do of course. I think one of the things that we were a little a bit, the only thing really that we didn't really know what to do with in the sense of privacy was in the evenings when the kids are in bed and the kitchen is done and all of that, did they want to come down and chat with us and spend time with us or did they want to be on their own? But they've all... I mean sometimes they would come and chat. But I think in that point in day they wanted to just be on their own and Skype with their family and friends and watch whatever TV they wanted to watch. But that's the only thing we've been a bit like, not really knowing how to find or what to say to them or what, you know. Yeah, you do need to, there's a few adjustments. Like not walking around the house without your clothes on. You feel like they might be around. Not that… [pause] It's not been that bad actually. It is a feeling of someone is in the house. And I think you sort of just get used to it really. It's not been that difficult.

M: Was there anything that caused you discomfort with the au pairs being there?

S: Well it was quite nice if they were sometimes away on the weekend [laughter]. If they would sometimes go, which [German au pair] for example didn't do a lot. Just gonna close the door because I don't wanna talk about them in front of the kids. I just don't want them to hear anything that they could feel was negative. Uhm… [pause] Because my husband and I need to have a relationship as well. You know? And that's difficult enough with 3 kids. So

sometimes it's nice if the au pair is out of the house on the weekend. Not every weekend or all the time but just... And that could be a bit difficult with her because she was very much here all the time. And sometimes it was just really nice to be able to say to the kids "You watch TV now and mommy and daddy are gonna take a nap" [laughter] or whatever. And that becomes quite difficult when there's also an au pair around. That's the only thing where I felt like it was difficult. And then like I said, but we've been through that, the fact that our moods seemed to go down with [German au pair] here. All of us were sort of in a less, we felt like we had less... See, we have this expression in Danish and I can't say it in English cause there isn't an equivalent, but we call it surplus. To have surplus, if you understand what I mean. So we felt like we didn't have that. We didn’t have that extra, you just sort of went through things. And we weren't very, like, bubbly. And we felt like that was probably partly... It's something we talked a lot about, actually when she left and after she left. [Child comes in] Yes? Are you coming back? To say hello?

C: Yes.

M: Hello [name].

S: [To child] What do you like about having au pairs?

C: Very happy.

S: You’re very happy? What’s good about having [Spanish au pair] here?

C: Very good.

S: [laughter] What do you like doing with her?

C: Playing.

S: Yeah, it’s nice, isn’t it? I’ll come soon, okay? [Child leaves] Uhm… It's the only thing. We haven't found our au pairs very annoying. I can't really think of anything. [pause] Only that with her we had this feeling that the general mood in the house was dragged down a little bit. Which is a big deal, actually. But no, we haven't had a lot of, you know, it's annoying that they leave their coat hanging around or... Either it doesn't annoy us, or they didn't do it, I don't know. Only as I said sometimes on the weekends with one of them it would be nice if... Other than that no, we haven't felt like that, no. If they've been somewhere

and we're watching TV and they've been out maybe with friends or [French au pair] would go play hockey in the evenings, you know, they would come back, we would pause the TV, they would chat for 5 or 10 minutes and then they would go upstairs again. So no. I think they've all been quite good at- either because they wanted their privacy too or because they were good at showing consideration towards us. No, it's never been a problem.

M: Good. In their free time- did they spend any of their free time with you?

S: Yeah. I mean after 8-9 o'clock when everybody was put to bed and all the stuff was done then they would usually go to their room. On weekdays anyway. But other than that they would spend their time with us really. So, I would say to… Because with my niece we did it all a bit differently. Because I think I was worried because we were family that she would not think of it, that she also had, like, a job to do. So, I talked to her about that. And she just took it too much as a job, I felt. So, she was like "Ok, I'll come down until 8 o'clock, and then I'll do this and then I'll have a break and then at 4 o'clock I'm gone". And she would just be gone. And I would be there with the kids and they'd have dinner and everything would be a bit crazy. And we talked about this before [French au pair] came that we really needed to soften that. And that's why we said the thing about can we not count the hours, can we not say… Just tell us whatever you need to do, we'll sort it out and then just be more flexible. And that's what got well. And for [French au pair], because I would say to her "You know you don't have to be here in the afternoon, I can deal with it". And she said "Yeah, but it's not like I have something else to do. And I like hanging out here. And I can see you're busy, so I'll give you a hand". So, in that sense, they're just here. And if they need to go, they just do. It seems to work out quite well. I mean obviously you would need to talk to our au pairs to verify what I'm saying. I couldn’t know for sure if they feel the same. Yeah, it’s uhm… They do seem to be quite part of the family, yeah.

M: Good. And in their free time could they come and go as they wished? Did they have a curfew?

S: Yeah, of course. No, no. They're grownups. The only thing we've said we don't want is we don't want them to go out and get very drunk and come home

late if they're working the next day. And that's a safety issue because they're driving the next morning. But none of them, I mean they're way too sensible, all of them to ever, they would never have done that. So no, they don't have a curfew. And anyway, it's London, so it's quite natural that the curfew is going to be the last tube anyway. So, it would be rare for them to come home after 1 o'clock anyway. But they're all adults, we don't give them a curfew.

M: Good, good. And do you feel like after a point they felt at home in your home?

S: I think certainly. Again, maybe with the exception of [German au pair], I'm not sure. The two others definitely, yes. They definitely feel at home.

M: How freely could they move in the house? Was there any place they didn't have access to?

S: No. They went everywhere. Maybe I forgot to say that the laundry was one of the things that they did. So, I would put laundry on and so on and then our au pair would hang the laundry and fold it and put it away. And that goes on in our bathroom which is in conjunction with our bedroom. So, they come all over the house, there's no restrictions really. They even sometimes come in when I'm on the toilet, which is a bit annoying. Because we don't have a lock on that door. But that's happened with all of them. And then they get a bit more careful "Ok, if the door's closed maybe I should knock".

M: Do you think they have enough private space in the home?

S: If they do? If they have enough private space?

M: Yes.

S: Well, we've got 3 floors. And they live on the 3rd floor. And up there there's 2 rooms, a landing with a TV and stuff and a bathroom. And unless we have visitors, like family or friends visiting, then they have that to themselves. And then when someone is visiting us they live in the other room and use that bathroom as well. And if our au pairs have a visitor, they live in that room and use that bathroom. So yeah, I think that's quite fine for private space. We don't go up there much.

M: Did they have weekends off?

S: Yeah, weekends are off unless we ask them to babysit.

M: If you wanted them to do something further, something extra, how would you tell them? How would you ask them?

S: We don't pay them to do extra, that's part of the contract. And once in a while we just sit down with our diaries and we coordinate and say "Ok, so we need babysitting here, are you free?". And [Spanish au pair] for example, she's very organised, so she will come and ask us if there's something she wants to be sure she can do. If it's something, either celebrating a friend's birthday or she did the colour run for example. So, if she needs to know that we don't need baby-sitting, she will come and tell us "Are you gonna need me on this date?" and then we all coordinate our diaries and sort it out. And if there's been something where she had- sometimes we have needed babysitting at times when she had family visiting and then we've gotten a babysitter from outside to do it. But because it's not great for her, if she's got family visiting for three or four days to waste a whole day of that time. And our cleaner does babysitting as well, so we usually get her to do it.

M: So, are you trying to have good communication with your pairs about that?

S: Yeah. It's quite equal, I feel we're quite, we just talk about it really. But that doesn't mean it's not, I know it's still a power relation, I know that we're still the family and this is where she lives. And so, I do understand that however much we feel like we're equals, of course there still may be things they feel are difficult to say. But we've put them in touch with each other as well. So, when we got a new au pair, we would put them in touch with our previous au pair so that they could talk with each other. And if then they had something like "Oh, you should be aware that they might get you to do this" or whatever, they could sort that out on their own. I don't know if they did obviously, but they had the option.

M: Okay. And if there was any instance when you were not satisfied with their work, would you tell them about it, would you let them know?

S: Yeah, if it were little things, I can't remember anything right now, but it might be something like "Don't forget to wipe the table when you've done the dishes because otherwise it can go all wet and mouldy" or whatever. Something like that, yeah, we would say that.

M: Was there maybe an instance when one of the au pairs seemed unhappy with what they had to do?

S: Yes. Like [French au pair] when she'd been here a while and when the baby got older then she said she felt like she had too much to do. And I think that was quite awkward for her to say. But we had a good relationship and she talked with her mom about it first. And her mom was quite, I think she came from a quite old school, conservative style French family, like "do your work" [laughter]. So her mom had said "Yes, but you know it's a good family and that's the most important thing. You can try and talk to them if you feel that they are...". Because she felt like she had a good relationship with us. So, she did talk with us and then we sorted it out. I know we talked about it several times later and I've said "Please, you can tell the other au pairs like you felt like you could come and say" because that's much nicer. That's the only thing that they have had.

M: Was there any point where you asked one of your au pairs to do something and they said no?

S: I don't think so. No. There's nothing I can think of. Not where they said no. There might have been something where they've maybe said "I'm not sure I can do it" or... It's mainly been related to the driving really, because they were all quite nervous about driving on the left side at the beginning. But there's never been something where they said no. There's more like- so we've spent lots and lots and lots of time teaching them to drive here so that they felt comfortable. It's not a good example. It's not what you're asking. They've never said no.

M: Was there any point when you said no? Or you just felt they asked for something that was too much?

S: No. The only thing I can think of is that this spring [Spanish au pair] had her cousins visiting at absolutely the worst weekend they could have picked. Because my husband was doing a Master's degree and a full-time job and it was the weekend leading up to his exams. And I think because the cousins had just booked this, it was not that they expected to stay with us but it was just that [Spanish au pair] obviously would like to spend time with them. And I think they didn't ask her. So, she was sort of caught between them and us and I think she felt quite bad about it. And we just said "It's not great. But don't worry about it,

we'll sort it out". And that’s how that one ended. That's the only thing I can think of and it wasn’t really her. But she was put in a bit of an awkward situation by her family.

M: Did you set up any house rules when they arrived? Or not necessarily rules, maybe guidelines.

S: Yeah we did, yeah definitely. I'm trying to think what. Well one thing was we asked them not to, that they could take pictures of our kids, of course they could and send to their family, but we didn't want them to put them online. We don't really do that ourselves. Or very rarely. We did talk about not being on the phone too much. Maybe we didn't talk with [Spanish au pair] about that actually, I can't remember now. Yes, little things. Little things like not putting ketchup on the table every day. One of our au pairs felt like that was natural because if the kids wanted ketchup, they could have ketchup. Where we're quite- a lot more stricter with "We're eating this. If you don't wanna eat it, don't eat it but you're not getting ketchup". Little things like that. What else? Yeah, the thing with not, you know, coming come late and drunk if they were driving the next day. I feel like not a lot. We must have talked about things, but it's been quite natural really. Other than that, not a lot of... I mean there's been rules for the kids obviously that they needed to know. Like what the kids can and can't do, like they don't have free access to screens for example, they have to ask and we don't do TV and computers, tablets and so on in the mornings. So probably mostly related to the kids really.

M: Did they all follow them?

S: No, they've all been very good.

M: Did you have to adapt your own daily routines when they arrived, the way you lived your daily lives?

S: I think [husband] did a little bit because I think he prefers to get his exercise out of the way before the au pair comes down. And it's only been a, not a problem or anything, but he says with [Spanish au pair] sometimes he's in the middle of something with weights and stuff in the kitchen and she gets up quite early. So maybe he's, I'm not sure he adjusted it or got up earlier or maybe he has, actually, he is training a little bit earlier. Just to feel like he could get that

done before she came down. And then the thing with being a bit more careful, to be honest we're not particularly shy, but a bit more careful sort of closing the door to the bedroom if I just got out of the shower and was naked or something. But it's just little adjustments like that. Yeah, that’s it.

M: Okay, good, good. So, let’s change the topic a bit and talk about food. Do you generally eat all together?

S: Yes we all eat together. We've actually said, I can't remember if we said it to [German au pair] as well, we did said to [French au pair] I remember "If you wanna eat by yourself, it's your choice, we would love to have you eat with us". And she just said "No that would be weird" [laughter]. But we wanted to give her the choice if she for some reason would want to eat on her own. And I'm not sure we even said it with the others. I can't remember. It would be weird. So yeah, they just eat with us. Unless they're going out or something, they'll sometimes say "I'm not gonna have dinner at home because I'm going out with some friends".

M: Of course. Did any issues come up with the food? Did they have any preferences, follow specific diets or something like this?

S: Yeah, a little bit. So, with [French au pair], she was quite a fussy eater we found out [laughter]. She liked like very traditional French food. So, she did sometimes have, especially in the beginning, she was a bit... But she would never complain or ask for anything specific, but then I would still feel like... I know we're not supposed to change anything but I don't want a member of the family to not have a proper dinner because I cooked something that I know they don't like. So that was sometimes a little bit of "Oh, come on [French au pair], just eat it. You know, it's not gonna hurt you". But she got a lot better. And she says so herself that she can eat a lot more things now than she used to and that she's really surprised her boyfriend who likes spicy food and she never used to touch it. And then after spending some time here and obviously we get Indian takeaways once in a while, she can actually eat a little bit of spicy food. But in the beginning I did feel a bit "Oh, come on, you can't eat that either?" [laughter]. You know, I didn't say it but there was a lot of food that I would put on the table that she would sort of poke around a lot. But then we talked a lot,

because I like cooking and I always do the cooking. They do it once in a while but none of our au pairs have been very competent in the kitchen. They like cooking but it's all been in the sense of, you know, "I'm gonna call my mom and ask how to do a paella" or whatever, a traditional French cake. Which is quite nice when they then do that and then they teach me and then I get the recipe and we sort of exchange... But on a daily basis I cook. Also, because we've got 3 kids and we can't spend... If you don't know what you're doing in the kitchen then you spend 2 hours cooking, don't you? And you have to look at recipes and call your mom and [laughter]. So, it's easier for me, I just do it in half an hour, we've got food on the table. But we have had, like exchange recipes, that's quite nice, I've enjoyed that. With [German au pair] she didn't tell us until a few days before she arrived, she wrote an email. She never told us about any allergies, and I think we did probably ask, because we had a whole interview guide. And then just a few days before she arrived, she said "Oh, by the way I can't eat seafood and I can't eat a lot of dairy". So that was a bit, okaaay... But she said "You don't have to make special food for me" and she did mean that. And she just sort of avoided. But it did mean that in that year we didn't eat a lot of fish and things like, not that we eat a lot of mac 'n' cheese but there were some things where it was a bit more difficult. I don't know if it would've made a difference anyway in her coming to us. We probably would have picked her anyway, I don't know. But that did complicate things a little bit.

M: So did you have to adapt your cooking?

S: Yeah, we did, yeah, I did. And then [Spanish au pair], no there's nothing. She's not happy to eat anything but she eats most things. But they all I think went crazy with our rye bread, but they sort of gotten used to eating it.

M: Did they ever express dissatisfaction when they didn't like the food? You mentioned [French au pair] poking around her plate.

S: I think it was awkward for her because she was trying to be polite. And obviously didn't want me to feel like I would have to cook something special for her. But on the other hand, she really was quite fussy. So, she couldn't just make herself eat it. So, if I went somewhere and I didn't like it, I would just eat it anyway, you know? But she was really so fussy that she couldn't make herself

do that. But then she was being polite when she didn't say it. I don't think I would, I would have found it difficult too to say it to a host family "I don't really like the food". And as I said it got a lot better, she really did change her attitude towards food quite a bit.

M: Good. So did they have access to the fridge and cupboards to take something between meals if they wanted to?

S: Yeah of course. Obviously, yes. You know what, I was an exchange student when I was 15 and the first host family I stayed with, they said when I arrived "You can take whatever you want". And when I did, they would tell me off. And that experience, I think it was a big part of why I got an eating disorder after that stay. I would never ever put restrictions on what people can eat, it is really really unhealthy. That's very strange to me. Come on, how much can they eat? They're not gonna eat you out of the house.

M: True. So, how would you describe your personal relationship?

S: Yeah, well, I guess we've been covering it pretty much but like I said with [French au pair], she's half friend half daughter. I love her. To bits. You know? I can still get upset thinking about the day we took her to the station. And she was crying, [husband] was crying. For some reason I wasn't crying when I said goodbye. When we came back to the house, I sat down on the kitchen floor and I cried for an hour. It was horrible. And I can still feel like this. Why is she so far away, you know? But she's become a friend to me. And [Spanish au pair] too actually, I think she's, we're really close with her as well. And [German au pair] I think we've covered that, it wasn't a perfect relationship really. That was a lot more, can't really use that expression [laughter], but it was a lot more top down, you know, it was a lot more me sort of trying to take care of her. So she was a lot more of a child that I found it a bit more difficult to relate to really. Whereas with the others it was more like an equal relationship.

M: Were there any topics you avoided talking about with them?

S: No.

M: What about topics such as politics and religion?

S: No. On the contrary I think we talk quite a lot about politics in this family. No, actually, with [Spanish au pair] we talked a lot about politics in the Skype interview, indirectly obviously. Because we asked a lot- We decided, because with [German au pair] personality was a problem not, you know, not her sense of duty or anything, she did everything well but it was a personality thing. So we designed this crazy, like after 2 normal Skype interviews with [Spanish au pair]- we did all these weird questions, and one of them "If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?" that kind of thing, to get her talking about things that would just show who is was as a person instead of "Do you agree to..." whatever. And then one of them was if you were President or King of Spain, your country, what 3 things would you do? So, we even then talk a little bit about politics. So no, we don't avoid that. And I mean for religion it's easy because they've all been, [Spanish au pair] and [French au pair] are Catholic but they are Catholic in the sort of quite relaxed, we don't really go to church that much way, which is the way- and we're Lutherans or Protestants in the same way, you know? [German au pair] had the same religion as us and again very secularised, not really going to church much. So that's never been, it's not really a topic. But I mean we can talk about it. We've all been very similar on that point.

M: Okay, yeah. Good. And did you talk about non-work related topics?

S: Yeah, we talked about- I mean with [French au pair] because she was just starting to sleep with her boyfriend, so we actually talked quite a lot about that. I mean not from day one obviously but when she'd been with us for a while. Not with [husband] but with me, we did talk quite a lot about it. Because her family was, like I said, very conservative and quite upset about the fact that she wanted to have sleepovers with him and things like that. So, yeah, we did, we did. We talked about contraception actually and, yeah, things like that. So, I think for her it was quite nice to have a grown-up who was not telling her "You can't do it. You just have to abstain" but someone who was "Yeah, of course you're doing that with your boyfriend, you're 19 years old" or 20 I think she was at the time. "Of course, you're doing that, but it might be a good idea to" you know. So, we talked a little bit about stuff like that. [Spanish au pair] is older so we wouldn't talk about that. But we have talked about, she actually told me

when she'd been here a while that before she came here, about 6 months before, she'd broken up with a boyfriend that had been abusive. And yeah, so we've got a close relationship like that, we talk about really... And some of these conversations have been with me, I think, because they've been, like, girl talk type of things. But yeah, they talk with [husband] about loads of stuff as well. [German au pair] has not been that personal.

M: Yeah, yeah. So, as the relationship progressed, did it become easier or more difficult for you to ask them to do things?

S: That's an interesting question, I've never thought about that actually. Uhm… [pause] I think it's a mix really, because in a sense, you've got those, not 100 days, but you've got a certain time in the beginning where you can say everything you want done. Because you are in the process of telling them, you know "This is what you'll be doing, this is how it's gonna happen". And yeah, so in a sense it does get more difficult really. Because then you've got this whole personal relationship going on and then you have to start saying "I want you to change something". And then you are sort of reminding both of you that we are still also employer-employee. And then in another sense, it's also quite easy, because we've had with at least two of our au pairs, this feeling of it's a cooperation really. We're cooperating about- cause it's usually always related to the kids and stuff we want to happen with the kids or stuff the kids need help with or.... And so, we will talk with them because they are, you know like, the third important adult in the kids' life. So, we will talk with them about it and then sort it out together. And it might actually be us telling them what to do. But it'll be more of a... So I'm thinking it's gonna be interesting to see how [Spanish au pair] reacts to the phone thing. Because I have asked her once, you know, sort of carefully sort of "Are you on your phone a lot with [child]?". Because when it all started, when the nursery talked about his attention and all of that, I did think of the whole thing with the phones. And she did seem to be a little bit offended by it. Maybe, I'm not sure. I'm sure it will sort itself out, it's not something, it's not a big deal. So, it will be interesting to see. But again, I mean, our way, we've talked about how we're gonna tell her. I think that our way will be to say "We've given this a lot of thought and we think maybe it will be nice for [child] if we put our phones on the shelf out here. Would you be ok to try that?". And I'm thinking

it will, I doubt I will have to say to her "I want you to put your phone...". Yeah. "Would you be ok to also put your phone there and sort of go along with it?". It will make it quite hard for her to say no, first of all and second of all I mean she can think for herself. She'll probably think "Yeah, it might be a good idea to try".

M: Yes, sounds good. Good. So, we have some final general questions. What do you think is an important trait someone needs to have to be an au pair?

S: Mmmm… [pause] Well, either, uhm… It's a lot to choose from, isn't it? Yeah, I think to be an au pair, I mean that's a different thing, but definitely independent or a strong wish to become independent I think would be quite important. And then some sort of social and practical skills. I think, for example, that I would have been a terrible au pair. I was an exchange student and that was good for me because I went to school and stuff. But I think I would not have had- I would not have been good at seeing "Ok, someone needs to do the dishes now cause everything is chaos in this house". It's some sort of practical awareness, I think is quite important. Yeah and then social skills, an open mind.

M: Definitely. And on the other hand to be an au pair host?

S: Yeah. I think it's really important to understand that having an au pair is not having a cheap nanny. And that you need to be willing to have a young person as a part of your family. And it's not as easy as it sounds, I think. Like the thing with the language, which I thought was really peculiar. That apparently a lot of host families want their au pair to speak English before they come. It's like "What do you think the point is for them to come?". To have that understanding of what is, you know... Or maybe basically you could say what would you want. If I sent my- I don't have any daughters and boys don't often become au pairs- but if I sent my daughter somewhere, how would I like her to be treated? So, have that in mind instead of seeing them as a sort of worker person.

M: Good, good. And do you think in general this exchange is fair?

S: I think it depends a lot on how the family deals with it. And I think it works, in a lot of cases it really works. And it can be a very happy experience. I have heard, like you probably have, through my au pairs when they talk with other au pairs and then they've come back and told me. And sometimes it's a bit awkward for me really, cause I know things about families at the children's'

school for example. Because the au pairs talk with each other and then they tell me and then... I do think that some people, I don't know if it's a British thing especially or if it's the same problem, probably the same in Denmark and all over the world. Some people don't understand this. They don't understand what the au pair experience is. And in that case, it becomes unfair, definitely unfair. But you can say the good thing about au pairs is that usually they have other options. Usually. I mean it's not, most of them have come out from a family and they can go back. But it would always feel like a failure for them if they have to do that. So, I think yes if the host family has understood, like, the spirit -can you say that? Like the spirit of the au pair experience, then yes I think it's a fair exchange.

M: Mhm. Was there any point when you felt it was unfair to you? Like what you were giving was more than what you were getting in return?

S: No never. Never. No. I think for us it's been a very, we've been very fortunate.

M: How would you characterise the experience? In terms of the relationship between the au pair and the family? What type of relationship is it for you?

S: I think definitely they became members of our family. For us it's a family member. Yes, I do know, so that’s the thing, exchange students are definitely family members, that's the whole point of it, there's no work mixed into that so that makes it sort of a cleaner experience. And I understand how the au pair thing, because it mixes the two, can be a bit more like a grey zone. But like I said, and that's just our, that's how we feel it should be, it's in the word, isn't it, au pair, that's on equal footing. So, for us it's definitely been a family experience and what it should be. I think- I know that it sort of has migrated into being more of an employer-employee thing and I think that's wrong. Maybe also, I find it really strange that Britain doesn't have an au pair programme because I think if they did then maybe it would be easier to sort of inform people that "Hey, this is what it is, you're not just getting some cheap worker from abroad". Maybe. I think it would be better if the government had some sort of stake in it. I think it would be good maybe.

M: Yes, possibly. Okay, final question. Thinking back, is there anything you would have changed or done differently?

S: Yeah, looking back I wish we hadn't asked [French au pair] to do cleaning from the beginning. I mean she did have more time in the beginning, but I do feel like for us, in the beginning it was quite- we felt like it was a lot of money and we needed to sort of sort out and not have a cleaner and if we were to afford it and so on. And I think maybe we were a bit too uhm, mean money-wise. Like we hadn't yet sort of relaxed into this. So, looking back on it, I just wish, I mean it wouldn't have made that big a difference for us to have a cleaner from the beginning. But then, I mean, no harm done, she told us, we fixed it, so it's not a big deal. But that I would have changed.

M: How did you feel when she said that?

S: I felt quite bad. I felt like, yeah. Also because at that point I knew her and I knew her to be really hard working and always do all her duties. And I felt bad for not seeing or realising that she had too much to do. We worked it out instantly. I said "Ok, we'll figure it out and we may have to... You know, it will take me a little while to find a cleaner, so I can't fix it tomorrow but yes". Yeah, I think she was quite happy with the way we dealt with it. I just wish maybe, but it's not like it harmed her that she had to come, maybe quite the opposite actually cause it's good for all of us to sometimes have to say to someone "You know what, I'm not ok with what is going on". But I did feel bad. I did feel like it was something I should have seen.

M: Mhm. Okay. Good, good. So my questions are done. Is there anything maybe that you want to add, that I didn’t ask you about and you feel it’s quite important to be said about this.

S: No, I think we've covered it pretty well. I think for me it was… One of the reasons I said yes to the interview is I feel quite, you know, strongly that, I know that there are critics, I don't know if it's so bad over here. But in Denmark the au pair programme thing because some Danes would get someone from the Philippines and then they'll never learn Danish and they'll work really hard and so on. So it's been criticised a lot, you know, theatre plays and stuff about au pairs. And I would never put on Facebook for example that I have an au pair. I'm not trying to hide it, I'm friends with my au pairs on Facebook. But I wouldn't sort of, you know "Our au pair did this and that" because that would, I would…

I know that in Denmark people would look at me weirdly because I have an au pair. Not so over here, I know it's different here, it's more accepted socially to have an au pair. But I do know there's a lot of criticism of it and it worries me a little bit because when it works, it is such a great thing for a young person to have that opportunity. And like I said it's affected our family to become more open, we have now friends in Germany and France and Spain, our kids write letters to them. There's so many beautiful things about this thing, so that's why when I got that email I felt like "Yeah, I wanna do an interview". Because I was worried that your results will be to the sort of it's an unequal relationship and it's not sort of. So, I wanted just to have my say and I think I've said it.

[Asks about research]

S: And like I said when I was an exchange student, the first family I stayed with was actually very very, it was a very horrible family to be honest. And then 6 months in I moved to another family and they were great, and they sort of saved the experience for me. But I know first-hand how horrible it is to live in a family where you don't feel at home. And I was younger and didn't talk to my family a lot because back then they would advise you not to call your family because you needed to settle in the new environment. So, it's really changed. I mean it's, what is it? 20 years ago? Yeah. But that was like "Yeah, write some letters and maybe call once in a while but don't call all the time because you need to let go of your family and settle in a new place". So, I didn't really talk to anyone about it, I was quite lonely. And so it is definitely a risk for that young person who comes to this, in a vulnerable situation. But then in another sense I think it's easier because they will quickly, because of the internet and so on, have a bigger network of other au pairs that they can talk with about what is ok and what isn't.

M: Yes, I know au pairs often have networks, official and unofficial to support them. Good. Do you have any questions for me before we finish?

S: Uhm, not really. Not other than I’m interested, if you would send it to me when you’re done, I would love to read it or an abstract or whatever. It’s probably gonna be very long [laughter] But I’d love to see the results.

M: Definitely, I will let you know. It will take some time, it’s definitely a very long process [laughter]. But I will be in touch.

S: Great,

M: Well, thank you very much for this interview.

S: Ok, well, good luck with it and happy writing.

M: Thank you very much.

Appendix C. Consent form

Edinburgh Napier University Research Consent Form

CONSTRUCTING THE MORAL FRAMEWORK OF HOSPITALITY IN NON-COMMERCIAL HOMESTAY TOURISM

Edinburgh Napier University requires that all persons who participate in research studies give their written consent to do so. Please read the following and sign it if you agree with what it says.

1. I freely and voluntarily consent to be a participant in the research project on the topic of the relationship between hosts and guests in non-commercial homestay tourism to be conducted by Gesthimani Moysidou, who is a postgraduate student at Edinburgh Napier University.
2. The broad goal of this research study is to explore the establishment of the host-guest relationship in non-commercial homestay tourism. Specifically, I have been asked to respond to some questions about my experience, which should take no longer than 2 hours to complete.
3. I have been told that my responses will be anonymised. My name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in any report subsequently produced by the researcher.
4. I also understand that if at any time during the interview I feel unable or unwilling to continue, I am free to leave. That is, my participation in this study is completely voluntary, and I may withdraw from it without negative consequences. However, after data has been anonymised or after publication of results it will not be possible for my data to be removed as it would be untraceable at this point.
5. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
6. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the interview and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I have read and understand the above and consent to participate in this study. My signature is not a waiver of any legal rights. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to keep a copy of the informed consent form for my records.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the respondent has consented to participate. Furthermore, I will retain one copy of the informed consent form for my records.

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature Date