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PERMACULTURE AND PEACE
Toward a Permaculture Peace Framework

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ABSTRACT

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The world, and everything on it, is changing. Local and global justice movements have developed to demand action on issues such as climate change, environmental justice and social justice, drawing attention to systemic mismanagement and abuse. It is becoming increasingly clear that new and creative approaches to peacebuilding is needed. This research draws inspiration from the concept of “permaculture”, a systems design approach to sustainable farming and living, in order to create an alternative “permaculture peace framework”.

To aid this, the research uses a case study approach to allow for the exploration of how a small NGO in Kosovo makes use of permaculture in their work. GAIA Kosovo and their “3peas: Permaculture as a path to peace” project is at the heart of this study, as they navigate social and ethnic divides while trying to address issues of climate change and environmental justice. The study uses elements from ethnographic content analysis and critical discourse analysis, to analyze the content available on the websites of GAIA Kosovo and 3peas.

The case study found that much of the work and events had connection to the 3 ethics and 12 principles of permaculture, and the use of creative ideas and events can create alternative and local approaches to peacebuilding. It was further found that, despite the war in Kosovo ended in 1999, social and ethnic divides are still an everyday reality, but that small and local civil society initiatives can alleviate such divides.

Taking inspiration from the case study, the research concludes with the adaptation of the original 12 permaculture principles, to create 11 principles as the foundation of the tentative “permaculture peace framework”. The framework aims to give people working with peacebuilding, as well as regular civilians, an inclusive and creative approach that acknowledges the inherent value of people, that can be utilized all levels of society.

Keywords: Permaculture, Climate justice, Community, Kosovo, Qualitative case study, Permaculture Peace Framework, Peace and conflict.

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| CDA | Critical Discourse Analysis |
| CJ | Climate Justice |
| CSA | Community Supported Agriculture |
| ECA | Ethnographic Content Analysis |
| EJ | Environmental Justice |
| EU | European Nation |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| IPCC | International Panel on Climate Change |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OAF | Operation of Allied Forces |
| PDC | Permaculture Peace Framework |
| SCI | Service Civil International |
| UN | United Nations |

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1. Introduction:

Within the field of Peace and Conflict studies topics such as climate change, food security, climate justice and migration are receiving more and more attention. However, I would argue that the attention often comes from an international relations perspective which, arguably, does little to investigate the local and everyday practices of peace. In this thesis, I am interested in permaculture design as a tool to connect the aforementioned topics, with the philosophy and ethics of permaculture, which promotes sustainable and self-sufficient living, as well as in relation to peace and conflict studies. Permaculture is often viewed to be a way of gardening or “natural” food production, though it is not only about farming. As many permaculture practitioners argue, permaculture can be viewed as a philosophical approach to life, nature and people (Eliades, 2012). Indeed, in this thesis, I will even argue that the philosophy of permaculture can be used as a theoretical viewpoint into the social, and natural world. As Michael Pilarski argues (1994), permaculture is not limited to certain environments; the permaculture principles can be applied anywhere, regardless of how degraded the ecosystem is. When practitioners create permaculture designs, the designs are site specific, as it is understood that each location is specific and will require unique inputs. Therefore, the argument is that permaculture can be applied to any ecosystem, working together with the challenges that is faced in specific regions, such as drought, or seasonal flooding.

Some authors argue that climate change will be an enormous challenge to peace in the future (Dalby, 2013, p. 318; Gleditsch, 2012; Nordås & Gleditsch, 2007), due to an increase in extreme weather, we can expect more droughts, floods, hurricanes and bushfires, which will be a factor in an increase of conflicts, both in scale and in number. Poorer regions in the world will be the most affected, as adding an increase in extreme weather on top of already existing problems can make states weaker and have detrimental effects on marginalized peoples (Fankhauser & McDermott, 2014). Not only is it likely that climate change will have a negative effect in the availability of food, it is also likely that access to food, the stability of food supplies, and food utilization will be negatively

affected (Schmidhuber & Tubiello, 2007). Food security is therefore under threat. Through desperation, it is likely that communities will be strained, and the environment will likely suffer even more.

What can permaculture do to help alleviate issues such as climate change, conflict mitigation, food security and improving conditions in poor regions? One of the central arguments in will present in this thesis is that, in theory, permaculture can foster food security, create sustainable agriculture, foster community and reconciliation through shared interests, just to list a few. The thesis will explore the 12 central permaculture principles, as well as looking into theory and relate those meanings to prominent peace and conflict theories and writers, including Galtung, Lederach, and others. By linking Permaculture to social science theories, as well as peace and conflict theories, the aim of the thesis is to develop and explore what I will call the “Permaculture Peace Framework”. The Permaculture Peace Framework is built upon, and inspired by the work of a range of scholars, such as John Paul Lederach and his focus on imagination and creativity in peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997, 2010), Johan Galtung and his notion of “positive peace”(Galtung, 1969, 1990), as well as the concept of “permaculture” itself, as presented by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren (B. Mollison & Holmgren, 1979, 1990) and developed further by Looby Macnamara (Macnamara, 2012). Though permaculture has been around for more than 50 years, it has rarely found its way into the academic world, and it has not been academically connected to peace and conflict studies. That is to say, the Permaculture Peace Framework will build upon already existing permaculture theory and praxis and argue that it offers a peacebuilding framework that puts focus on the local, on creativity, and the understanding of kin, nature and culture.

To explore a possible connection between permaculture and peace, the thesis is using a case study design as the main method of investigation. The case study is focused on the non-governmental organization (NGO) called GAIA Kosovo. I chose this organization because it has an ongoing project called “3peas: permaculture as a path for peace”, which is explicitly trying to tie permaculture together with peacebuilding. Combined with a very complex past, a history of armed conflict and ethnic divide, Kosovo can be viewed to be a country in which locally driven peacebuilding efforts are needed, from which peace researchers could draw inspiration.

Climate change is an ever-increasing threat as more storms, more droughts and more rainfall bring several humanitarian crises. Intergroup competition has long been of interest in peace and conflict studies (Cohen & Insko, 2008; Jun, 2018; Keen, 1995), and now it may seem that there is an increase in division between people over anything from; left vs right, rich vs poor, citizen vs migrants, anti-vaxxers/maskers vs science, and even between states and unions, just to name a few. I argue that there are too many negative developments taking place all at once, and we simply cannot react fast enough to mitigate them all. Thus, I view the problem to be manifold. To enable proactive work, it is often argued that we need a paradoxical combination of time and funding (Lederach, 1997, p. 74). It is paradoxical because we need urgent change, but lasting and meaningful change takes time and requires a lot of funding, but due to the urgency, a lot of funding likely goes to “symptom treating” projects.

This study will go against “standard” qualitative decorum for research design, as the point of departure will be a hypothesis, instead of research questions. I have made this choice for several reasons. This thesis will not hide, nor be apologetic to the fact that it is shaped by what I hope to find and achieve with the research. This decision does not equate to me being uncritical to my own position, nor does it mean that I would cling to my assumptions when faced with evidence that contradict them. In fact, I argue that by using a hypothesis I am forced to be hyper aware and critical of my own position in order to give the research any weight and merit. I delve deeper into this discussion in chapter 4. For now, my assumption and hypothesis is thus:

- Permaculture theory and practices can be used to form a practical and theoretical framework that can be applied in Peace and conflict Studies.

In order to aid and guide the research, I have also used a central research question in combination with the hypothesis; How does GAIA Kosovo and their 3peas project incorporate permaculture into their work in their specific context?

The objective of this study is therefor to draw inspiration from permaculture and an organization that makes use of permaculture in peace relating work, in order to develop an alternative approach and framework to peace initiatives. The intent is to develop the framework so it can work both on

individual and local levels, but also on higher political levels as well. By exploring how an organization in Kosovo, GAIA Kosovo, makes use of permaculture in their work, it should be possible to get a glimpse of how such a framework might look like. Furthermore, by making direct connections between permaculture and other theoretical work within peace and conflict studies, I hope I am able to make a compelling argument for the creation of such a framework. The objective of the study is not to evaluate whether or not GAIA Kosovo is successful in their work, but rather draw inspiration from them in the creation of a tentative permaculture peace framework.

In chapter 2, I will delve into the theoretical approach that has shaped the research. In the chapter I will present the foundation of the thesis, namely the permaculture ethics and principles. As mentioned, I draw inspiration from the theories of positive peace, moral imagination and feminist new materialism, which will also be presented in this chapter. Chapter 3 will present previous literature that is closely related to the thesis topic. Academically, very little has been written about permaculture and peace, thus in this chapter I will delve into other literature that I believe is closely related. This includes literature on climate change and migration, farming and community, civil society and social movements, and finally permaculture and peace. In Chapter 4 I will explain the methodological considerations and approaches that I have used for the data collection and analysis. The chapter will discuss the case study approach that is being aided by elements from ethnographic content analysis, as well as critical discourse analysis. The chapter will then present the data collection process, and finally critically evaluate the chosen approach. Chapter 5 will present the case study and analysis of the work of GAIA Kosovo and their 3peas project. I will then present a tentative proposal for the Permaculture Peace Framework in chapter 6, which will be inspired and informed by the previous chapters. Finally, in chapter 7 I will conclude the thesis and offer my final thoughts on my research, as well as the potential and hope and cautious optimism that I have with the Permaculture Peace Framework.

2. Theoretical Framework

Considering that this thesis will take a theoretical approach, and to present the Permaculture Peace Framework properly, this chapter will begin by exploring which theories and approaches have inspired and shaped it. Thus, in the following chapter I will explore what “permaculture theory” is. Permaculture is an overarching approach to life which is guided by 3 major ethics, and 12 guiding principles. Following the introduction to permaculture, I will introduce and explore Galtung’s notion of “positive peace” together with John Paul Lederach’s work on “the moral imagination” and his approach to sustainable reconciliation. Following this discussion, the chapter will further introduce the concept of “feminist new materialism” which emphasize that there should be a different understanding between the natural and “civilized” world, as well as how people relate to each other.

2.1 Permaculture theory

At this point in the thesis, you may be asking “but what is permaculture”, which is a legitimate question, though it is not possible to give a straight and definitive answer. Given the nature of permaculture it is difficult to offer any tangible examples. This section will try to draw a comprehensive, but brief, picture of permaculture as a concept and theory, which will hopefully clear some things up.

Permaculture is a system design approach, which has 3 overarching ethics and 12 guiding principles (Macnamara, 2012). These will all be explored in turn. The ethics and principles can be seen in figure 1, where there is

also a small elaboration on each principle.

According to permaculture practitioners and educators, permaculture is not only a way to farm sustainably, it is also a way to build bridges among people and

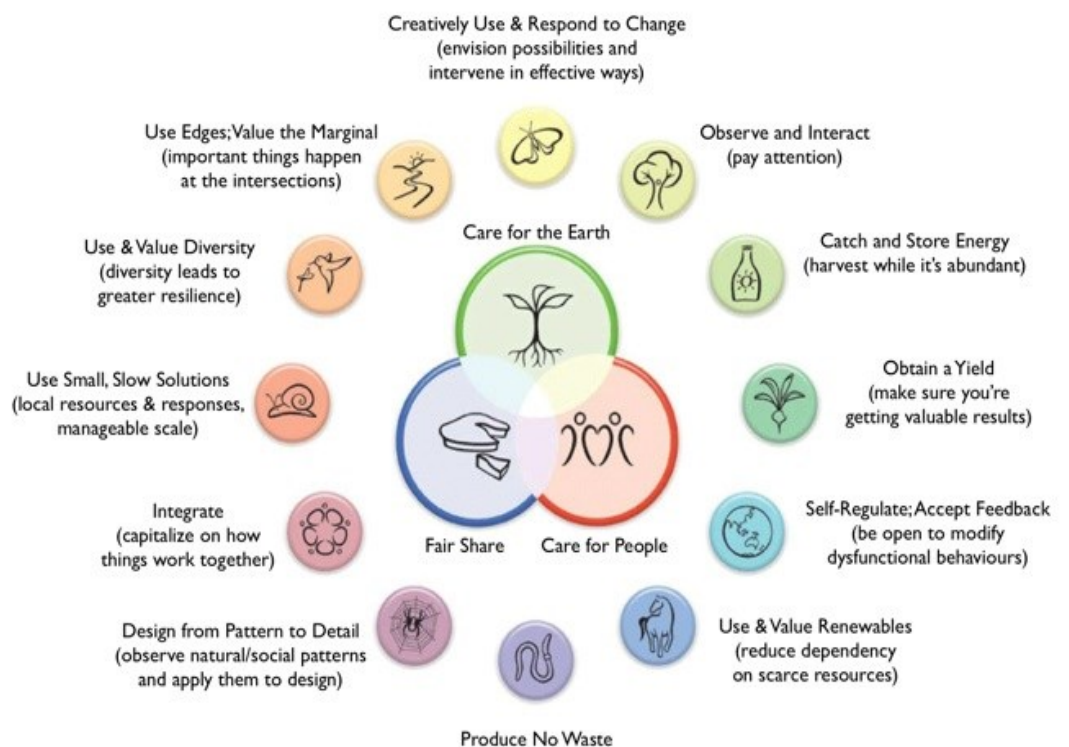


Figure 1 the permaculture principles burrowed from permaculture.co.uk

cultures (Macnamara, 2012). To that extent, permaculture can then also be backed up by elements from the emergent feminist new materialism, which puts emphasis on how and different understanding of nature is needed, and which is drawing parallels to how we treat nature to how we treat each other (van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010a), though Feminist new materialism will be explored further down.

“Permaculture” was first coined in the 1970s by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, with which they wanted to create harmony between people, as well as between people and the earth (Holmgren, 2010, p. xix; Macnamara, 2012, p. 1). Permaculture is therefore trying to have an alternative approach to sustainability, which is not only related to nature, but to all aspects of life. As Macnamara (2012) argues, the sustainability ideas and knowledge that was put forward by permaculture is by no means anything new. Our ancestors made use of much of the knowledge and approaches, and much of it have also come from indigenous populations around the world (Macnamara, 2012, p. 1), but this knowledge has largely been lost through “profitable agriculture

systems”, as well as through the colonial oppression for centuries in many parts of the world. Therefore, even though permaculture was coined by white, male Australians, listening to, and learning from local and indigenous groups is an important aspect of permaculture. Permaculture is then aiming to rediscover local knowledge that can be applied in different contexts, stressing the importance of indigenous knowledge. For David Holmgren, he describes permaculture as:”

Consciously designed landscapes which mimic the patterns and relationships found in nature, while yielding an abundance of food, fibre and energy for provision of local needs. People, their buildings and the ways they organise themselves are central to Permaculture. Thus the Permaculture vision of permanent (sustainable) agriculture has evolved to one of permanent (sustainable) culture. (Holmgren, 2010, p. xix)

From this perspective, permaculture is just as much about living in harmony with nature as it is about living with other people and to achieve this, permaculture is rooted in ethics and principles. The ethics and principles of permaculture will be discussed below as they are at the center of the permaculture framework. Considering that permaculture has traditionally not been connected to peace studies, I have found it important to spend quite a bit of the thesis presenting permaculture theory.

As previously mentioned, there are three central ethics within permaculture, which are: 1) “Care for the earth”, 2) “Care for people”, and 3) “fair share”, or “redistribute surplus” (Holmgren, 2010; Macnamara, 2012).

Care for the earth

Holmgren argues that this ethic is closely related to the “Gaia hypothesis”, which states that humans are just the stewards of the earth, and sees the earth as a “self-organized system” (Holmgren, 2010, p. 3). It is also rooted in the idea that our ancestors and many indigenous peoples believe in “Mother earth” as a god, and if we do not treat her properly, we will face her wrath. On a side note, at the time of writing, the previous point may be especially poignant, and if one was spiritually inclined, one could see 2020 as the year we saw new heights of her wrath.

Caring for the earth also includes the care of all living things as well as the air and water that we all use (Michael, 2011), and Macnamara also argues that care should be given to species for its intrinsic value, and not only to the things that we find useful or beautiful (Macnamara, 2012, p. 4). Holmgren states: “we accept all lifeforms or species as intrinsically valuable, no matter how inconvenient they are to us (or to other lifeforms that we value)” (Holmgren, 2010, p. 6).

Care for people

Care for people attempts to make people care for themselves and others in sustainable ways (Macnamara, 2012, p. 5), and aims to reach the needs of people. Macnamara argues that people have several needs that must be met, such as emotional and social, and for many these needs are being met through unsustainable ways. Holmgren goes further and argues that people seek comfort by raping the planet and depriving other people of their resources (Holmgren, 2010, p. 7). In short and simplistically put, this ethic asks you to first make sure that you take care of yourself, and then you can begin to take care of others in your group, and then your group can help other groups. Holmgren also specifies:

As we reduce our dependence on the global economy and replace it with household and local economies, we reduce the demand that drives the current inequities. Thus, “look after yourself first” is not an invitation to greed but a challenge to grow up through self-reliance and personal responsibility. (Holmgren, 2010, p. 7)

The following section will draw heavily on the work by Looby Macnamara (Macnamara, 2012) and David Holmgren (Holmgren, 2010, 2020), as they engage with more with the theoretical and social aspects of permaculture, which is the interest of this thesis.

Fair share

Authors explain this ethic differently, but in short this ethic asks us “to set limits to consumption and reproduction, and redistribute surplus” (Holmgren, 2010, p. 8), or as Mollison argues “set limitation to population and consumption” (B. C. Mollison, 1990, p. 3). Macnamara (Macnamara, 2012, p. 5) has a, perhaps, bit more optimistic sum-up: “some for all, forever”. What they do agree on, is that we should live within our natural limits so that our consumption should not exceed the

earth's natural boundaries, nor allow our consumption to be exploitive of other people (Macnamara, 2012, p. 5). Though, if we do end up with a surplus that must be redistributed among people. The "fair share" ethic asks us to be aware of what is a need, and what is a want, in order not to create a surplus in consumption in order not to pollute. It also argues that pollution is surplus that has not been properly utilized.

The 12 principles

As mentioned earlier, there are 12 major principles that guide permaculture design. The principles will only be briefly introduced as they will be explored deeper in the analysis. Exploring them fully here would not only be outside the scope of this thesis, it would likely also be needlessly repetitive. The principles were first created with nature, farming and gardening in mind (B. Mollison & Holmgren, 1990), though many of the principles can be generalized. The following section based on the work of Macnamara (Macnamara, 2012) and Holmgren (Holmgren, 2010, 2020).

1. Observe and interact

This principle argues that we need to observe our surroundings in order to survive. We observe whether fruit or veggies are ready to harvest, or if they are dying from pest that are attacking them, our observations will determine how we interact with things (Macnamara, 2012, p. 19). Holmgren argues that in the natural world, animals use their senses to observe if there is any danger, and in a human context, children will observe the adults and learn from them (Holmgren, 2020, p. 10). Observation must be followed by action:

"there is no point in just observing an accident waiting to happen – we also need to be able to interact and prevent it" (Macnamara, 2012, p. 19). Observing and interaction can therefore not be overstated enough, as that will allow people to design solutions and designs early on, and thereby making the smallest intervention as possible as time progresses.

2. Catch and store energy

Energy, and how we get it, is arguably one of the more important questions in relation to climate change and sustainability. We can feel the adverse effects of too much, or too little sleep, as well as too much or too little food, which means we are not making use of the energy efficiently. Our consumption of energy is leading to large scale pollution, as we do not care enough where the

energy is coming from. For this principle, it is argued that modern consumption has led us to treat resources as unlimited, which has led us to no longer care about how we can store and use energy more sustainably. This principle is asking us to find better ways to power ourselves (higher quality food, as an example), but it also asks us to do better on a societal and global scale to avert climate change

3. Obtain a yield

In gardening and farming, harvesting can be very rewarding and obtaining a yield is quite literally harvesting the fruit of your hard labor. It can be argued that achieving a harvest, regardless of scale, empowers people in their long term goals. Obtaining a yield can then perhaps be equated to “success”, regardless of scope. For Mollison and Holmgren (Holmgren, 2010, 2020; B. C. Mollison, 1990; B. Mollison & Holmgren, 1990), there are many ways to help obtaining a yield in gardening and farming, though this principle has not been explored in relation to social settings.

4. Apply self-regulation and accept feedback

This ethic asks us to be critical towards ourselves, as well as toward our society and world in general. Macnamara argues that our bodies will tell us if something is wrong through pain or discomfort, and it will require us to regulate certain behaviors. It is argued that when receiving feedback that a defensive reaction is counterproductive, and integrating it will prove better results (Birnbaum & Fox, 2014). Holmgren further argues:

With better understanding of how positive and negative feedbacks work in nature, we can design systems that are more self-regulating, thus reducing the work involved in repeated and harsh corrective management. (Holmgren, 2010, p. 73).

Through this principle, it is argued that all living organisms have gotten to where they are in time and space, by self-regulating and changing accordingly. In extension, the designer should be willing to change certain practices if they see that certain elements are not responding in a positive way.

5. Use and value renewable resources and services

This principle asks us to only use renewable sources of energy to avoid pollution. This principle is highly related to the following principle, and there is a bit of an overlap.

6. Produce no waste

In natural woodlands very little material is being wasted, and everything that dies will feed another part of the ecosystem. Adversely, permaculture scholars and practitioners argue that when something dies or becomes obsolete for humans, it will often end up in landfills. Worse, it may end up in nature when waste is not properly managed. There is then a consensus that we need to reevaluate how we consume things. According to Holmgren there is an overemphasis on “recycling” as that requires an input of energy to degrade the materials, so people need to “refuse, reuse, recycle” instead. Macnamara extends this principle to people as well, and she asks us to be aware of where our time is being wasted and how we can prevent it.

7. Design from patterns to details.

Just as every garden and ecosystem is different and require different interventions every conflict will require something different to alleviate them. It is highly unlikely that a solution to a problem will be the solution to another as every problem is unique in its context. However, permaculture starts by looking at the patterns and then works down to the smaller details, to find a solution that would work for the given context.

8. Integrate rather than segregate

Permaculture argues, with the old proverb, that “many hands make light work”. It is believed that everyone has something good to offer a community, and that every unique person should have a place. This principle is applicable to a small group work assignment as well as to society as a whole. This is derived from seeing how different plants, flowers, trees, insects and animals can achieve a symbiotic relationship, and that they can benefit from each other. Some plants will fix nitrogen to the soil which other nearby plants will use to develop and produce a yield. The principle asks us to be inclusive and not kill or remove plants because they might be considered pests in conventional agriculture.

9. Use small and slow solutions

Permaculture theory acknowledges that things do not just develop overnight, thus long-term thinking is required. Permaculture theory acknowledges that things do not just develop overnight, thus long-term thinking is required. It is argued that it is impossible to achieve every goal at the same time, but with slow and calculated steps it is easier to achieve what you set out to do.

10. Use and value diversity

According to permaculture monocrops are at higher risk of perishing due to diseases, droughts and floods, and thus losing everything. However, if the farmer has multiple crops, losing one type would no longer be catastrophic. It is thereby argued that if we have at least three different ways to reach our needs, we have the ability to safeguard ourselves. Like principle 8, diversity in a group or a social space can be a unifying factor if you acknowledge and value people's differences, strengths, and weaknesses.

11. Use and value edges and the marginal.

According to permaculture theory, the edges of ecosystems is where you see a lot of interesting events. In nature, edges are not abrupt and sudden like the edge on a table, they are more fluid and overlapping. As Macnamara argues, "a forest perimeter tapers out gradually, a riverbank blends into the field, the sea moves with the tides". The edges also appear in social and personal life and by stretching our edges, it is argued that we can learn from it, regardless of it being the edges of our comfort zone or reaching out over the edge of our social background.

12. Creatively use and respond to change

Through this principle it is argued that change is inevitable and uncontrollable, and sometimes it is even difficult to understand. It is argued that what is important is how we engage with the change, and instead of resisting it we should be flexible. Macnamara attaches the proverb "vision is not seeing things as they are but as they will be", and that being flexible and creative will make it possible for us to adapt better to change.

2.2 Positive peace, sustainable reconciliation and moral Imagination

Several other theoretical and practical lenses are relevant, both for the thesis, but also for the theory of permaculture and many important aspects intertwine among them. This thesis is also inspired by John Paul Lederach's approach to "sustainable reconciliation", as well as his emphasis on the use of imagination. Lederach argues that organizations and people have known for a long time, that new ways of preventing, and answering to conflict are needed, but we are still in the early stages of understanding how such new ways may look like. Lederach puts a strong emphasis on the importance of local people and their cultures in creating sustainable and lasting peace and that solutions needs to take the larger systemic picture into consideration when designing peace and reconciliation efforts (Lederach, 1997, pp. 92–94).

For the reconciliation framework, there is furthermore an emphasis on long term solutions, and short-term efforts should only be used when long term implications of those efforts, have been considered. It is therefore argued that it will take a long time, even generations, to create sustainable reconciliation and peace in societies that have been divided, and that no quick fixes can, or should be used in such efforts (Lederach, 1997, p. 72).

In the same vein, in his work on the “the moral imagination” Lederach puts emphasis on making use of, and believing in, the unexpected (Lederach, 2010, p. 62), and asks us to think outside the box when finding solution to problems. Especially in deep rooted conflicts where people have been at odds for generations, it is difficult to build trust among them through short term initiatives. In the “moral imagination” framework, Lederach argues that less focus should be put on achieving results as it narrows the vision and the process towards social change is forgotten. The framework argues that practitioners should instead be asking how change happened, or didn’t happen, and instead of being interested in results that often are quantifiable, they should be more interested in qualitative results.

Through this framework, it is argued that reconciliation and peace efforts must be prepared to continue for long timeframes, while adjusting the approaches along the way, in order to be able to entertain a notion of sustainable reconciliation and positive peace. This thesis understands “positive peace” as it was proposed by Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1969), in which “positive peace” is only achieved once there is no longer any direct personal violence and no structural violence. Through this lens it is argued that the peace that is achieved after direct violence ends is a “negative peace” at best, if peoples or groups are continued to be marginalized in society, either structurally or culturally. Charles Webel elaborates:

‘Positive’ peace denotes the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society, such as harmony, justice, equity, etc. ‘Negative’ peace has historically denoted the ‘absence of war’ and other forms of widescale violent human conflict. (Webel, 2007, p. 6)

The notion of “positive peace” then argues that how we understand and approach conflict and reconciliation needs to change in order to create any form of lasting peace. However, it is also further argued that the strive for positive peace is in evolution and is a continuous struggle (Webel,

2007, p. 7). Through this view, positive peace can be viewed as a utopian idea, and thus likely never truly achieved. Arguably, this also implies that creativity and imagination is crucial for rebuilding trust in and between communities, and not to rely on any generalized and outdated blueprints that will not be applicable to other situations. Especially relevant for our understanding of communities and “us vs them” rhetoric, is the emerging work on feminist new materialism, which I will explore below.

2.3 Feminist New Materialism – An emerging school of thought

Feminist New materialism is a rather new and emerging cultural theory, as it began to be explored in the second half of the 1990s (van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010), though despite its young age it can still offer a theoretical approach to the social and natural world which is interesting for the topic of this thesis. The new materialist turn aims to highlight and explore the importance of the material of the human body and the natural world, and challenge the social constructionist feminism that focus on the linguistic world (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; van der Tuin, 2011, 2018). This materialist turn has unsurprisingly caused some debate as to the importance of language vs material. For instance, Karen Barad argues that language been given too much power in feminist thought, and she even poses the question of “How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter?” (Barad, 2003, p. 801). In a response to this critiques, Sara Ahmed criticizes Barad of caricaturizing the turns to linguistics and interpretations (Ahmed, 2008, p. 34), and thereby negating these turns. Ahmed argues that “new materialisms” in turn tries to “clear the ground” of what came before it (2008, p. 36), however Van der Tuin (2008, 2011) accuses Ahmed of presenting new materialism in a too narrow manner. However, a discussion of the epistemological and philosophical value/non-value of new materialism vs other feminisms is not within the scope of this thesis. Instead, this thesis is more interested in a particular aspect regarding understanding nature.

An aspect of feminist new materialism is to understand and change how we view the natural world, and how the concept of individualism is contributing to natural degradation. Through this lens, nature is not a passive entity, but instead an “...agentic force that interacts with and changes the other elements in the mix, including the human” (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008, p. 7). By accepting that

nature and non-humans have meaningful agency in our world, a myriad of ethical questions arise. Humans will then be forced to re-evaluate how they interact between cultures, technology, biology, history, and the environment, and acknowledge that all these areas have importance (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008, p. 8).

It is then argued that “things”, such as trees, mountains, rivers, will continue to be viewed to be resources for those in power, unless they are given rights as beings (Värynen, 2020). Feminist materialism is generally monist in its approach and argues against dualist thinking. It refutes notions such as nature and culture being two different things (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008, p. 4; van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010), and mind and matter being disconnected from each other. Conty explains: “New materialism is the name that has been given to the new scholarship devoted to studying this modern unconscious and celebrating what modernity had repressed”(Conty, 2018), and argues that the human is no longer the exceptional. Through this understanding of new materialism, it is argued that the system where the “exceptional” humans have been placed as rulers of a world of objects, needs to change. To view humans as “exceptional” is viewed to a kind of individualism, which van der Tuin (2018) argues is a trait of advanced capitalist and neoliberal normalizations which essentially renders community dynamics impossible. New materialism argues for two seemingly contradicting thoughts on community and “kinship”. Van der Tuin (2018) argues, through the work of Achille Mbembe, that to go beyond the “common” perception of an enemy, we need to “un-kin”. Van der Tuin argues that we enclose ourselves with the people of our group, and exactly that enclosure separates us from everyone, and everything which is different. Donna Haraway instead argues that we need to view kinship differently.

Making kin is perhaps the hardest and most urgent part. Feminists of our time have been leaders in unraveling the supposed natural necessity of ties between sex and gender, race and sex, race and nation, class and race, gender and morphology, sex and reproduction, and reproduction and composing persons... If there is to be multispecies ecojustice, which can also embrace diverse human people, it is high time that feminists exercise leadership in imagination, theory, and action to unravel the ties of both genealogy and kin, and kin and species (Haraway, 2015, p. 161)

We are then asked to detangle ourselves from a kinship that is inherently entrenched and exclusionary, not only to other humans, but to nature and non-human entities, and we are encouraged to engage with a new type of kinship. One that is open and inclusive, one that spreads love and care to all entities, whatever they may be. It could then be argued that people are inherently social, though often only toward those entities that are considered to be kin. The feminist New Materialism as presented above, can be viewed to be normative and value laden in its approach and that it aims to be a driver in a change to how we view and value kinship, as well as how we value all humans, non-humans, and nature.

3. Literature Review

Exploring connections between Permaculture and Peace and Conflict studies have so far not been extensively investigated in academic literature, with the exception of Felix-Romero's (2010) PhD dissertation on El Salvador in 2010. In this section I will therefore delve into other topics that I believe are closely related to permaculture and peacebuilding as a whole. Firstly, I present literature that focus on the role of climate change on migration, food security and conflict. Climate change is becoming more and more important on all levels of governance (Dalby, 2013) and it will have a great impact on the livelihoods of people around the globe. Many permaculture thinkers argue that permaculture can help alleviate problems created by climate change, as well as creating a system of resilient food security that is resilient to natural disasters (Birnbaum & Fox, 2014; Holmgren, 2010; Macnamara, 2012; B. C. Mollison, 1990). Secondly, in this chapter I explore literature on civil society and social movements. The civil society holds great power if it can manage to come together, and social movements have the ability to create political and social change (Barnes, 2005; Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Nandini, 2012; Spurk, 2010). Thirdly, I explore the work of Felix-Romero and her work of permaculture in relation to peace and conflict studies.

3.1 Climate change, migration, and food security

Over the past few decades climate change has become more and more important in international relations, security studies, migration studies, and peace and conflict studies (See for example: Castles et al., 2014; Dalby, 2013, 2018; Ramsbotham et al., 2011), and academics have been hugely interested with what climate change might do to states, national security, and people's ability to sustain themselves. Climate change is likely to affect countries differently, and some writers even argue that the expected change might be beneficial for certain areas (Lohmann-Jensen, 2010; Parry et al., 2004).

As an example, in the case of Danish agriculture, Lohmann-Jensen argues that the sector may welcome an increase in temperature, as that could potentially lead to food production moving from the south of Europe to the north. According to Lohmann-Jensen, with an increase in temperature,

Denmark could see a whole month of productive crop growth added to the normal growth period (Lohmann-Jensen, 2010). According to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)¹ report from 2019, climate change have affected regions and climates differently, though the report argues there has been a general negative impact on a global level (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 453). Especially smallholder farms in poorer countries are at a high risk. The IPCC report found that in poorer and marginalized locations, low levels of technology and lack of other farming resources, exacerbated the negative impacts that climate change had on people's food security. Especially if there is a decline in rainfall, farming will become increasingly difficult in the more arid regions and can ultimately become impossible. For example, the IPCC projects that with a 2.4°C increase in temperature in Ethiopia would remove 21% of the suitable growing areas for coffee, and with a 2.2°C, 90% of coffee growing areas would become unsuitable for coffee production, a very important crop (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 460), which would negatively affect a lot of farmers and people relying on coffee farming in order to sustain themselves.

It is unclear how exactly climate and environmental change will affect migration patterns², and some scholars argue that climate change won't be the sole reason for why people move (Castles et al., 2014; Mbow et al., 2019; Ramsbotham et al., 2011). Within migration studies there is a big interest in push-pull factors, which either makes people want to migrate, or they may force people to flee, and such factors can be anything from economic reasons to violence reasons (Castles et al., 2014, pp. 28–31; Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020; Universiteit Maastricht et al., 2016). The IPCC report found that the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions is "likely" to affect migration in the Pacific (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 518). Castles et al. however, are reluctant to say that climate change alone will drive migration, as they argue that migration is driven by multiple factors (Castles et al., 2014, p. 211). Some authors argue that even without climate change, international migration will continue, due to economic, political and social processes, such as repression and inequality (Bali, 2013; Castles et al., 2014; Sherbinin, 2020) and as long as global inequality continues

¹ The IPCC aims to provide governments on all level scientific information about climate change. The chapter referred to in this section is chapter 5 of the IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems written by Mbow et al. The IPCC report was written by 107 experts from 52 different countries.

² I use the notion of "migration pattern" and "migration" as umbrella terms, which includes voluntary and forced migration, similar to how the IOM defines "migrant". See: (IOM, 2016).

to persist, people will likely continue to migrate or flee due to livelihoods being destroyed or be forced to flee because of structural or direct violence.

The IPCC further argues that aggravation of already difficult human conditions through climate change and that variability have different short- and long-term effects, which could contribute to an increase in food-insecurity and malnutrition. “Drought threatens local food security and nutrition and aggravates humanitarian conditions, which can trigger large-scale human displacement and create a breeding ground for conflict” (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 516). According to the report, migration can potentially exacerbate the food security issue as people are not able to work as they are migrating, fleeing, or being forcibly relocated. In relation to this, according to the latest available data from 2017, from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 18.8 million people worldwide had been newly displaced due to environmental factors. The IOM further found that between 2008 and 2016, an estimated 227.6 million people had been displaced due to extreme weather (Vidal et al., 2018, p. 44).

Castles et al. (2014) argue that climate change can be seen as “just” another factor that either forces people to flee or make them decide to leave their communities behind in order to find a different place to settle down. However, Reuveny argue that sometimes migration can also spark tension between migrants and people from the receiving areas, especially if there is already a scarcity (real or perceived) of certain key resources or services (Reuveny, 2007, p. 659). According to Warziniack (2013) countries that have a limited water supply will be less willing to accept refugees. Warziniack further argues that if a country has an abundance of water, there is less likely to be voluntary out-migration.

Similar to the argument that climate change is rarely the sole reason for migration, according to Nordås and Gleditsch, climate change is also not likely to be the sole cause of violent conflict (Nordås & Gleditsch, 2007), but it can be a factor that is exacerbating already present issues. Reuveny further argue that in cases where scarcity of resources is present, such as water, people and groups are more likely to compete over access, which can lead to violence (Reuveny, 2007). Especially for poorer countries, climate change may pose significant challenges. For example, the IPCC report

draws on studies showing that a severe drought in 2007-2010 in Syria, led to agricultural collapse and led to an estimated 300.000 people moving to bigger cities of Damascus, Aleppo and other cities (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 518), but still stress that if there had been better structures in place, both nationally and globally, displacement could likely have been mitigated. According to Paula Granger (2019) this drought and climate change, was a key force multiplier contributing to the rise of the so called Islamic state in the 2010s. Granger argues that internal migration in Syria and Iraq was due to drought, because farming and herding could no longer be sustained. This, she argues, boosted the recruitment effort of the so-called Islamic state. Writing for National Geographic, Peter Schwartzstein (2017) states that IS recruitment efforts took advantage of the drought in Iraq as early as 2009 and began recruiting in small villages where it was increasingly difficult for people to sustain themselves. In another similar example the IPCC report further found that In 2012 in Mali, a drought caused thousands of livestock to perish, which may have been a factor in an increase of the membership of armed rebel groups (Mbow et al., 2019, p. 518).

Regardless of where they are located, smallholder farms can face a lot of challenges, and in many countries, farming becomes increasingly unsustainable as way of living (Morton, 2007). As an example, even in Denmark, a country that used to pride itself of their agriculture, there has been a decrease of 60% in farming businesses in the past 30 years (NYT, 2016). In order to help smallholder farms to survive, some people have begun experimenting with Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which Cynthia Abbot Cone and Andrea Myrhe (2000) argues aims to reconnect the consumer directly with the producer. They argue that the interest in CSA has developed into a global social movement. The goals behind the CSA movement is to ensure the survival of small farms through building communities between the farmers and the members of the CSA (Cone & Myhre, 2000, p. 187). They argue:

In its simplest form, CSA is a contractual agreement between a farm and a group of consumers variously described as "shareholders," "members," or "subscribers." Members purchase a "share" at the beginning of the season, allowing the farmers to plan production for a guaranteed market and providing capital up front to purchase inputs. Thus, shareholders pay the real costs of production and in this way contribute to the support of local, small-scale growers. Risks are

shared: if there is a poor harvest, everyone gets less, not just the farm (Cone & Myhre, 2000, p. 187).

Cone and Myhre researched 8 different farms in the US, through participant observation, interviews with farmers and shareholders, as well as harvest surveys. They found that none of the farmers started building the membership base from scratch, rather they all began developed slowly through friends and family (Cone & Myhre, 2000, p. 190). However, the members that joined the different CSA farms did not do so for the sake of community, rather for the sake of the environment and the quality of food (2000, p. 195). Social movements and civil society actors can have a strong ability to bring communities together to avoid intergroup competition, thus civil society and social movements will be the focus on the following sub-chapter.

3.2 Civil Society and Social Movements

“Civil society” can be seen a rather diffuse term, though it is often used in connection to the idea of the “grassroot” level. The definition of civil society has been debated in western political thought for centuries, and it has been a topic for writers such as John Locke (1632-1704), Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755), G. W. Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) and Karl Marx (1818-1883), who all had different views on the meaning and importance (Spurk, 2010, pp. 4–5). How early western political thinkers defined and viewed the role of the individual and the civil society is interesting, though for the purpose of this thesis, such a discussion is perhaps not entirely relevant considering how countries and their societies differ from each other on a global scale. Germany and France have completely different historical background and views of the individual, to that of Vietnam or Chile (Nandini, 2012), especially when it comes to the role of civil society in the context of conflict resolution. However, Spurk view civil society as comprised of a mix of actors, which are mostly voluntary organizations, associations, NGOs and individuals, who are trying to maintain or achieve different objectives, often even in conflict with other civil society actors. Barnes argues that civil society actors can range from “officially constituted institutions to small, informal community groups, these associations give expression and direction to the social, political, spiritual, and cultural need of members” (Barnes, 2005, p. 7). Far from being an exhaustive list of examples of civil society

actors in the context of peace and conflict, through the following examples, it is still possible to see how Individuals and groups of individuals can create focus and change.

DasGupta and Gopinath (2005), have investigated a civil society initiative in Kashmir in India, which has operated since the early 2000s, called Athwaas. The region of Kashmir and its borders has been a contested area between India and Pakistan for many years, and armed conflict erupted in 1989. The Athwaas initiative is led by Hindu, Muslim and Sikh women from Kashmir, and they work to create an inclusive network for women regardless of ethnicity and “which side” of the conflict they are on. The initiative thus attempted to build bridges among the societal gaps by exploring the shared suffering through the conflict, thereby finding a way to humanize each other (DasGupta & Gopinath, 2005).

In Nepal, domestic actors, with little outside help, managed to negotiate a settlement to put an end to the civil war that raged from 1996 to 2006 (Chalmers, 2010, p. 259). The civil society, or grassroot actors, began to offer protection to each other, against abuses from the conflicting parties, and in the face of international disinterest, the civil society also began undertaking conflict monitoring. Civil society actors was crucial in providing information to major international advocacy organization, such as Amnesty International and Human rights watch (Chalmers, 2010, p. 274). Though a lot of factors specific to Nepal made it “possible” for civil society actors to come together and provide services such as protection, monitoring, and advocacy, Chalmers argues that the boldness and conviction of the civil society had a bearing role in achieving (a fragile) peace (Chalmers, 2010, p. 289).

However, to offer some contrast to the positive view on civil society actors, actors can also be mobilized for conflict escalation instead of for peacebuilding. Spurr refers to such actors as “uncivil society actor” (2010, p. 25), though he acknowledges that the line between being a “civil society actor” and being an “uncivil society actor” can be blurred. Spurr argues that work by civil society actors in Northern Ireland first focused on strengthening their bonds and ties, but later channeled those in destructive fashion. According to Barnes (2005, p. 9), important and locally respected figures, such as traditional authorities and religious leaders, may provide rationale and justification

for violence or conflict escalation, instead of adding to the peacebuilding efforts. Some examples of prominent “Uncivil society actors” could include the Ku Klux Klan and Al-Qaeda, as these organizations incite violent conflict instead of inciting de-escalation. However, according to Glasius, the concept of “uncivil society” is academically under-theorized (Glasius, 2010), and it is a term that can be used by all sides in the attempt to delegitimize their opposition.

Della Porta and Diani argue that principles and values will “...influence how actors define specific goals, and identify strategies which are both efficient and morally acceptable”, and the stronger that belief is, the stronger is the will to act upon it (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 67). Della Porta and Diani further understands social movements “as not only wanting to influence certain policies, but also has something that aims to transform societal priorities”. Thus, according to Della Porta and Diani, the more strongly people believe in a certain set of values, the more likely they are to actively engage in a social movement. An example of such a movement could be the “environmental justice movement”. The Environmental Justice (EJ) movement is rooted in the struggle for indigenous environmental rights that face many native Americans in North America (Wilson, 2010, p. 19). Inspired by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Wilson argues that EJ was largely created by underprivileged people of color, indigenous people, and people living in poverty, in order to bring attention to how environmental degradation were affecting their lives. According to Wilson, the contemporary EJ movement was catalyzed by struggles in Warren County in North Carolina in the 1980s, in which the predominantly African American community was fighting the establishment of a toxic landfill (Wilson, 2010, p. 20). According to Wilson, the struggle was initially joined by local grassroots organizations, but later swelled to include national actors, and their efforts helped bring attention to localized issues that had been overlooked by the mainstream environmental movement of the time.

Following the events in Warren county, the US General Accounting Office created a report called “Siting of hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation With Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities”, and through this report it became apparent that people of color, poor, and otherwise marginalized peoples, were facing the worst of environmental hazards and unwanted land uses (Wilson, 2010, p. 23). Furthermore, in 1987, a publication by the “United Church of Christ

Commission for Racial Justice” showed that race was the most significant independent variable for the placement of hazardous waste facilities and uncontrolled toxic waste sites (Murdock, 2021, p. 8). Though the notion of environmental justice may have developed through the struggles in the US in particular, Martinez-Alier et al. argue that people around the world have been faced with similar issues.

Martinez-Alier et al. (2016) tried to determine if one could classify the EJ movement to be global, through research aided by their tool “EJAtlas”. The EJAtlas is a database that is mapping “ecological distribution conflicts”, and is informed through co-creation between academics and activists and civil society actors (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016, p. 3), which they argue helps bring attention to conflict that would otherwise not be noticed, or go underreported. In their research, Martinez-Alier et al. found that:

Preliminary results show a high occurrence of cases involving indigenous and traditional communities plus ethnically discriminated groups. They are involved in over one third of documented cases, though this involvement shows large regional variation.” (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016, p. 6)

It would therefore be easy to say that many conflicts are small and local in their nature, though that would be an inaccurate depiction. The study argues that given global commodity chains, there is an obscure network of international actors that are involved in localized conflicts. They found that certain industries were central to many of such conflicts, and especially companies in the fossil fuel sector (such as Shell, Exxon Mobile), the mining sector, or agro-industries (such as Monsanto), have been involved with a lot conflicts (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016, p. 6). This then indicates that in many cases, small local communities are fighting huge international corporations, which makes the distinction between local and international quite blurred. However, they argue that there is indeed a global environmental justice movement, despite many of the environmental issues are taking place in the local (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016, p. 17).

The EJ movement has further been instrumental in the development and spread of “climate justice” (CJ). Similar to the EJ movement, the CJ movement argues that climate change has a

disproportionate impact on poor and marginalized peoples (Bhavnani et al., 2019, p. 3). In the wake of colonialism and the continued exploitation of natural resources in the global south at the hands of the global north, Bhavnani et al. argue:

The rampant extraction of resources by imperial powers in colonized lands—and sub-sequently by local predator elites—left the lands in a state of continuing impoverishment, and with depleted levels of physical and economic resources that make it daunting, if not almost impossible, to withstand the humanitarian and environmental crises caused by climate change. The extraction-driven industries built on the platform of colonialism by the so-called “richer” nations of today have been primarily responsible for climate change.(Bhavnani et al., 2019, p. 3)

The idea of climate justice is therefor similar to the concept of environmental justice, as activists and organizations are pushing accountability from the entities that have had detrimental impact on the climate (Bhavnani et al., 2019, p. 6). Kyle Whyte argues that through his studies, he found that many indigenous people were first being harmed by the fossil fuel industry, but also how they are being negatively affected by current laws and policies (Whyte, 2019, p. 13). Whyte argues that climate change policies, and proposed climate change solutions will cause a lot of suffering for indigenous peoples, as well as other marginalized groups, unless colonialism, capitalism and industrialization are addressed as the more powerful countries will continue to dictate international policy (Whyte, 2019, p. 19). Whyte uses the allegory of “canoes vs aircraft carriers” on the sea. He argues that the canoes will be flooded by the waves created by the huge aircraft carriers when they are sailing around.

3.3 Permaculture and Peace and Conflict Studies.

Some scholars are linking the importance of farming to development and community building in different areas of the world (Pyhälä, 2013; Ranney et al., 2010), however there very few academic articles that are specifically investigating the connection between peace and permaculture specifically. Instead, Other scholars have for example been focusing on other topics relevant to permaculture and peace, such as the importance of farming and peace (which is also an important aspect of permaculture) in countries such as South Sudan (Bemma, 2014), and others have focused

on the anthropological aspects of permaculture (Lockyer & Veteto, 2013), though these topics are not of immediate relevance for the scope of this thesis.

One of the works where permaculture and peace is looked at in detail is Felix-Romero's (2010) study on farmers using permaculture in El Salvador, a country with an extensive history of conflict. El Salvador remained a colony for several centuries, during which the native population were killed and had their land seized by Europeans. Felix-Romero set out to find out the role of permaculture in the lives of practitioners through interviews which she coded into different tenets; environmental conditions, permaculture community impact, health, permaculture personal impact, food security, improvements due to permaculture, and living conditions (Felix-Romero, 2010, p. 61). Through the interviews Felix-Romero found that several of the interviewees emphasized the importance of ancestral knowledge, and how that shape the way they interact with the land (Felix-Romero, 2010, p. 134). Some of the interviewees also made connections to how permaculture creates community, which was an important factor for the case of El Salvador and helped the practitioners bridge communal gaps created by centuries of conflict. Through her interviews, she sums up the general themes:

Permaculture is a peace-supportive problemsolving approach for addressing local environmental challenges that is culturally appropriate for rural subsistence farmers. Additionally, permaculture supports community building and relationship building between individuals and nurtures a long-term relationship between people and their natural environment. The development of the relationship between person and environment is unique to the theory of permaculture as peacebuilding and significantly contributes to the fields of environmental conflict resolution and peacebuilding by creating agency for the environment in a way that expands the system of actors and possible solutions for addressing serious environmental challenges. (Felix-Romero, 2010, p. 170)

Her research then shows that for the people that were interviewed, permaculture is multifaceted, and it helps them navigate social and structural problems as well as aiding them in terms of food security and how to deal with climate change. Her dissertation furthermore connects permaculture to discussions on structural and cultural violence by Johan Galtung, as well as the work of John Paul Lederach, and she argues that these share similar worldviews (Felix-Romero, 2010), thus also situating permaculture within peace and conflict studies.

3.4 Permaculture critiques

Permaculture theory offer many approaches that are useful in peacebuilding, but some aspects can also be considered problematic and even contradictory to themselves. There is generally an emphasis on letting nature resolve matters by itself if faced with an issue without too much intervention, and then only intervene after a long period of observation. However, this aspect may not translate well into the praxis of peace, especially in cases where violence erupts.

According to Owen (2014), the emphasis on “Nature knows best”(people in affected areas/countries/societies), is perhaps a too naïve approach, disregarding factors from the outside such as introduced pests that are not local to the area (influence from other states, groups and the like). Perhaps nature has been too corrupted at this stage that it cannot find a solution as it is overwhelmed. Perhaps, these are not so much critiques as they are areas that need to be developed further, which this thesis will also touch upon. In extension, some gardeners and farmers who have years of experience farming with the permaculture principles and approaches, argue that some “permies” do not have the practical knowledge of different plants and how to care for them, yet they believe they know better than a seasoned farmer (Owen, 2014).

Through some of the readings, as well as through my Permaculture Design Course, I have come across language and wordings that I view to be questionable or even problematic.

Traditional societies had social and ethical constraints on population growth and resource use, which allowed communities and culture to persist over long periods without destroying the environment (Holmgren, 2010, p. 73)

In this particular example David Holmgren is trying to say that we can learn from our ancestors and from indigenous peoples, but he is at the same time grouping all such groups together, and thereby he is removing the individuality of indigenous and traditional societies. In a similar vein, in a lesson in my permaculture design course on building houses:

Women often spend a lot of time around the house and therefore will have many ideas about how needs can be met and how to deal with issues of health and cleanliness. (Permacultureeducation.org, 2021)

My critique is therefore that, at times, permaculture education is working within a frame of gender normativity, instead of actively working against stereotypical rhetoric. Issues of gender, ableism, and race, are being raised within the permaculture community, especially the Permaculture Women's Guild address these topics (Di Blasio, 2018). The permaculture movement is therefore not free from a patriarchal structure. Within the permaculture movement, an emerging sub-movement trying to address the problem of "spermaculture" and the "permaculture patriachs" (Moyles, 2015). This has also led to the creation of the "permaculture women's guild", which offer permaculture courses and magazines created by women for women (*The International Hub For Women In Permaculture*, n.d.).

4. Methodical considerations

As mentioned earlier, for this thesis I will delve into the research by using the following hypothesis as a point of departure:

- Permaculture theory and practices can be used to form a practical and theoretical framework that can be applied in Peace and conflict Studies

Whether or not a hypothesis can be used in qualitative research is hotly debated, as many believe that you need to be able to test a hypothesis, which critics argue cannot be done in qualitative research (Chigbu, 2019). Traditionally, testing of hypotheses requires a controlled environment in which it is possible to replicate results to answer with a “yes or no”, which is generally not possible in in qualitative studies. Furthermore, using hypotheses will make the research inherently biased from the beginning, which will require the researcher to be extremely aware of ethical concern, though that would also be the case had the chosen approach been another qualitative method, such as ethnography (May, 2011). Scholars, such as Chigbu contest the traditional understanding of a hypothesis and argues that such a study design does indeed fit with a qualitative framework.

This chapter will first present the chosen methods which I have used, and been aided by, in the research, and why they are fitting for exactly this study. 4.2 will explain the method I used to gather the data, how I analyzed and approached it, and why I made those choices. In 4.3, I elaborate on the ethical considerations that have shaped and guided the study, and finally in 4.4 I will explore the delimitations of the chosen methods and approaches.

4.1 Case study approach, content analysis and critical discourse analysis

This study is utilizing case study approach, in which a single organization, as well as their permaculture project have been investigated in order to see how they relate permaculture and peace. To aid the analysis, I have also applied aspects of several other approaches, such as qualitative content analysis and elements from critical discourse analysis.

A case study design does not aim to find generalizable results, but it allows the researcher to delve deeper into certain projects (Walliman, 2006, p. 45). Thus, the case study approach allows the thesis

to investigate how a specific project and organization is using permaculture ethics and theory and applying it to their unique situation. The case study design is inherently flexible, in that it can be descriptive, exploratory and explanatory, and is especially often used in policy research (Jupp, 2006, p. 20). Jupp argues that a case study design can be used in order to find examples of good practices, especially within an evaluation context, which is relevant for this thesis. Jupp further argues that case studies are often combined with other methods, and are often explanatory, and that in such cases, the design “...may be viewed less as a vehicle for generalization than as a form of pilot study” (Jupp, 2006, p. 21). With that said, according to May and Perry (2011, pp. 225–233), singular case studies, when rich in description, can be a natural basis for generalization. According to May and Perry, it may be beneficial to integrate several cases when the aim is theory development, though for intrinsic case studies, where a case is unusual or revelatory, it is not uncommon to investigate a singular case. Given that there is so little research on permaculture in connection with peace and conflict studies, this thesis will engage with a single case as I believe it will provide valuable knowledge in its own right.

The qualitative content analysis aspect relates to the gathering and categorizing of the data, which allows for a more systematic approach to the data, though I have adopted the ethnographic approach coined by Altheide (1987). Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) requires “...continually reflexive movement between concept development, sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation” (Altheide, 1987, p. 68). Bryman argues that it is a method that allows for a more systematic and analytical approach, though it is less rigid with the categorization of data compared to traditional content analysis (Bryman, 2012, p. 559), and it acknowledges the central position the researcher has in the whole process. This also means that I have revisited the data several times over the course of the research. Altheide further argues:

Although categories and “variables” initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. Thus, ECA is embedded in constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings and nuances (Altheide, 1987, p. 68)

Altheide argues that qualitative content analysis has to evolve and change, similar to how media platforms have changed from being limited by being print on paper, and manual retrieval and access (Altheide, 2000, p. 297). As information has increasingly moved online, and that my data is publicly available on websites, I would argue that ECA is therefore well suited for this analysis.

This thesis is not a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), though I have drawn inspiration from this approach, nonetheless. Discourse analysis is a study of linguistics and practices, and it is a method of analysis which can be used to analyze texts or interviews (among other things) by looking at the contents or the grammar of the data (Gee, 2011). Discourse can be many things but Bloor and Bloor argue that:

In its broadest sense, 'discourse' refers to all the phenomena of symbolic interaction and communication between people, usually through spoken or written language or visual representation. (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 6)

Discourse analysis thus aims to investigate the connections between power, practices, knowledge and language (Jupp, 2006), as such connections can be difficult to notice, if one is not aware of the power that is present. Gee (2011 p.2) argues that language "... allows us to do things and be things... In fact, saying things never goes without also doing things and being things". Traditional discourse analysis tries to look at the language used from an objective standpoint, where the focus is on what words "mean" and how grammar shapes the text that is being analyzed. Critical discourse analysis, however, goes a step further in the analysis and looks at the language in connection with the context it was created (Gee, 2011, p. 9) thus attempting to find a deeper meaning that may otherwise not have been apparent. Thus, the researcher can be argued to take an "active" role in the analysis of the collected data, which means that researcher needs to be aware of their own bias. The approach to Critical discourse analysis that has been used in this thesis, situates itself within a social constructivist worldview (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) and has a normative approach to the analysis, trying to find and correct social wrongs (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 12). James Gee further elaborates that a CDA researcher:

...also want to speak to and, perhaps, intervene in, social or political issues, problems, and controversies in the world. They want to apply their work to the world in some fashion (Gee, 2011, p. 9)

Though the purpose of this research is not to strictly “right a social wrong” within permaculture theory, it is trying to see if permaculture could have larger impact in other academic arenas, such as peace and conflict studies, thus dealing with certain power dynamic. As critical discourse analysis has roots in social constructivism and is inherently normative, it can then be argued that critical discourse analysis is in equal parts a method for analysis, as well as a theory, which makes it especially useful for this research.

The data was initially read through while it was being collected, then read through more thoroughly in the analysis program Atlas.ti, which allows for easier handling of bigger data sets. Atlas.ti allowed me to easily comb through the data and attach codes, notes, mind maps, and comments, as well as keeping track of how many instances of the codes appear throughout the data set. The program simplifies the initial analysis and makes returning to certain codes and comments easier. In the first read through in the Atlas.ti program I did the first round of coding with the focus of finding larger themes. Following this round of coding, I went through all the codes, quotes and data, in order to group the codes that would within my understanding of the 12 Permaculture Principles.

Atlas.ti allowed me to click on a certain code and then see in which files the given code appeared in, thereby making it easier to jump between files. The program allowed me to be critical toward my initial comments and attachment of codes as I revisited the data set. Each time I went back to the data, I asked myself “why did apply this code?”, or “why did I choose not to include this?”. This introspection led me to continuously adapt the data set, and Atlas.ti enable me to be highly critical toward my own decisions throughout the research process. The research process is further touched upon in the rest of chapter 4, as well as throughout chapter 5.

4.2 Material/data

GAIA Kosovo and the 3peas project was chosen, quite simply, because it was one of the first projects that came up when I googled “Permaculture and peace”, back when I started my studies. Within the first few months of my MA program, I had contacted GAIA Kosovo, and we had agreed that I would come to Kosovo as an intern in the summer of 2020. I was to use my time there conducting ethnographic fieldwork and collecting data. However, due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, those plans were changed, though I still wanted to use the organization as a case study. Given the historical background and social context of Kosovo and the, somewhat, recent war, GAIA Kosovo and the 3peas project are excellent subjects for an in-depth case study. The historical and social context will be explored further in chapter 5.

To be able to explore the hypothesis, I collected several types of data, which I coded and analyzed, and pitted against each other. The main data is comprised of information that is found on the websites in connection with the case study. This data is freely available from the websites of the organization and the 3peas project and has been written or created by people affiliated with the projects, either as employees or as volunteers. The data can therefore also be considered primary sources. The data consists of several types of formats, blogs, publications, and other statements and a few images, though the bulk of the data is written text. As an example, the collected data will be referenced as D12, and a full source can be found in the appendix including links and titles of the different documents.

The data has been gathered by first looking at the “about” pages of the websites, which usually gives a brief overview of their organization and their work. By using that as a “starting point”, it is possible to see the foci of the organization, which will put the rest of the information into perspective. I then went “back” to look at the front page, or “home”, which tend to have different stories or links, or latest publications and articles. From there the collection became less rigid as each website is built differently, though a good design will “automatically” lead the reader to other areas of the website. This approach enabled me to better follow the “route” as it was intended by the creators, and such they had a passive influence on the data collection. Various data from secondary sources has been collected, in order to do a triangulated inquiry (May 2011, p. 182),

which Höglund and Öberg also emphasize is important (Höglund & Öberg, 2011, p. 46). The data from secondary sources mainly relates to historical and contextual background, in order for me to get a better understanding of the context and the information gathered from the primary sources.

The secondary sources have therefore been used as support or as a challenge to the primary sources. As the thesis is interested mostly in the philosophy and theory of permaculture in relation to peace and conflict studies, and not so much the practical in-depth knowledge of permaculture farming, articles and other information from the projects, which are dealing focusing on plants and gardening tips has largely been omitted from the data. However, there is often an overlap in between “practical” and “theory”, as permaculture theory is often referenced in those articles that are focused on the practical. The inclusion of an article or blog post etc. has then been decided on a case-to-case basis.

4.3 Ethical Considerations

This thesis is largely a theoretical piece which is reliant on already publicly available information. Because this research is theoretical, and is using information from an organization, little-to-no personal or sensitive information has been collected. In cases where I deemed the information sensitive, all necessary precautions have been taken in order to ensure anonymity. The organizations that are included in the study have been contacted to let them know of the research, and they have all been asked if they would like to actively participate in the study. While 4

For any qualitative study, the researcher must be aware and critical toward their own position within the research (May, 2011), which is certainly also the case in this study. As the point of departure for this thesis, is a hypothesis, it has been made clear that there is an assumption, or even hope, to what the research will find, and the hypothesis is further shaped by my own bias and interests. However, this does not mean that I am uncritical in my approach and analysis, quite the contrary. In order to give this research value, I have tried to remain extremely critical to my own analysis and position through constant reflection and revisiting the data several times, as well as

critically engaging with permaculture theory and education as mentioned under the chapter on permaculture critiques.

4.4 Delimitations of the methods

The chosen methods have some limitations. This thesis is trying to explore and create a theoretical framework, and to make the argument stronger, it would have been beneficial to investigate several cases. According to May (May, 2011, p. 233), when the aim is theory creation, the optimum number for case studies is in the range between 4 and 10 as you can then begin to see similarities and differences between cases. Jupp further notes that a common critique of the case study design is that individual cases rarely offer any generalization, thus the knowledge that is gained is perceived to be of less scientific value (Jupp, 2006, p. 20). However, considering that this study wants to do an in-depth exploration and analysis, I have limited the research to only one case study. This choice has been made for several reasons. 1) The ethnographic content analysis approach necessitates the research to go back and forth between the data and the analysis, which is not only highly time consuming, by including several case studies, but the amount of data would also be overwhelming within the limitations set for the master thesis. 2) There is a limited amount of permaculture projects that are actively working in with peace, or within pre/post or active "conflict zones". It could be perhaps be argued that any permaculture project, regardless of size and location, is working with peace, through their work with the earth and the environment. However, I believe that the ideas and definitions of peace, conflict, and permaculture are already concepts that are diffuse and complicated enough, thus the research aims to find concrete examples of permaculture in praxis, in relation to peace projects.

5. Case: GAIA Kosovo and the 3peas project

Before jumping into the findings and the analysis, I will first present a very brief introduction to the historical background of Kosovo. Due to the restrictions of this thesis, it is only possible to provide a small glimpse of the complex history of the country. I will then delve into the findings and the analysis, and finish the chapter with some concluding remarks

5.1. short background

Kosovo is an interesting case due to having a complicated history, in part due to formerly being a part of Yugoslavia, which had already been violently breaking apart throughout the 1990s, in part because Kosovo is home to many different ethnic groups, but also in part due to being embroiled in war and conflicts in the 90s. The war in Kosovo lasted from February 1998 to June 1999. The conflict was multidimensional considering that a large amount of the aggression came from the Serbian forces toward the Kosovar Liberation Army and the general Kosovar Albanian population (Webber, 2009, p. 448), but it was also a big international crisis that brought in NATO and the Operation of Allied Forces (OAF). According to evidence gathered by different NGOs, it is estimated that around 90% of Kosovar Albanians had fled their homes during the course of the war (Webber, 2009). The war culminated in genocidal violence toward the Kosovar Albanians by the hands of Yugoslavian forces, which led to a large scale intervention from international actors (Ronayne, 2004, p. 67) Following the war, the EU and NATO sent aid to help establish multi-ethnic democracy and rule of law, though it seems the results of those efforts are disputed (Webber, 2009, p. 457) but general opinion seem to be negative.

A peace agreement was finally reached which saw Milosevic pulling the troops out of Kosovo, the Kosovar Liberation Army demilitarizing, and the deployment of NATO peace keepers and a process for political process allowing Kosovo “substantial self-government” (Webber, 2009, p. 452). Following the agreement, many ethnic Serbs left Kosovo in fear of reprisals. Anti-Serb violence and protests did sporadically occur, which led to around 30 people dying in riots in 2004 (Ray, n.d). Kosovo formally declared independence in 2008. As seen on the map below, Internationally, there

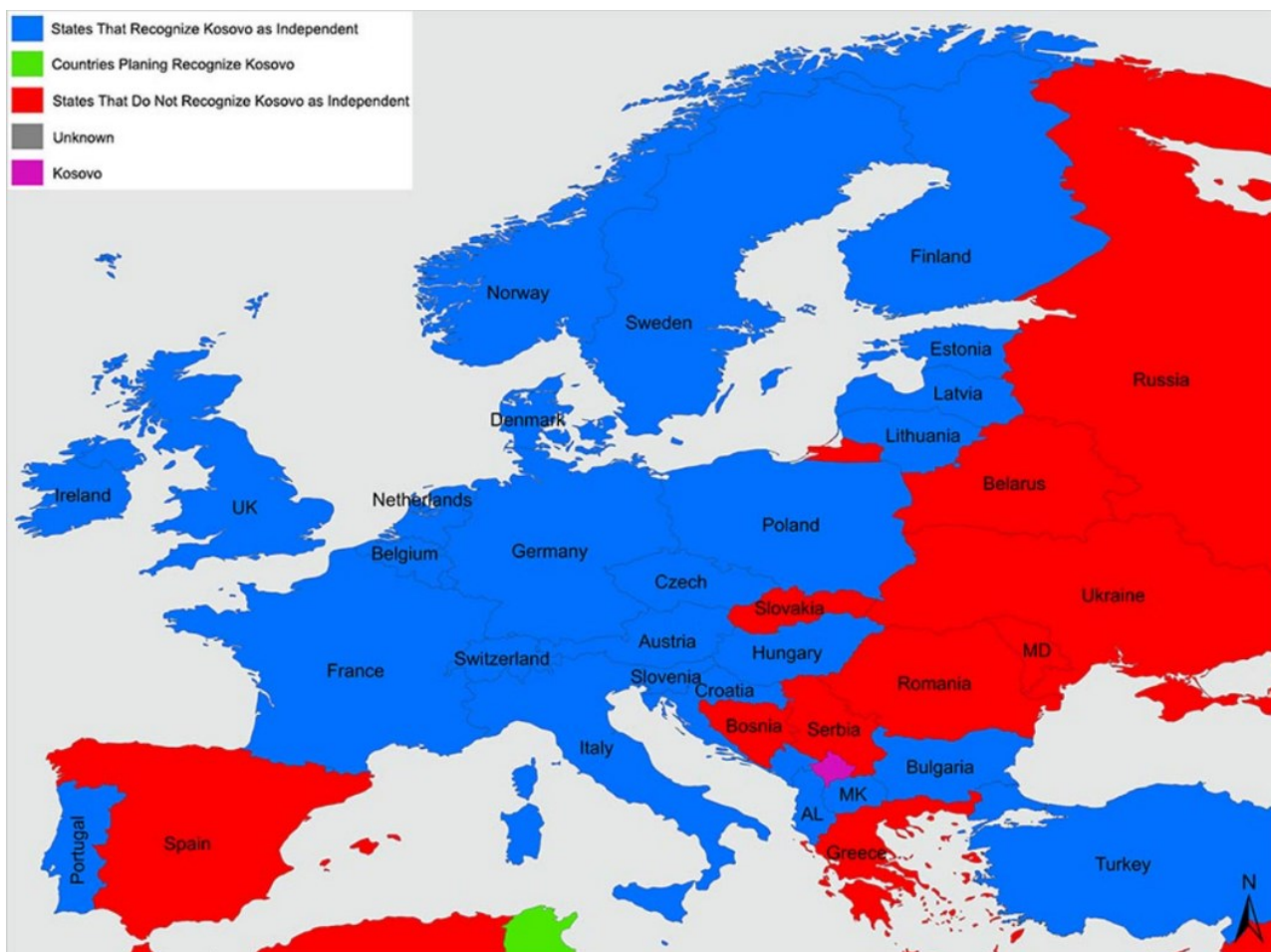


Figure 2: Recognition of Kosovo is no consensus as to whether Kosovo can be recognized as an independent country, or if it is still a part of Serbia (Allcock, 2020), though all major international organizations, like EU, UN and NATO, have all recognized Kosovo as its own sovereign state. Kosovo has been recognized by several countries as independent, though some EU member states, Russia, as well as Serbia, do not agree with the declaration, and view it as illegitimate. Kosovo is a site of a multitude of difficult-to-solve issues and protracted conflicts, and it is therefore interesting to investigate what community and peacebuilding efforts take place on the ground, and how permaculture is utilized in this context.

This Case study will focus on the GAIA Kosovo organization in general, but extra attention will be given to their “3peas” permaculture peace project.

GAIA Kosovo is a part of Service Civil International (SCI), an international volunteer organization which has a focus promoting peace through their projects. According to GAIA’s website, GAIA Kosovo was created in 2010 with their mission “...to work towards peace, social and environmental justice by being an example for alternative and regenerative ways of living (D16) From what is available on their website, GAIA Kosovo does not appear to have been created solely with permaculture in mind, but also to focus on other projects, though these can be argued to be intrinsically linked.

5.2 GAIA Kosovo – 3Peas Findings

One of the first elements that I paid attention to, even before delving too deep into the analysis, was the name the organization; GAIA. I knew, likely through previous studies, that Gaia have something to do with earth, and Greek mythology. For the latter, Gaia was the “personification of earth as a goddess” (*Gaea | Definition & Children*, n.d.), indicating that the organization has a certain connection with nature, and earth as a whole. As mentioned earlier in this thesis (in the permaculture ethic section), it could also be a reference to the “Gaia hypothesis” (which is also named after the Greek goddess), which states that everything in nature is connected and that earth can be considered to one giant organism (Lovelock, 2000). Though it is not explicably stated anywhere on their website, it should be rather safe to assume that their name is a reference to their environmental approach in their work and organization. This is further supported by their mission statement; “GAIA’s mission is to work towards peace, social and environmental justice by being an example for alternative and regenerative ways of living” (D16).

The initial data gathering found 16 separate pages on the two different websites, respective to GAIA Kosovo as the organization in charge of the 3Peas project, and the website for the 3Peas project. The dataset was later expanded to 22 different documents as some articles were

reevaluated during the analysis, which will also be touched upon later. During the collection phase the pages were quickly read, and I determined which had relevance for the research and which did not. As mentioned earlier, data that solely deals with the practical aspects of permaculture gardening, such as how you can make planters out of old tires, were left out, as I was more interested in social and theoretical aspects. The length of the collected pages varies greatly, some being only a short paragraph, others being full blogs spanning several pages and written by several authors. I then read through all the data and noted emerging themes I found. I ended up with 60 different and individual themes throughout. However, some themes would often occur several times in one document, sometimes even several times within the same paragraph. On several occasions, the same quote would reflect several themes. As a visualization, see the following quote:

Permaculture is ‘simultaneously a design approach, a philosophy, a movement and a set of practices’, it is a broad concept, and it is somehow difficult to communicate this complexity in a few words to somebody who has never heard about it. (D11)

In document D11, 3 different codes were attached to this specific quote; “abstract”, “connection” and “inclusive”. Though not explicitly mentioned, these themes latent within this particular example. In other instances, the codes match the wording used within a quote, though the code is still formed through my own understanding. Though the first coding amassed 60 different themes, some were often reoccurring, others were only repeated once or twice. Figure 2 show the most prevalent themes, with “Community” and “Local” being the most reoccurring themes. However, many of these codes are overlapping with each other, thus the relationships are not mutually exclusive and perhaps even at times interchangeable. Even

| | Name | Grounded | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ community | | 14 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ local | | 13 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ inclusive | | 6 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ education | | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ environment | | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ resilience | | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ diversity | | 5 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ peacebuilding | | 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ sustainability | | 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ communitybuilding | | 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ story | | 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ ethnicity | | 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ financial | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ man vs nature | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ separation | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ food security | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ The past | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ care taking | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ The "other" | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ principles | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ connection | | 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> | ◇ well being | | 3 |

Table 1 spread of codes

though the themes and codes are somewhat blurry, figure 2 still show an emphasis on having inclusivity on local and community levels. This finding corresponds well to how GAIA Kosovo present themselves; “We are joining the global movement for regenerating society from its roots, acting locally in Kosovo and Balkan region” (22). How GAIA Kosovo describe their work seem to embody several of the main tenets of principles of the PPF, which can be found in how they describe their peacebuilding program:

The team in Mitrovica intends to work towards breaking down multiple barriers in an inert divided city. By creating opportunities for people of different backgrounds to meet, the program will improve common understanding between the people of the city, and ensure more sustainable peace. As the team approaches cultural and educational organizations from all parts of the city, GAIA can foster connections and synergies between them, encouraging a wider and richer cultural life that will tear down the most acute divisions. By making people meet, by unearthing positive stories from past and present, the program will help fight against prejudice and the fear of the ‘other’. (D10)

There is no more detailed and explicit information regarding their peacebuilding program available, though in the above description show connection to permaculture principles such as **observe and interact, design from pattern to detail, integrate rather than segregate, use and value diversity** and **use and value edges and the marginal**. Though, there are overlaps in their work and their events, so even if they do not mention that the events have an explicit connection to peacebuilding, they likely will have an implicit connection.

GAIA Kosovo activities:

Following the initial coding and analysis, I revisited all the codes and their sources with the lens of the original “permaculture principles”, thus creating 12 separate “coding groups”. The 12 principles of permaculture are often overlapping, and several themes can then be attached to several of the principles at the same time, thereby creating a complicated interconnected relationship between the data. Figure 3 shows the latent connection each permaculture principle has to the attached codes. Since the data that had an emphasis on gardening or farming was removed from the sample, principle 2 and 5 did not have many matches. This is largely due to the way these principles are worded, as it makes it difficult to attach themes to them unless these are explicitly related.

| Principle | # of codes |
|---|------------|
| Principle 1: Observe and Interact | 13 |
| Principle 2: Catch and store Energy | 4 |
| Principle 3: Obtain a yield | 7 |
| Principle 4: Apply self-regulation and accept feedback | 10 |
| Principle 5: Use and value Renewable resources and Services | 3 |
| Principle 6: Produce no Waste | 6 |
| Principle 7: Design from Pattern to detail | 8 |
| Principle 8: Integrate rather than segregate | 10 |
| Principle 9: Use small and slow solutions | 7 |
| Principle 10: Use and Value Diversity | 11 |
| Principle 11: Use and value edges and the Marginal | 8 |
| Principle 12: Creatively use and respond to change | 7 |

Table 2: Codes in relation to Permaculture Principles

The first sentence in the quote on the previous page caught my attention and I tried to find out what was meant by “An inert divided city”. Mitrovica is a city in northern Kosovo and it is divided by a river. The southern half is inhabited mainly by Kosovar Albanians, while the northern half is almost completely Serbian (Cerkini, 2020). The divide is so strong that people have been afraid to cross the bridge to either side, and it is also stated in (D14) that there is a continued presence of peacekeeping officers. Generally, the north part of the city, like Serbia, does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state and have set up their own assembly that works with the Serbian government (Cerkini, 2020). It seems that the notion and understanding of kinship is of particular interest and that it is understood that the locals perceive people outside of their immediate community with skepticism. This can be seen in D8, GAIA Kosovo tells the story of “cultural exchange” event they held, in which a Kosovar Albanian participant remark that they had sworn to never talk to a Serbian person. Through a statement by a participant they further highlight why such events are important:

The participants showed great open-mindedness regarding the issues addressed. Some mental barriers were brought down, and new perspectives emerged, in which the “Other” is not an enemy but a friend. “I need the time to process, but I know something changed for me” admitted another participant. (D8).

Given the historical complexity of Kosovo and Serbia, and that there is a lot of tension, not only on a state level, but on communal levels as well, which likely means that the required energy input for change is high. However, the above quote is also one of the few instances that embody the “**Obtain a yield**” permaculture principle as it is possible to see an impact of the event. Whether or not the above-mentioned participant actually has radically shifted position from viewing the other as an enemy, to viewing them as a friend cannot be established, but it is possible that there has been an improvement. It also shows how conflict is not inherently bad if it is approached with a proper mindset, much akin to another approach from John Paul Lederach, namely that of “conflict transformation” (Lederach, 2003). The participant might still harbor some conflicting thoughts on their counterpart, and some conflict might still be present, but the change in attitude may also be a small step toward transformation.

It is apparent that there is a long-term fear of the other, as well as a remembered experience of violence, which tend to make people more vulnerable and easier to manipulate. Lederach argues that such elements are a sign of a deeply divided society (Lederach, 1997, p. 23). It is perhaps, then, not surprising that through the data from GAIA Kosovo, “community” and “local” are among the most reappearing and reoccurring themes. It could even be argued that these themes are encompassing all the other themes, as viewed on the below chart:

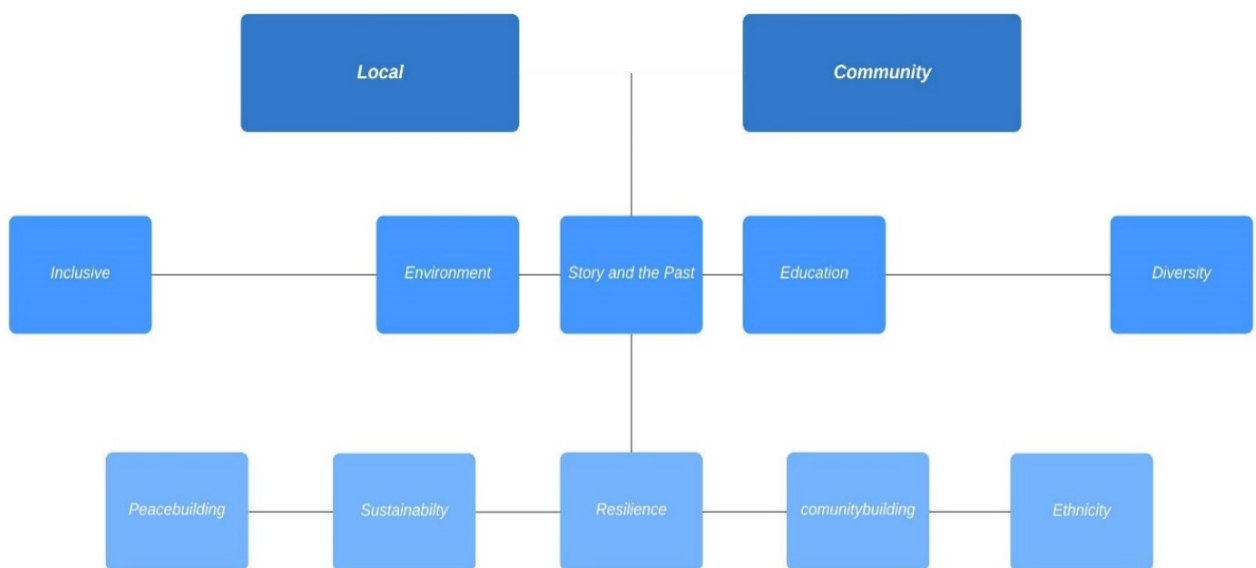


Figure 3: Interconnected themes

However, the interconnectedness of all the themes cannot be visually shown in a coherent manner, as they are all connected in some shape or form.

Other than their youth exchange programs, GAIA Kosovo also engage in what they call the “story telling Caravan”, which are events in which local people can share their stories of their past, and how the locals used to be closer (D17 and D18). Events such as these serve to build up an understanding of a shared past, and perhaps an understanding of each other’s trauma, before distrust and violence wreaked havoc. As Lederach argues:

Reconciliation as a locus creates a space for encounter by the parties, a place where the diverse but connected energies and concerns driving the conflict can meet, including the paradoxes of truth and mercy, justice and peace. (Lederach, 1997, p. 35)

For the event in D 23, the “storytellers” were reminiscing over their history with the rivers that run through the divided town, and about how important the rivers are, and the importance of water. This is arguably an important step to humanize the other, to show that there is a shared love and

that “the other” is not solely destructive. Even though water is a life-giving entity and a powerful symbol, unfortunately it does not always equate to a peaceful existence between conflicting parties. How groups view or approach a water source may be conflicting and lead to an increase in conflict (Wolf, 1998). Interestingly, the water situation in northern Kosovo seems different. Kosovo has problems with pollution and especially their water sources are highly contaminated. Politicians on both side of the physical divide do not seem care much about such issues (Aliu, 2020). By treating nature and the environment with neglect and indifference, in extension, people treat themselves, and others, with neglect and indifference. Derived from the data, I find the pollution and dwindling of the rivers that run through Mitrovica, to be a powerful symbol and metaphor to how the social situation is in the city.

In a different storytelling caravan event (D18), 3 speakers are talking about the role of sports and how in Yugoslavian tournaments, no one cared about the nationality of players, which connects to a shared past. However, it is not stated what time period the stories of those tournaments refer to; thus, I have not been able to determine the state of animosity between Kosovar Albanians and Serbs. Regardless, the story offers an individual truth which I believe holds an intrinsic value. Sports may then be an area in which a peaceful existence could develop. As an example, In the protracted conflict between Palestine and Israel, a project called “football for peace” has been running for a number of years, to which John Sugden of the University of Brighton, argues: “...that if projects such of this are locally grounded, carefully thought out, and professionally managed they can make a modest contribution to wider efforts to promote conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence”(Sugden, 2006). However, in the case of Israel and Palestine, Dart argues that the success of “football for peace” has been largely exaggerated. He argues that such initiatives can only work if there is any resemblance of peace among the countries (Dart, 2019). However, Hooliganism is rampant in Serbia and several violent groups are connected to local teams, as well as their national team (Markovic, 2015). In 2010, an international match between Serbia and Italy ended in chaos when Serbian hooligans invaded the pitch and burned the Albanian flag (Markovic, 2015). That action was likely not only directed at Albania, but also Kosovo in extension, considering the strong ties between the two nations. The action could also be interpreted as the hooligans not seeing Kosovo as a sovereign state separate from Serbia. Regardless, nationalism in sports, not only

football, seem to run strong in the post Yugoslavian countries (Rudic et al., 2018), which might make it difficult for peace projects to make sport a unifying factor. With that said, Krasniqi and Krasniqi (2019) argue that “Open Fun Football Schools” in Kosovo has had a some success in bringing together people from the different ethnic backgrounds, so it would likely be an avenue worth exploring further.

Regardless if sport can, or cannot, be used to build relationships between the groups in this specific case, the “storytelling caravan” events may help to remind people of shared interests and as way to create and facilitate dialogue. Through such events I see different permaculture principles in use, such as **observe and interact** with the past and each other. In my view, the events are **small and slow** approaches to reconciliation and that these events **use and value diversity**. Despite that it is possibly to identify permaculture principles within these events, the **yields** are more difficult to pinpoint. This is not surprising to me, perhaps this is even expected, following the argument from Lederach that peacebuilding and reconciliation is a process (Lederach, 1997, p. 71). Similarly, Harold Saunders (Saunders, 2008) also argue that dialogue should be viewed to be a process, and through it you can build relationships. Thus, perhaps

It is possible to argue that the overall work of GAIA Kosovo has some connection to permaculture, and in 2017 they started an EU funded project, called “3peas: Permaculture as a path for peace”, and the below section will be dedicated to the findings of this project.

3PEAS project:

The “3PEAS” project is run by GAIA Kosovo, which has the tagline: “Permaculture as a path to peace” (GAIA SCI Kosovo, 2019). For this particular project, permaculture and peace are intrinsically linked, at least in vision. The project initially received funding for a 2-year period, from 2017 to 2019, and had further received funding before the beginning of the Covid pandemic in 2020, but due to the pandemic, they couldn’t fully engage with their planned events. That also meant that the planned internship which me and GAIA had agreed upon, had to be cancelled.

The reason why this project gets its own sub-section is partly because of the explicit connection between permaculture and peace, but also because the initial findings were somewhat surprising to me, which I will get back to a little further down. The main page of the projects website has 5 drop down menus: Home, Tools, Resources, Blogs, and Contacts. The “Home” dropdown menu has sections that explain what permaculture is, what the project is about, and why permaculture has a connection to peace. In document D20, “why all of this”, 3peas mentions several issues that the world is faced with, many of which are those that were mentioned in this thesis, namely those of climate change, environmental justice, and social injustice. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they ask a question related to the one that I asked in the introduction:

The question is: How can we (re)act on the problems that Climate Change is confronting us with, without going again into the same patterns of behaviour that are producing climate change, social injustice, and any form of systematic violence? How can we overcome the mindset of making fast, direct and way too superficial responses to the problems we are facing? (Like fighting pests with pesticides.) (D20)

They argue that many of the issues the world is faced with comes down to a question of values, or perhaps the lack of such. They further argue that due to issues like the ones discussed in the introduction of this thesis, that the:

...narrative which puts the (white, male) human in the center of the world, on the top of the evolution, with the imperative to dominate and make use of all other creatures, has come into place, promoting scarcity of resources, concurrence and fight for survival. Closing ourselves to the truth of the interrelatedness and aliveness of everything, living the story of separation, our culture draws a picture of the world as consisting of “humans” and the “environment”, understood as a more or less random assembly of unintelligent, un sentient beings with no inherent value besides their usefulness for human purpose.(D20)

It is then clear that the project has both a very negative and pessimistic view interpretation of the world as it currently exists. At the same time, perhaps paradoxically, they also have a holistic view on the world, and through this project they aim to change how humans’ value non-human entities. Their argument is further developed in the “tools” menu, in which they delve into the notion of

“Social permaculture”. “Social Permaculture” seeks to learn from the natural design approaches and principles, and adapt it to human connections, such as the value of diversity:

embracing diversity also means confronting those systems of racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, and all the other destructive patterns of discrimination and structural oppression that keep us divided and separate. It requires us to actively engage in efforts to change those larger societal patterns.(D4)

It is thereby apparent that 3peas, and in extension GAIA Kosovo, is actively engaging with the promotion of climate justice, social justice, and change, which is not terribly surprising.

At this stage I began to wonder how much the information was

| | 1) PC Theory | 2) Social PC/ Peace theory | 3) Practical Gardening | 4) Practical Peacebuilding | 5) Other |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 4 |

Table 3: Topics and Articles

theoretical of nature and how much of it was

more closely related to practical aspects. As I revisited the data it became apparent to me that I would need to make 2 types of theory categories and two types of practical categories in order to be able differentiate between the different foci. The “other” category are pages such as “contact”, “ask questions”, thus of no relevance to this thesis project.

In part, this division of the foci was one of the main surprises of this project. I had assumed, and perhaps hoped, to find more 1st hand accounts of mixing permaculture with peace, instead of the “large” amount of gardening information, and the large number of theoretical posts. The practical gardening group includes articles on how to reuse old tires for planters (as mentioned earlier), how to make seed-bombs and

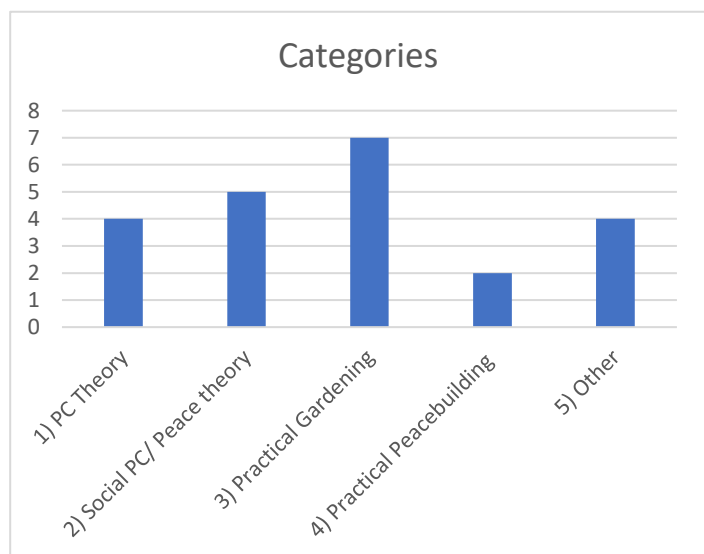


Figure 4: Number of categories

composting, which is all useful information, though less so for the focus on permaculture and peace. At least that was my initial reaction. As I went back and forth between the data, I began to question this reaction and realized I probably had tunnel vision in what I expected to find.

Originally, I dismissed the articles that I had placed in the practical garden group, as I argued that they were written in English, therefore not aimed for the local people, and thus I viewed them to not be actively engaged with creating peace. However, I do not know if these practical gardening tips have been explored with the locals, nor do I know the value of them in their local setting. Is it not also helping to create peace and justice by giving people inspiration and tools to be resourceful, and reuse material that would otherwise be trash, especially if people are less well off? In fact, I came to realize that some of the articles that I initially had dismissed, were based on local workshops, which aimed to teach people how to use trash to grow food, as in D21. In a picture in D21 we see what seems to be a workshop on how to build planter out of old plastic bottles for vertical gardens. For people living in cities, that do not have access to land, a vertical “garden” can be a valuable extra source of food. In D22, the article about making seed bombs, they state the goal to be:

Creating seedbombs with seeds of indigenous, beneficial and non-invasive species that will bloom in urban settings re-creating a habitat for biodiversity, bees and insects and beautifying the city. (D22)

They further argue that some “guerrilla gardeners” are using such seed bombs around urban areas and can therefore be seen as attempts take back the city space. It could even be seen as civil disobedience. The 2 pages that I found, to a large extent, explicitly deal with peacebuilding are blog-style pages where their projects in Mitrovica and Bozevce are in focus, which I will explore further below.

Bozevce

Bozevce is a small village in east Kosovo, in which the 3peas project have established a permaculture farm. The page has 16 different posts written by the international volunteers who live or have lived there. As the authors change, so does the focus and the subject of the blog posts, including

information on local flora, different natural building workshops and general life on the farm. In one blog post a volunteer state:

Since almost 2 years, volunteers from the entire world are working in the small village of Bozevce to build a place where it is possible to gather people from different backgrounds around the same table to learn about permaculture. (D19)

According to one of the key figures in permaculture theory, Macnamara, Intercultural exchange is a way for people to build a relationship with people they otherwise would have no connection with, and to such extent, bringing in people from different backgrounds is beneficial (Macnamara, 2012). I interpret that the benefits extend further than to just the volunteers as they will likely bring home new thoughts, approaches, and understandings, and apply that to their local setting. That enables a snowball effect (perhaps a slow moving one) that expands the “movement”. This can be seen through a blog post that mention that the farm had volunteers from France, Austria, Spain, Belgium, Jordan, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, USA, and Kosovo. However, of the 16 different blog posts, few seem to explicitly deal with peacebuilding and reconciliation among the locals in the small village. In D19, the blog describes the village as slowly dying as all the inhabitants are elderly and no young people are left. The post further states:

Rich memories and knowledge will be lost forever, and only tiny patches of them will remain in the buildings, fences, letters and photos that the last villagers that move out leave behind, until time tears them apart. (D19)

According to this blog post, the international volunteers seek to learn from the elderly inhabitants of the village while also commenting on the modest and run-down houses and appearances.

Most of the villagers live in a single room where they cook, rest, eat, sleep and everything else, especially during winter, when there is always wood burning in the stove to keep it hot. When I glanced around me during our visits and saw how humble some of those rooms and their owners looked, I felt ashamed to think that, if one of those people were to knock at the door of my flat in the city, I would probably not let them in as unsuspectingly nor host them as generously as they were doing for us (D19).

There are several interesting points in this quote, but one is especially pertinent. By visiting the poor neighbors, the author of this post managed to critically analyze their own prejudice and find the inherent value that each person possesses. In my view, this provides a rather good example of the permaculture principles “value diversity and the marginal” in the context of a social setting. It can also be argued that this example shows how the notion of “othering” and prejudice affect us on an everyday basis. “Othering” can be considered a process in which difference between people or groups, translates into the “other” being inferior due to an arbitrary set of codes and values (Krumer-Nevo & Benjamin, 2010). In my understanding, this process would have been extremely interesting to investigate in the context of Kosovo, and to see if the 3peas activities would have an influence in transforming the animosities and differences between groups.

In extension, it almost feels like a missed opportunity to me that many of the volunteers on the farm are from other European countries, instead of coming from Kosovo or surrounding areas and regions. That being said, it is also likely that it only feels like a missed opportunity to me, as I personally had the expectation that the Bozevce project would be focusing on the local.

Mitrovica

In the dedicated blog for Mitrovica, they have so far only written 3 different entries on their activities and projects. The low number of posts can likely be explained because of the overlap between 3peas activities, and GAIA Kosovo activities, and as such it is possible that they have made the choice of publishing their information on the GAIA main page. In the first post they talk about their rooftop permaculture garden project, which is established on top of the library in Mitrovica. The aim with this garden is manifold:

Mitrovica’s urban landscape is growing – which is a positive development overall, but at whose and at which costs? A large share of families is living in apartment nowadays and do not have the possibility to have their own garden to grow their own vegetables and avoid industrially treated fruits and vegetables. This rapid urbanization leads to a trend that food consumption and production are increasingly separated from consumers as well as local food practices.

Especially younger generations gradually become desensitized to traditional knowledge concerning gardening, harvesting and cooking held within their families. (D14)

In this statement, in my view, I see a clear relation to the themes the volunteers experienced in Bozevce, namely that of knowledge being lost. The discussion seems to be rooted in a battle between value systems, “modernity” vs “traditional” and old vs new, and it is therefore questionable how many locals actually view the loss of traditional knowledge to be inherently negative. There can be several reasons as to why people embrace a more “modern” lifestyle and people letting go of “old and outdated” knowledge. If people instead bring their attention toward achieving a lifestyle that requires less physical labour and brings more comfort can hardly be blamed. According to the World Bank (World Bank, 2020), Kosovo remains the 3rd poorest country in Europe, and they argue that population needs to be equipped with the skills and knowledge needed for a modernized economy. The minimum wage in Kosovo is 130 euro per month, so perhaps it is expected that there would be a popularized interest for a modernized economy. I would then argue that creating a permaculture project in an urban setting has a lot of potential to bridge the gap between the modern and the traditional and help inform and informally educate the locals. Some of the events and workshops showed people how to do certain practical permaculture practices.

These events were mostly visited by high school students from the city and our friends. Although modest in numbers, we were regularly visited by a few children who showed keen interest in what we are doing and to what ends we are taking our time to build a garden on top of a building in an urban environment. (D14)

The 3peas activities by themselves does not have the biggest outreach, but it also takes a long time to develop a fully realized garden, just as it takes time to transform societal issues and conflicts. Afterall, the 3peas project was only created in 2017. In the field of peace and conflict theory, Lederach argues :

...the peacebuilding task must take into account the long-term horizon of

protracted intermediate conflicts and wars, and develop a comprehensive, multifaceted strategy for ending violence and achieving and sustaining reconciliation. (Lederach, 1997, p. 18).

In one of the photos in this particular blog post (D14), at the center we see a woman explaining something to a group of youths. The photo takes place outside in the sun, which somewhat embodies the notion of non-formal education and a relaxed atmosphere. The youths are focusing on the woman speaking and it seems they have a legitimate interest, which is visible through their body language and the tight circle around the woman. These workshops and school excursions can be viewed to be non-formal education that allows the youth experience alternatives to the status quo and carry those experiences to other aspects of life.

In another entry in the same blog (D14), it is also mentioned that some of the students are at a loss regarding what they can do against climate change:

Despite passionate talks about climate change and its impact on water resources, often enough I would come across the phrase – but what should we do, we are only students and its mostly big industries and the political elite that (n)either takes measures against the consequences of a fossil-fuel reliant economy, deregulated market economy nor does it pro-actively invest in public awareness of non-standardized waste-management or the health consequences of building another coal plant in Kosovo(D14)

In my understanding, this is reminiscent of a rise in “eco-anxiety” among people around the world, and some psychologists are especially worried about how this affects children and young people (Plautz, 2020; Taylor & Murray, 2020). I doubt that the author of this entry has actually come across such a specific articulation of the issues at hand, at least not “often enough” rather it seems to be a condensed version of several discussions. Regardless, the fear among the participants is likely very real. The answer 3peas offers to this dealing with this fear seem to be a bit paradoxical. First they implicitly invoke the permaculture ethic of “people care”, in which they argue that: “One can and should do its part according to their own needs and demands”, indicating that one should not do too much as to burn themselves out. It could be viewed as them saying that everybody’s needs and abilities are different, which is an inclusive argument. However, further down in this post they argue:

Coming back to the comment of being to young from our volunteers in the Open Days, it is noteworthy that age plays a factor in one's access to knowledge in some cases, but it is not an excuse for being able to resist to current ways of living, if not changing one's own habits and everyday consumptions. (D14)

Perhaps this argument was made in order to empower the reader but to me it also seemed to leave a feeling of guilt, which could be problematic, especially when it comes to young people. People deal with anxiety and being overwhelmed in different ways, which may already include feelings of guilt, and bringing more guilt into it could likely be counterproductive. That being said, Greta Thunberg serves as a great example of what a motivated and unrelenting youth can achieve. The difference is that Greta Thunberg and the global extinction rebellion movement aims to place the guilt of climate change on the global governments and elites, and less so on the youth of world. Though, at this stage, it is clear to me that GAIA Kosovo have a lot of different projects and ideas, and most of them have a connection to permaculture as a whole, though I believe certain aspects could be tweaked and improved.

5.3 Concluding remarks

GAIA Kosovo and their 3peas project, can be interpreted to provide a good example to how permaculture principles can aid and steer peace- and community building efforts in different settings. Through their activities, I believe it is possible to see how they **observe and interact** with the local population, either through storytelling events or through informal education activities. Their activities can at the same time be interpreted as trying to **“catch and store energy”**, in the sense that they are trying to provide an input in their social context. It is debatable whether the findings can say anything concrete about the success of these activities, or if they **obtain a yield**, as it is difficult to measure, especially since a “success” can be viewed subjectively. Given the nature of several of their activities, and that many of them invited for reflective thinking among the participants through storytelling, it would likely be fair to assume that they also **self-regulate and accept feedback** from participants, though this is harder to find specific examples. However,

through the blog posts, largely written by the volunteers, it is indeed apparent that they try to foster reflexivity.

Their activities and approaches seem to be grounded in trying to support people who are interested, as well as including people that are “the edge” of society, such as the elderly population in Bozevce as seen in D19. That can also be connected to the principle of “**produce no waste**”, as every being have an intrinsic value, and it is implied that older generations, as well as their valuable knowledge is being left behind. These activities further overlap with the principles to **value the marginal and diversity**, as well as **integrate rather than separate**.

Kosovo has a complicated history at it is apparent that areas are still tense. From this case study, it is possible to see how an organization, informed by permaculture, is trying to mitigate social cleavages and improve the current situation. The outcome of the analysis on the 3peas project was a surprise as I had expected to find much more data in direct relation with permaculture and peacebuilding in the specific location in which GAIA Kosovo and 3peas operates. However, I recognize that my understanding of peacebuilding has been conditioned through a more “traditional” viewpoint on the concept. I had wrongly assumed that the project in Bozevce would include more local participants instead of relying on international volunteers, and I have been pondering from where this assumption came from, and I have come to realize that it came from a place of prejudice. I do not have deep knowledge of the society and social life in Kosovo, nor do I have any personal connection to the country. Thus, I should value the knowledge and approaches that GAIA Kosovo uses, and I should trust that they have much more experience in conducting their workshops, trainings and events, than I do. This prejudice that I had can be related to one of the critiques of permaculture that was discussed back in the introduction; namely that some “permies” believe they have the answer to everything despite having little to no on-hands experience.

Whether or not GAIA Kosovo and the 3peas project are successful in their endeavor is difficult to say because meaningful change is slow and takes time. I believe “Success” is also a diffuse concept, especially when it comes to social change. The word “success” further implies that there exists a state of finality, an end-result where no more work is needed, but I would argue that such a state is impossible. The social world is always changing, our climate is changing, and the needs of people

and non-humans change. Like the idea that positive peace is unattainable and utopian, I would also argue that a world where social work will no longer be needed is equally unattainable. Regardless of how you define success and if it is measurable or not, from an academic point of view, we can still draw inspiration and learn from the work of GAIA Kosovo.

6. The Permaculture Peace Framework

So, where does the knowledge from this case study take us? GAIA Kosovo provides an example as to how a small NGO civil society actor, and how their work can be inspired by permaculture and use that to promote change and community. While it is not possible to say how effective their projects and events are in promoting change and sense of community, it does seem like there is some interest in the local populations in the project cities. The analysis found that, through my own interpretations, that there are many of their projects, events, and writings that have a connection to several of the permaculture principles, as how these were introduced earlier in the thesis. I am therefore confident that it is possible to create a set of principles, that can be of use in several locations and contexts, just as it is possible to implement the permaculture principles in different environments and projects, all over the world. This chapter will therefore present an adaptation of the original 12 permaculture principles, and has been influenced by GAIA Kosovo's work, as well as the theoretical approaches presented earlier in the thesis. I call this adaptation the "Permaculture Peace Framework" (PPF).

6.1 The Permaculture Peace Framework

The PPF has been inspired and heavily shaped by all the above theories and social lenses, as well as the knowledge from GAIA Kosovo. It should be made clear that this framework does not pretend to be complete, and I hope that this work will provide the foundation for further research. Within the limited of the scope of this thesis, it would be impossible to develop the framework far enough for it to be widely deployed. However, this thesis is intended to be a departure point for further research, especially for myself, but hopefully also for others. The central argument is that the Permaculture Peace Framework will be able to help practitioners, researchers and lawmakers navigate complex situations, as well as private people in their everyday lives. The framework aims to find and highlight hidden power structures that are inherently present in conflicts, and by making such power structures visible, it should be easier to develop and implement projects and initiatives. As Macnamara (Macnamara, 2012) argues, by carefully observing our surroundings, we are able to better tailor solutions to a given problem or conflict, regardless of the size and scale of the project.

The PPF further adopts Iris van der Tuin's (2018) argument that in order to avoid furthering "us vs them" rhetoric, how we view and understand community needs to change. I believe that by entrenching ourselves we lose our connection with the rest of the world, both non-human and human alike. The original 3 permaculture ethics argues that we have a moral obligation to treat our planet and all life on it, with respect and inclusion. This foundation is carried over to the PPF, and therefore they remain the same. They are, as mentioned earlier; 1) earthcare, 2) peopelcare and 3) fair share and redistribution.

Furthermore, the PPF has a focus on how local knowledge and experiences make every person, place, community, and conflict unique. In extension, each peacebuilding design should be designed for the specific context in which it is used. The framework argues that the original three ethics and twelve guiding principles of permaculture provide a comprehensive starting point to peace building, reconciliation and community building. This refers back to – and is heavily inspired by - the chapter on permaculture principles, as well as the knowledge gained from GAIA Kosovo. The adapted principles, as presented below, have been boiled down to 11 principles instead of 12. I view the original principle 10 (use and value diversity) and 11 (Use and value edges and the marginal) to be highly overlapping, especially when adapted and applied to social understandings, thus I have combined them in the principles below.

6.2 The 11 Principles

The following set of principles follow the order of the original permaculture principles. The principles are not a "step-by-step" guide for peacebuilding, rather they overlap and intertwine constantly.

6.2.1 Observe and interact

The PPF argues that by carefully **observing** (principle 1) conflict situations, preferably before any violent conflict erupts, it will be possible to make better suited interventions. Conflict itself can mean many things but the PPF does not see conflict as something inherently negative. It rather follows the argument by Galtung that conflict is a part of everyday life (Galtung, 2004, p. 2), and

how we approach conflict is often more important than actual conflict. Conflicts can then be understood as a pre-requisite for meaningful change; thus, the interest is in violence prevention, not conflict prevention. However, observation is not only an external exercise, but it should also equally be applied internally. It is a difficult exercise to critically observe one's own needs, behaviors and thought processes, but it may help avoid or mitigate certain damaging processes.

6.2.2 Energy needs

The PPF argues that if the **energy needs**, such as food, of people and communities are not met, that will lead instability and insecurity, and thus needs to be a factor in peacebuilding. The understanding of "needs" is largely based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs³, and the PPF argues that each need requires a different "energy" input in order to be achieved. Understanding the needs of people, and in extension, the needs of groups, is important for reconciliation (Burton, 1990), though this is easier said than done. The PPF accepts that the notion of needs is highly complex, and how to understand and approach the concept differ in academia (Avruch & Mitchell, 2013; Burton, 1990). I would argue that, from a feminist new materialist viewpoint, one should also seek to include and respect the needs of the environment and non-humans while designing peace initiatives.

6.2.3 Seeing results

If the peacebuilding efforts are not **obtaining a yield** or **seeing results** for the PPF, the logical step would be to **observe** (principle 1) and then **self-regulate and accept feedback** (principle 4) from the stakeholders in order to adjust the efforts. "**Seeing results**" does not equate to "success" in the traditional understanding of the word, rather I would argue that any result would be useful for a given process. Viewing it as such will also encourage constant vigilance and reflectivity and flexibility. This principle asks us to constantly reevaluate the designs and activities in order to see what is working and what is not and make changes accordingly.

³ Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is a theory within psychology, in which a range of needs are visualized in a pyramid. In order to reach the top of the pyramid, the needs below must be met. The level ranges are "Physiological needs" such food and water, "safety needs", "belonging and love needs", "esteem needs" and finally "self-actualization". (McLeod, 2020)

6.2.4 Apply self-regulation and feedback

For the PPF, taking honest feedback seriously, and in extension accepting it is important for all actors in peacebuilding efforts, regardless of position. Being open to feedback is especially pertinent for policy makers and people in decision-making positions that have direct impacts on other people's lives. Leaving out the input from those that policies are affecting can lead to escalation. Civil society actors and organizations have, or can have, important functions in society, and especially important is the inclusion of marginalized peoples.

6.2.5 Use sufficient and sustainable resources

For the facilitation of peacebuilding efforts, **sufficient resources** should be available so the services can be continued for however long it is needed. By not seeing projects and efforts through to the end, you end up with an insufficient "yield" and you may need to intervene again later. This principle further asks us to value and empower the local by sustainable means, and limit harmful outside interference. As Macnamara argues: "We can freely exchange knowledge and skills with others. We are renewable resources in ourselves and can choose to put our energy to good use." (Macnamara, 2012, p. 21)

6.2.6 Produce no waste

Similarly, in order to not **waste** money, time and energy, you need to constantly evaluate the current needs of the participants and stakeholders. It is also connected to the belief that each person has intrinsic value and efforts should be made to include and/or aid those that need support. It is also the belief that projects and initiatives, ideally, should continue as long as needed, though this is highly challenging because funding can be difficult to secure.

6.2.7 Look at the patterns

Principle 7 ask us to look **at patterns**, not only in a conflict but also in any social setting in order to find the details and root causes of behavior. Like a medical problem, where if you only treat the symptoms the patient will never heal, PPF believes that you cannot promote reconciliation or transformation in a conflict if you do not address the root causes.

6.2.8 Integrate rather than segregate

Any peacebuilding effort should aim to include and **integrate** everyone who is affected into the process. How that would be possible would depend on the local context, but PPF acknowledges the intrinsic value of different opinions and ideas, as well as the intrinsic value of each individual and group. However, this principle also reaches into the social and political world and it argues that only when equality and equity is strived for, can any sort of environmental-, climate-, economic- and social justice exist.

6.2.9 Small and slow changes

PPF argues for **small and slow** changes instead of trying to implement too many changes at once, which could be overwhelming for the affected people and groups. PPF believes that in peacebuilding efforts, it takes time to deal with trauma and to build trust between people, especially in contexts where conflicting parties live in close proximity. Protracted conflicts have developed over a long period of time, it should then also be expected that reconciliation takes time. Moving too fast and implementing too big changes may spiral out of control, and unexpected and unforeseen consequences may not be possible to reign back in.

6.2.10 Value diversity, value the marginal

In order to facilitate trust, PPF encourages to **value and diversity, the edges and the marginal** (principle 10 and 11). The permaculture Peace Framework believes that by including people of all cultures and creeds, as well as marginalized groups in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, it is possible to build resilient and inclusive communities. However, in protracted social conflicts, this may well be a slow and arduous endeavor, and it shouldn't be forced. The involved parties must be open and have an interest in transforming the conflict at hand.

6.2.11 Creatively respond to change

For any long-term projects unforeseen challenges and developments are unavoidable, thus facilitators and participants alike, must **creatively respond to change**, and be willing to adapt to those changes. Change can be welcomed and beneficial, but change can also be a challenge for a

design that is being implemented. How we react to both negative and positive change matters. It is likely that there will be setbacks in any process, and this principle asks us how we can use the change to our benefit, instead of making rash and shortsighted reactions that may be counterproductive.

6.3 PPF Summary

The PPF have been inspired by different theories, previous literature, as well as the work of GAIA Kosovo, as discussed in this thesis. The principles presented in this chapter can be viewed to be additions to the original permaculture principles, in order to create a conceptual and theoretical framework with peace and conflict studies. Permaculture design is a systems design approach, in which it is understood that if one thing in the system is changed or fails, the repercussions can be felt throughout the entirety. Therefore, continuous planning and little adjustments need to be made. The PPF is built on the belief that similar things happen in situations with conflict. The framework aims to enable creative peacebuilding and community building efforts, as well as bridging the gap between the natural world and the social and political world. This framework is a conscious attempt to bring in alternative and creative approaches into the field of peace and conflict studies.

7. Conclusion

Despite the war in Kosovo ended in 1999, this case study has showed there are still a social a physical divide between the different ethnic groups in Kosovo. Through the work of GAIA Kosovo, we have seen how a civil society organization can make use of the original ethics and principles from permaculture in their work. Their work not only tries to build bridges among ethnic divides, as seen through the “story telling caravan” events, but also between people of different ages and nationalities. Some of their work deals with food security and trying to connect urban youth to healthy food production, via their urban permaculture roof garden project in Mitrovica, as well as through different workshops. I have argued that it is difficult to see the direct impact of the work and the initiatives, though this not necessarily a negative, given that change takes a long time. GAIA Kosovo and the 3peas project tries to make use of creative events and projects to improve the situation in their country and the region, and it is rather clear that their work will continue.

This thesis had the assumption and hypothesis that the principles of permaculture could be adapted to create a practical and theoretical approach to peacebuilding. The data from the case study did not actually fully cooperate with this hypothesis, neither did the data argue against it. The adapted principles as presented above, do not offer any concrete practical steps (at least in a traditional understanding of the word) to how one should approach peacebuilding. However, I would argue that the Permaculture Peace Framework principles does offer concrete elements that should be remembered when designing peace initiatives, thus offering some practicality for the practitioner. I have also argued that similar to how each permaculture site will be different and will require different inputs, different social- and conflict settings will require different inputs and solutions. That is to say, it can then be considered to be impossible to offer any practical approaches that can be universally applied, since every context is unique. The PPF can therefore be viewed more as a set of theoretical principles that seeks to aid in peacebuilding efforts, regardless of size and societal level. The assumption was therefore partly correct, since the data did show how a small local NGO can incorporate permaculture in their peacebuilding work.

The PPF have been inspired by many different theories within peace and conflict studies, such as the notion of positive peace, sustainable reconciliation, and aspects of feminist new materialism,

and of course permaculture theory, and in the current format of the PPF I have condensed and compiled these theories into the principles. Therefore, it is possible to go much deeper into each principle and draw meaning, than what has been presented in this thesis. I have further argued that the world is changing, and it is not possible to know how fast and to what extent the change is happening. Therefore, the starting point of this thesis was one of pessimism, and I view how the international community deals with conflict, forced migration, environmental disasters and climate change to be inherently unjust. However, the theoretical departure and the research findings from Kosovo, and adaptation of the permaculture ethics and principles, are built on inclusion, idealism, hope and optimism.

The version of the PPF presented in this thesis is a tentative one. The connection between permaculture and peace and conflict studies ought to be further researched in different settings and different geographical locations. I would also argue that the original permaculture principles did not need much alteration to create the PPF, which, I believe, strengthens, and supports my original hypothesis. The PPF is inherently fluid, meaning that not only will my understanding of what the principles mean change over time, some principles will likely be weighted higher than others in certain contexts. It also means that this topic would benefit from being explored further, not only by myself, but also by other people, thus improving and evolving it. I have also argued that the PPF principles should not be understood as a “step-by-step” guide to peacebuilding but should be understood to be elements that should be remembered in the design and implementation of peacebuilding efforts.

I argue that each conflict is unique and too complex to apply any grand narratives or solutions, and instead fluid notions and approaches of peacebuilding may help us understand the world better. The work of GAIA Kosovo and their 3peas project shows the importance of small, localized events can bring meaning and empowerment. In my perception, everything is changing, and we must find creative and sustainable ways of dealing with those changes, and we have a moral obligation to help each other. Through the ethics and principles of permaculture, I believe we can.

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Appendix

List of gathered documents

| Document (D) # | Title and link |
|----------------|--|
| D1 | About 3PEAS 1.0 & 2.0, https://3peas.design/home/about-3peas/ |
| D2 | Natural Building, https://3peas.design/tools/natural-building/ |
| D3 | Regenerative agriculture, https://3peas.design/tools/regenerative-agriculture/ |
| D4 | Social PC, https://3peas.design/tools/social-pc/ |
| D5 | Volunteering in Bozevce, https://3peas.design/category/volunteering-in-bozevce/ |
| D6 | Building with nature in mind, http://gaiakosovo.org/2019/08/27/building-with-nature-in-mind/ |
| D7 | GAIA home page, http://gaiakosovo.org/ |
| D8 | Meeting Neighbors, http://gaiakosovo.org/2018/10/23/meeting-neighbors-a-week-in-velika-hoca-hoce-e-madhe/ |
| D9 | Nature based practice, https://3peas.design/nature-based-practice/ |

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| D10 | Peacebuilding program, http://gaiakosovo.org/project/peacebuilding-program-in-mitrovica/ |
| D11 | Permaculture for sceptics, https://3peas.design/permaculture-for-sceptics/ |
| D12 | Permaculture program, http://gaiakosovo.org/project/permaculture-program-in-bozevce/ |
| D13 | Building a rocket stove mass heater, https://3peas.design/building-a-rocket-stove-mass-heater/ |
| D14 | Mitrovica Blog, https://3peas.design/category/volunteering-in-mitrovica/ |
| D15 | Composting in urban settings, https://3peas.design/composting-in-urban-settings/ |
| D16 | About GAIA, http://gaiakosovo.org/about-us/ |
| D17 | Story Telling Caravan, http://gaiakosovo.org/2019/03/28/we-have-more-bridges-now-but-back-then-we-used-to-be-more-united-although-we-only-had-one-bridge/ |
| D18 | Story Telling Caravan, http://gaiakosovo.org/2019/02/28/when-you-practice-a-sport-youre-not-supposed-to-look-at-nationalities-youre-just-friends-seeking-to-play-together/ |
| D19 | Neighbors, https://3peas.design/2019/03/21/neighbours/ |
| D20 | Why all of this, https://3peas.design/home/about-the-world/ |
| D21 | Creating a vertical garden from plastic bottles https://3peas.design/creating-a-vertical-garden-from-plastic-bottles/ |
| D22 | Make Seedbombs, https://3peas.design/make-seedbombs/ |