
Locals Only!

Understanding territorial behavior at surf breaks in
Portugal

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Abstract

In this thesis, I look at manifestations of surf localism. Or more precisely, how local surfers in Baleal, located next to Peniche in central Portugal, perceive conflicts over waves, how they negotiate space in the increasingly crowded line-ups and how the status of being a local directly influences the social dynamics of a line-up. The study is based on qualitative interviews and observations that were conducted during a four week stay in the survey area and analyzed with the Grounded Theory Method. The findings show that emerging conflicts between local surfers and visitors are rooted in a diverse understanding of the prevailing rules in the line-ups. These rules are context-specific and place-dependent. Crowding is a challenge for the dynamics of any line-up, and local surfers develop various strategies to deal with it, involving protective actions that can be regarded as practices of localism. Every surf spot has its own rules and demands a specific behavior of the people who surf it, which makes it difficult to formulate universal behavior norms, although such attempts have already been undertaken with the publicizing of surf etiquette. Localism may therefore be regarded as a complex set of place-dependent and context-specific practices, varying from supportive forms of guidance in the water to abusive or even violent, territorial behavior against visitors.

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Explanation of Terms

Dropping in on so.: When a surfer enters a wave that is already being surfed by another surfer

Intermediate surfer: A surfer who can ride a wave to the end and perform some basic turns

Line-up: The space just behind the breaking zone, where surfers wait for approaching waves

Free-surfing: Surfing independently, not taking or giving classes in a surf school

Kook: Derogatory for a beginner or intermediate surfer who does not know what he or she is doing

Paddling in/going in: Leaving the water

Paddling out: Paddling to the line-up

Party wave: A wave intentionally surfed by multiple persons

Peak: The spot where a wave breaks first

Pulling the nose [of the surfboard]: Interrupting an attempt to catch a wave/letting a wave go

Small day: Easy conditions with small waves

Snaking: Paddling around another surfer to get closer to the peak into a priority position

Surf etiquette: An informal set of rules about the correct behavior in the water

Take-off: The beginning of a ride

Wave count: The amount of waves surfed

Wipeout: Falling off the surfboard into the wave

WSL: World Surf League; formerly ASP: Association of Surfing Professionals

1 Introduction

1.1 Context

*«Yeah man sometimes it's just like, you need to protect what is yours here you know like a bit»
(Fieldwork quote, Afonso, 31).*

While people who have never been in contact with surfing themselves may connect it with a laid-back lifestyle of traveling, white beaches and tanned bodies, the reality sometimes looks quite different. In this thesis, I investigate a phenomenon referred to as «localism», meaning in this context territorial behavior of local surfers¹ at surf breaks around the world. This territoriality can lead to conflicts whose severity can range from intimidation and verbal abuse – which many traveling surfers have experienced – to damaged cars or even physical violence against people. Scheibel (1995: 255) describes localism as *«the various exclusionary cultural practices by which a number of surfers attempt to control access to particular surfing spots»*. It can also be characterized as a *«masculinized, xenophobic territorialism that can both unite and fracture others through threatened or actual violence»* (Scott 2003: 1). With reference to the Hawaiian history of surfing, in which surfing was subject to a strict hierarchical system, violence and localism are also seen as traditional components of the surf culture (Sweeney 2005).

Popular travel literature like the surf guide Stormrider (Low Pressure 2016), which evaluates surf spots according to criteria such as favorable wind conditions or swell directions, usually also lists the degree of localism at every evaluated spot and warns tourists of notorious places. This indicates that the degree of localism may influence a traveler's decision regarding whether or not to visit a certain place. Violent incidents with media attention like the case Nat Young, a former professional surfer and world champion who was almost beaten to death at his home break in Australia (Young 2000) contribute to a certain awareness of traveling surfers. Consequently, especially in the case of developing countries, localism and its deterrent effect on surf tourists may threaten local livelihoods.

¹ Surfing in the context of this thesis means exclusively the practice of riding waves, not windsurfing, kitesurfing or similar activities. For detailed information, e.g. about the history of surfing, important riders and surf slang, see Warsaw ((2005)), Encyclopedia of Surfing ((2016)) or Surfline ((2016)).

With a booming surf industry, very accurate forecasting of conditions and an increasing mobility of (landlocked) people, it is getting more and more crowded in the water. Depending on the source, there was an estimated amount of 5 to 26 million surfers worldwide in 2005 (Warshaw 2005) and today, there may be more than 30 million surfers (Surf Careers 2016). Meanwhile, the amount of rideable waves stays about the same, apart from remote waves that are yet to be discovered and a few artificial reefs to be built. Considering that it is often associated with crowding (De Alessi 2009; Daskalos 2007), localism is likely to become of increased importance in the future and remain on the agenda of surfers and researchers alike. Also, the manifestations of localism are context-dependent and differ from place to place, (Nazer 2004; Mixon 2014). Therefore, it is important to deepen the understanding of the processes at work and study differences between various locations.

1.2 Research Questions

In this thesis, I look at how local surfers in Baleal, located next to Peniche in central Portugal, perceive conflicts over waves, how they negotiate space in the increasingly crowded line-ups and how the status of being a local directly influences the social dynamics of a line-up. The research questions are:

- *How do local surfers perceive conflicts over waves?*
- *How is the line-up as a social space constituted, negotiated and represented?*

The aim of the thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and context-specific interpretations of the prevailing rules in the water, as well as to identify underlying thoughts and motivations that guide interactions in the line-up. The focus is on the perception of a heterogeneous group of local surfers in Baleal, whose opinions constituted the main part of the survey. Based on the findings, the characteristics of localism at this particular place are evaluated and compared to other studies.

To answer the research questions, a qualitative approach was chosen. The main instrument of data collection was the problem-centered interview after Witzel (2000), which was combined with participatory observations (Lüders 2000) in the line-ups. The transcribed interviews and field notes were then analyzed by coding text passages using the Grounded Theory Method (Glaser & Strauss 1967).

1.3 Structure

The following chapter outlines the state of the art. It shows different aspects of surfing that have already been addressed by social science, as well as various approaches to localism in contemporary research. After the literature review, the methods of the thesis are explained. It is shown how the data were collected through conducting interviews and observations, and how the sampling of the interview partners was done. After that, the analysis of the data using the Grounded Theory Method is presented, followed by a detailed description of the case study area and the criteria that led to its choice. The next chapter presents the results of the survey and is structured into the six main categories crowding, contextual rules, negotiations, surf schools, seasonality and localism. These subchapters feature detailed findings with quotes from the interviewees. After thoroughly presenting the results, they are summarized in the discussion, while answers to the research questions are discussed. In this process, the results are discussed in relation to existing literature, and the methods of the project are reflected critically upon. Finally, concluding remarks give suggestions regarding future research projects

2 State of the art

Science has engaged with surfing on numerous levels, for example from the perspective of tourism research with the focus on sustainable development and the environmental and social impact of surf tourism in both popular and emerging destinations (Buckley 2002; Ponting et al. 2005; Martin & Assenov 2012). On other occasions, the emphasis lies on a historical perspective on surf culture (Finney & Houston 1996), on territoriality or on surfing space and its constitution. Because the perception and interpretation of surfing space is fundamental to the research questions, this literature review focuses on research on surf localism. This topic has been addressed on several occasions and approached from various perspectives, most prominently as a resource conflict or as an element of identity construction. There is research from a great variety of fields such as sociology, economics, tourism, linguistics, sport science, ethics and geography. A useful overview of surfing and social theory has been written by Ford and Brown (2006). In the following sections, different approaches to surf localism in contemporary research are presented, with various theoretical backgrounds and different core themes.

2.1 Resource conflicts

Localism as a resource conflict has been theorized as a classical tragedy of the commons (Hardin 1968). According to this theory, unregulated common pool resources are doomed to overexploitation, because of the lack of motivation for collective action. This will eventually lead to degradation of the resources, unless private property rights are enforced (Hardin 1968). Critics of this theory have stated that sustainable exploitation of a common pool resource is possible without formal property rights by governing common pool resources with adequately designed institutions (Ostrom 1990).

When surf localism is regarded as a resource conflict, the breaking wave is seen as a common pool resource with insufficient regulation, where overcrowding leads to its degradation (Kaffine 2009; De Alessi 2009; Mixon 2014; Nazer 2004). With too many people surfing the same surf break, the wave quality itself is not affected, but the surfing experience will be of a lower quality as there are less waves to be surfed per person and more obstacles in the water that may interrupt a ride. Using this approach, localism is seen as a way to enforce property rights on the resource, regulate access and ensure the quality of the surfing experience for the local surfers. Using quantitative analyses of surf breaks in California, Kaffine (2009) and Mixon

(2014) found a positive correlation between the quality of a wave and the level of localism, and based on this they argued that the higher the quality of a common resource is, the more effort is put into regulating it. To illustrate the methods of surf localism, De Alessi (2009) and Nazer (2004) compared it to the strategies of the «lobster gangs» of Maine, where access and exploitation rights of fisheries are enforced with intimidation and violence to keep outsiders out of the business (Acheson 1975). Although not very popular among surfers, the privatization of surf breaks is seen as a possible solution to the problem of violent localism (Mixon 2014; Kaffine 2009; De Alessi 2009). This would put an end to informal property claims if properly enforced, but it is not an option for other researchers (Olivier 2010; Nazer 2004). Instead, the efficiency of social norms and informal rules, also known as surf etiquette, for governing the line-ups is emphasized (Nazer 2004).

2.2 Social space, identity construction and masculinity

On other occasions, localism has been linked to space, lifestyle, identity construction and masculinity (Anderson 2014; Beaumont & Brown 2014a; Preston-Whyte 2002; Usher & Kerstetter 2015a; Waitt 2008; Waitt & Frazer 2012; Langseth 2012). Surfing space is seen from a constructivist perspective with reference to Massey (2005), which means that line-ups are regarded as places that have multiple meanings and are subject to constant reconstitution and negotiation.

Another important theoretical framework is the model of the four stages of identity construction in sport subculture, which consist of pre-socialization, membership, socialization and acceptance (Donnelly & Young 1988). A strong identification with a surf spot is therefore seen as part of the integration in the subculture (Langseth 2012; Usher & Kerstetter 2015a).

Other researchers regard the practices of localism as an embodiment of masculinity (Waitt 2008; Evers 2009; Waitt & Frazer 2012). Localism is then described as a male demonstration of power by local surfers over other men who are seen as intruders.

Qualitative field studies of surfing that engage at least to some partly with localism have been conducted in different parts of the world, namely in Australia (Waitt 2008; Waitt & Frazer 2012), South Africa (Preston-Whyte 2002), Nicaragua (Usher & Kerstetter 2015a; Usher & Kerstetter 2015b), California (Anderson 2014), Norway (Langseth 2012) and England (Beaumont & Brown 2014a; Beaumont & Brown 2014b). The most relevant for this thesis seem to be the findings of Beaumont and Brown (2014a) who looked at exclusionary practices of

local surfers in a small village in Cornwall. *[W]e illustrated how a process of Othering based on location, rather than gender, used benign localism to attempt to protect the community and its way of life from Outsiders (Beaumont & Brown 2014a: 15)*. So rather than being a performance of masculinity, like proposed in other studies, e.g. by Waitt and Warren (2008), localism was found to be a form of protection for the village community. This community feeling can be experienced in a unique way through the practice of riding waves together, so the longing for its preservation is seen as a major driver of localism (Beaumont & Brown 2014a). They further state that localism became more pronounced with overcrowding and that by the process of Othering, referring to the creation of a group of insiders, the locals themselves became outsiders when traveling and surfing at other places (Beaumont & Brown 2014a).

Another qualitative field study of interest was conducted by Usher and Kerstetter (2015a) in Nicaragua. They found that practices of localism were more commonly performed by newcomer foreigner residents than by the indigenous locals and explained this by identity construction and the accumulation of subcultural capital (Ford & Brown 2006), meaning the newcomers had to establish themselves in the local subculture and stand out against the tourists – from whom they were not distinguishable visually.

It is notable that qualitative field studies on localism were virtually nonexistent in the 1990s and seem to have grown in popularity in recent times, so there may be more to be expected in the future.

3 Methods

This chapter offers an overview of the research methods. Achieving the aim of this thesis, to explore the perspective of local surfers on interactions in the line-up, requires a qualitative approach. The main principles of qualitative research are general openness, flexibility of the research design, recognition of research as a circular process, implying readiness for adjustments and reflexivity of the relation between the researcher and the subject (Flick 2015; Lamnek 2010; Mayring 2002). These principles were used as a guideline for the research design and the choice of methods for the survey and the analysis, all while recognizing the researcher as an integral part of the research and avoiding false neutrality (Rose 1997).

First, the survey methods are presented and discussed. After that, the analysis process is explained and finally, the choice of the location for the case study is explained, including a brief overview of the area.

3.1 Data collection

The research design is based on the Grounded Theory Method as presented by Strauss and Corbin (1996), which is further described in 3.2 *Analysis*, so the choice of survey methods was made to produce data that would be suitable for theoretical coding.

The prime research interest was the perception and interpretation of social interactions, the exploration of which requires in-depth interviews with the subjects. After evaluating different interview forms as presented by Flick (2011), the problem-centered interview after Witzel (2000) was chosen as the main method for the survey, as it best suited the research questions. The problem-centered interview enables a combination of inductive and deductive thinking, emphasizing the interviewee's own narrative while at the same time letting the interviewer make use of his previous knowledge by asking the interviewees to expand on particularly interesting points of the narrations (Witzel 2000). To support the interviews and make use of the stimulating effects of group interaction, which promotes spontaneity and puts the interview in a socially contextualized environment, a group discussion as described by Ritchie and co-authors (2014) was also conducted.

In order to have a second pillar, offering another point of view, participatory and non-participatory observations (Lüders 2000) were made. With two perspectives, gained by two different methods of survey – interviews and observations – a triangulation of methods was

possible. Flick (2011) describes triangulation as the combination of different theoretical approaches or, like in this case, different methods, that offer additional insight into the research topic. In addition, there were many informal conversations with locals and tourists that were not recorded or systematically analyzed but contributed to my personal perception of the place and its people.

The interviews were conducted during a 2 week period in May 2015 in the area around Peniche, Portugal. A translator was not necessary, as all interviewees spoke English. In total, 14 interviews were conducted, including one group discussion with 3 people. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed, resulting in about 10 hours of audio material and 175 pages of transcripts. The previously designed interview guidelines were interpreted with flexibility and spontaneously adjusted according to the direction of each individual interview. It contained mainly open, narrative stimulating questions, structured into 4 topics: surf spots as places, social life component, rules in the line-up and specifying local, supplemented by questions about demographical data. The interview guidelines can be found in the *Appendix*.

The participants were initially chosen through snowball sampling, which limits the generalization to a wider population (Biernacki & Waldorf 1981) but offered a starting point in an unfamiliar field. Variation in opinions was regarded as more important than representativeness, so the interviewees were chosen with regards to demographical characteristics such as age, gender and the time of residency in the area. During the survey, the already gathered data were reflected upon and gaps filled by future choices of interview partners, so the overall sampling was a mixture between snowball sampling and theoretical sampling as described by Glaser and co-authors (2010). In theoretical sampling, data collection and analysis are ongoing, parallel processes that demand constant adaptation of the survey (Glaser et al. 2010). During the four weeks of field research, I stayed in the Baleal Surf Camp, one of the oldest surf camps in the area. The camp has Portuguese owners and is well rooted in the town, which probably helped to get in touch with locals quickly.

The youngest interviewee was 21 years old, the oldest 56 and there were 13 men and 2 women interviewed. Among the interviewees, there were 10 Portuguese, 3 Brazilians, one American and one German. All participants were in some way connected to the area of Baleal; all of them have surfed there and either live and/or work in Baleal and its surroundings or did so in the past. (See 3.3 *Case study* for a detailed map of the area). When choosing the interviewees, it was also regarded as important to gain a certain amount of expert knowledge, so there was extra effort made to find and interview people who have lived in the area for a long time, as well as surf camp operators, head coaches, seasoned surfers in general and the

first female surfer of the region. The economy of Baleal largely depends on tourism; almost all of the interviewees had jobs connected to surf tourism and 9 of them worked as surf instructors. Jobs at bars and receptions are popular too, and some interviewees had more than one job at a time. I have no sense of past simple and present perfect!

The interviews were conducted in bars and restaurants or at the workplace of the interviewed people. Some interviews were conducted in a private setting, others at public places, depending on the preference of the interviewees. Before conducting the first interview, I had already stayed in Baleal for 2 weeks in order to get known to the area and the people and to establish a sense of mutual trust, which in some cases may have helped to deepen the conversations and made it easier to obtain recommendations for more potential interview partners. A theoretical saturation (Glaser et al. 2010) was reached after about a dozen interviews, meaning that there was no more new information gained with more interviews in the setting of Baleal. The interviews reflect a broad spectrum of opinions of surfers whose life is centered in Baleal. To gain insight into an even broader spectrum of opinions, the focus of the survey should be shifted to adjacent Peniche. The validity of the methods is further discussed in *5.2 Critical reflection of the methods*.

The observations were made during a 4-week-stay in April and May 2015 as well as in a second stay of 4 weeks in September and October. The non-participatory observations of the line-up were made from the beach, from a beach bar or from an adjacent line-up. However, they were restricted to observations of body language and the occurrence of excessive shouting because of the distance, the wind and the loud noise of the breaking waves. The participatory observations in the line-ups were more fruitful and enabled thorough impressions of the prevailing atmosphere on a daily basis. They provided insight into a great number of context-dependent interpretations of surf etiquette, negotiations between surfers, as well as critical situations like crashes and arguments. Most of the time, I experienced these as a close spectator, but sometimes I was directly involved, especially regarding the ignorance of surf etiquette, when someone dropped in on me, and because of the necessity to constantly negotiate with other surfers in overcrowded line-ups. The setting can be regarded as natural, because I was by no means discernible as a researcher but was just one of hundreds of surfers in the line-ups of Baleal.

Maybe move this part to discussion? The main challenges during the data collection were getting hold of the interview partners. Although many people were interested in the topic of the thesis and agreed to give an interview, appointments were rarely adhered to, except if they were within an hour. This can be attributed to the general lifestyle in Baleal, in which

leisure time seems to be structured spontaneously. After learning this, the strategy was adapted and interview candidates were (sometimes repeatedly) approached directly at their workplace, in bars or in the line-up. As soon as an interview was running, people were usually eager to contribute.

The challenges of the participatory observations were more of physical nature, because reaching the line-ups on days with rough surf can be demanding. However, the participatory observations were only undertaken on the designated beginner spots of Baleal, which gave insight into typical beginner- and intermediate-dominated line-ups. The reef of Lagide was avoided, just like Supertubos in Peniche, for reasons of personal safety, and also to avoid situations with the potential to undermine the established trust and credibility. It was obvious that overestimating one's surfing abilities and paddling out to line-ups of waves suitable for advanced surfers only was likely to cause conflicts with advanced surfers, locals in particular. This might have resulted in interesting situations with direct participation, but it may also have negatively influenced people's willingness to be interviewed, so it was avoided.

3.2 Analysis

In order to analyze the data, the first step was transcribing the audio files, which was done using the software f4 (Audiotranskription 2016). The transcription was done by myself and was helpful to internalize *what* was said and *how* it was said. In order to preserve the way that people talked about something, the transcription was done word-by-word, marking short breaks with a comma, medium breaks with a point and breaks longer than 3 seconds with 3 points. The exact choice of words and the length of pauses between them can be crucial to fully grasp the meaning of a statement (Silverman 2006). However, to increase readability, filler sounds have not been transcribed but were substituted with commas, which also symbolize a gap in the flow of speech. In the process of transcribing, the interviews have been anonymized by changing the interviewees' names, but the names of the places remain the same, as they are important for the results.

After transcribing the audio files, the text material was analyzed according to the Grounded Theory Method, which was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Grounded Theory can be seen as a circular research process that seeks to develop a theory by interpreting qualitative data, gained by methods like interviews and observations, while constantly adjusting the data collection (Flick 2011). By systematically cracking, conceptualizing and rearranging the data,

which is what Glaser and Strauss (1967) call coding, the researcher is able to classify the data and identify relations between worked out terms and develop categories (Flick 2011).

To start with, three rich interviews were systematically coded, the most interesting parts of the text line-by-line, to establish a basic system of interrelated codes and subcodes. After creating this foundation, the other interviews were coded more selectively. During the coding process, the code system became clearer with every added interview until all relevant codes could be arranged into 6 categories that are closely related to each other:

- Crowding
- Contextual rules
- Negotiations
- Surf schools
- Seasonality
- Chasing localism

Every category consists of multiple codes, most of which contain several subcodes. The categories form the structure of the result chapter while the codes are represented by the third level subchapters. The last category *Chasing localism* is the core category around which the other categories are grouped. It is shaped by these categories and its content can only be understood when taking the other ones into account. After coding the interviews, the field notes from the participatory observations were coded too. The comparison with the perception of the interviewees offered validation, helped to identify additional contradictions and facilitated a methodical triangulation (Flick 2011).

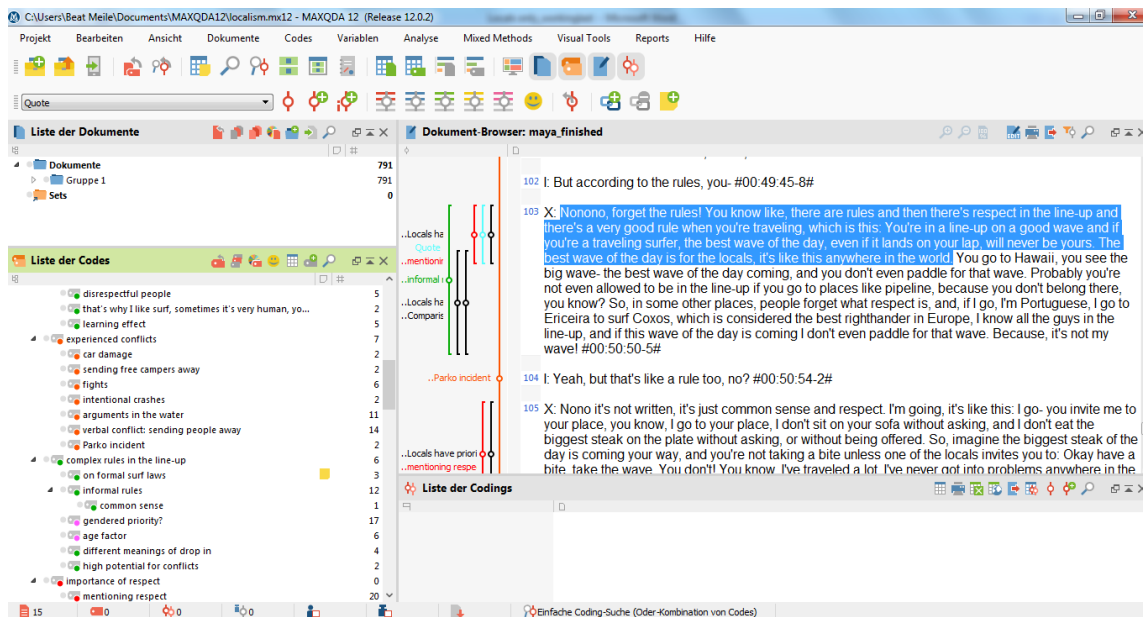


Figure 1: Coding with MAXQDA.

The coding was done using the software MAXQDA 12 (MAXQDA 2016) which offers a clear user interface (see *Figure 1*) and helps setting and revising codes, structuring the code system and keeping an overview of the project.

3.3 Case study

The destination of the case study was chosen after carefully considering various options. This was accomplished by consulting travel guides, surf magazines, research literature, first hand opinions from traveling surfers and own experiences.

First, there was the decision of whether to choose an area with a low impact of tourism or a prime destination for traveling surfers. The choice fell on the latter because, as even though there may be interactions between tourists and locals in destinations off the beaten track, the chance to find interview partners with diverse opinions on the matter was thought to be higher in popular tourist destinations. Also, the chance to make observations of interesting scenes seemed higher in heavily frequented surf spots than in deserted regions.

For budget- and proximity reasons, European destinations were favored, but other places were also considered.

Another criterion was language. The desired language for the interviews was English with French as a second option. This eliminated some Spanish candidates that would otherwise

have been promising and opened the gates for Portugal, which is known to be a popular travel destination among European surfers because of the many options for surfing, the pleasant climate and the relatively low costs. In popular tourist destinations, the Portuguese people tend to speak English well, which I learned on a previous journey to Portugal.

When deciding which place to go to in Portugal, seasonal factors had to be considered. Because the target subjects for the interviews were local surfers, there had to be a possibility to get in touch with them, so the season had to be right for waves of good quality. At the same time, a relatively low level of tourists was required to have a higher probability of encountering locals when approaching random surfers. For the planned fieldwork in May, Peniche seemed to be the perfect place, with spring normally offering good surfing conditions while still being off-season for both surfing and regular summer tourism. In addition to being more versatile than the other hot spots of surf tourism in Portugal, in the Algarve region, Peniche is also more compact and offers a larger variety of surf spots in a smaller area, which makes the logistics easier.



Figure 2: Map of the survey area (based on Google Maps 2016).

Peniche is a small harbor town in Central Portugal, about 80 kilometers north of Lisbon and situated on an artificial Peninsula in the Atlantic Ocean (see Figure 2). The town is

characterized by a fish factory and seems to have no particular value for tourism. However, on a larger scale it becomes clear that the actual epicenter of surf tourism is not Peniche but nearby Baleal, a summer resort that administratively belongs to the town of Ferrel. In Baleal there is a second peninsula (see *Figure 3*) that is roughly 5 kilometers away from the peninsula of Peniche and that has a high density of surf camps, surf shops and summer apartments. However, the most famous wave of Portugal, Supertubos, is situated just south of Peniche.

It is the combination of the two peninsulas that divide the coastline into different parts that makes this place unique for surfing. Good surfing conditions are highly dependent on the direction of the wind and on the exposition to the swell. With expositions from south-west to north-east as well as wave characteristics suitable for beginners up to professional surfers, the Peniche area offers a great variety of surf spots.



Figure 3: Surf break of Cantinho da Baia. This is a beginner's beach at the southern corner of the Baleal peninsula. This day in May 2015 offered small conditions and with about 20 people in the water a relatively uncrowded line-up.

Sometimes it can be confusing when describing the area, because the usage of the towns' names seems to be scale-dependent. On a small scale, one usually refers to Peniche, but on site it is helpful to differ between the Baleal area and the town of Peniche when speaking about localities. In this thesis, the differentiation is usually made; however in direct quotes of

interviewees, Peniche sometimes refers specifically to the town or its nearby beaches and sometimes to the area as a whole.

4 Results

The results chapter is structured around the categories that were developed during the analysis. First, all aspects of crowding are presented, after which the rules of correct behavior in the water and their context-specific interpretations are explained. This is followed by negotiations with transgressors, including a typology of experienced conflicts. After that, the impact of surf schools on the line-ups, as well as the seasonal aspects of the preceding topics are outlined. Lastly, the core category localism, which influences the others and puts them into a new dimension, is presented in detail.

4.1 Crowding

Crowding is a highly important issue across the whole area of Peniche and especially around the peninsula of Baleal. It is obvious to see why crowding has a strong, negative impact on the quality of a surf session. Every single interviewee regarded it as a major topic when talking about his or her surfing experience and about the challenges of finding a comfortable spot in the line-up.

The following subchapters show the results regarding safety issues, strategies on how to deal with crowds, the construction of the right mindset, assessing people and places, the temporal development and the dilemma of economy and overcrowding.

4.1.1 Impossible to control – safety issues

Apart from diminishing everyone's enjoyment of a surf session because there are fewer waves to be surfed per person, overcrowded line-ups are regarded as a real danger. Most people start to feel uncomfortable at a certain level of crowding and are concerned about their safety because of other surfers who lost control of their surfboards. If the crowd is regarded as not very disciplined, meaning basic rules are being ignored or if it consists mainly of beginners who tend to lose control over their boards quickly, the feeling of insecurity is further increased.

«The thing is, that we have to control is, the beginners man, 'cause those are the dangerous ones, those ones those are the ones that like they don't control themselves, you know they still don't have that... that quality, that skill of surfing, they're still hazardous for themselves and others. So if you see beginners going to a line-up, like an outside line-up, fucking crazy, they shouldn't do that shit, cause they don't know what the fuck they're doing, they just gonna battle for every wave possible in the wrong place, anything can happen» (Santiago, 21).

Most people experienced accidents when they were surfing a wave and then got dropped in on by another surfer or when they were paddling back out to the line-up and got run over by someone surfing a wave. It has to be added that there does not necessarily have to be an actual crash to get hurt: When trying to avoid a crash with another person, a surfer might fall and get hurt badly by his or her own board, especially when surfing a more powerful wave.

The biggest safety situation seems to be a crowd consisting at least partially of free-surfing beginners using epoxy boards, which are harder and heavier than the performance orientated fiberglass boards. Surf schools mostly use soft top boards that are large and heavy, but with a soft, foamy surface to minimize the ramifications of crashes. Maria, who has experienced a couple of them, puts it like this:

«When you ride a surfboard, you have to think that thing you're riding it's a gun, you might kill someone you might hurt someone, so you have to be careful with other people in the water. And some people, because they're starting, or because I don't know why they don't have that notion» (Maria, 56).

People are not only worried about their personal safety, but also about their material, because surfboards – especially fiberglass boards – are very fragile and get damaged easily.

4.1.2 Strategies on how to deal with crowded line-ups

Maybe the most obvious strategy to deal with crowds is to leave the line-up when it gets too packed, or not to go there in the first place. Many people would go for a compromise and sacrifice some wave quality or take the trouble to surf at a more remote spot for the benefits of an uncrowded line-up.

When surfing in overcrowded line-ups, it is regarded as very important to make oneself noticed, so some people are constantly whistling, shouting or screaming whenever they see someone paddling for a wave they are already in. Without this verbal attracting of attention, it seems to be almost guaranteed to get dropped in on some line-ups. Santiago describes this situation as follows:

«Of course! "Heeeey! Get out of the way!" Of course man, you have to. They have to know that you're on the wave cause, I can believe that most times they don't see you, of course even that happens with us, like you're just concentrating! On the wave! Paddling! I'm gonna get it! I'm gonna get it you don't remember to look at the left. Ey, anyone coming, no man you're just trying to get it, and sometimes you're not aware of it, so the guy that is already on the wave should do anything to warn you even just cause it's dangerous, like, I think you're not getting in, you're paddling as hell, I'm going on the wave, you can get there in the end and out of nowhere I just come up: "Pochh!" My board in your face, you see the dangerous thing out of it? So yeah of course, you have to try and let the guy that you're coming: "Motherfucker, get out of the way!" That's the best approach man, cause that's like, that's the basic principle. But yeah of course you can whistle like, you can do everything but in my opinion not shouting aggressively but shouting, is the best way, they have to hear you, you know. That's the main goal» (Santiago, 21).

According to my observations, this approach is widely practiced and usually there are no hard feelings between those involved. On the contrary, after a critical situation, an almost run-over surfer would often encourage the other one to shout louder the next time to be recognized earlier.

Another way to deal with crowded line-ups is abandoning the rules (which are expounded later in this chapter). In order to make the most of their surf session, some people decide to embrace chaos because they do not see a reasonable way to play according to the rules:

«And then just, you lose your patience man, you realize that it's not possible, I'm gonna have my waves and, that you basically have to don't give a fuck. And that's the only way that you can go into the water and you can say yeah I'm gonna have fun. I'm gonna get out, I'm not gonna complain with anyone, I'm not gonna say, nothing to anyone, but I'm gonna drop, whoever the fuck it is, I'm gonna believe they don't surf for shit, and they gonna fall [...] 2 seconds after they get up, and they gonna waste that wave, and I won't allow that, cause I have like one hour before work, and I wanna enjoy [...], the most of it, and those guys are staying here for one week vacation, so» (Santiago, 21).

However, this view is not shared by everyone. Others state that it is crucial to uphold a certain order and to be altruistic and friendly in the line-up:

«You have to be polite, some people are stupid, you just have to be polite also [...], you have to let others surf right? You not gonna catch all the waves, let others surf also, you know take your time, it's a sport to enjoy» (Carolina, 35).

In contrast, as a final strategy, some surfers celebrate a markedly aggressive behavior to scare others away and reduce the number of surfers in the line-up. This includes making hostile glances at others, exaggerated shouting, dropping in on someone on purpose to cut off the ride or bluntly sending people away.

«Sometimes we are not very correct you know, I'm telling you about the common sense and-sometimes we have to- It's like I was telling: action, reaction. It's a question of action reaction, sometimes, in an ideal world it would be like I'm telling you but, because it's not like this sometimes you have to overexaggerate a little bit, so that things normalize again. You know, you have to go over the top, so that it settles, evens things you know, sometimes you're in the water, and no one is particularly doing anything but, the line-up is very short, it's a very small area, there's too much people. If 80% of the people are not catching waves, and they are annoying, it's better to open some space and to, you know, start to... And that sometimes happens» (Rodrigo, 39).

Rodrigo's confession illustrates that strategy of decimating the crowd, however this is an extreme form and usually not the case for the beach breaks of Baleal but rather for the reef break of Lagide with its narrow take-off zone.

Surprisingly, the timing of the surf session was rarely mentioned. It can be rewarding to go surfing early, at sunrise, to avoid the crowds and especially the schools. This is practiced by some dedicated surf tourists and of course locals that go surfing before work, but was not discussed in the interviews.

4.1.3 Good vibes, not anger -the right mindset

Because negotiating space in the line-up can be exhausting and stressful, people sometimes have to remind themselves of the reason why they are in the water in the first place: Because they want to have fun. Many interviewees describe surfing both as an individual sport and a social activity, so there is a desire to pursue a hobby, but also to share «good vibes» and have a great time with others in the water.

«Like, cause you get frustrated cause it's not that easy maybe the best waves you can't ride on cause someone dropped in on you, it happens but, man you just need to count to ten, realize that «alright there's gonna be another wave there's gonna be another day like«, the feeling itself like that's the main issue you don't- you have to avoid ruining it cause then it's not mission accomplished. You know, it's not the same feeling, it's not the same «alright I did it yeah awesome amazing» naah you just get out of there pissed off with life, and, surf can't be about that, it can't bother you, you know? Has to be something that, as I told you, enhance your day! You know make it better, that's the main goal in my opinion» (Santiago, 21).

Maybe even more important than remembering to stay positive during the surf session seems the mental preparation before entering the line-up. For some people, constructing the right mindset could even be seen as a powerful crowd-handling strategy:

«I think, it's just a mindset you know? You... like we right now, we're like here in front of Bruno's, and Cantinho is the most crowded place in Peniche, and, summertime there are days with 200 guys in the water, easy. [...] If I'm free surfing and I see a massive crowd, then I'm probably not gonna go there, then I'm probably not gonna go in the middle of the crowd, I will look for some other place I would probably rather surf not as good waves with less people, but if for some reason I decide I'm going there, then I'm already in that mindset. It's my option to go in the middle of 200 guys so if I'm not gonna be complaining if I get dropped in or if someone almost runs over me, [...] so just go there and have fun, not, not go there with that aggressive vibe or anything I think that's really stupid. When you go surfing in the middle of a crowd of beginners, you know what you're getting into» (Martim, 37).

Some interviewees describe it as a learning process. While they used to be stressed out quickly and experienced frustrating situations, they got calmer after a while and changed their attitude.

4.1.4 Assessing people

Assessing people is regarded as an important skill when approaching a crowd. In order to find the right place in the line-up, a surfer has to get a feeling for the general mood in the line-up and needs to estimate the skills of the people surrounding him. For an experienced surfer, the latter seems to be an easy task, in fact it is often enough to see someone carrying a board or just sitting in the line-up to get an idea of his or her level of surfing.

«When you come to the water, how you feel it that, you know you look to a person you can feel the energy you know. You look to a person while you surf, myself I can see that from 20 meters away you know. You know if the person's stressed, if that person is relaxed, if that person is stressed by the situation because you know, as she or he doesn't know what he's doing so he's in a stress situation. Or if you see this guy paddling smiling you know, showing that he's very confident what he's doing, he's paddling to you know to a spot where he gonna catch this nice wave» (Lucas, 20).

For Lucas, assessing other surfers in the line-up seems to be an easy task. Also, the general mood of the line-up is usually recognized quickly and can vary from welcoming greetings from strangers and applause for every surfed wave, to a more competitive mood with annoyed looks or even open hostility.

Beginners are often seen as obstacles, if not dangers, to other surfers. In a line-up with many beginners, some people tend to abandon the rules straight away, because they see no point in observing them:

«Out of 30, that're there, are 20 that don't surf shit. I'll just, I have to avoid those 20 man. I have to- if I'm gonna wait for those 20 to get a wave, I'll die before I get a wave you know, that's the main principle and that's why here that happens [...] Man and, when it's a general surf population out there, then don't know each other, it's a struggle man, wherever you are, you have to fight for your position you have to do everything, it's not how it should be but yeah it's how it is» (Santiago, 21).

However, if the skill level in the line-up is higher and/or the waves are more powerful, for reasons of safety and a positive mood in the line-up, the rules are regarded as vital. If a surfer arrives in such a line-up and does not behave appropriately, he or she will most likely be rebuked or even sent away. Situations like these seem to happen more often on small days when there are no challenging surf breaks present and surfers from all skill levels are surfing the same waves.

Another important factor is the origin of a surfer. Entering a line-up that consists only of locals will demand an even more polite and respectful approach, but this will be discussed further down.

Finally, the type of surfboard one is using can make a difference. Some interviewees describe line-ups consisting of longboarders as more laid-back and less competitive than shortboarder and bodyboarder line-ups. In mixed line-ups, there can be tensions between members of the respective groups, mainly because shortboarders have to take waves much later than longboarders, so if there are many of the latter, there will be no waves left for the shortboarders. This situation is even more pronounced when there are stand-up paddlers present, as they are able to take waves even earlier due to their massive boards. Not surprisingly, no other surfers seem to like stand-up paddlers much and they sometimes face plain refusal.

4.1.5 Assessing places

In order to find the right spot in a line-up for an enjoyable surf session, it is regarded as important to choose the right surf spot in the first place:

«You need to choose well your spot. It's just about that. You know, in your level you cannot go to Supertubos, you know. If somebody in your level go to Supertubos, it's because they saw something in television that's cool and they want to go there and they think they can get their board there. This person is the most crazy that you can be right? How this person would be accepted on the line-up? It's even not about catching waves, it's a danger you know? That person can fall off from somebody's head on, you know?» (Lucas, 32).

To find a good place to surf, a surfer obviously needs to know the level of his or her own surfing skills and only after that is it possible to occupy oneself with the choice of the right spot. Some people get frustrated quickly when they are trying to surf a challenging wave in a crowded line-up with beginners who are overwhelmed and just blocking other people's paths («floaters») or, even worse, provoking crashes because they are not up to the situation. In that case, some interviewees are quick to send people away to easier waves. As usual, this can be

achieved in different ways, either by politely explaining the problem or by rudely chasing them away.



Figure 4: Surf spots in the area of Baleal and Peniche (based on Google Maps 2016).

In Peniche and Baleal, there are waves for any skill level. The people who were interviewed seem to know their limits. While some enjoy riding the challenging waves of Molho Leste and Supertubos, they would not surf them on days when they are too powerful. Others avoid those spots altogether because of the competitive mood in the line-up or because they live in Baleal and prefer to surf just on their doorstep instead of moving to the stretch of beach south of Peniche. For an overview over the surf spots of the area, see *Figure 4*. However, all interviewees are well aware of the different requirements of one's manners depending on the prevailing mood in the line-up and they would adapt accordingly to avoid arguments. Or, to use the words of Lucas (31): «*Every spot has [its] own rules*».

4.1.6 Temporal development

Everyone agrees that it is getting more and more crowded every year. The most important driver of this surfing boom seems to be the international surfing contest at Supertubos, which

has taken place every October since 2009. The number of surfers in the line-ups of Peniche and Baleal has been growing ever since; apparently every year it has gotten significantly more crowded and many people consider the maximum capacity of surfers in the water to be already reached or oversaturated. In general, surf tourists seem to be very happy with the destination, so the surf camps receive a good amount of return guests together with the ever increasing numbers of complete beginners who visit the area for the first time.

Some of the older interview partners who have already been surfing for more than 20 years tell stories about empty line-ups on perfect days that seem hard to imagine today. Guilherme (46) describes the situation of meeting another surfer back then as very pleasant, both could exchange experiences and share some good moments, while today, meeting another surfer means just one more person in the crowd.

Predictions for the future are not bright: Most people who were interviewed expect it to get worse in the future with more surf traffic in the water and a more competitive mood in the line-ups.

4.1.7 Economy versus surfing space dilemma

Most people seem to be well aware of an economic dependence on surf tourism. Life in the village of Baleal is very much centered around surfing and almost all interviewees and many of their friends have jobs that are directly (surf camps, surf schools and surf shops) or indirectly (restaurants and bars) dependent on surf tourism. In addition, many let rooms or even whole apartments to make some money on the side, so there is a need to attract as many people as possible to the area and in general, people are extremely hospitable and friendly. That being said, many people also complain about the chaotic car traffic and the general confusion during the peak season, especially in August, and of course about the overcrowded line-ups.

So we have a classical dilemma: on the one hand, there is a desire for as many visitors as possible and on the other hand, a certain weariness about those same visitors jamming all the line-ups of the area.

This dilemma can also be seen in the annual international surf contest at Supertubos, which brings media attention and visitors to the area. The contest takes place in a distinct timeframe of several days in October; however it is only conducted on days with suitable conditions and paused on days considered not good enough. During the good days when the contest is actually running, the world-class wave of Supertubos is reserved for the participating athletes

of the World Surf League (WSL). Martim works at the contest and describes the problem like this:

«And the day the contest ended, the waves turned crap, and Supertubes was not working for maybe two months after the contest. So, the three best days in probably like five years, we couldn't surf there, [...] like I'm saying everything has two sides so I'm making money out of the contest so I'm interested in the contest in more than one way, but, I'm a surfer and in the end surfers are always selfish and when I see those waves breaking I'm like "oh my god, damn, damn contest why is it here?" you know? "Go away", you know "I just want this for myself" you know and so that's a little bit the feeling» (Martim, 37).

Nevertheless, most interviewees are looking forward to the contest all year and describe that period as the most exciting time of the year.

4.2 Contextual rules

This chapter seeks to specify the prevalent rules in a line-up, which have already been touched upon above, in 4.1 *Crowding*. The rules are of informal character and closely entangled with crowding and the diverse nature and dynamics of a crowd. The interpretation of these rules seems to vary, which makes it an interesting topic to examine more closely.

At first, the most important rules are explained. After that, several factors that influence the interpretation of those rules are presented, namely gender, age, skill level and natural conditions. At last, some opinions on formal laws are shown.

4.2.1 Informal rules

Every person interviewed has an idea of an informal set of rules, sometimes referred to as «surf etiquette», that enable people to surf in groups and interact in the water. These rules are thought to contribute to a safer surfing space, regulate priority matters in the line-up and maintain a sense of fairness.



Figure 5: Peak and shoulder of a wave.

Probably the most important, and certainly the most mentioned rule is the prohibition of dropping in on someone. This means that there is only one surfer allowed per wave, namely the one positioned closest to the peak of the breaking wave (see *Figure 5*). Whoever drops in on this surfer will most likely cause the open face of the wave to collapse and thereby interrupt or terminate that person's ride (see *Figure 6*). If the drop in happens very close to the person already surfing, it will block the way and may provoke a crash or a self-accident. Therefore, if a surfer takes a wave and, while surfing it, realizes that there is someone already in that wave, he or she should leave it immediately by riding back over the top of the unbroken wave, if his or her skill level allows such a maneuver. Dropping in on somebody on purpose or not leaving a wave after discovering a person with the right of way is usually seen as an insult and may lead to further consequences. Different reactions to perceived misbehavior are presented in *4.3 Negotiations*.



Figure 6: A surfer dropping in. The riding surfer on the left, dressed in a red lycra, is dropping in on the surfer on the right, causing him to interrupt the ride or risk a crash. The peak of the wave is on the right, just outside the margins of the picture.

Another behavior in the line-up that is considered inappropriate is paddling around other sitting surfers to get closer to the peak and into a priority position («snaking») instead of waiting for one's turn, as described below:

«So, if you want to catch a lot of waves, you can do it, but just make sure you don't drop in on other people, that you don't paddle around the other people you're not snaking the other surfers, because that's just rude you know that doesn't show education and that's bad for the surfers that's very! bad for the mood in the water, because that's, honestly, having someone just snaking and being too aggressive in the line-up, it's just that kind of thing that completely sets me off» (Martim, 37).

Some interviewees stressed the importance of altruistic behavior and a sense of fairness in the line-up. They would not tolerate people that take wave after wave without leaving any for the less skilled. This does not necessarily have to be snaking but can be principally legitimate positioning deep in the peak, while other surfers prefer to wait more on the shoulder of the wave for a less challenging take-off. The offending act in this case is the amount of waves surfed while others remain empty-handed.

Another rule mentioned was the correct way of paddling back out after a ride. After having finished a ride, it is desirable to paddle around the peak and use the channel of water flowing back from the beach and out into the sea. That way, the current will support the paddling and the surfer is not in the direct way of others.

However, if someone ends up in the impact zone where the waves break and are being ridden, there are guidelines to prevent crashes and make sure the riding surfers are not interrupted. A riding surfer has to watch out and be careful not to hit anyone in the water, but at the same time a surfer paddling back out has to anticipate the rider's way and must paddle away from it, even if that means paddling straight into an advancing wall of whitewater.

Finally, there is the request to treat the local surfers with special care:

«I make myself clear in a way that people understand that, there is etiquette in the water. And one of the etiquette is to respect the locals. It's one of the main ones» (João, 46).

This rule is probably the most debated one and more about the concepts of rights and duties of local surfers is presented below in 4.6 *Chasing localism*.

4.2.2 Ladies first? – Gendered priority?

Gender is an interesting factor regarding the interpretation of the rules. In the beginner- and intermediate line-ups of Baleal, roughly 20% of the surfers were female in the observed weeks in April, May, September and October 2015. In more advanced line-ups on bigger days and on more difficult waves like Lagide, and south of Peniche on Molho Leste and Supertubos, there were significantly less women in the water. In the peak season in summer, the overall amount of women will probably be higher because during that time, the waves are more beginner-friendly and the surf schools the busiest. Among surf students in schools, the amount of women seems to go up to 50%. Altogether, the line-ups are usually dominated by men, in both numbers and skills.

While some male surfers stated that they would treat women in the line-up exactly the same way that they treat men, others declared that they gave women priority privileges and would tolerate more violations of the rules before intervening. Gabriel recognizes differences to his home country Brazil:

«Your girl, like, always has priority you know like, you are very gentleman. Here they don't care. Those guys they do: "Heeey blabla" and like that» (Gabriel, 35).

Tomas on the other hand sees an advantage for women in this context:

«Girls in the line-up, well that depends on where you where you, where you wanna reach you know, no usually, usually I think yeah respect more girls but I think we all know why (laughing). I think because, they might think that being cool inside the water might get them to have something else outside it, I think so but usually yeah, yeah I think most of the people respect girls, yeah. Depending on, cause you know you have girls surfing pretty good actually, and there's one thing to have a girl that surf and it happens once or twice they can drop you out or something like that, if it happens more than that she gonna be an equal, an equal means that they are not gonna allow you to do the same again» (Tomas, 31).

Some male surfers treat women in the line-up differently, depending on the physical attractiveness of the latter:

«If it's a hot girl like all the guys on the water are like really welcome and man it's a natural thing. It's like, yeah of course man! It's the natural way of the world. [...]If you are working, somewhere and it comes like a hot girl, you are extremely friendly, and if it's like... a normal average ugly girl, man and you are just not losing time with it you know» (Afonso, 32).

The women who were asked about the topic stated that they never experienced any disadvantages because of their gender, apart from having less physical strength than sporty male surfers. If anything, they too regarded it as an advantage and confirmed the men's statements about enjoying certain privileges because *«maybe the guys try to pick us up in the water»* (Carolina, 35). Additionally, Maria (56) suspects that men like to compete with each other rather than to compete with a woman.

Generally, the interviewed men think that women have a positive impact on a line-up. Women are thought to brighten up the mood and contribute to a more playful and less competitive atmosphere with their presence.

Observations support all the above statements. In general, women seem to get rebuked less often than men when not respecting the priority order. When a man points out a perceived misbehavior to a woman, this is done in a friendly, non-aggressive way more often than when pointed out to another man. However, there are also men who do not seem to care about gender. The topic of women treating other women in a different way compared to how they treat men was not discussed in the interviews, but observations showed that interactions between women seem to be more of a supportive than of a competitive nature.

4.2.3 Impact of age

The average age in the line-ups in Baleal and Peniche during the time of the survey seemed to be roughly just under 30 years and normally distributed. Most people, including almost all foreign tourists, seemed to be around 20 to 35 years old, but especially among the Portuguese surf population there were also older surfers in their 40s and 50s and occasionally children and

teenagers surfing with their families. The percentage of women was highest among the surfers in their 20s, especially among the foreigners, and there were almost no women over 40.

When confronted with questions about the age factor in the water, everyone interviewed immediately relates old age with respect, but not always in the same way. Some think that *«it is an advantage. Being my age, being known as I am, I got some respect in the water»* (Maria, 56). This feeling seems to be mostly shared by other seasoned surfers. Guilherme states:

«If I go to the water now, I think in ten guys just maybe two or three are Portuguese. Maybe seven in ten are foreigners, and sometimes I think the foreigners feel: "Ah okay this guy is Portuguese, is a little more old guy", ok they try to respect, they feel ok it's a more old and he look like a Portuguese and they try to respect a little more» (Guilherme, 46).

Besides bringing in the argument about nationality, Guilherme (who is 46 years old, tanned and silver-haired) relates the respect he receives in the water also to his age, which is certainly above average in any line-up of the area. However not everybody correlates age with received respect in the line-up in the same way. Tomas (31) assumes the opposite, that older surfers are less respected in the water because of their age.

In general, line-ups with older-than-average surfers seem to be more relaxed. However this could also be related to the fact that older surfers tend to ride longboards, apart from reasons of personal style preferences, they are also less exhausting to paddle and more stable to surf. Like stated in 4.1.4 *Assessing people*, the mood in longboarder-dominated line-ups seems to be generally calmer and less competitive.

With children, most interviewees show some forbearance and would not threaten or hurt them. Miguel describes his reaction when being dropped in on by a child as follows:

«For kids yeah, just because one thing: Not hurt the kids, you know you can't hurt a kid and if it's good, the wave is really good and I see him to paddle start paddling beside me and I know, [...] I gonna be the priority, I gonna yelling him or just say something "ho! hoy!" Just, to say it's my wave, "it's my wave!" but if I see the guy is still paddling, I'm gonna stop I don't wanna hurt him. But then I gonna yell him, yeah, that's for sure, I gonna say him to him: "Hey! Should start looking!» (Miguel, 31).

However, incidents with children in the line-up seem to be rare because if they are out there, they are usually looked after by an adult. The summer months with bathing tourists and families might present a different picture, but conflicts between surfers and other stakeholders such as swimmers are not part of this survey.

4.2.4 Impact of skill level

Regarding priority claims, some interviewees' generosity depends on skill factors. After explaining priority rules, Miguel describes the following situation:

«But you have more rules than that! If you are all the time catching waves, and people are in the line-up just waiting for waves, it's not good too! Even, if I am with the priority it's not fair, because I already catch five waves and that guy, just catch one, or sitting there. And then you feel like: Ok, that guy can yell you he'd say: "Fuck! Hey, stop catching waves!" if he's a local if he's like the same level as [me] he gonna tell me: "Fuck! No no you already catch five waves! Fuck now I gonna drop in [on] you fuck!" Or then he drop in [on] me, and then, I'm start yelling [at] him like [...]. Sometimes [it] happens. Sometimes you should say yeah it's true I'm sorry, yeah» (Miguel, 31).

It is notable that he expects the other person to be a local to be worthy to discuss the matter. After being asked if he would also forgo a ride for a tourist, he adds:

«If the tourist sometimes I do the same I'm feel like: "Fuck, I already five waves, let's go him catch wave". But, if he's a good surfer! If a open-mouth, if he's someone just stay there: "Ooooooh!" I know already saw him to, to drop a wave and I say: "Ok that guy is, he just don't have skill for that, I don't care". You know sometimes, it's that you know that work, it's it's complex» (Miguel, 31).

So he would only renounce for people with enough skills to ride the wave in a way that he regards as satisfying. This interpretation seems to be shared by most other interviewees and allows them to get a good amount of waves even in very crowded line-ups, if they consist mostly of beginners. The interesting hint about local priority will be outlined in detail in 4.6 *Chasing localism*.

4.2.5 Natural conditions

Other important factors that affect the interpretation of the rules and the atmosphere in the line-up are the daily conditions, especially the size and period of the waves and the direction and force of the wind. On the other hand, the weather seems to play a subordinate role; as long as the waves are considered good, cloudy and rainy weather is accepted, in some cases even appreciated as protection from the sun.

The bigger the size and the longer the period, the more powerful and challenging are the waves and the more tense will the mood in the line-up most likely be. Also, a long wave period will lengthen the waiting time between the sets of waves and heighten the excitement and willingness to take chances once the set finally approaches. If a surfer has to wait for 15-20 minutes until a set of about 6-10 waves arrives, he or she will probably be less generous to others regarding wave priority and try to get one of the waves before the following waiting period.

The wind is responsible for the shape of the wave. If it blows off-shore or not at all, this will normally increase the quality of a wave and thus make a surf session more valuable. On rare days with perfect conditions, some surfers tend to try to make the most of it and act more selfishly.

Furthermore, if the tides allow only a small window of favorable conditions at a surf spot, this may intensify tensions in the line-up. The same seems to be true for waves with only one peak and a tight take-off zone such as Lagide, a wave that breaks on a reef or Molho Leste which bounces off the harbor wall. This is in contrast to beach breaks with several shifting peaks, where the crowd spreads and where there is not one perfect spot to take-off on the wave but a wider range of possibilities.

On days with easy conditions («small days») and a friendly atmosphere in the line-up it is not uncommon to see multiple surfers on the same wave with no one complaining («party wave»), especially among friends and when the surfed boards are longboards which have enough volume to be surfed also on the flatter parts of the wave.

«You know when you surf over here with me, Daniel, in soft boards, in this vibe that we, we normally do, this is, this is fine you know. And a lot of people this, a lot of people here realize this as well for example: Some beginner is dropping a wave, but you see the beginner is like going in front and stuff and you see the face of the wave going by, [you can go behind]» (Lucas, 32).

In this case, the concept of the usually despised action of dropping in on somebody needs to be relativized. The crucial point here is the feeling of safety because of the non-threatening size of the waves, so an unplanned sidestepping does not lead to a serious fall with a long hold underwater. Also, the mood is naturally less competitive because the (missing) size and power of the waves do not allow advanced surfers the practice of thrilling maneuvers but rather encourage relaxing and fooling around.

4.2.6 Opinions on formal laws

When confronted with questions on the desirability of formal laws regarding access to surf spots or policing of the line-up to guarantee a safe and fair space to surf, most interviewees strongly rejected such measures and some were upset with the mere thought of it. Rodrigo (39) even refuses the idea about informal rules or a surfer's code and claims that the right behavior in the water should be entirely based on common sense, so formal laws are out of the question. Santiago fears for the inherent qualities of the surfing experience:

«Man but that's just eliminating the principle of surfing. In my opinion. You know that's the good thing about surfing like, no rules, let's say ok you have those ones but, it's that concept it's the freedom it's everything and just trying to make regulations out of it like surf police would just be crazy man it's yeah it's just stupid! Cause you have to you have to think how stupid it is. It'll eliminate all the good vibe, the action that are usually forge surfing[...]. Well, I dunno man, man it's, it's the future. How the fuck can you predict the future [...]Let's hope it won't happen but we can't say for sure. You just need to keep on loving it» (Santiago, 21).

It seems as if many people do not solely see surfing as a physical activity, but also as a possibility to escape the regulations of everyday life and to dive into an environment with other values and a different set of rules. Or, as Miguel likes to put it:

«And then that's why it's, that's why I like surf, sometimes it's very human, you know very masculine or very, you know it's not the rules as the society you know, it's like the stronger are the best one and you know» (Miguel, 31).

Whereas for others like Maria (56), safety concerns weigh heavier, so certain control measures would be appreciated, particularly concerning matters of education for people who rent boards and do not attend any surf schools.

4.3 Negotiations

The last chapter showed a set of informal rules and their contextual applicability. Those rules frame the social interactions in the line-up and are themselves subject of constant negotiation and varying interpretation. This chapter will show a variety of possible reactions to perceived misbehavior.

First, different reasons for transgressions are shown, namely ignorance, inexperience, inability and indifference. Afterwards, reactions to transgressions are listed and divided into educational measures and more confrontational negotiations. Finally, several types of experienced conflicts of varying severity are presented.

4.3.1 Ignorance, inexperience, inability or indifference?

When someone performs an action in the line-up that is considered out-of-place, the surrounding surfers may ask themselves why that transgression happened before deciding how to respond. Most interviewees do not automatically allege bad manners, especially if the culprit is clearly a beginner, but instead assume that the person does not know any better. This may have an influence on the kind of reaction that follows perceived misbehavior. Martim spontaneously created a typology of transgressors which is worth to take a closer look at:

«There are many kinds of surfers: the guys who don't know, the guys, who are not aware, they know but they are not aware they don't have enough experience to be aware of the situations, and the guys who are aware and don't have a lot of control, and then you have the guys who are aware, who have control and simply don't care. They have no respect because they think they're the [greatest] you know. And basically, those are the guys who get into trouble in the water. Because they have attitude, they don't show respect, and whenever a guy like this is in the water, everyone gets nervous around them» (Martim, 37).

According to his assessment, there are 4 types of transgressors:

- Type 1: the ignorant that have no notion of any rules
- Type 2: the inexperienced that know of the rules, but are not aware of a given situation or not experienced enough to implement the theoretical knowledge
- Type 3: the incapable that know the rules and are able to assess a given situation correctly, but don't possess the skill level to act accordingly
- Type 4: the indifferent that know the rules, assess a given situation correctly and would be able to act accordingly, but decide willingly not to do so

This typology is in line with my observations. A crowded line-up on a day with easy conditions will typically consist of many beginners and intermediate surfers. The beginners who surf on their own will most likely be type 1 or type 2 and be much focused on themselves without even realizing the complex social structure around them. If they are part of a surf school, they should have been taught some basic rules before entering the line-up, which would make them type 2. This means they know about the priority rules but recognize neither the waiting line nor any surfer already in the wave they paddle for and they fail to anticipate a riding surfer's way. Type 3 refers to somewhat experienced beginners that are not able to leave a wave safely after realizing that they have dropped in on someone and also to intermediates that are unable to fully control their surfboard when riding and as a result put others in danger. Type 4 is self-explanatory and refers to more experienced intermediates who usually do not attend surf schools (anymore) or advanced surfers who abandon the rules as a strategy to cope with the crowded line-up and get as many waves as possible.

«And mainly I think we have a lot of people who've never seen a wave in their lives. That's what I, that's the conclusion I have, and they don't understand that that part of water that's coming to them is the same that someone is already riding. So that's that's why and sometimes you shout or you whistle, so, for them to stop, they don't, I don't know what's going on in their minds, they don't stop paddling. Maybe they think the other person won't reach them I dunno what's, or maybe that's what I said they don't they don't think that's the same wave. Because they've never seen a wave before in their lives. I don't know why. They behave like that» (Maria, 56).

Maria illustrates what could be described as a typical behavior of a type 2 transgressor who does not assess the situation correctly. It is notable that she does not allege ignorance or indifference to misbehaving beginners but assumes a lack of perception.

Some interviewees describe the crowds in Baleal as particularly undisciplined, and comparisons with other places are not uncommon. Miguel, who lived in Australia for a while, observes:

«Yeah, so I came from Australia and I went here with the new knowledge, the new skills, and I was in the water and, like, like I, I did in Byron Bay or whatever, or the Gold Coast, just have a good vibe just surf good fun, but then I start saw a lot of Portuguese yelling like: Fuck! [...] Fathers fuck!" I was like: "Fuck! Why were they all the time yelling? Come on just chill out man no worries!" But then I found my, I found myself doing the same. A few months later. Like, you do the same, because, you know you start understanding, some guys just, they they don't understand the rules and they don't care about the rules and, as a local, and least as someone who is from here, and you feel like: "What?!" Fuck, I went to Australia, I never! If I drop in someone, I ask apologize, you know? I was like polite, I'm sorry. And here they just, drop in you and sometimes, they [...] even laugh at you, and you feel like: "What?!" And it's not one, it's 1,2,3,4,5 a thousand, million, you know it's all the time, all days and sometimes, you you start to be maybe unfair with them you now because you are already with your weapons, you know like: "Fuck! Go out!" And maybe he's a good guy [...]. But you know as it's all the time the same, all the time the same, all year round, you feel like: "Fuck!"» (Miguel, 31)

What Miguel also describes is the permanence of the problem. Rules are apparently not broken eventually but constantly, so after originally being more tolerant, people lose their patience.

Surf tourists' lack of knowledge and misperception are seen as the main factors responsible for the sometimes chaotic conditions in the line-ups, together with the strategical abandonment of the rules and frustrated actions of more skilled surfers, both tourists and local residents.

4.3.2 Educating the ignorant

Most interviewees agree that enforcing the rules is desirable and important; and none accepted systematical transgressions. However there are numerous approaches to give transgressors an understanding of the rules. A widely practiced approach seems to be educating people in some way. An excerpt from a focus group discussion illustrates two different ways of education:

«The best way to pay attention is as I said, someone come close to you and say: "Don't do that again I gonna fuck your face!" And then you feel like: "What? Maybe I shouldn't do that again" you know» (Miguel, 31).

Miguel describes a rude reaction here that was observed many times in the line-ups of Baleal, and he still remembers receiving those reactions when he started to surf, whereas Santiago urges people to not overreact but to show some empathy because of the diverse challenges beginners face:

«Yeah but, yeah but maybe that's too aggressive for some, some people you know? Don't forget there are some people that are already suspicious or afraid of going into the sea. Man there's a lot of them. I am not only talking about girls I'm talking about guys as well. They're not used to it they don't have that confidence you know, if they- if they're in the beginning and someone goes to them and sss- reacts like they react, it may ruin not only the vacations but surfing itself. Cause they they, instead of interpreting it as a good thing, as a relaxed thing where you just go and, be at one with the ocean et cetera et cetera, they gonna react at ok this is a fight in the water, everything is a fight, for you paddling into the wave you already paddling against that guy you know like: "Huaaaa!" And that may be a wrong interpretation, and you don't wanna send that message» [...] «Man, in my opinion, even if they fuck up in the water man, and this is how I do things, I just smile, say there's no problem, and tell them try to do things this way. You know, cause, they'll react to your empathy, you know they'll they'll understand that, they did a wrong thing, take your thought but,: "Ok he's a good guy, he understood whatever this is and he told me just be careful the next time and I can believe that most of the human race will understand that feeling and will try not immediately, of course everybody does mistakes even I even Miguel even Julian, drop in by accident sometimes» (Santiago, 21).

In the end, there was an overall agreement between the three participants that a softer approach is probably more rewarding for everyone involved. This realization is shared by many interviewees, and a middle way seems to be common practice:

«Somehow you have to be... Benevolent and, versatile and, somehow be tolerant to this type of situations. Understand that beginners sometimes don't know what is the right place to be in the line-up. But! Something that you have to learn as a beginner as well is to, hearing somebody shouting at you saying: Fuck! Don't get in my wave!» (João, 46).

Sometimes, more intermediate or advanced surfers do more than just explain rules and try to help beginners on their own account. In uncrowded line-ups with a good mood that even seems to be the norm rather than the exception, however in overcrowded line-ups, helping other people with their surfing is not practiced very often. Rodrigo sometimes feels sorry for beginners who struggle and offers help for reasons of pity. When asked about the situations he tends to help more, he explains:

«First depends on the attitude of the person, if he, is deserves to be helped or not. And then depends on your mood because maybe you have 45 minutes to surf and you're not in the mood to, I'm a surf teacher, sometimes I'm not in the mood to do that in my free time you know but, most of the time I help, yeah, and it's, I do it, because I like it you know, it's... it's for feeling I guess» (Rodrigo, 39).

Others support this statement and praise the «good deed of the day». Apparently, some enjoy helping people in general and make no exceptions to that in the line-up. Offered help is usually highly appreciated by the recipient and conceivable negative reactions because of injured pride («I'm not a beginner!») are almost non-existent; in general beginners seem to be clear about their status.

4.3.3 Negotiating with the indifferent

When confronted with surfers who consciously neglect the rules, people usually show less patience. The chosen approach in this case seems to depend on the willingness to risk a conflict. If the transgressor has an intimidating appearance, some interviewees would not be too offensive in their approach. The same is true if the person seems to be well integrated into a group of locals, which is shown in 4.6 *Chasing localism*.

«So this is the kind of thing that annoys me and then there's a guy, that goes out, and catches 3 waves just like straight away, bambabam, and on the third wave, he just paddles around one of the girls that was in the water, and I just looked at the guy and I told him: "Man, you do that one single time again, and you're out of the water". And he was like: "Ah man you know I'm sorry, I thought she wasn't catching-" - "Nonono, you snaked her. You paddled around that, and that is completely unrespectful. If you're behaving in the line-up, you're more than welcome. If you don't show respect, you're gonna go surfing in some other spot because I- we don't want you here". You know, and it's not having some kind of bad attitude, it's just that, when we go into some surf spots, if you don't show respect, I hope that someone kicks you out of the water, you know and this has nothing to do with aggression, it's just like: if you don't show respect, you don't deserve to be there» (Martim, 37).

Martim describes a typical situation of an advanced surfer maximizing his or her wave count by not caring about other surfers in the line-up and circling them to get into a priority position. As described, this is usually not tolerated and in this case solved by a calm but rigorous reaction of a bystander. Even though he was not directly involved in the actual transgressions of «snaking», he condemned the other surfer's behavior and confronted him in order to keep a certain order in the line-up.

However, many interviewees recall feeling sorry for overreacting after being involved in a conflict. Even when they held the upper hand, an argument would diminish the joy they experience through surfing.

4.3.4 Types of conflicts

Not all negotiations are resolved peacefully and some surfers are likely to insult others who do not play according to the rules. Verbal disputes seem to be the most common type of conflicts in the line-up, the language used is mostly English or Portuguese and the tone can range from a calm discussion to crude insults.

If an argument becomes more serious, some interviewees are quick to send transgressors away from the line-up. When asked if he had already sent people away, Martim states:

«For sure, for sure. Several times. And I don't like to do it, I think it's stupid when someone does it but, I'm really, I'm a really calm person, when it gets to a point that I feel this guy has to go out of the water, it's because that person doesn't deserve to be there» (Martim, 37)

João is a bit more discrete but goes in the same direction:

«No I don't send nobody away from the spot but, I'm speaking for myself, other people are a bit more aggro. If! somebody drops in once and then goes again to the same spot and does the same a second time, then he will have troubles for sure and probably he will have to be sent away or...» (João, 46).

Maria (56) got hit by a riding surfer when paddling out, so her friends sent the culprit away. This list could be continued, the main point is to show that there are countless occasions in which this kind of reaction can be triggered. In addition, sending people away does also happen on land with free-campers:

«Man and for me that makes me a bit like, yeah. It's frustrating you know because you arrive here sometimes even when I was living here sometimes you had campers like and I mean like big big campers parked in front of Lagide. So you want to arrive with you car to check how is the waves working and you have a camper there with like ten guys or whatever living in front of the peak, so I went there, guys you need to move the camper from there. Why? Man because you are just in front of one of the best surf spots and like if I'm not, if, I'm telling you this, more people will come here and tell you. Ah ok, we will move. They didn't move, till went the brother of Tiago. And brother of Tiago is a bit like a rude guy you know and he just arrived there, man are you take the camper from here, or your camper will be broken during the night and then the guys on the next day moved the camper» (Afonso, 31).

This case is not directly linked to negotiations in the line-up but shows that regulations and implemented measures of control can also happen on land. Afonso also recalls an incident of a friend of his who had a dispute in the water and smashed the opponent's car window after the surf session.

The most extreme form of conflicts in the line-ups is physical fighting, in which several interviewees have already been engaged.

«And like I was saying I'm a calm guy but when I reach my limit I reach my limit, and actually I think I never was the first one holding up the hand, but for sure I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna run away and [a fight] happened already inside the water yeah, [...] and more than once» (Tomas, 31).

None who talks about fights seems to be particularly proud of it, if anything the subject was quickly put aside.

«Ok, yeah, I've had a few fights in the water yeah, yeah. And I had... I don't know, many guys, normally it's with Portuguese guys, I had one with a guy, he's actually actually kind of a local these days here, with a longboard, that was one of the most significant. Sometimes it's not even a fight, you go there and, people don't understand the words, you go there and like, give him a little slap just to, man, get out of the water because you're not that much of a good swimmer, so it's better to, to, but now it's, I dunno man, I don't like to talk about fights» (Rodrigo, 39).

Rodrigo seems to show a dominant behavior in the line-up and likes to rebuke people who do not play according to the prevalent rules. Other interviewees described similar situations but

seemed to act less aggressively in general. Apparently, serious fights mostly happened with Portuguese people and advanced surfers, not with foreigners and beginners.

4.4 Surf schools

Surf schools are omnipresent in Baleal and Peniche, in the overall appearance of the towns as well as in the line-ups, especially at the beach breaks of the big bay between the two peninsulas and at Prainha.

There are a handful of surf camps with a capacity of around 50-60 students or more in the peak months and dozens of smaller surf schools, with or without accommodation. Many of them are only open in summer, with the peak season in August.

They are important stakeholders because of the special status of surf instructors in the line-up, because of their space-consuming nature and because of their potential to prevent incidents by educating the students not only in technique but also in socially accepted behavior. These 3 topics are presented here.

4.4.1 Authority of a surf instructor

Surf instructors possess an ambivalent role in the line-up. They unite favorite hobby with their job and when they are working, they are sometimes torn between instructing their students as dedicatedly as possible and enjoying some waves themselves, especially when the conditions are above-average. When surf instructors are working, they can show an authoritarian behavior and are often easily identified, even if they are not wearing a designated lycra shirt. If they know the surf spots in detail and are advanced surfers themselves, they usually act confidently and seem to possess a natural authority. This confidence is heightened when set in relation to their students who are often beginners and not familiar with the setting, and it seems to be transferred into their social interactions.

In order to guarantee the safety of their students, the instructors have to be alert and negotiate constantly with other surfers in the line-up. The more challenging the natural conditions and the bigger the crowd, the more challenging the job becomes. Lucas who is head coach in one of the biggest surf camps in the area describes this aspect of his job as follows:

«In my case for me is very clear here because this is a school for the surf camp so I have to control that everybody, you know keeps a, a cool environment and, everybody's safe everybody is respecting and they respect us we respect them and, we keep that thing, under control. [...] We cannot like, when you see this massive number of people coming learning to surf, rent the material, going surfing, it's kind of impossible to control you know and then has many points of conflicts, everywhere. Everywhere. We talk about, you know each spot has, their own rules. Here is a beginner spot, you know for example is, [...] in everybody's head is a beginner spot. Someone can drop a wave and come close to one of my students I said: "hey man what you doing can't you see I'm giving a lesson here?» (Lucas, 32).

As a free-surfer, it is not uncommon to be prompted to move to another place in the line-up or even to another wave if a surf instructor feels the urge to make some space for his group. In an exemplary scene, an instructor giving a private lesson entered the line-up of Prainha with his student and, as soon as they arrived, he moved directly to an Israeli stand-up paddler (who spoke neither English nor Portuguese) and warned him not to take too many waves and leave some for the others. When the stand-up paddler tried to paddle for the next wave, he was physically blocked by the instructor and then sent away to surf on another peak, which he did.

4.4.2 Surf schools as an annoyance and implicit rules

Surf instructors have the power to decide whether to enter a given line-up or to move somewhere else, which will have a significant effect on other surfers, especially if the instructors are in charge of a bigger group of students. This means they sometimes have to decide whether to spoil a surf session for the surfers already in the water (who may be their friends), surfing the desired wave, or to make the effort and move the group somewhere else and thereby lose time and take the risk of not finding another suitable spot.

«I would say I would say this what you're doing, what I'm trying to tell you, which is not easy to anybody from outside see, and is something that we don't talk about as well, one of the most hard part to be a coach, it's it's this thing. You know to keep the respect on the beach, to keep yourself in a respect way with all the surfers, everybody know I'm surfing you know and, every surfer hate it, if you are in somewhere and there a bunch of, let's say a group of surf school arrive in that spot you know. [...] It's the worst thing can happen in your surf» (Lucas, 32).

Above, Lucas describes some social challenges of his profession.

«[If] there's mass of beginners in the middle of the peak that's not so good and you have to respect the people who are surfing you know it is a business but the surfers have to surf also. If there's guys who can ride the wave and there's a bunch of kooks in the middle, if it's my responsibility, it's not good you know so, now I try to avoid it» (Rodrigo, 39).

Like described here, surf schools can be an annoyance in the line-up because they typically enter it in groups and often consist of beginners who are not in control of their boards yet. However, if compared to free-surfers of the same skill level, surf students are in general more disciplined and better educated in the rules. The main problem seems to be the size of the

group who enters at once, compared to free-surfing beginners who usually surf in pairs or small groups.

If the desired line-up is already occupied by another surf school, the instructors have to come up with solutions to be able to co-exist, which can also lead to relocation of one party or the other:

«Normally, if there's another school which is not respecting the, the common sense norms, I would go, first I see if there's a local... if there's a local surf teacher that I can address to, cause I always prefer to talk with the locals. If not I see who's responsible, I, I approach them and I tell them that- and we have to find a solution because things are not working and most of the times there's no problem, it's a question of common sense you know, you not gonna invade a, imagine if you are with three or four kids, giving a surf lesson and then a, a school arrives with 40 guys, on top of you, you don't need to be Albert Einstein to know you're not doing the right thing, so you just go there and tell man I'm sorry I'm here with three guys, you're endangering my, my students, can you put your crew a little bit more to the side or whatever, and normally there's no problem» (Rodrigo, 39).

Apparently, the tolerance level for surf schools is highly place-dependent and there seems to be an informal agreement among the schools about which surf spots to frequent and which ones to avoid. Matters like these are discussed in irregular meetings that are conducted by some surf camps. When giving a lesson in one of the less tolerant spots like Lagide, Supertubos or Molho Leste, a surf instructor will have more difficulties in defending his or her position.

«I try to be... as correct as polite as you can be, in what concerns to the surf school because, I'm a surfer first, you know, first of all I'm a surfer, so when I'm surfing, on my own, I think it's very rude you're surfing in one spot, there are like two guys in the water, and then someone brings a surf school, with 10 or 20- even if with 5 people and they come exactly where you are on your own, I think that's very rude. You know so, if I get to this place, and, sometimes we go to places that are not like our mainstream places for teaching, I don't teach anyone in Supertubos, I don't teach anyone in Molho Leste, I don't teach anyone on the reef breaks because I think it's wrong, those are places for the competent surfers not for the people that are having classes, I'm not saying that you can't be coaching competent surfers, but I'm talking about the normal surf classes» (Martim, 37).

However, on days with small conditions, surf classes are also given on the mentioned spots. During participating observations in a surf class, I was allowed to surf the wave of Molho Leste, but the head coach made clear that this was a privilege because the high quality wave was rarely unattended and he was ready to move the class to the side any time in case of the arrival of more advanced surfers.

During the peak season in summer, when lifeguards are on duty and the beaches are full of swimmers and beach goers, the usage of the space is more restricted. Some of the biggest camps have concessions and take care of a section of the beach where they provide lifeguards and beach cleaning and in return are the only ones allowed to give lessons in that section.

«You as a free surfer, you can surf anywhere but if you have an economical activity, while you're surfing, it's a different setup, it's a different thing. And if you, if I'm having expenses, because I'm, giving the beach a lifeguard and I'm providing the cleaning of the beach, I should have something in return from that, so what I ask is, this area, cause I have a lot of students, and I need the space» (João, 46).

This demarcation is an advantage for business and also advertised on the website (Baleal Surf Camp 2016). In the line-up, this should strengthen the position of the instructors of the respective surf schools and weaken the positions of outsiders. However the concession areas were not actively managed during the weeks of the survey in April, May, September and October but open to everyone, so this practice could not be observed.

4.4.3 Responsibility to educate the students

Most interviewees see it as a responsibility of the surf schools to educate their students in the correct behavior in the water and the interviewed surf instructors assure that they put great emphasis on it.

«Yeah of course man, of course I don't want to have a problem with them in the water, can you imagine like in the future [...] you gonna be a surfer and I gonna share the line-up with you so if you are my student I have to teach you how to behave» (Gabriel, 35).

Gabriel has a practical point of view and tries to educate his students also for his own sake. For Davi, the future atmosphere in the line-ups of Baleal depends on how well the surf schools fulfill their educating tasks:

«Yes. If, depends of the schools. I think, if the schools work well, have a good work, teach the, the school have to teach the rules. Priority, respect the locals, if all the schools do that I think less fight, but, if don't teach it like that, well...» (Davi, 33).

Gabriel is pessimistic about the future, because like some of the others, he thinks that the surf schools do not put enough effort into the teaching of surf etiquette.

«Yeah man I think [the future] is gonna change like a lot of people coming like, people, they, most of the crowd they, they are people that they learn surf in surf camp and most of the surf camps don't care about, talk about like, explain about the rules, how you have to behave in the line-up, who has priority, it's like just crazy guys with a surfboard and nothing in the head who go there» (Gabriel, 35).

Other surf instructors talk about the difficulties of this task, because the students have to pay attention to many different things in an unfamiliar environment. Also, they are in usually eager to go surfing and do not pay much attention.

Miguel (31): «But but as a surf instructor I understand, sometimes you don't have time for that you know, you have time for teach them to do the pop up, to catch a green wave, you don't have time-»

Julian (27): «I have».

Miguel: «Yeah you do that we do! We do that! We, we try one session tell them what are the rules the main rules lalala lalala but you know, you are there, at the beach like: "Yayayayaya I wanna go surfing I wanna go surfing!" They just don't pay attention».

As illustrated in this focus group extract, apart from reasons of the students' impatience, it can also be a challenging task for the instructor to transmit all this new information because of its extent. Additionally, surf schools face a competitive market and are evaluated by their customers according to criteria such as progress in surfing and maybe more importantly, experienced fun, which is usually not associated with a theory lesson on a windy beach.

As evident from the participatory observations in surf schools, their educational mission is interpreted in different ways and varies from school to school and even within one school from instructor to instructor. The rules are sometimes, but not always, mentioned in theory and applied to a varying degree. One of the main issues could be that the practice of dropping in on someone may be mentioned and described as prohibited in theory, but that this knowledge is then ignored in group practice in the water. Prohibiting drop-ins may neither be practical nor necessary in easy conditions with small waves, when it is unproblematic to share waves, but if it is not taught as the exception of the rule «one surfer per wave», the students may not learn this rule.

What can happen when surf students show a poor understanding of this rule can be observed in the line-ups on a daily basis: Because it is sometimes sanctioned but often tolerated to drop in on fellow students, the habit to watch for other surfers before dropping into a wave is not very well developed. If more advanced surfers who get many waves are present in the same line-up, conflicts are likely to arise. An interesting scene took place at the designated beginner spot of Cantinho da Baia during one of the surf classes I participated in: A local shortboarder got dropped in on twice by students of the same group (who are clearly marked by colorful lycra shirts), lost his temper and abused the surf instructors of the group. Even though the students were not beginners anymore but intermediate surfers, the awareness of the rules was obviously low. As a consequence, the upset instructors ordered the whole group of about 10 students back to the beach to explain the situation and how to avoid it in the future. The explanation was conducted emotionally and the incident referred to as a stain on the good relations between the surf camp and the local surfers.

4.5 Seasonality

It is important to point out the seasonal differences in all categories of the results. Interestingly, there seems to be a dichotomy between the seasons, as many interviewees talk of summer and winter and seem to have no concept of spring and fall. But precisely the transitional months of April, May, September and October belong to the most interesting ones because apparently they are subject to ongoing change.

The seasonal differences are probably most obvious in terms of crowding. While the village of Baleal is lively and overcrowded in summer, parts of it seem deserted in winter. Many jobs in the tourism sector are seasonal and as a consequence, in absence of tourists there are also less people living there. The reason for the lack of visitors in winter is most likely the weather, which is colder, windier and wetter. In addition, the ocean is more powerful and not suitable for beginners to surf. However in the peak season in August, some interviewees are quickly annoyed by the crowds and the road traffic and are looking forward to September.

For the microcosms of the line-ups, this means there are less people surfing in total and that the percentage of local surfers in the line-up is much higher in winter, but surf tourism in the low season seems to be growing:

«It's becoming worse cause, even during the winter man, when you think: "Alright, they gonna be here during the summer", but, during the winter it's like our time to relax, our time to surf with our friends like, let's say share a peak with true Portuguese guys man, this here, it was the worst winter that I have ever seen in my life man» (Santiago, 21).

«And used to be more clear that you know, during the rest of the year you see no one in the water, and now you see more people come from you know Germany, Denmark, spots like countries that has like minus 20 degrees and come here wintertime we have like, five degrees and people are like, having a blast surfing and, you know, for them it's like summer I mean. And this people are coming more and [fights] also can happen during, during the low season you know. People can say: "What the fuck! Now even in you know we are in the winter, what?! Go out of here I don't want to see you!"» (Lucas, 32).

Lucas and Santiago describe a mental image of the local surfers, consisting of uncrowded line-ups surfed only by local residents. Some interviewees work harder in summer and take time off in winter to make use of the favorable surfing conditions that are the result of the more powerful natural conditions but also on the lack of crowds. Thus, crowded line-ups in winter have the potential to be more frustrating than in summer, when people are prepared for it.

Concerning surf etiquette, this means that in winter, people have to be more careful about how to behave, both because of the generally more dangerous conditions that reinforce tensions in the line-up and because of the more sensitive local surfers. Tomas sees a seasonal difference in the tolerance level against transgressors of rules in the line-up:

«Yeah, yeah depends on the season for sure on the winter, on the winter cause we're-, it's because you know for sure that on the summer you gonna have much more people surfing you gonna have much more situations where you can complain. So every time you go into the water you know already that's gonna happen something. And it's not the same thing on the on the winter cause you can have still plenty of people surfing, but usually on the winter just [...] who know what surf is, so yeah for sure it's different, on the summer you are more calm and relaxed and with a different range of what they can do, on the winter it's harder to, the lines are more strict, yeah, for sure» (Tomas, 31).

For the surf schools, winter means more space to teach classes but also fewer customers. As a consequence, many instructors work in other jobs in winter and some, like Davi (33), seasonally migrate to other countries, because jobs that are not related to the surf business seem to be rare in the area. Those who stay in Baleal all year can expect more leisure to surf by themselves in winter, paired with more challenging surf conditions and fewer but more advanced customers.

4.6 Chasing localism

After presenting the results about crowding, surf etiquette, negotiations with transgressors, the role of surf schools and the seasonal differences, this subchapter adds the special case of the status *local* and the complex relations between local surfers and tourists, which is the core theme of this thesis.

«In Peniche it's really dangerous because the locals [are] so crazy, and because the crowds become bigger, so the people the locals, it's crazy and, you have to be careful in Peniche and respect the locals, it's normal, [wherever] you come you have to respect the locals» (Davi, 33).

At first, the advantages of local knowledge and the dealing with it are presented. After that, the significance of nationality is shown briefly, before taking a look at the varying definitions of who exactly is a local in the first place. Thereafter, the importance of respect is explained, before dealing with the crucial question whether or not local surfers deserve special rights in the line-up. After that, experiences with other places where the interviewees often had the role of visitors, as well as perceptions of places they know through the media are presented. To finish, some differences between Baleal and Peniche are given a closer look.

4.6.1 Local knowledge

One aspect that is frequently mentioned is local knowledge. If a person surfs in one place for a long time, obviously he or she has a better understanding of the natural and social processes that are taking place at that particular spot. Lucas describes his concept of local knowledge:

«You know [...] how that wind blows you know, that direction is colder than usual so you know, you know how it gonna affect the wave that sandbar that, current here is that current strong enough or not, and this understand and the behavior of the line-up is based on this things you know? Somebody that doesn't know it you gonna have a completely different approach to the line-up, somebody that knows this, moves differently» (Lucas, 32).

This deep understanding of the place-dependent factors that shape a desirable wave is seen as a crucial advantage in the positioning in a line-up. Compared to visiting surfers, local surfers will always have this advantage of local knowledge and better positioning and therefore probably get more waves. Also, this knowledge may lead to an increased feeling of safety that is reflected in a more confident manner:

«When the waves are really good here in the front, the locals catch all the waves, you know, and we can have fights between us but it's like it's not even a fight, it's like, pretend fight. And all the others see that we are so comfortable with each other that naturally the crowd spreads. If there's four or five of us in the peak here, there's no more waves for anyone. You gotta go somewhere else you know» (Rodrigo, 39).

Apart from the deeper knowledge of the natural dynamics of a spot, for a local surfer there is also a social advantage. What Rodrigo describes here can be understood as the construction of a group of insiders who show an extroverted, dominant behavior that may appear intimidating to outsiders, who then prefer not to challenge that group in the sense of surfing the same wave.

Besides being more comfortable when surfing a given spot, the superior knowledge of the region enables local surfers to select their place to surf out of a deeper pool of options, because first, they know more places in the area and second, they know which place to choose in which conditions:

«But the thing is, like I as saying, the north coast it's a very-, I know all the beaches around Peniche, all of them, you know like probably in a, 200 kilometers radius, I know every single spot, I know every, the way the conditions the winds the swell the sizes, for any single spot. If I want to free surf on my own, you can be sure that I'm gonna do it. You know so, why get in the crowds and get pissed and, there's always a, that's the thing here in this area of Portugal we have so many options, I think people only get aggressive because the don't want to spend a little bit of fuel or to walk a little bit further, and go and surf with less people» (Martim, 37).

For Martim, it is a question of commitment whether to surf in crowded line-ups or not and he recommends other locals to make use of their knowledge and move around more often if temporally and economically possible. This is practiced by many interviewees who prefer to

surf north of Baleal at Almagreira or other spots that they sometimes prefer not to name in order to prevent them from becoming known to a broader audience.

«You know where I used to surf, to avoid all this crazy thing that you see here from now on from June on, is up to the north. It's a secret spot. Where I go and I bring no more than one person with me. [...]. You don't, go to somewhere where we call secret, and we get amazing waves, and this amazing waves is not supposed to be frequented by some people else» (Lucas, 32).

What Lucas describes here seems to be common practice for most interviewees who possess a motor vehicle or a bicycle. This secretive behavior seems to have gained importance with the rise of the internet and the swift distribution of information. Googling the term *secret spot* will provide a variety of images of surfed waves labeled *secret spot*, so obviously there is a desire to show one's surfing footage while at the same time trying to avoid spreading the name of the actual place. This secretive behavior of the interviewees can be seen as a coping strategy and a direct response to the crowding on the already famous surf spots.

4.6.2 National element

When asked about social processes in the line-up, many interviewees are quick to distinguish between Portuguese and foreigners to make a point, although one person, Maria (56), does not make any differentiation at all. When she explains situations in the line-up, she argues with neither national nor residential references until directly asked.

«If you enter with a pro-attitude you know all swollen up full of colors and screaming in German to your friends or screaming in... in Dutch or screaming in Portuguese or in Spanish or whatever is your, your language, in a place that it's not, you're not, people don't know you, you... you're an aggressive intruder you know. But if you come with the right attitude: man, Portuguese people are very friendly there's no bullshit» (Rodrigo, 39).

Some, like Rodrigo, expect foreigners to be modest and not too extrovert in the line-up, others admit that they not always succeed in respecting foreigners the same way that they would treat compatriots. Gabriel (35) remembers to have been called on to go back to his country Brazil when he first arrived and found some conflicts in the line-up. Also, some of the (male Portuguese) interviewees seem not to like Spanish people too much and tend to feel provoked by them more quickly in certain situations than by other foreigners.

However, Baleal is a place with an international atmosphere which seems to be enjoyed by most and even provides a reason to settle there for some. Therefore, most interviewees find it more useful to distinguish between locals and non-locals than arguing about nationalities.

4.6.3 Defining local

In general, there seems to be an agreement that a true local surfer has to be born and raised on his or her surf spot, as exemplarily stated by Lucas:

«Local is only who borns on the spot and raise on the spot. If you say for somebody if somebody in Hawaii say they, let's say somebody is hanging around or living around for 10, 15 years, and they he say he's a local they gonna punch him in the face and, you know show him some respect» (Lucas, 32, Brazilian).

To illustrate his argument, he refers to Hawaii, which is done frequently when explaining localism in surfing. This will be taken a closer look at in 4.6.6 *Comparisons with other places*. However, when digging deeper, there is a multitude of different understandings of the status *local*. It turns out to be a somewhat contested expression, difficult to define and emotionally charged.

Regarding the connotations of the word *local*, there are contradicting views among the interviewees. When asked about whether he would describe himself as a local, Guilherme does not like the term much and replies:

«Cause local means: "This is mine!". This is not mine, I just want the respect of the people who come and respect the locals but not: "I'm local! I'm the owner of this place!" You know, that's the negative part about the word. Then normal I don't say I'm a local, no I live here, this is for everybody, I try to, people who come here don't live here I try to respect the people who almost years spend the time here, but you know the local the word is like negative» (Guilherme, 46).

For him, presenting himself as a local implies making a claim of ownership, which is not in his interest. This nourishes the assumption that in surf culture, local is often used in a possessive sense.

«No it's, local it's only when you born in the place you know. They say: "Ooh I'm a local because I live here for five years". No I'm not local and I don't want to be a local you know, anywhere because I want to go for, like everywhere and I don't want to be a local. When you're a local you belong to that place, and I don't want to belong any place» (Gabriel, 35, Brazilian).

Gabriel refuses to be called local because he cultivates a nomadic lifestyle and is not thrilled by the thought of being tied to a place.

Still, the status *local* is mostly seen as a desirable privilege that must be appreciated.

«We're all Portuguese man in my opinion so locals itself should be Portugal itself, like not "Oow this is my beach!" It's just stupid man. I live three kilometers away from here. What's the problem? That's my opinion you just, none have to care man, the beaches are for surfing, they're for everyone so, in my opinion you should be able to surf everywhere, but in an orderly manner. You just have to respect anyone as they would respect you anywhere» (Santiago, 21).

Santiago, who was born on the peninsula of Baleal, refuses the definition of local as a status being only applicable to people born and raised next to a particular surf spot. He raises

questions of scale: who would be a local, the one living at the beach, in the village of Baleal, in Peniche, or in the greater area? For him, being a local is a matter of nationality, not of the current place of residence.

«Here I feel like a local because I live here I'm a Portuguese and, why I'm not a local [...] I'm asking to myself too, why I'm not [...]. I live in, 20 minutes or maybe 3 minutes from here, to my home here, it's like I can see from my, my my mountain, I can see the ocean, and I came all my life here, and now I live here and I just, drop some some kilometers here, why I'm not a local, why why not?» (Miguel, 31).

Miguel is asking himself why he would not be regarded as a local, even though he lives only a few minutes away from Baleal. Again, questions of scale are raised but in this case not answered, as he remains unsure whether to call himself local or not. Either way, from a tourist's perspective, he thinks he is seen as a local because with his physical appearance, he is clearly identifiable as a Portuguese surfer.

Below is an excerpt from the interview with Davi, which introduces the concept of a hierarchy of the local status:

*«D: I'm not born here ya, so I'm not local. But now I'm living here but I'm second local
I: Second class local?
D: Okay, after, after locals I am and then the tourist
I: So there is like a hierarchy?
D: Ya, for tourists I'm local.
I: So first you have the locals that were born here,
D: Yes, ya of course. Or, living many many years here.
I: How long exactly do you live here now in Baleal?
D: Me? Three years. But at 10 years I come to Peniche.
I: So how long do you think it will take you to become local here?
D: Na, nana I think I don't have time for that.» (Davi, 33, Brazilian).*

This supports the view of a local status given by birthright or at least by a long time of residency in the (not further specified) area. The interesting point is the idea of the status of a second class local for people like the 33 years old Brazilian who live and work in Baleal or Peniche but who have not lived there long enough to be regarded as a local by those living there for longer. In the perception of the average foreign tourist however, he may be identified as a local for his habitus, even as a Portuguese by those who have insufficient language skills to distinguish Brazilian from Portuguese. This leads to the construction of a hierarchy and shows the importance of self-perception and external perception, which both seem to influence the status of being a local.

Guilherme too refers to the external perception of tourists:

«Almost of the people they all, if you see here some guy: "Gnaa I'm a local!" The guy don't live here and just come at weekends. The real guys live here don't say: "Gnaa I'm a local!"» (Guilherme, 46).

He describes a case in which Portuguese weekend tourists are perceived as locals by foreign tourists, because of their performance in the line-up which may root in their self-conception of being Portuguese and maybe regular visitors and therefore locals on that particular surf spot. At the same time, they are only pretenders to according to Guilherme's perception and not seen as locals.

The concepts above are all rooted in the comprehension of *local* as a passive state, earned by birthright or by long term residency. However, some interviewees understand the status of local as an active state, to be earned by agency.

«For me a local is someone who give something good for the community, you know for the area, and after a few years of work, I think, probably you, you manage to become a local. But in this area I think to be a local you need to be- or you're born here or you spend a lot of time here and you live here and I think mainly that's it. The people who you deal every day especially on the winter, when there just a few, you know, I think those are the ones considered locals» (Tomas, 31).

Tomas gives a first idea of this, only to relativize it. Although this could be seen as his personal view, local status earned by agency, as opposed to the external perception of local status defined by long-term residency. Martim has a nuanced opinion on the topic which is why he is given a lot of space in the following quote:

«And when people see that you have this kind of behavior, they start respecting you, and this, you know like in Hawaii, they talk about a thing which is like a pecking order, which is there is like a, like an order in the line-up, like a rank. And, in my personal way of seeing it, this is how you're in your rank: You show respect towards the other surfers, you show respect towards the nature, you, you have a good act all together you know like, you're you show some proper character, and then, you're earning from everyone else. And then, if with this, you show some competence in surfing, then it's very easy to earn your respect in the line-up you know and, I'm, if you ask me: "Are you a local?" I wasn't born here, but I can tell you that, [...] just to keep it safe maybe 95% of the [...] surfers born in Peniche consider me a local, and I would say I'm not originally from here but I am considered a local by the other surfers so, more than considering myself a local, it's what the other guys consider myself. Because they are the real locals the guys who were born here who grew here, I would like to see some of them they don't show as much respect for Peniche as I show, so I would like to see them, having the whole act together you know, and deserving it like the label a little bit better, being a bit more responsible, being a little bit more tolerant and, it's, it's a bigger picture you know» (Martim, 37).

This definition of *local* unifies many different aspects. There is the notion of a pecking order in the line-up, with the illustrating example of Hawaii in mind, and the explanation of how to rise in that order, which equals earning respect. This can be achieved by showing respect for people and the environment *and* by exhibiting some surfing skills. Then there is another visualization of self-perception contrary to external perception, with the primacy of the latter and followed by the passive definition of long-term residency. The concluding remark can be seen as a criticism to those fulfilling the criterion of long-term residency, in the sense of an

encouragement to show more respect or, in other words, also fulfill the definition of being a local defined by agency.

Martim refers to precisely this agency of showing a responsible and exemplary behavior when he uses the usually negatively connoted noun and describes *localism* as a positive thing:

«But, there are there is something that lots of people, talk about, which is localism. And everyone talks about localism being a bad thing, I think localism, is a really positive thing, if we're not about, if we're not talking about aggressive idiots in the line-up. Because that's never good» (Martim, 37).

However, most people seem to refer to localism as a disgrace to surf culture, when the term is not discussed further, and first of all think of the «aggressive idiots» in the line-up that are mentioned above.

4.6.4 The importance of respect

The call for respect is omnipresent in the interviews and statements like *respect the locals* appear many times, even in visualized form (see *Figure 7*) so a closer look upon this expression may reveal interesting patterns.



Figure 7: Graffito in the restroom of a beach bar next to Cantinho da Baia.

To begin with, many interviewees emphasize the importance of respect when interacting with other people in the line-up, like Gabriel when being asked about the rules:

«The rules is like everywhere: Local always have priority and, as I'm Brazilian you know like, any Portuguese for me it's a local, and, yeah, it's all about respect, in surf it's the rules is all about respect» (Gabriel, 35).

In the above case, Gabriel takes the role of a visitor and states that showing respect means following the rules, which is exactly what Miguel demands of the tourists:

«It's like: "Come on guys, you can come here no worries, no worries you can come but, just respect, just respect people just understand, if you don't have skill for that just go a little bit in the corner. You know it's like surf it's a community but come on, everybody, it's, you have rules you know, and just follow the rules» (Miguel, 31)"

Like these two cases illustrate, showing respect is usually vaguely described as following the rules. As soon as the interaction is on a local-tourist level, the rules are even more complicated and debated, and showing respect becomes part of the discussion concerning whether or not local surfers should enjoy certain privileges.

«How [to show respect]? Don't, don't go in the same wave. Not paddle the same wave, and the first wave coming for the locals and second, if not local coming, you, you go. Everywhere it's like that» (Davi, 33).

For Davi, showing respect means taking a humble approach and leaving waves for the locals, regardless of theoretical priority positions, which is representative for many interviewees and is shown further below.

Apart from *showing* respect as a visitor, *being* respected is an important issue. To be respected by the local surfers, a tourist in the line-up has to act in a certain way that is expected of him or her and that expected behavior can vary from line-up to line-up, as already shown in 4.2 *Contextual rules*.

«I think just staying aside it's a good beginning for them to respect you. Cause they understand that I'm there and I'm not just there to surf and to drop in to whoever it is, they realize I'm there because I like surf, they realize that I'm aside because I'm learning and I think that's already something that they will respect also cause they understand that's another person who really likes surf and not just another one just catching waves or whatever» (Tomas, 31).

This statement of Tomas shows a direct causality, namely showing respect leading to being respected, which in this case equals to being allowed to surf at that particular spot without being hindered.

However, to be respected, it seems as if it is not enough to follow the surf etiquette and grant privileges to the locals but it is also important to be a good surfer:

«You surf to relax to have fun, not to be stressed, you know. Should be this way. And sometimes it's not, and that's a problem because there's a lack of respect or education in the water as well. So it will be always a fight between the, respect and how easy you are in the water with other people, how do you respect the line-ups and, if you respect that, for sure if you're a good surfer they will be [impressed] by that. You also need to be a good surfer, to be respected, you know» (João, 46)

This comment describes the two previously mentioned factors of showing the expected behavior and having proper surfing skills, both of which are required in order to be respected. However, for some interviewees, it is equally or more important to be brave than to be highly skilled:

«How do you earn your respect? For me personally, my opinion, the best way to earn your respect is like I told you, enter the water with a humble attitude, you wait in the line-up, when your wave comes you don't pull the nose no matter how big is the wipeout if you going to eat shit or not, all the guys are paddling out the locals and you have to go. If you take the nose off a wave man you may as well get the fuck out of the water and... go surfing somewhere else» (Rodrigo, 39).

This statement shows the importance of not hesitating when it is one's turn to take a wave. The act of pulling the nose and letting the wave pass by unriden because of fear of an unpleasant or even hurtful wipeout is seen as cowardly and can apparently lead to conflicts with those who have granted priority to the hesitating person. Taking the wave and performing a wipeout on the other hand is interpreted as bravery and therefore respected.

Finally, being respected can also be an impossible task even when fulfilling the required elements of behavior, skill and bravery, because it is not in the power of the agent but determined by external factors: *«It's not that we don't respect you, but there's a lot of you» (Santiago, 21).*

Put together, it seems as if the individual definitions of respect are rooted in the interpretation of a complex code regulating the interactions between locals and tourists. In order for tourists to obtain respect from the locals, they are expected to act humbly and show respect, and also to possess surfing skills and show bravery in the water. However, it is context-dependent and differs from the usual interpretation of priority rules between people of the same status.

4.6.5 Locals have priority?!

Obviously, the status of being a local surfer somehow influences the social interactions in a line-up and the presence of locals may create new dynamics because of varying expectations

concerning the appropriate behavior. Among the interviewees, the Portuguese local residents who have lived in Baleal for a long time tend to justify local priority in a tautological way, as a natural practice that has always been like this. To give an example, when asked about how he copes with crowded line-ups, João answers:

«Well, I'm a local... That means that, I don't like to be dropped in, but I don't drop in on anybody as well. Mean locals and crowds will always be in collision route» (João, 46).

This can be regarded as a locals-first attitude that apparently does not need further explanation. It also indicates a complicated relationship between locals and visitors, especially when the latter appear in bigger quantities. This would be the standard definition of localism that can be found in any surf guide like the Stormrider (Low Pressure 2016).

«Nonono, forget the rules! You know like, there are rules and then there's respect in the line-up and there's a very good rule when you're traveling, which is this: You're in a line-up on a good wave and if you're a traveling surfer, the best wave of the day, even if it lands on your lap, will never be yours. The best wave of the day is for the locals, it's like this anywhere in the world» (Martim, 37).

Martim supports this thesis and declares that the best wave of the day (or even the best wave of every set) belongs to the locals, which he illustrates with a dinner including a host and his guest who would never take the biggest steak for himself unless offered.

«Normally they, they, you understand perfectly who are the locals because normally they are always on the best spot surfing the best waves, and if you come to take the best wave of the set, probably you will get a problem with them because, it's a natural selection over things, respect the locals they will respect you, it's the only thing» (João, 46).

There seems to be a customary law dictating priority privileges for locals for the sake of their status only, because the statements are usually based on the call for respect, and the status quo. However, there are several efforts to explain local privileges:

«Of course if I'm a local, and I'm paddling and probably you're on holidays you have the whole day to surf and I'm on my lunch break, I'm gonna catch more waves than you, that's also normal and understandable» (Rodrigo, 39).

Regarding justifications of the locals-first attitude, Rodrigo argues that locals typically have a shorter amount of time to surf because they are working and therefore deserve more waves in that short period. Although a tourist would probably reply that he or she can only surf this one week while the local has the surf spot in front of his or her house every day.

Another frequent explanation for priority rights of locals is that they deserve those rights by fulfilling duties. These duties include maintaining a clean environment, mainly by collecting garbage at the beaches but also policing the line-up for safety reasons, informing the ignorant about immediate dangers and helping people in need.

«Yeah because I live here, I live here and I take care of the beach you know is like people just gonna come here to use anything, because they pay for accommodation they pay for the board they pay, they, they have to, how to say, yeah it's like, priority in the water you can't pay you know it's not about money it's about respect and, it's about how you behave in the water» (Gabriel, 35).

Gabriel states that he demands priority because he collects garbage from the beach and corrects others who fail to do so. Also, he shows a certain defiance regarding the economic situation in Baleal, in which foreign tourists in their twenties are often relatively well-funded and wealthier than the locals, and declares that purchasing power is a worthless factor in the line-up. He regards etiquette and respect as decisive in the surfing space.

When the interviewees themselves are not playing the role of locals but of visitors, when traveling or when surfing with more established locals, many accept local priority as something natural not to be questioned:

«Yeah I, just like when I go when I drive and go in, get in and have some locals, I wait for my, my wave, if this local drop in, drop in I don't complain, I respect him there, and step by step, if you are, if you are... surf very well, you get your waves and then the locals, see you if you respect the locals, maybe in half an hour one hour you can surf with the guys» (Davi, 33).

Davi describes a gentle approach that is representative for most interviewees who are not eager to provoke conflicts and have learnt to deal with delicate situations. However, while most interviewees support the locals-first attitude, many condemn aggressive responses of locals to perceived misbehavior of tourists, or even for no other reason than their presence – which is the common definition of surfing localism (Warshaw 2005).

«Yeah I see lots of guys getting stupid, you know, being aggressive. I don't think there's anything you can do because, you know like Peniche has become a touristic place, and you know you can't have only one side of the coin. The coin has always two sides you know and, if it's good because half the city is making a living out of tourism, you cannot say "okay you're not welcome here, you're just welcome to those 200 meters of beach over there and this is our spot so get lost", you cannot say that you know» (Martim, 37).

Martim explains the dilemma of economy and surfing space (see 4.1.7 *Economy versus surfing space dilemma*) and demands to treat visitors well, regardless of the place they are surfing and thereby refuses the idea of surf spots reserved for locals only. At the same time, as shown above, he also demands respect from the visitors, which he specifies as surrendering the best waves to the locals, which is a debated point of view too:

«If you go to a place to surf, you have to have good sense. And see that you're not the only one, there's more people there, and people want to have fun. So they have the same right as me, if I'm here or if I'm there, if I was born here [...], that's arguments that mean nothing! You know, you just have to have good sense and respect. If you have good sense and respect everything works» (Maria, 56).

Maria refuses any local priority rights altogether, even though she can be found cleaning the beaches on a daily basis, so she does not demand a special behavior from tourists that goes beyond the common rules. Ironically, she was mentioned in several interviews as a prime example of whom to give priority to on every occasion possible, mainly due to her seniority. Being the alleged first female surfer of the region, she has the status of a local celebrity and seems to be highly respected among the other local surfers. When asked about place-dependence in terms of the foreigner-local relations, she states:

«Well, that's in Supertubes, the localism. Yeah, in Supertubes you got some guys who think they, the wave belongs to them. They bought it, they got a [claim to] the wave. No I'm joking you know, because this doesn't belong to anyone, come on! This belongs to everybody!» (Maria, 56).

According to the above she refuses both the place restrictions and the priority in the line-up, along with other like-minded interviewees.

«Yeah, well it's always the same thing you know, every time every time and specially like this, if you have the priority and like I was saying we are inside the water. If I have the priority doesn't matter for me if he is a local or, whatever. I have it and I have it. And really piss me off!» (Tomas, 31).

Tomas is also a critic of any local privileges and supports the right to complain for anyone getting dropped in on by a local surfer. However, he also urges that this kind of complaining would likely lead to problems in any line-up of the area and recalls several arguments of varying degree he experienced when arriving in Baleal a few years back. Nevertheless, it has to be added that the greater part of the interviewees does not question local priority but accepts it as a given fact.

A conflict that happened at Supertubos during the period of the WCT contest in October 2013 between the professional surfer Joel Parkinson and a local bodyboarder illustrates the diverging perceptions regarding local priority. The cameras caught Parkinson dropping in on the bodyboarder, which was followed by an argument and a punch in Parkinson's face. Several interviewees mentioned this incident and explained that Parkinson showed an arrogant attitude against bodyboarders in general and that his drop-in was a reaction to being repeatedly dropped in on by the bodyboarder. These drop-ins can be regarded as a demonstration of local power that a visitor, even if he is a professional surfer, has to accept. However, when Parkinson did the same to the bodyboarder, it was regarded as an insult and physically sanctioned.

In summary, can be found two stages of local priority can be found. First, there is the concept of places that are (partially) restricted to locals and second, the notion of situation-specific priority in the line-up of any spot, both of which are partially contested.

4.6.6 Comparisons with other places

When discussing the situation of Peniche's and Baleal's line-ups, the interviewees often make comparisons to other places they have visited, heard about from friends or seen in the media. The comparisons are often made to justify one's own behavior and classify it as widely practiced and socially acceptable.

Hawaii is a popular example and often used to relativize incidents that happen in the line-ups of Peniche and Baleal, because Hawaii's line-ups are notorious and thought to be more problematic in terms of the frequency of random violence. It is notable that comparisons often happen on different scales and single spots like Molho Leste in Peniche are compared with entire states like California and Hawaii, or countries like England and Australia. The exceptions here are domestic comparisons with other Portuguese surf spots like Coxos in Ericeira, or with Mundaka in Spain.

«Here I think, I've seen [localism] be pretty extreme, but, it's strange because I wouldn't say it's as race-based as other places, that I've been to, here it's, if you're just like respectful in the water they'll let you have a wave or two you know. And in Hawaii, good luck, you know you paddle in at the wrong spot, on the wrong board in the wrong conditions, that kind of thing you know, especially a white guy like me. And clearly not from the islands» (William, 27).

William, who has been surfing in Hawaii, describes the mood in the line-ups as tense and the rules as very strict. He has the notion of a racial hierarchy in the water in which the native Hawaiians dominate the line-ups and other US-Americans are regarded as intruders, regardless of how long they have lived there. This image is also portrayed by the surf media and mentioned by other interviewees when discussing localism and it is usually seen as an overreaction of the local surfers. However, some interviewees understand and support the protective behavior of some Hawaiian surfers. Also, when defining *local*, most interviewees regard residents in Baleal and Peniche only as locals if they were born in that area or have lived there for an undefined, but long, period of time.

Davi has already lived in Brazil and England and tells of significant differences:

«[It] is really crazy. Brazil is like... The gangs go surf with guns, in the beach, in Rio de Janeiro, ya, depends it's danger, ya it's danger» (Davi, 33).

While also describing the locals of Peniche as crazy, he assesses the situation in (parts of) his home country Brazil as dangerous and brings up examples of friends who joined armed surf gangs in Rio de Janeiro, thereby constructing the image of a violent and hazardous surfing environment that is not comparable to Peniche. In contrast, when describing atmosphere in

England, where he also lived for a while, he says that he has not seen anything he would call localism.

Some interviewees describe their experiences at Mundaka, a famous river mouth break in the Basque country, which hosted the international surfing contest that now takes place at Supertubos in Peniche. All of them emphasize the importance of adopting a humble approach, which means being patient and not insisting on priority.

«It's like your etiquette again, so in Mundaka it's a lefthand, [...] man and I was there and nobody let me catch waves like I was on my turn and they were all the time going but they are locals, you know and they are from there so I'm not gonna put just my thing arriving and like I'm gonna catch this wave because it's my turn no, so man I wait like 45 minutes for my first wave. But then they understand that I was respecting them on their own place you know and I respect because I'm not from there» (Afonso, 31).

Experiences like this seem to influence the expectations that the traveling interviewees have of visitors at their own home breaks in Peniche and Baleal. In Afonso's case it means that when being in a conflict situation with a Spanish surfer in Baleal, he still has the memory of the atmosphere in the line-up of Mundaka and remembers the expected behavior he had to show as a visitor in order to be accepted there. As a consequence, he expects the same humble behavior from the Spanish tourist

4.6.7 Comparing Peniche and Baleal

While elaborating premises of being a local, questions appear concerning space on a regional scale. Namely, it remains unclear if a surfer can be regarded as a local at a surf spot in the village of Baleal but not in Peniche; and vice versa. The interviewees have different opinions on this topic but tend to generalize the *local* to all spots of both Baleal and Peniche.

«You're a local in all the spots around here but the thing is there are spots where probably people consider that you are more local than [on other spots]. You know but I'm so old that I'm already local in all the spots, yeah» (Rodrigo, 39).

Rodrigo is a supporter of this view, which applies the local status to all spots of the area simultaneously, but points to slight differences, which are emphasized by others:

«That's already, yeeeah it's not that connected you know, Supertubos and Molho Leste it's more for Peniche people, [...] it's still a place where you can surf in the area, but people living here for example in the island, it's not the same thing as if you lived in Peniche and you go surf every day to (?) there, there's a difference, not a big one but there's still a difference» (Tomas, 31).

Tomas has a different feeling when surfing at the spots located south of Peniche and feels less connected to those places than to the surf spots in Baleal, a feeling that is shared by other interviewees. Miguel (31) speaks of a rivalry between people of Peniche and Baleal, which

roots in an old football feud between the towns of Peniche and Ferrel. However this was not further examined and remains an anecdote.

What can be said is that Peniche and Baleal have completely different townscapes and also different social structures; with Peniche being an industrial harbor town and Baleal a summer resort. Consequently, the Peniche locals who dominate the line-ups south of the harbor are perceived as tough working class people, while Baleal seems to be home to an international, heterogeneous group of surfers. Some interviewees whose lives are centered in Baleal tend to feel less confident when surfing south of Peniche and feel more at home at the surf spots of Baleal. Maria (56) is the only interviewee who both lives and works in Peniche; she feels equally at home at all surf spots but prefers Baleal for its smoother conditions at the beach breaks. However, most interviewees who live in the town of Peniche work in Baleal, so the Peniche perspective of social differences between the towns cannot be further elaborated with the available interview material.

5 Discussion

In the first part of the discussion, the results are summarized and placed in the context of the research questions and the existing literature. In the second part, the methods are critically reflected upon and questions regarding positionality and sampling are discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the results

At the core of this research project are questions about the form of localism that was practiced in Baleal and Peniche, about the social dynamics in the line-ups and the constitution, negotiation and representation of surfing space. The concrete research questions were:

- *How do local surfers perceive conflicts over waves?*
- *How is the line-up as a social space constituted, negotiated and represented?*

In order to understand conflicts in the water, there is a need to understand the dynamics in the microcosm of a line-up first, and so the second question will be discussed first.

The line-up of a surf spot is the area just behind the zone of the breaking waves, where the surfers gather and paddle into the unbroken wave in order to surf it. On days with favorable conditions and clean, not too challenging waves, the line-ups of Baleal can get overcrowded and chaotic, especially in the summer holidays and on weekends. They then function as the playground for a heterogeneous group of surfers, consisting both free-surfers and surf schools with surfers using different types of boards and surfing with various levels of skill. The group includes both foreign and Portuguese tourists as well as locals. During mid-season in May 2015, there were sometimes more than a hundred people surfing at the same beach break. People may have different backgrounds, ideas and skill levels, but everyone is there for exactly the same reason: to ride waves.

To simplify interactions in the line-up and reduce the risk of accidents, there is an informal set of rules, sometimes referred to as surf etiquette, which mainly regulates priority access to waves. The application of the rules seems to vary depending on the context. Gender, age and skill level of the people in the line-up and the daily natural conditions all influence the interpretation of the rules. In the literature, knowledge of the rules is usually taken for granted and transgression seen as an act of vice (Olivier 2010) or a means of asserting power (Preston-Whyte 2002). In the heterogeneous crowd of surfers in Baleal however, it seems to be more

complicated, and some people – especially free-surfing beginners – may have no notion of the rules. Transgressors can be divided into the ignorant, the inexperienced, the incapable and the indifferent (see 4.3.1 Ignorance, inexperience, inability or indifference?). These different types all fail to follow the rules for different reasons but the outcome is the same: somehow hindering someone else's surfing. The utility of the rules is debated: some authors doubt their efficiency and propose the development of formal laws and access regulation to prevent localism from becoming the dominant, alternative form of governing (De Alessi 2009; Kaffine 2009; Mixon 2014). In Baleal, this is not seen as an option, although there are already some concession areas in place, in which only the surf school with access rights is allowed, along with free-surfers not belonging to any surf school. However, individual freedom seems to be highly valued, and people would rather solve the crowding problem themselves than accepting formal laws and their enforcement.

In order to handle the crowded line-ups, the local surfers have developed strategies, some of which could be regarded as practices of localism. The most passive approach would be avoiding crowded line-ups altogether or leaving them. When this is not an option, an extroverted behavior with the purpose of being recognized in the line-up, especially when riding a wave, is widely practiced. Conscious transgression of the rules is also a strategy, meaning that surfers will snake others and drop in on them. Finally, abusing people to scare them away also occurs.

Understanding the context dependence of the rules is crucial for understanding how a line-up works and why conflicts arise. Simply put, at some breaks a visiting surfer has fewer rights than a local and must earn his or her waves by showing respect. This means that the visitor must take a humble approach, be patient and not complain when not granted priority. If the behavior of a visitor does not meet the expectations of a local, there will be tension. Apart from complying with the local rules, a surfer may enhance his acceptance by showing skills and/or bravery, which can be regarded as subcultural capital (Ford & Brown 2006; Langseth 2012). This seems to be valid for both tourists and newer residents, who are sometimes regarded as visitors and sometimes regarded as locals, depending on the constitution of the line-up. Usher and Kerstetter (2015a) conducted a field study in a village in Nicaragua, where they found the foreign residents to be especially dominant in their behavior, in order to establish themselves in the local subculture.

In addition to the local status and the skill level, the type of surfboard seems to influence one's acceptance in a line-up as well. Worldwide, the line-ups tend to be dominated by shortboarders, who enjoy a higher status than riders of any other type of board, followed by

longboarders, stand-up paddlers and bodyboarders, in that order (Waitt & Frazer 2012; Ford & Brown 2006). However, the line-ups of Molho Leste and Supertubos are dominated by local bodyboarders, who seem to enjoy a much higher status in Peniche than in other regions of the world, where they are sometimes not even considered as surfers (Preston-Whyte 2002). Waitt and Frazer (2012) found the mood in longboarder line-ups to generally be more relaxed and in Baleal, this seems to be the case too, but it cannot compensate for the tensions that arise in overcrowded conditions.

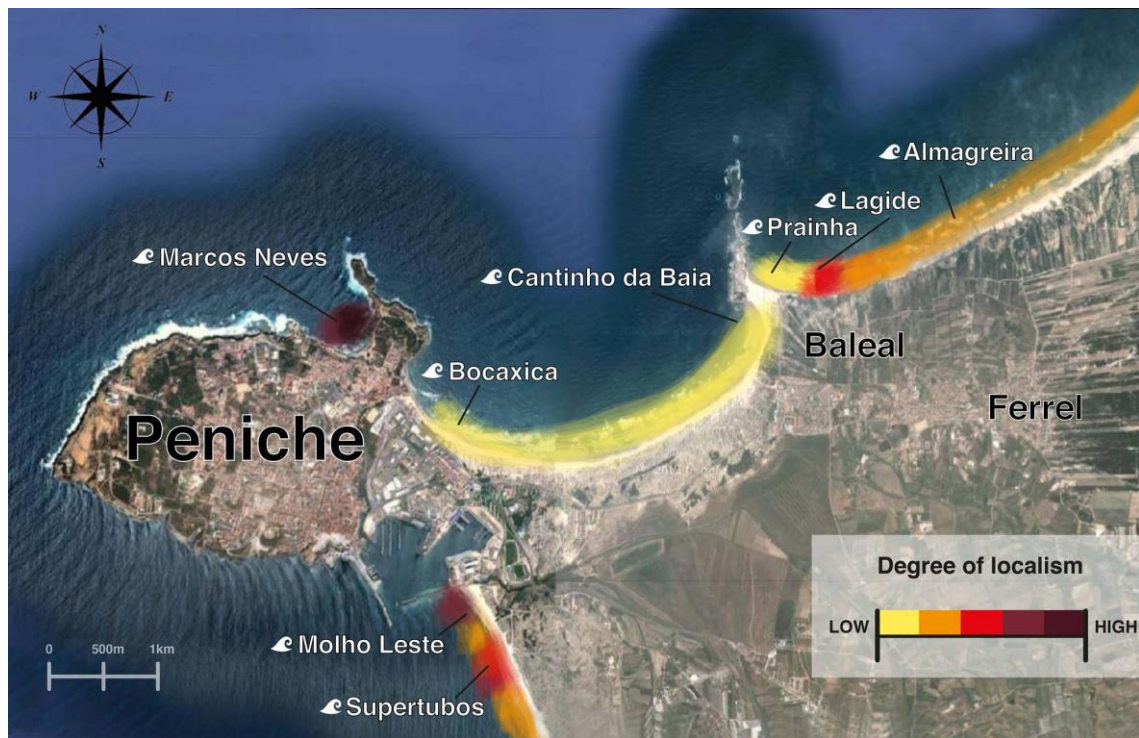


Figure 8: Degree of localism in Baleal and Peniche (based on Google Maps 2016).

The expectations that locals have of visitors, regarding their skill level and behavior in the line-up, are highly dependent on the location. The map of *Figure 8* shows the spatial distribution of localism. The illustrated degree of localism is relative to the survey area and not comparable to other places. For example, the degree of localism in Molho Leste may still be low compared to the localism at Lunada Bay in California, as presented by Nazer (2004) or Carrol (2015). It is notable that the waves of the highest quality – Supertubos, Molho Leste and Lagide – are also the ones with the highest degree of localism, where visiting surfers will need to be more careful than at the beginner beach of prainha or at the big bay between the two peninsulas. This supports the findings of Kaffine (2009) and Mixon (2014) who found a positive correlation between wave quality and the degree of localism in California.

To evaluate localism in Baleal and Peniche in absolute ways, it may be useful to draw on Nazer's (2004) classification, in which he divides localism into mild, medium and heavy forms. Mild localism means that visiting surfers must strictly follow the surf etiquette and give the local surfers some extra credit, which means not arriving in large groups, taking a slow approach and letting the locals surf the best set waves, which is commonly referred to as «respect the locals» (Nazer 2004). In contrast, medium and heavy localism seeks to actively keep visitors out with abusive or violent actions. If applied to Baleal and Peniche, there is probably no heavy localism in the area, but certainly mild localism in all but the yellow marked breaks in *Figure 4* and maybe medium localism in Molho Leste and Marcos Neves, where visitors seem not to be welcome. However, Nazer's (2004) scale may be too focused on violent actions for the case of Peniche and Baleal, which seem to be more in line with Beaumont and Brown (2014a). They emphasize a balanced perspective of localism:

«A balanced view of localism as a continuum of values and behaviours, ranging from benign or even positive expressions of local identity to actual acts of violence towards outsiders or their property» Beaumont & Brown (2014a: 3).

This definition notably involves a positive meaning of localism, which was also found in this thesis, for example local surfers policing the line-up in a positive way, helping people who struggle and rebuke those who ignore the rules. The reasons for protective behavior however differ significantly. While Beaumont and Brown (2014a) found exclusionary practices of localism designed to protect the community experience of surfing, the interviewed people of Baleal predominantly wanted to protect their personal space and surf their own waves without being hindered.

5.2 Critical reflection of the methods

Because qualitative fieldwork is always contextual, relational, embodied, and politicized, it is important to keep one's positionality in mind (Sultana 2007). There are several circumstances of the data collection, the analysis and the choice of location that have to be considered when evaluating the results. At the same time, there has to be a certain awareness that it is not possible to stay entirely neutral as a researcher and that the outcome will always have a personal, unconscious interpretation (Rose 1997).

One important criterion is language. English is neither my native language nor the interviewees', with one exception. In order to not exclude any possible candidates because of language barriers, I was ready to work with a translator. However, this turned out not to be necessary, as the level of English was generally high enough, which I trace back to the

international atmosphere in Baleal, where English is omnipresent. Admittedly, a few interviews would probably have been (even) more fruitful if they were conducted in Portuguese, because some interviewees struggled to find the right words to express their thoughts thoroughly. Also, when coding the interviews, the fact that they were conducted in a foreign language had to be considered, because some words such as *respect*, *friend* or temporal expressions may have different meanings depending on the different cultural and linguistic background of the interviewees. However as the time spent on interviews increased, my contentual and acoustic understanding of English in a Portuguese and Brazilian context was steadily enhanced.

Another criterion that also refers to positionality is gender. A female interviewer would probably have received slightly different narrations, especially when discussing gender-related topics with male interviewees. Also, my habitus as a surfer, a foreigner and a twentysomething may influence the way the interviewees talk about some topics. A Portuguese or even a local would likely have established a different connection with the interviewees.

Apart from matters of positionality, the sampling of the interviewees is likely to have a strong influence on the outcome. Because my everyday life in the field was centered in Baleal, I was part of the social network of this place, which biased my choice of interview partners. Some interviewees would probably have refused the interview if they had not met me before, others I could not talk to because I did not know them well enough. In consequence, the narrations and answers to the questions I received in the interviews must be seen from a Baleal point of view and cannot be extrapolated to the wider area of Peniche. In order to reach the residents of Peniche that do not work in Baleal and that have their lives centered in the very town of Peniche, it would be necessary to stay in the corresponding neighborhoods to get familiar with the area and the people. Surfers with a working class background who do not work in jobs associated with tourism were underrepresented in the sampling. They are likely to have different opinions on matters like surf schools and crowding than people who economically benefit from it.

6 Conclusion

The findings show that emerging conflicts between local surfers and visitors are rooted in a diverse understanding of the prevailing rules in the line-ups. These rules are context-specific and place-dependent. Crowding is a challenge for the dynamics of any line-up, and local surfers develop various strategies to deal with it, involving protective actions that can be regarded as practices of localism. Every surf spot has its own rules and demands a specific behavior of the people who surf it, which makes it difficult to formulate universal behavior norms, although such attempts have already been undertaken with the publicizing of surf etiquette. Localism may therefore be regarded as a complex set of place-dependent and context-specific practices, varying from supportive forms of guidance in the water to abusive or even violent, territorial behavior against visitors.

A first step to more disciplined line-ups in Baleal could be the installation of sign posts that explain and illustrate the common rules of surf etiquette. These would not meet the context-specific character of the rules in practice, but would provide information as a starting point and are already in place at other destinations, for example in Spain or Australia. This measure may help to prevent the mood in the line-ups of Baleal getting tenser and practices of localism more abusing.

Implications for future research include more field studies in general, in order to get a better overview of the characteristics of localism and the social dynamics of line-ups. Concerning the survey area of Baleal and Peniche, a concentration on the town of Peniche and the surf breaks of Supertubos and Molho Leste would probably provide additional insights.

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Appendix

Interview guidelines

Surf spots as places

Opener: Why do you surf here?

Which surf spot(s) around here do you favor? Why? Are there any advantages or disadvantages compared to other surf spots?

Is there something special about this place/your favorite surf spot? Do you only come here for surfing or also for other purposes? Do you somehow protect the place (against e.g. pollution or intruders)?

Have you traveled to surf? Where? What were your experiences?

Social life component

Do you prefer to surf by yourself or in a group? Why? Is surfing important for your social life? Do you have friends who surf? A partner who surfs?

Do you participate in a surf club? What events do take place here?

Do you have enough time to surf besides your work?

Rules in the line-up

Do you follow certain rules in the line-up? Do you expect others to do so? How do you react when someone does not follow the rules? Who makes sure that the rules are enforced?

Do you communicate in the line-up? How? With friends? With strangers?

Have you experienced critical situations in the-line up that made you angry or uncomfortable?

Is everybody welcome here or are there people who are not allowed in the line-up? What about large groups? Total beginners? Girls? Are crowds a problem? Do you somehow regulate access to the line-up?

Are there seasonal differences? If so, what are these differences?

Specifying local

Do you have spots where only locals are allowed or where locals always or sometimes have the right of way? How is that accepted and enforced?

Who is a local? How could I become a local?

(tourists or traveling locals only): What are your experiences with locals? When and where are they friendly/hostile? Are there patterns, depending on crowding, the kind of wave (difficulty, beach/reef/point) or the world region?

How do you see the future of this surf spot?

Facts

Anonymized name:

Age:

Gender:

Nationality:

Occupation:

Residence:

Family status:

Personal declaration

I hereby declare that the submitted thesis is the result of my own, independent work. All external sources are explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.

Zürich, 28.01.2016

Beat Meile