

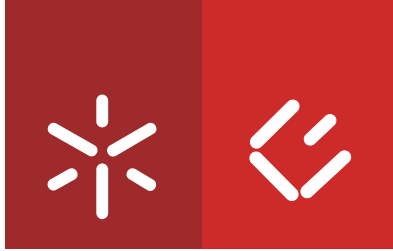


Universidade do Minho
Escola de Economia e Gestão

Artur Manuel Vieira Saraiva

**The green consumer identity formation
process: The context of organic food
consumption**

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Doctoral Thesis in Business Administration

Conducted under the supervision of
Professor Moritz von Schwedler
Professor Emília Fernandes

October 2017

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

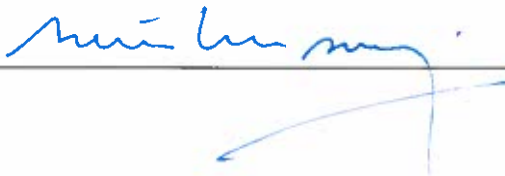
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Full Name: Artur Manuel Vieira Saraiva

Signature: _____

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Some say that doing a PhD is a lonely process. I do not share that opinion. This thesis was only possible with the collaboration of many other people. First, I am deeply grateful to those I have interviewed and who are the essence of this work. Thank you for opening your hearts, for welcoming me into your homes and for becoming my friends.

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Finally, I wish to thank my wife, Renata. This work is also yours because we made this journey together.

Artur Manuel Vieira Saraiva

TITLE AND ABSTRACT

Title: The green consumer identity formation process: The context of organic food consumption

Some authors argue that the current environmental and social problems that currently affect the world are related to the current market system, overconsumption, and materialistic lifestyle. According to the literature, few consumers are willing to express an ecological oriented consumption. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to contribute to a better understanding of the reasons why only a small number of consumers are involved in the consumption of organic products, and how they develop this ethical identity. For this purpose, an inductive approach was adopted to address the research objectives. The methodology is positioned in the interpretative paradigm to address, in depth, the narratives of 31 frequent consumers of organic products and motivated by issues that affect the environment. The narratives were collected through the interview method.

In the narratives, a hard ecocentric discourse was identified that converge to three political dimensions of food consumption: politics of production, politics of localism and activism. It was also structured the construction of green identities over 5 phases: (1) consciousness, (2) gathering, (3) negotiation, (4) stabilization, (5) sharing. This construction is made aware through an individual strategy adoption of voluntary simplicity, voluntary sufficiency and anti-consumption practices that symbolizes commitment to environmental convictions, which in turn operate feelings of satisfaction and personal well-being.

This research proposes several contributions to the field of consumer behaviour. First, it brings innovation by applying the 'Processual Theory of Identity' to understand the formation of green consumer identity in the context of organic products consumers; secondly, it deepens a theme that has been scarcely studied in consumer behaviour field - the political perspective of consumption; third, it deepens the complex and interconnected relations among ethical

products, political consumption, green identities, voluntary simplicity, voluntary sufficiency, and anti-consumption.

Keywords: Qualitative research methods, Organic consumption, Sustainability, Green consumption identity, Political consumption, Anti-consumption, Voluntary simplicity, Voluntary sufficiency.

TÍTULO E RESUMO

Título: The green consumer identity formation process: The context of organic food consumption

Alguns autores têm defendido que os problemas ambientais e sociais que atualmente afetam o mundo estão relacionados com o sistema de mercado, com o excesso de consumo, e com o estilo de vida materialista. De acordo com a literatura, poucos são os consumidores que estão dispostos a manifestar um consumo orientado por preocupações ambientais. Deste modo, o principal objetivo desta investigação é contribuir para um melhor esclarecimento acerca das razões porque apenas um pequeno número de consumidores se envolvem no consumo de produtos biológicos, e como essa identidade de consumo ética é construída. Para este propósito, foi adotada uma abordagem indutiva para explorar os objetivos desta investigação. A metodologia posiciona-se no paradigma interpretativo para abordar, em profundidade, as narrativas de 31 consumidores assíduos de produtos biológicos e motivados por questões que afetam o ambiente. As narrativas foram obtidas através do método da entrevista. Nas narrativas, foi identificado um pronunciado discurso ecocêntrico que converge para três dimensões da política do consumo: política de produção, política de localismo e ativismo. Foi também estruturada a construção de uma identidade de consumo verde ao longo de 5 fases: (1) consciência; (2) recolhimento; (3) negociação; (4) estabilização; (5) partilha. Esta construção faz-se a par da adoção de uma estratégia pessoal de simplicidade, de suficiência voluntária e de práticas de anticonsumo, que simbolizam a identificação com as convicções ambientais, e que, por sua vez, operam sentimentos de satisfação e de bem-estar pessoal.

Esta investigação apresenta vários contributos para o campo do comportamento do consumidor. Em primeiro lugar, pela inovação, ao aplicar a 'Processual Theory of Identity' para perceber a formação de identidades verdes no contexto do consumo de produtos biológicos; em segundo lugar, aprofunda um tema ainda pouco estudado na área do comportamento do consumidor – o consumo

na perspetiva política; em terceiro lugar, aprofunda a relação entre temas complexos, mas interligados, tais como: os produtos éticos, o consumo político, identidades verdes, a simplicidade voluntária, a suficiência voluntária, e o anticonsumo.

Palavras-chave: Metodologias de investigação qualitativas; Consumo biológico, Sustentabilidade, Identidade de consumo verde, Consumo político, Anticonsumo, Simplicidade voluntária, Suficiência voluntária

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, FIGURES, TABLES AND GRAPHS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAFN	Alternative Agro-Food Networks
AMAP	Associação para a Manutenção da Agricultura de Proximidade
AMLF	Association for Maintenance of Local Farming
CSA	Community Support Agriculture
CMS	Critical Management Studies
DSP	Dominant Social Paradigm
ECCB	Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behaviour
EOAC	Environmental Oriented Anti-consumption
IBM	Identity-Based Motivations
LPT	Labour Process Theory
LETS	Local Exchange Trading Systems
LFN	Local Food Networks
NCC	New Consumption Communities
NEP	New Environmental Paradigm
NSMT	New Social Movements Theory
SFSC	Short Food Supply Chains
SRAC	Sustainable Rooted Anti-Consumption
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom

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**The green consumer identity formation process: The context of
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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to provide a general outline of the study in order to contextualize the subject of this thesis, that is, the formation of green consumption identities; to explain the research opportunities left open in the field of ethical consumption and to explain how research can contribute to the enrichment of knowledge in this field. Thus, the research question and the objectives to be achieved are presented, followed by the theoretical frameworks that support the research and the expected contributions. The chapter ends with the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Research scope and justification

Since the 1990s and especially in recent years, the interest in the field of ethical consumer behaviour has grown substantially (Chatzidakis, Hibbert, & Smith, 2006). However, most studies continue to focus more a business perspective rather than to know the important role that consumer decisions can play in a better society. Even so, the idea of sustainability has gained some relevance as a consequence of the emergence of some groups such as anti-consumption movements, identity sustainable consumers, or downshiffters, who provide various forms of cultural and behavioural changes (de Burgh-Woodman & King, 2013).

Sustainability, as a marketing practice, has frequently been focussed on studies about how consumers have modified their behaviours and how marketing might 'green' its own activities (de Burgh-Woodman & King, 2013). Despite their important contributions, this existing research has largely "left sustainability as a core unproblematised, assuming it to signify, in one form or another, an ethical system underpinned by concern for the future survival of earth's environment" (de Burgh-Woodman & King, 2012, p. 161). There has been a debate in the literature,

that is usually referred to as 'ethical purchasing gap' or the 'attitude-behaviour discrepancy', between what people say they can do in ethical terms and what they actually do (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2011; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010, 2014; Chatzidakis et al., 2006; Shaw & Shiu, 2003). This is because there are considerable barriers to consumers expressing an ethics attitude in the consumer society of the Western world. Moreover, individuals frequently are generally not willing to make sacrifices with regard to their consumption (Autio, Heiskanen, & Heinonen, 2009; Autio, 2005; Moisander, 2007; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010).

In this research, the intention is not to analyse organic food from a market perspective, but considering it in a more symbolic, emotional and intangible way (Hall, 2008). Therefore, following Burgh-Woodman and King's (2012) suggestion, this research will focus on sustainability that defines consumers' experiences, highlighting how the relation human-nature fits as an ideational foundation for green consumers, and for the consequent behaviour changes. Such perspective of sustainability implies to analyse consumers who really transformed intentions to action and deeply compromise their consumption behaviours with radical shifts in their lives. Therefore, this research has as its starting point the experiences of consumers who have already adapted and matured solid ethical behaviours: the deep organic food consumers in Portugal. Consequently, it is relevant to identify and understand the point of view of such active consumers in the sustainability dialogue, regarding how they construct their identity projects and why they reject forms of unsustainable consumption. In the same way as in Fuentes (2014,a,b) research, this study aims to explain how green products can be used as 'symbolic resources' to build a consumer's identity and contribute to achieving a sustainable environment. According to Connolly and Protheros's (2003) study, both consumption and environmental responsibility are means of constructing identity, incorporating meanings and signs. Thus, the emphasis of this research will be placed on ethical and environmental concerns of today's market niche and how the changes in their lifestyle and environmental awareness happens.

In a study developed in environmental management research, Åhlström, Macquet and Richter (2009) found that there are few publications focusing on more alternative sustainable models. Adding to this, the majority of the research is

considered “non-reflective” (p. 337) and focuses on the marginal adjustments regarding environmental issues. Additionally, these authors refer to a lack of a critical perspective in environmental management studies. At the same time, environmental researchers claim that a research agenda would have to urgently find new production and consumption models that are sustainable and profitable at the same time. As Ählström et al., (2009) mentioned, “the idea of continuous economic growth with marginal environmental adjustments is illogical” (p. 342), considering that the product itself has a higher negative environmental impact. Consequently, the situation calls for research on alternative methods of production and consumption from the ecological point of view.

As Ählström et al. (2009) have also stated, companies usually enter the discourse of sustainability because it complements their other objectives, generally set within a dominant economic profit paradigm (the ‘business-as-usual paradigm’) without ever questioning the *status quo*. They point out that there is also a tendency to use environmental and social intentions as part of companies’ public relations strategies. This prevailing mentality may be, however, incompatible with long-term environmental protection. Also related to this subject, Adler, Forbes and Willmott (2007) referred to ‘greenwashing’, when companies construct a “green symbolism without taking the radical steps required to deliver a full measure of green substance” (p. 144). Furthermore, in an interesting article by Desmond and Crane (2004), it is highlighted that morality continues in the margins of marketing practices. They argue that the only social responsibility of marketing is to achieve profit, based on a relationship between profitability, efficiency and economic selfishness. The authors argue that these factors set up the central marketing thought. In this scenario, ethics are still outside the meaning of organisational life, and have also been removed from the marketing decision-making process.

As far as Chamorro, Rubio and Miranda (2009) support, green consumer studies within environmental consciousness will continue to be attractive because the findings of today will not necessarily be valid in the future. Consequently, new research on this topic should continuously be done to “identify possible developments in consumers’ attitudes, intentions and behaviours” (p. 233).

Thus, from Newholm and Shaw's (2007) point of view, much work remains to be done in order to explore and theorize the everyday of consumption and ethical consumption projects across a range of cultures.

Considering this, these are the main arguments for this research:

- Increasing and unsustainable consumption (Jackson, 2005a);
- Permanent conflict between western society and environmental concerns (Kilbourne, 1998);
- The role of marketing focused on achieving competitive advantages for companies, rather than looking in terms of future directions (Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2015);
- Wide-spread use of the weak version of green sustainability (Adler, Forbes & Willmott, 2007; Chang, 2011; Desmond & Crane, 2004);
- Green products, means consumerism, environmental devastation and 'greenwashing' campaigns (Adler et al., 2007; Fuentes, 2014a; Soron, 2010).

To these, three more arguments are added resulting from the dissatisfaction with the current consumer society:

- Today's identity crisis and ethical disorientation (Soron, 2010);
- The effort to construct a stable identity out of the market pressure (Soron, 2010).
- Organic consumption is associated with the need to reduce consumption levels in general terms and that organic agriculture is linked to a more responsible response to the food production system (Shaw & Moraes, 2009).

To research ethics and environmental motivations of organic food consumers as well as the formation of their environmental conscience, matches with the arguments presented here.

In this research, a study of ethical consumer behaviour is proposed, highlighting the relationship between natural environmental and the politics of consumption. It is believed that the change of consumer attitudes could lead to an important

transformation in the way of living and ultimately global sustainability (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). Consequently, this research will focus on the analysis of the following main fields of interest: (1) the role of environmental awareness in the formation of green identities; (2) radical changes in consumer practices and anti-consumption attitudes for sustainability.

In line with this, regarding the gap in the literature mentioned above, and the few studies in this area of consumer behaviour, especially in the Portuguese context, the emphasis of this research will be on understanding the subjective reasons that justify abandoning conventional products and consumers' preferences for organic, alternative and local products. Moreover, through consumers' narratives, it is intended to explore how organic food consumption contributes to subjective well-being (Binder & Blankenberg, 2017; Iyer & Muncy, 2016), and the formation of new lifestyles, a new 'identity', or a new 'self' (Autio, Heiskanen, & Heinonen, 2009; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002; Cherrier, Black & Lee, 2011; Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2007; Cherrier, 2009; Haanpää, 2007; Hobson, 2002; Markkula & Moisander, 2012; Perera, 2014).

1.2 Research question and objectives

As mentioned before, the overarching aim of this research is to investigate the 'green identity' formation process, extending Cherrier and Murray's (2007) Processual Theory of Identity, in order to know why and how people engage in the consumption of organic food, and how such engagement is related with environmental concerns, dispossession attitudes and alternatives practices of consumption.

Thus, the research question for this research is:

Why and how do organic food consumers develop their new ethical 'identity', creating individual projects of sustainable consumption, and leading to important changes in their way of living?

This research question covers three main areas of research: (1) sustainability and environmental concerns; (2) 'identity' formation process; (3) alternative

consumer practices and anti-consumption behaviour. Moreover, the following research objectives will assist in answering the research question:

- (1) Understanding organic consumption motivations;
- (2) Identifying the main barriers in accessing and consuming organic products;
- (3) Understanding the cultural meanings represented by organic consumption;
- (4) Exploring the discourses underlying the politics of food in environmentally motivated consumers and the power that these consumption options represent in their lives;
- (5) Analysing how organic products contribute to build new green identities;
- (6) Understanding the new expressions that stand out in the formation of those green identities;
- (7) Understanding the influence of environmental and ethical concerns in consumer behaviour change;
- (8) Investigating the extent to which anti-consumer practices are present in the sustainability discourse;
- (9) Recognising how the new expressions and alternative consumer practices that stand out in the formation of new identities influence other consumers;
- (10) Investigating how anti-consumption practices contributes to well-being and life satisfaction.

In this sense, the empirical part of this research was guided "within the context of discovery" (Vitell & Muncy, 1992, p. 588), considering the sparse research that has been produced in this very particular field of consumer behaviour. Therefore, a qualitative study was developed among a group of enthusiasts' organic food consumers, by using in-depth and phenomenological interviews in order to

investigate the proposed topic and to understand this particular and complex context. In general terms, the methodological process follows the recommendations of the hermeneutic process (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1990; Thompson, 1997).

In order to answer the research question, the objectives are organized in four scientific papers that compose the chapters of this thesis.

Finally, this thesis aims to bring an innovative contribution systematizing the still tenuous relationship between the motivations of organic consumers, the formation of ethical consumer identities, and the expressions and positioning that result from this transformation process.

1.3 Conceptual framework and theories

In order to achieve the objectives and to answer the main research question, this research is set in the field of ethical consumption and green consumption and makes use of the Critical Management Studies (CMS), the New Social Movement Theories, and the Theories of Identity, as theoretical references to analyse how ethical consumer identity is constructed in this community.

1.3.1 Ethical consumption

According to Chatzidakis et al. (2006) the area of ethical consumer behaviour has followed two lines of research: (1) ethical consumption, which arises as a result of green consumption; and (2) consumer ethics, related to consumer misconduct. Within the sustainable development literature, ethical consumption is a “response to detrimental social and environmental consequences of global trade” (Brenton, 2013, p. 490), especially in developing countries, where consumers can affect the demand of certain products. On the other hand, authors such as Gregory-Smith et al. (2013) mention the scope of ethical consumption, as being related to human welfare, animal welfare, environmental welfare, or fair trade.

Consequently, ethical consumers are those who express values through purchasing (or boycotting) products and services that are linked to either environmental causes or to other forms of social justice (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010; McDonald, Oates, Alevizou, Young, & Hwang, 2012; Zander & Hamm, 2010). These behaviours incorporate an ethical/moral dimension as a consequence of concerns about what is right and wrong in the way that their individual decisions will bring consequences and could make a difference (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2014; Gregory-Smith, Smith, & Winklhofer, 2013). Other authors point out that 'ethical consumers' are commonly referred to as 'green consumers' (McDonald et al., 2012; McEachern & McClean, 2002). However, authors claim that although the use of different terms, they have the same meanings within the sustainable consumption discourse (McDonald et al., 2012). In a similar vein, the terms 'green', 'ecological', 'environmental' and 'sustainable' consumption/consumers are often used in an indifferently way to refer to the practices that reflect a concern for the environment, so that are theorized as a form of ethically oriented consumer behaviour (Markkula et al., 2010; Moisander, 2007).

The literature also suggests that the perspective of ethical consumption is part of the personal self-realization, in which through their consumption choices, consumers reflect their identity or a search for meaning in life to sustainable lifestyles (Jackson, 2005; Newholm & Shaw, 2007; Thøgersen, 2005). Some cultural phenomenon connected to the individual projects of ethical consumption are related with voluntary simplicity, downshifting, anti-consumption groups, slow-living movements, and environmental groups (Newholm & Shaw, 2007), happiness, well-being and good life, and more leisure or less work concepts (Dobers & Strannegård, 2005). Thus, a common feature of these consumers is that they "take into account the public consequences of [their] private consumption and use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change" (Webster, 1975, cited by Newholm & Shaw, 2007, p. 260). According to Newholm and Shaw (2007), green consumption studies were extended to ethical consumption "when the range of moral concern was detected" (p. 259). In fact, as referred above, the term 'green' is also associated with the environmental concerns of consumers' decisions.

Green consumption appeared in the 1980s and in the last 30 years has grown substantially, becoming an important issue for practitioners and academics (Sebastiani, Montagnini, & Dalli, 2013). Based on the existing research, green consumption is discussed as a form of 'pro-social' conscious consumer behaviour that involves an environmental social responsibility (Moisander, 2007). This green and ecologically segment is related to consumers who are willing to pay a premium price to obtain environmentally-friendly products (Ainscough, DeCarlo, & Trocchia, 2012), and involves the selection and purchasing of product and services in agreement with their green convictions (Moisander, 2007).

However, green consumption is inserted in a more comprehensive concept – 'sustainable consumption/development'. Several authors have proposed contributions to define this concept (Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Dobers & Strannegård, 2005; Kilbourne, McDonagh, & Prothero, 1997; Martin & Schouten, 2014). In general terms, sustainable development is defined as the economic and social development that meets current needs without compromising future generations ability (Hobson, 2002). This concept has become predominant in the environmental discourse and in the consumer decision-making process. In addition to green consumption, other tools are proposed by sustainable consumption, such as eco-labelling, environment taxation, downshifting, localisation, etc., which reflect different society values and beliefs (Seyfang, 2003, 2006). Sustainable consumption can take several meanings, from a perspective that can provide a clean economic growth compatible with environmental protection, to the anti-capitalist activists and proponents of low consumption lifestyle (Seyfang, 2003, 2006).

Another critical approach regarding the mainstream version of sustainable consumption, covers a number of other assumptions about the environment and society. This alternative view is based on the reduction of consumption and the redefinition of the concepts of prosperity and progress, in order to build up a new social and environmental order. As Seyfang (2006) explains, this theoretical base is designated as "new, humanistic, green (...) or new economics" (p. 385), and has its foundations on the environmental movement, and centred on justice and social wellbeing. Seyfang's (2006) research concerning the network for organic and local products is a good contribution in order to create "new measures of

wellbeing, to understand consumer motivations and debating how an 'alternative' sustainable economy might operate" (p. 385). In his article, Seyfang (2006) uses the concept of 'ecological citizenship' as a way of consumers express values of citizenship, an alternative force for a sustainable consumption, through the choice of organic products. This author defines 'ecological citizenship' as an ethical personal commitment towards sustainability, a sense of environmental responsibility that will bring the reduction of human impacts on a planetary scale.

According to Ainscough et al. (2012), environmental concerns include "sustainable agriculture practices, environmental safeguards and biodiversity issues (...) – 'planet' concerns" (p. 418). As regard to the organic agriculture practices, this movement is part of a wave of environmentalism which opposes the productivity model (Codron, Siriex, & Reardon, 2006), diverging radically from the mainstream and conventional food system concerning environmental issues (Smith, 2006; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003). This line of research integrates the concept of green purchase behaviour or environmentally friendly behaviour, translated in the Stern's (2000) model, the 'Value-Belief-Norm Theory of Environmentalism'. The central idea is that 'altruism' or 'pro-environmental behaviour' are influenced by feelings of moral obligation (Honkanen, Verplanken, & Olsen, 2006), so that the propensity to behave in an environment-friendly way was more related to universalism than other values (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2002).

Among the different conceptualizations to distinguish ethical and environmental aspects, Codron et al. (2006) identified two main orientations: (1) aspects related to environmental ethics, which includes organic farming movements and integrated agriculture¹; and (2), social ethics aspects, including fair trading and ethical trading. Codron et al. (2006) found that consumers tend to group both organic and integrated agriculture movements together for the reason they both deal with environmental issues, as well as they perceive fair trade and ethical trade movements together because they deal with social ethics. Furthermore, these two orientations are grouped in two main "actors philosophies" (Codron et al., 2006, p. 283):

¹ Movement that promotes one or more sustainable technologies, such as integrated pest, crop management and rational use of chemicals (Codron et al., 2006). This approach will not be developed in this thesis.

(11) 'Radical' philosophy

It appeared in the 1970's among organic producers and fair trade movements "who want to maintain an alternative strategy outside the dominant system" (p. 289), in opposition to conventional agriculture practices and unfair trade relations. However, in the late 1990's and first half of the 2000's, the movement has split into those how wanted to maintain the original traditional values and those how wanted to take advantage of the mainstream retailers interests.

(12) 'Reformist' philosophy

It emerged in the late of the 1990's from the conventional agriculture perspective, and arose as an effort "to modify but not radically change conventional agriculture" (p. 283).

In a more extreme position, Cuéllar-Padilla and Calle-Collado (2011) apply the concept of 'agroecology', as a philosophy for critical and collective action, in the context of small and marginalized producers by large and dominant corporations of the Spanish province of Andalusia. Agroecology is viewed as a response to the 'soft' views, a need to go beyond in a "hard sustainability" (p. 374), a combination of traditional agriculture system (subsistence agriculture and on-farm consumption) and postmodern values (ideological based, political rebellion and countercultural) to solve the environmental and social crisis.

This concept lays us to the political motivation of ethical consumption. Food and environment in which is produced and consumed are understood to have political denotations (Lyons, 2009). As Brenton (2013, p. 490) referred, "shopping becomes a political action". Ethical consumption is seen as a way of expressing a new activism, a protest against the globalization, the environmental degradation, and the social injustice. The consumers that identify with ethical consumption are aware that they can make a difference politicizing everyday consumption acts, by supporting producers involved in environmental conservation and social justice concerns (Brenton, 2013; Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Zander & Hamm, 2010). According to the literature, this expression can be reflected through a 'political-ecology' orientation concerning the environmental

conservation, or a human rights perspective typified by 'fairly' or 'ethically' traded and 'organically' grown products (Bryant & Goodman, 2004). This perspective arises against the questionable conditions (environmental and social) in which the products are produced to meet the consumption needs of the northern countries (Bryant & Goodman, 2004). According to Autio, Collins, Wahlen and Anttila (2013), alternative policies can take many expressions such as "local, organic, fair trade and slow food", in an opposition against the "industrially mass-produced types of food" (p. 564).

In a more detailed analysis of the social dimension of ethical consumption, for some authors such as Ainscough et al. (2012), these social concerns may include "fair labor issues and supporting the local community where the firm operates" (p. 418). As these authors mentioned, "people's concerns" (p. 418).

One of the most relevant issues regarding ethical consumption is fair trade (Doran, 2009). The central idea of fair trade consumers is to promote a direct and long-term link between small producers in the developing countries of the 'south' and consumers in developed countries in the 'north', promoting fair and better conditions for workers (Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Codron et al., 2006; Doran, 2010). Thus, consumers are interested in the origin and transparency of food chain (Autio et al., 2013), by paying back the financial return and the final sale price (Doran, 2009). Another social concern of interest is the treatment within the farming system regarding small scale producers and workers, usually collectivized in cooperatives (Browne, Harris, Hofny-Collins, Pasiiecznik, & Wallace, 2000; Bryant & Goodman, 2004). Nowadays, the most frequent fair trade products such as coffee, chocolate, sugar, tea, bananas, honey, etc. (Codron et al., 2006), no longer belong to a niche market, being widely available and sold in mainstream distribution channels (Doran, 2009). Although the main concerns are related to the social conditions in which the products are produced and marketed, environmental concerns are also included (Browne et al., 2000).

In what concerns to the values inherent to fair trade consumers, an important characteristic of ethical fair trade consumers found in Doran's (2010) study using Schwartz's (1992) Values Theory, was universalism and benevolence. As a consequence of this ethical concern focused on the welfare of others, on nature

and on the environment, universalism and benevolence is understood as showing concern for the other, understanding, tolerance and acceptance, acting as a source of “motivation for the promotion of the other, rather the self” (p. 527). Although this description of ethical consumption being associated with altruistic and universalism values, in Johnston, Szabo and Rodney's (2011) study regarding ethical and everyday practices among Canadian families, it was found that ethical consumption could be seen as an elite social practice, a specific niche markets (mainly organic and fair trade) only accessible to well-informed consumers, with high education and income, referring to the "cultural privilege" to facilitate access to a “dominant eating repertoire” (p. 311).

Despite this interest for the reasons and willingness to pay a fair price for products from developing countries, as Zander and Hamm (2010) referred, researches also indicate consumers' preference in relation to domestic products and many of them are also willing to pay an additional amount for that ethical products. This phenomenon has been referred in literature as 'localism'. According to Delind (2006), localism means to be in “face to face interaction of farmers, business owners (...) and residents” (p. 123), what she calls 'civic agriculture'. In this author's point of view, local food and eating locally became both a symbol of changing in social and environmental dimensions, and also by the individual perspective, representing a “vehicle for personal improvement” in the way that “local food is understood to be fresh, riper, more nutritious, and thus a healthier product” (p. 123).

In a study by Autio et al. (2013) regarding the Finnish context, it is highlighted a very interesting aspect associated with the meaning of 'local food', bringing out the natural and social environment consumers preferences. These consumers value what they see as the authentic food, that is, one that is "self-produced, self-processed and self-harvested produce – this is seen as the most authentic food" (p. 568), indicating a return and a re-creation of the past and a sense of nostalgia and cultural heritage. In their opinion, the preference for local and national products is considered a more sustainable choice by shortening the distances between the production site and distribution points (Autio et al., 2013). For this reason, local food consumers are driven for environmental issues, and also by concerns by the local economy by supporting local communities (Zepeda & Deal,

2009), contributing to the creation of sustainable food supply networks (Autio et al., 2013).

Fair trade and local products are included in a more broad concept - 'ethical trade' (Browne et al., 2000). The ethical trade movement means that the products should be made from firms with the guarantee that comply with labor code requirements and human rights standards. The ethical trade goal is to promote the implementation of a labour code of conduct and this is the aspect that distinguishes it from 'faire trade', since it is focused on helping small and disadvantaged producers (Codron et al., 2006). Browne et al. (2000, p. 74-76) identify three broad areas regarding ethical trading and linked to organic production:

(1) People-centred

Concerned with workers' welfare, whether on small farms, producer co-operatives, large estates or plantations. Such examples include: child labour, wages, conditions, equality, worker organisation and management systems.

(2) Environmental focus

Environmental sustainability issues were very important to the organic movement, which strongly supported environmentalist arguments in general. Also, 'food miles' concerns around the negative environmental impact of transporting food over long distances from developing countries, especially when a home-grown substitute is available.

(3) Animal centred

It is mainly concerned with animal rights and welfare, and includes no animal testing of experimental substances for cosmetic or other uses, and non-exploitative practices such as humane treatment of animals.

Nowadays, green consumption behaviour and sustainable marketing is perceived as ethically oriented not only because consumers' personal needs, but also

motivated by their altruistic concern for the welfare of society in general as well by the environment (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002; Phau, 2011).

1.3.2 Critical Management Studies (CMS)

The CMS offers a range of many alternatives to management theory, with an intention to radically transform management practice. Behind this purpose there are the feelings expressed by the conduct of business and its negative impact. Thus, CMS radicalizes the dominant structures for being responsible for creating a corrosive system of social values, without concerns for the individual and the environment, prevailing above this the economic and profitable growth (Adler et al., 2007).

With regard to critical marketing, emerged in the late of 60's based on a reflection on the role of marketing in society in response to the role of marketing and advertising, and because the agendas focus on the needs of the business rather than on the detrimental effect on society. During this period, theorists start to critique marketing activities and the core marketing values, in the light of social concerns and the general well-being of society, the ecological consequences of resource used, and the ethical dimensions of these issues (Tadajewski & Jones, 2014; Tadajewski & Brownlie, 2008a).

According to Adler et al. (2007), CMS has found larger inspiration in Marx theory, in contemporary European thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas and Michel Foucault, and in several new social movements. Thereby, critical theory assumes a neo-Marxist position in which all social reality is structured by socio-economic, cultural and biological influences. In this context, 'critical' functions are to 'unmask' inequalities in exchange relationships, as well as to question the 'having' mode, that is, to consuming and possessing, over 'being' and relatedness to the world (Fromm, 1976; Tadajewski & Brownlie, 2008a, 2008b; Tadajewski, 2014).

As the classic Marxism, the critical theory is concerned with the release of the individual's control from the economy, in their subservience relation to the market,

in which the ultimate purpose of criticism is the consequent social transformation. Therefore, the process of social transformation will help the individual to recognize that certain 'false needs' (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010; Soper, 2007; Soron, 2010; Tadajewski, 2012, 2014) are promoted by the interests of capitalism, and where people are just "small cogs" (Tadajewski, 2014, p. 778).

In what concerns to the CMS themes, Adler, et al. (2007) propose some guidelines:

- (1) CMS covers several theoretical traditions, based on Marxism, radicalizing the various forms of contemporary, normalized domination represented by modern capitalism², productivity society and asymmetrical relations of power and knowledge;
- (2) CMS are inspired by the Labour Process Theory (LPT), which highlights the exploitation of workers by employers, and the struggle of the de-privileged classes. In this regard, one of the key goals of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory is to explain and understand how the working class has been disempowered by the cultural ideological and technological attractions of modern capitalism, criticizing the positivist epistemology version of value-free notion because the knowledge of reality and rationality leads to an uncritical identification, impeding attempts to change it;
- (3) CMS considers that the main of contemporary societies is the 'financialization' of contemporary capitalism, and the 'coercive power' for enterprises to achieve the main goal – profit;
- (4) CMS criticize the market, because the capitalist class affirms its monopolistic power over the workers, using race and gender to divide them and to obtain a profit position. Also, argues that demand is created to satisfy artificial desires stimulated by advertising and marketing and that consumption should be a vehicle for consumer sovereignty.

² The concept of modern capitalism that is adopted in this thesis is presented in appendix 1.

In this sense, CMS integrates a long tradition of humanistic critique of modern bureaucracies and corporations in relation to the nature of work, and in relation to the inequality of life of the working class, women, and minorities of today's capitalist society (Adler et al., 2007).

In terms of academic research, CMS proponents combine reflexivity and meaning in research. Reflexivity in the way that authors are influenced by 'corporate social responsibility' or 'corporate citizenship'; and critical scholarship ask what meaning can be attributed to such key terms as 'trust, responsibility, or citizenship'. These characteristics can be found in the postmodernist approach of the 1990s (Adler, et al, 2007).

To sum up, we can infer that sustainability is not a priority of the occidental markets and lifestyle. The priority of business remains, as in the past, in making profit without looking at the collective interest and environmental issues. An alternative path will be to explore green and environmental practices in order to achieve a sustainable and different perspective, bringing to society a culture of green consumption. Thus, the study of ethics and moral motivations of organic consumers matches with the CMS arguments presented above. This is evident in the sense that organic products combine the best environmental practices, preserve biodiversity, natural resources, and combining high welfare standards (Delind, 2006; Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Lars, & Sjöden, 2003; Maya, López, & Munuera, 2011; Schroder, McEachern, Monika, & Morven, 2004).

1.3.3 New Social Movements Theory (NSMT)

The New Social Movement Theory (NSMT) is important to analyse collective forms of action and had its genesis the social theories and political philosophy (Buechler, 1995). This paradigm had the contribution of Manuel Castells, Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, e Jurgem Habermans (Kozinets & Handelman, 2004; Buechler, 1995) and emerged as a response to social inequalities in the light of classical Marxism. However, from the designation of this theory, 'new' is related to a separation from Marxism and its traditional perspective based on the production, the search for other political, ideological and cultural alternatives

(Kozinets & Handelman, 2004; Buechler, 1995). Consequently, according to Buechler (1995), 'New Social Movement' refers to "a diverge array of collective action that have presumably displaced the older social order of proletarian revolution associated with classical Marxism" (p. 442).

According to Kozinets and Handelman (2004), social movements are a phenomenon that has at its base the self-transformation and a social change, and whose objective, in the case of consumer movements, is to change the established consumer culture. The elements that make up the typology of the new social movements are (Cherrier, 2007; Kozinets & Handelman, 2004):

- (1) The individual and collective identity of the activist or member of the social movement, which serves to affirm immediate interests and assert the mobilization of its members;
- (2) The adversary, or obstacle to the general good, which represents the element of opposition of the social movement members;
- (3) The vision and social objectives to be achieved through the struggle, which in practice represents the irreconcilable opposition between actor and opponent.

Therefore, according to Buechler (1995) the main themes that make up the NSMT are:

- (1) The symbolic and instrumental action on the cultural and political sphere;
- (2) Favours strategies that promote autonomy and self-determination;
- (3) Emphasizes the role of post-materialist values³, and collective action;
- (4) Tries to understand the processes of collective identity construction and to identify groups of interest, rather than to assume conflicts between them;

³ Post-materialist values, theorized by Ronald Inglehart (1977), emerged in the 1960s in post-war Western industrial countries when instability was no longer a concern. It is based on the assumption that people no longer value physical and security priorities to give more importance to aspects such as "belonging, self-expression and quality of life" (Brechin & Kempton, 1994, p. 246). In these post-materialistic values, environmentalism also plays an important role (Abramson, 1997; Brechin & Kempton, 1994; Dunlap & Mertig, 1997).

- (5) Recognizes the importance of the various latent subcultures and the role of temporary networks in collective action, rather than assuming that it is the established institutions and organisations that have this role.

In line with this, organic food consumers constitute a social movement because they bring together multiple members, represent values and aspects of the same collective identity project, in a common arena of interests (Browne, Harris, Hofny-Collins, Pasiecznik, & Wallace, 2000; Lockie, Lyons, Lawrence, & Grice, 2004). As mentioned in the literature, the organic movement also establishes alliances with other countercultural movements (Cherrier, 2007), such as: the fair trade movement (Annunziata, Ianuario, & Pascale, 2011; Didier & Lucie, 2008; Jaffee & Howard, 2010; Morgan, 2010); the Local Food Networks (LFN) (Goodman & Goodman, 2007; Nie & Zepeda, 2011; Seyfang, 2006; Zepeda & Deal, 2009); the organic farming movement (Browne et al., 2000; Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011; Parrott & Marsden, 2002); or with the voluntary simplicity movement (Bekin, Carrigan, & Szmigin, 2005; Shaw & Newholm, 2002; Zamwel, Sasson-Levy, & Ben-Porat, 2014). In this way, the arguments proposed by Cherrier and Murray (2002) to consider organic food consumers as a social movement should be considered because:

- (1) They have a different view of society's problems, being available to change their purchasing pattern and lifestyle on a voluntary and autonomous way (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002);
- (2) Although fragmented, this community gathers around constellations of consumers, constituting a specific subculture (Cherrier & Murray, 2004), and are affiliated with other social movements such as: Transition Town (Carrington et al., 2014; Gorge, Herbert, Ozca lar-Toulouse, & Robert, 2015), Local Food co-operatives (Nie & Zepeda, 2011), farmers markets (DuPuis & Goodman, 2005; McEachern, Warnaby, Carrigan, & Szmigin, 2010), and other ethical spaces (Clarke, Cloke, Barnett, & Malpass, 2008; Moraes, Carrigan, & Szmigin, 2012; Moraes, Szmigin, & Carrigan, 2010);

- (3) The organic food consumption establish a response to the mass consumer society and to the extensive mode of conventional agriculture (Autio et al., 2013; Lyons, 2009; Seyfang, 2006; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003);
- (4) The organic food consumption helps to shape own identity within a new subculture that supports them to discover and to express a new lifestyle (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2007; Markkula, Eräranta, & Moisander, 2010; Perera, 2014).

According to this conceptualization, consumers are seen as a disadvantaged class in relation to their opponents, represented by business elites (Kozinets & Handelman, 2004). In addition, Cherrier (2007) states that the new social movements are formed when its members “share the recognition that specific rules can no longer be taken for granted” (p. 327).

In this way, NSMT follows a humanist tradition and a global consciousness, seeking pragmatic solutions to the cultural and moral order. Supports a paradigm that challenges the structures, utilitarian strategies and decisions of the elites of society. It is based on post-materialistic values, anti-growth, and libertarian values. In sum, it is based on the characteristics of contemporary social activism and the challenge of dominant structures, constituting itself as a useful tool to understand the social macro-structures, and the emerging dynamics in these dominant contexts (Buechler, 1995).

In this study, NSMT is useful to explore identity formation. As Cherrier (2007, p. 324) points out, “the construction of identity [is] central rather than peripheral to the formation of the movement”. Under these circumstances, considering that new identities emerge by redefining their position in society from the interactions of various audiences (Cherrier, 2007), it is also necessary to explain the theories of identity.

1.3.4 Theories of identity

1.3.4.1 Individual identity and social identity

Identity can assume two dimensions: a self-identity and a social identity. The self-identity refers to the description of traits and characteristics which includes aspects that make the person distinct and unique. It serves both for the individual to distinguish himself from others and to conform to the values, beliefs and behaviours of the group to which he belongs. It is explained by Identity Theory. As regard the social dimension, includes traits and characteristics contextualized and linked to a social group or the role that this group can take. These aspects are rooted in group members, in the interaction process, and explained by the Social Identity Theory (Hay, 2010; Hogg et al., 1995; Hurth, 2010; Perera, 2014; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010).

Regarding the individual identity of ethical consumers, Cherrier (2007) points out several characteristics: material simplicity (work, spend and consume less); take a critical stance on social and environmental problems; more open to change and personal growth (they value personal and spiritual development more than economic growth and good life); and objects, possessions, and consumption are seen as symbolic. However, as Cherrier (2005) explains, individuals consume to be part of a group and therefore are “subservient to normative and prescribed discourses of ethical consumption” (p. 600), so that social norms are internalized in order to influence ethical behaviour.

Thus, according to Cherrier (2007), the collective identities of consumers with ethical concerns have several characteristics: they manifest themselves through feelings of belonging and solidarity towards the members of the group; the ethical stance is fluid and constantly subjected to a negotiation process; there is a sense of belonging and solidarity within the group; the group provides a welcoming space and safety for consumers perform their ethical identities.

However, the two theories mentioned above (identity theory and social identity theory), complement each other and cannot be seen distinctly, because the

construction of one's own identity cannot be separated from the social context. That is, self-identity may change or influence social identity, or by significant actions on the individual by the group. The construction of self-identity and social identity results from the interaction between them (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Perera, 2014). As Cherrier (2007) found, the construction of an ethical consumer identity, even in postmodern contexts, the display of ethical consumer practices are subordinated to a social formation process. Therefore, this construction comes not only from within (self-identity), but is also shaped (share identification) from outside (collective identity).

1.3.4.2 The Processual Theory of Identity

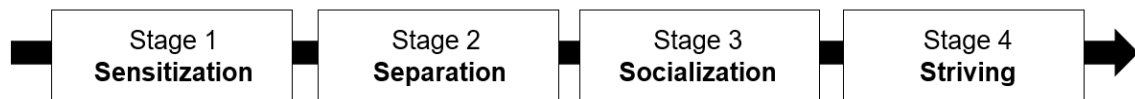
Taking into account that new social movements are strongly related with the construction of the self (Cherrier & Murray, 2002) the conceptual model that best suits in the analyses of green consumption practices among organic food consumers is Cherrier and Murray's (2007) 'Procedural Theory of Identity'. As suggested, the best way to study 'identity' is through examining the descriptive details of its gradual negotiation, using the collection of consumer narratives or life-stories episodes. The assumption is based on an "experienced existential transition, deconstructing one consumer 'identity' and constructing a new identity", where personal myths were located in a "past selves, future selves, perceived selves and desired selves" (p. 5).

The Processual Theory of Identity⁴ emphasize four main stages: sensitization, separation, socialization, and striving⁵.

⁴ Although not mentioned in the article by Murray and Cherrier, the Procedural Theory of Identity presents similarities with Plummer (1995) framework about "Sexual stories" and its identity construction: (1) sensitization, (2) signification; (3) subculturation; and (4) stabilization.

⁵ This theory will be developed in chapter 5 of the thesis.

Figure 1 - Processual Theory of Identity



Cherrier & Murray (2007)

As far as we realize, the theory has only been applied only in the context of young Australian environmentalists (Perera, 2014) and can be expected to be equally applicable in the context of organic consumer products. Moreover, it will be relevant to research in detail the following aspects:

- To understand the role of information and knowledge about sustainable consumption as a way to begin the process of change;
- To deepen the role of social influences;
- To realize what kind of green expressions and struggles emerge at the end of the process.

1.4 Thesis structure

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In the 'Introduction', the research scope and justification of the subject, the research question, the objectives to be reached, the theoretical references that guide the research, and the structure of the thesis, are explained.

The second chapter presents, in an integrated manner, the methodological options used, starting with comparing the qualitative and positivist paradigm, in order to justify the research positioning. Next, the ontological and epistemological procedures centred on the interpretative approach. Then, the concerns regarding the methodological procedures, starting by characterizing the sample, how it was selected and its criteria; the data collection procedures are then presented, in particular in relation to conducting interviews and the fieldwork. Following the data analysis techniques, the concerns regarding interview transcripts and field notes are also explained. The chapter concludes with considerations regarding the quality of research and methodological procedures (validity, reliability, generalization and transferability, and the theoretical saturation).

Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 present the papers that compose this research. Each paper addresses the research objectives, as shown in the following table.

Table 1 - Thesis structure

	Paper #1	Paper #2	Paper #3	Paper #4
Research objectives	#1, #2 and #3	#4	#5 and #6	#7, #8, #9 and #10
Thesis chapter	#3	#4	#5	#6
Purpose	To explore the reasons for the organic products choice, their relationship with environmental and ecological concerns, and the meaning that these consumer habits have in consumers' lives.	To explore which discourses participate in the environmentally motivated consumption.	To understand the green 'identity' change; the transition to a new sustainable consumption lifestyle; the critical incident moment; and the main phases.	To understand how anti-consumption practices are present in the discourse for sustainability, and how they influence the level of well-being and life satisfaction.

Each paper begins with a review of the literature on the subject (sustainability and ethical consumption, political consumption, green identity and anti-consumption literature), following the research findings, the discussion, and conclusions.

The seventh and final chapter integrates the main results obtained in the four papers, answers the research question and presents to the research community the main contributions to theory and practice. The chapter ends with the limitations of the research and proposes future lines of research left open in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

As presented in the Introduction chapter, the research question of this research is to understand how and why do organic food consumers develop their new green 'identity', create individual projects of sustainable consumption, and how this leads to important changes in their way of life. It is intended that the results of this research contribute to the area of consumer behaviour literature and to better understand how an ideological environmental discourse allows to highlight the relation between consumers' environmental concerns and the politics of food.

Although there are some previous studies at international level (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Connolly & Prothero, 2008; Perera, 2014; Zamwel, Sasson-Levy, & Ben-Porat, 2014), this subject has been studied in a fragmented way, particularly in the Portuguese context. In this way, this research intends to make a contribution from the methodological point of view through the empirical investigation that was conducted. Therefore, this chapter describes the research methodology developed during the research, that is, the "logical order the researcher needs to follow in order to achieve a certain predetermined result" (Mayer, 2015, p. 55), establishing the link between the philosophical perspective and research methods used. The methodological options that have been adopted have addressed the nature of the study in question, the inherent complexity of the subject, and the challenges in the research objectives themselves. Therefore, a qualitative methodology was adopted, integrated in the interpretative paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Deetz, 1996). According to Tadajewski (2004) the underlying principle behind the interpretative paradigm is seeking to "investigate the social world at the level of subjective experience" (p. 317). In terms of epistemological implications, knowledge is "apprehended not from the standpoint of an external, objective position, but from the individual participation in action (...), through the use of qualitative methods" (p. 317). Also, the same author argues that in terms

of comparison with the positivist paradigm, the main divergence is “that social reality is held to be subjectively re-created, thereby denying the possibility for objective social research” (p. 317). In green marketing literature, consumer behaviour has been “conceptualized as personal ethical orientated or a set of pro-environmental personal values and attitudes that inform a particular form of socially conscious” (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002). Consequently, in this complex context, the choice of this methodological paradigm seems to be adequate.

Accordingly, the chapter begins by addressing the methodological approach and strategy, presenting the qualitative interpretive paradigm and its differences from the positivist paradigm, the ontological and epistemological assumptions followed, and an explanation of the research positioning. Then, the methodological options for the collection, processing and analysis of results. Finally, the chapter concludes with some considerations regarding the quality of the methodological procedures used, in relation to the validity, reliability, generalization and transferability, and the theoretical saturation.

2.2 Approach and methodological strategy

2.2.1 The qualitative paradigm and its comparison with the quantitative paradigm

In recent years, qualitative research has gained rapid expansion in the social sciences and in the particular case in the market study, relying on techniques that seek to understand, predict and explain human behaviour, and the way in which humans view their social world (Bailey, 2014; Mayer, 2015; Park & Park, 2016).

Qualitative research is usually characterized through the use of methods “that make the world visible” (Mayer, 2015, p. 56) and which includes, at least, in-depth interview techniques and moderation skills; researchers who have the knowledge to cover the procedures they use and the subsequent interpretations of the results; an ability to answer questions such as ‘why?’ and ‘how?’, and an “agency context” (Bailey, 2014, p. 169). Therefore, qualitative research is considered an

appropriate method for 'discovery' (Park & Park, 2016) and follow an interrogative strategy (Barnham, 2015). In this sense, in general terms, the objective of qualitative research is to "understand and explore descriptive accounts, similarities and differences of various social events" (Park & Park, 2016, p. 4), and for this reason it works with open, flexible questions that may even be altered during the course of the investigation (Mayer, 2015).

One of the main characteristics of the qualitative research is to focus on the dynamic nature of reality, studying the complexity of different points of view, the idiosyncrasy of particular cases, understanding them and reflecting on those particularities. For this reason, qualitative research has a holistic orientation, considering the social phenomenon (organic food consumption) as a single system, within which one looks for "patterns, consistencies, repetitions and manifestations pertinent to research question(s)", and participating in the construction of theory (Park & Park, 2016, p. 5).

For these reasons, qualitative research contrasts with the quantitative perspective (table 2 summarizes some of the differences). Of these, it is emphasized that quantitative research is concerned with using statistical methods to select and treat a large number of cases, the results of which tend to be generalized to large populations. However, the main difference between the two paradigms lies in the perspective about reality, that is, their ontological assumptions. On the one hand, quantitative research is concerned with finding facts, so it uses 'what' questions (Barnham, 2015). On the other hand, the qualitative approach understands social reality as "complex and pluralistic", and looks at reality as socially constructed by participants' lenses, regarding their perceptions and experiences "rather than through the lens of abstract categories and concepts imposed by the researchers" (Reinecke, Arnold, & Palazzo, 2016, pp. xiii, xiv).

Another important difference between the two paradigms is that qualitative research is commonly understood as "theory elaboration and theory generation rather than theory testing", proceeding inductively from the data to the theory, exploring "domains and questions where quantitative research would struggle to formulate hypotheses or find sufficient data" (Reinecke et al., 2016, p. xiii).

Table 2 - The comparison of qualitative and quantitative methods

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Objective/purpose	To gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations; to provide insights into the setting of a problem, generating ideas and/or hypotheses for later quantitative research; to uncover prevalent trends in thought and opinion.	To quantify data and generalize results from a sample to the population of interest; to measure the incidence of various views and opinions in a chosen sample; sometimes followed by qualitative research, which is used to explore some findings further.
Sample	Usually a small number of non-representative cases.	Usually a large number of cases representing the population of interest; randomly selected respondent.
Data collection	Unstructured or semi-structured techniques, e.g.: individual depth interviews or group discussions.	Structured techniques such as on-street or telephone interviews.
Data analysis	Non-statistical	Statistical; findings are conclusive and usually descriptive in nature
Outcome	Exploratory and/or investigative; findings are not conclusive and cannot be used to make generalizations about the population of interest; develop an initial understanding and sound base for further decision making.	Used to recommend a final course of action.

Based on Park and Park (2016, p. 4).

In this sense, this research follows an exploratory character, and seeks new knowledge about a complex and little studied phenomenon (the formation of green identities). As Mayer (2015) point out, the intention is not to arrive at definitive conclusions or absolute truth, but to serve as a starting point for future research.

2.2.2 Research positioning: Ontological and epistemological assumptions

Deetz (1996) organizes the research in four main orientations: normative, interpretive, critical, and dialogic. According to the conceptualization established by this author, and by the arguments presented above, this research is positioned in the interpretative quadrant because "interpretivists acquire the 'subjective' (implying personal and/or particularistic) label since they claim a double hermeneutic (an interpretation of an interpreted world)" (p. 193). By this, it is meant that the research must have a special ability to interpret findings (Bailey, 2014), to make a reflective work and actively participate in the investigation process.

Consequently, this research also seeks inspiration in the hermeneutic/narratological model proposed by Thompson (1997). This author uses the metaphor of "person as a text", or the person's narrative as a text (p. 440). On the one hand, the meaning of these particular events are contextualized within a narrative marked by internal contradictions and beliefs, which allows the construction of a personal identity. In turn, these identities are also contextualized in a system of cultural meanings. It is from this cultural context that the interpretative frames of reference are provided for self-identity construction.

Yet, this position cannot be enclosed in a sealed manner, as this research also finds inspiration and identifies some characteristics about critical thinking (Burton, 2001). Given the focus of the study mentioned above, during the research, emphasis was placed on reflection on the status quo and power relations. Thus, within this critical perspective, regarding the green identity formation process and ecological citizenship behind it, it is possible to bring a critical interpretation about its role and impact, in order to achieve a superior form of society, with a more reflective and humanistic stand (Adler, 2002). In this regard, Tadjewski (2004) notes that criticism operates at the level of awareness and encourages the transformation of society, especially in relation to contemporary capitalism.

In terms of business conduct and its negative impact on society and on the environment, Critical Management Studies (CMS) opposes itself against dominant structures and values systems that characterize the capitalist society, in its relationship with the individual and the environment (Adler et al., 2007). However, a critical approach to marketing and consumer research still remains marginal and has not attracted a great deal of attention in marketing (Burton, 2001; Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2015; Tadjewski & Brownlie, 2008). Consequently, CMS can be seen as an emancipatory impulse, opening a new disciplinary space experiencing "doubt about normalising perceptions which are taken for granted" (Brownlie, 2006, p. 511), According to Adler et al. (2007) 'radical' is understood as "attentiveness to the socially divisive and ecologically destructive broader patterns and structures – such as capitalism, patriarchy, imperialism, (...) appealing to faculty, students, practitioners, activists, and policy makers who are frustrated by the mainstream's narrow focus" (p. 120, 121).

In this research we also find similarities with the postmodern position. Postmodernism, as an extension of the critical theory (Ozanne & Murray, 1995) is an opposition to the philosophical and sociocultural ideas in western culture, represented by modernism. In this context, postmodernism critique to modern systems (capitalism and liberalism) has a cultural position rather a purely economic. This research follows some theoretical assumptions, adopting Firat and Venkatesh (1995) postmodernist perspective:

- (1) That, in western culture postmodern perspective consider modernism as dogmatic and representing a limiting view of the individual (consumer);
- (2) That modernism has failed in the construction of an ethical society, marginalizing the “lifeworld”, that is, the civic life and community where the individual can find self-expression through more traditional forms of action and participation” (p. 240);
- (3) That postmodernism propose a feminist perspective “grounded in Foucauldian views of power and regimes of truth” (p. 240), by criticizing the modern construction of the consumer-self as the mind separable from the body, the individual separable from the social” (p. 240).

Postmodernism emphasises the moment of consumption, as a “social act wherein symbolic meanings, social codes, political ideologies, and relationships are produced and reproduced” (Breen, 1993; quoted by Firat and Venkatesh, 1995), p. 251). In this scenario, consumers would “respond strategically by making themselves unpredictable (...) subverting the market rather than being seduced by it” (p. 251).

According to Mayer (2015), research philosophy is related to the development of knowledge and the nature of this knowledge, representing, therefore, a certain vision of the world in the perspective of the researcher. Summarizing what was mentioned above, in terms of philosophical assumptions within the social sciences, this research is positioned according to Morgan and Smircich (1980, p. 492), and described in more detail below.

(1) Core Ontological assumptions⁶

Reality is a social construction and a symbolic discourse.

(2) Human Nature assumptions

Man as actor and a social constructor.

(3) Basic epistemological⁷ stance

To obtain a phenomenological insight and to understand how social reality is created.

(4) Research methods

To explore subjectivity using a hermeneutic and discourse interpretation process.

Regarding the strategy for this research, a qualitative paradigm design was used to induce results. According to Locke (2007), in qualitative research hypotheses are not necessary and the researcher could simply ask questions, because qualitative research is concerned with meaning and not making generalized hypothesis statements (Mason, 2010). Thus, the aim of this research is not to prove any hypotheses, but to provide a deeper understanding of consumer experiences regarding the environment, their habits, and to explore the meaning associated with individual behaviour (Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Ozcaglar-Toulouse, Shiu & Shaw, 2006). In this investigation, in-depth interviews and participant observations were conducted (Bekin et al., 2005; Holt, 2002; Moraes et al., 2012; Varman & Vikas, 2007; Zamwel et al., 2014), whose material contributed to “make the world visible” (Mayer, 2015, p. 56).

The humanistic perspective suggested by Deshpande (1983) was followed. Hence, the researcher cannot distance himself from the phenomena nor can the phenomenon be understood without his personal involvement. This is why qualitative research occurs in the natural setting (Reinecke et al., 2016) and

⁶ Ontology: related with the nature of existence and the structure of reality (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

⁷ Epistemology: concerning with the nature of knowledge produced (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

"locate the observer in the world" (Mayer, 2015, p. 56). Therefore, sensitivity and personal immersion is required to guide research and to translate experience into a verbal interpretation, according to the 'humanistic perspective' (Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Hirschman, 1986; Tadajewski & Jones, 2014). According to Hirschman (1986) the characteristics that define the humanistic inquiry in marketing research are: (1) human beings construct multiple realities; (2) researcher and phenomenon are mutually interactive; (3) research inquiry is directed toward the development of idiographic knowledge; (4) phenomenal aspects cannot be segregated into 'causes and effects'; (5) inquiry is inherently value-laden.

The philosophical argument behind the qualitative paradigm is to show how participant sees the world – 'the social construction of reality' and not to search for objective truths (Atkinson, 2014; Barnham, 2015; Brownlie, 2006). In this research a qualitative and existential phenomenological approach was used to get a more in-depth knowledge of this research topic, in order to explore the meanings behind consumer decision, by emphasising the individual lived experience through each narrative (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Moisander & Valtonen, 2006; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002; Newholm & Shaw, 2007; Thompson et al., 1989, 1990; Thompson, 1997). According to Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1989, 1990), in an existential phenomenological perspective, the life of a person is a socially constructed in context where their experiences are interrelated in a coherent and meaningful way. Therefore, the results assume a contextual character based on the discretion of the person's subjective experience first-hand. This study follows this new epistemological perspective by focusing on the consumption experiences of each individual, characterized by the use of in-depth inquiry and the hermeneutic endeavour analysis (Thompson et al., 1990). However, it is not intended to separate the individual from the context in which he is inserted, such as Thompson et al. (1989) refer, the "human-being-in-the-world" (p. 135).

In what concerns the nature of the methodology (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), this research is positioned as 'idiographic', because the emphasis of the analysis is on the subjective accounts of everyday lives, highlighting the subjective

experiences of individual and the way they interpret the world and create new identities (Thompson et al., 1989).

In this way, the findings cannot be generalized and “all phenomenological descriptions can be challenged by another phenomenological description” (Connolly & Prothero, 2003, p. 280). Unlike the positivist tradition, where the researcher tries to generalize the findings to other contexts for being universal, in this research is not intended to capture this reality, but to investigate the partial, the meanings and significance due to the diversity of views and experiences. According to Wetherell et al. (2001), there are multiple realities and truths, so that this research is partial and situated.

Accordingly, this research followed Thompsons' et al. (1990) three central concepts, regarding existential phenomenological approach:

(1) Intentionality

The underlying concept of intentionality is that experience and the object of experience are the same unit. That is, the lived experience must be understood in relation to the context from which it emerges.

(2) Emergent dialog

During the interviews, the interviewer conducts the conversation in a way that portrays each person's experience and the questions or comments are added to participants' responses in a natural emerging dialogue. As Thompson et al. (1990) emphasizes, the "method is adapted to fit the phenomenon" (p. 347).

(3) Hermeneutic endeavour

The process of interpretation is permanent and involves a "back-and-forth process of relating a part of the text to the whole" (p. 434), with the interviews being interpreted idiographically and trying to identify common patterns throughout the interviews (themes).

The following table describes the main characteristics of this approach identified by Thompson et al. (1989).

Table 3 - Existential-phenomenological characteristics

Nature	Characteristic	Description
World view	Contextual	Patterns emerge from a context
Nature-of-being	In-the-world	Experience and world are viewed as co-constructing
Research focus	Experience	Research focus is on experience as described from a first-person view
Research perspective	First person	
Research logic	Apodictic	Researchers seek to apprehend a pattern as it emerges
Research strategy	Holistic	Seeks to relate descriptions of specific experiences of each other, with each other, and with the general context
Research goal	Thematic description	

Based on Thompson et al. (1989).

As regards the problem of neutrality and the identity of the investigator, it cannot be ruled out as a limitation. On the one hand the separation is impossible, because their own identity as a consumer is important to collect and analyse the data. Wetherell et al. (2001) refers to 'reflexivity' in the sense that the investigator acts in the world and the world acts on the investigator, "in the loop" (p. 17). Despite this, and considering that personal interest can affect the outcome, Wetherell's et al. (2001) recommendation was followed to maintain a position of neutrality.

Taking into account the objectives of this research, it was decided to treat the data using several tools that complement each other to capture the research problem and answer the main question. The qualitative methodologies are related to the best approach that responds to the question of research, and for this the appropriate tools were selected to design the study, collect data and analyse them, in order to reach an understanding of a particular phenomenon (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). As Reinecke et al. (2016) suggests, the qualitative methodology works as an "umbrella" both in terms of data source and in terms of how they are analysed. Thus, the methodological tools used in this research to implement the research objectives were: content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and hermeneutic endeavour. The following table summarizes the methodological strategy followed in this research.

Table 4 - Methodological strategy

Approach	Strategy	Method	
		Data collection	Data analysis
Inductive	In-depth qualitative inquiry	In-depth interviews; Participant observation	Content analysis
			Thematic analysis
			Discourse analysis
			Hermeneutic endeavour

2.3 Methodological procedures

Since the beginning of the research process, attention has been focused on the participant so that she/he could explain the complexity with which she/he builds her/his green identity around organic products. Thus, and considering the challenges posed through the research objectives, the methodological process centred on a qualitative approach that is described below, emerged naturally.

2.3.1 Sample

In this research, to constitute an adequate sample for the research objectives it was a requirement that each participant identify herself/himself as a frequent and enthusiastic consumer of organic products (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009), and highly committed and identified with her/his environmental-related consumption choices (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Haanpää, 2007). Accordingly, participants were recruited within the Portuguese organic community that include environmental groups, eco-shops, eco-communards, eco-farms and Local Food Networks (LFN). The first participants were selected from the researcher's personal contacts, and the following by using the snowball technique via invitation (Zamwel et al., 2014). Thereafter, participants were recruited through a process of purposive sampling (Cherrier et al., 2012; Clarke, Shaw & Shiu, 2000; Connolly & Prothero, 2003, 2008; McDonald, Oates, Alevizou, Young & Hwang, 2012; Noy, 2008; Oates et al., 2008; Perera, 2014; Shaw & Moraes, 2009; Shaw, Newholm & Dickinson, 2006; Shaw & Riach, 2011). According to Noy (2008, p. 330), this non-probabilistic technique provides an exceptional way of reaching to some

'hidden populations' and tracking social networks. It can also be employed as a particularly effective tool when analysing the social dynamics of those who share similar social experiences (Noy, 2008). Snowball sampling implies interrelations between 'in-depth' interviewed in the way that those informants whom the researcher meets are those who supply the referrals. Therefore, the quality of the referring process is related to the quality of the interaction and also how informants perceive or frame the interview encounter (Noy, 2008).

The sample included 31 interviews (see table 5) and the recruitment strategy considered an effort to include a mix of gender (female – 61%; male – 39%), socio-economic groups, geographic differences such rural (61%) and urban (39%) areas, but always taking into account that they were organic food consumers with a high knowledge about their role as consumers. In terms of occupation, three categories stand out: farmers (about half of the interviewees); liberal professionals; and activists. Some of these participants, as will be explained later, have left other jobs, apparently more stable and more remunerated to embrace other activities, namely organic farming and activities related to environmental activism. In terms of age, it is high (47 years old), as well as their education level of education of participants was high relative to Portuguese averages (PhD – 10%; Master degree – 6%; Degree level – 65%; Secondary level – 19%). It should be noted that this sociodemographic evidence is consistent with other studies (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002). In relation to nationality, one third of the consumers are foreign citizens, who chose Portugal to implement their sustainability projects. It is interesting to note that of these participants, only one of them lives in an urban area and the others in rural areas, on farms or ecovillages, devoting themselves to the organic farming.

With regard to the sample size, this research contrasts with the traditional quantitative requirements wherein sufficiently large samples are used to obtain a representative population allowing the generalization. Conversely, this work, qualitative in nature, as proposed by Wetherell et al. (2001), tries to get a smaller sample in terms of population in order to justify that revealed patterns are shared by other members of the subculture (organic food consumers). However, the sample was sufficient to ensure that most or all the emerging concepts were discovered (Mason, 2010).

Table 5 - Participants details

Pseudonym	Age	Occupation	Education	Residence	Nationality
Lara	41	Office Assistant	Degree level	Urban	Portuguese
Mário	40	Consultant	Degree level	Urban	Portuguese
Maria	72	Artisan	Degree level	Rural	British
Andrea	35	Yoga instructor	PhD	Rural	Portuguese
Inês	50	Psychologist	Degree level	Urban	Brazilian
José	55	Manager	Secondary education	Urban	Portuguese
Pedro	65	Biodynamic farmer	Secondary education	Rural	Dutch
Sónia	41	Web designer; Activist	Degree level	Rural	British
Jorge	66	Agronomist; Activist	Degree level	Rural	French
Rosa	71	Organic farmer	PhD	Rural	Dutch
Marco	55	Organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Sofia	42	Researcher	PhD	Urban	Portuguese
Monica	35	Journalist; Activist	Degree level	Urban	Portuguese
Joana	43	Consultant; Organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Miguel	53	Organic Store manager	Secondary education	Urban	Portuguese
Vitor	35	Organic Store manager	Degree level	Urban	Portuguese
Matilde	50	Art restorer	Master Degree	Urban	Portuguese
Luís	62	Retired	Secondary education	Rural	German
Júlia	38	Organic Farmer	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Tiago	35	Organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Olga	64	Organic farmer	Secondary education	Rural	Portuguese
Raul	47	Psychotherapist; organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	Canadian
Clara	46	Trainer, organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Cristina	30	Accountant	Degree level	Urban	Portuguese
Mariana	50	Housewife	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Óscar	33	Organic farmer	Degree level	Rural	German
Mara	49	Researcher, activist	Master Degree	Urban	Dutch
Daniel	59	Organic farmer	Secondary education	Rural	Portuguese
Leonor	34	Organic farmer, activist	Degree level	Rural	Portuguese
Lia	35	Organic farmer, activist	Degree level	Rural	French
Susana	40	Environmental educator	Master Degree	Urban	Portuguese

2.3.2 Data collection

According to some authors, the best method to be used in this kind of research is in-depth interviews when the concern is the meaning of a phenomenon (Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Newholm & Shaw, 2007). This detailed interview strategy allows participants the opportunity to express through narratives experiences, feelings about their human behaviour and new forms of subjectivity in terms of ethical choice, preferably in their natural environment, where patterns

are difficult to study by other research methods (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Autio, 2005; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002).

Before the interview, as much information as possible about the interviewee in order to better conduct the interview. The interviews conducted with organic food consumers followed a semi-structured and flexible script that focused on the research objectives (see appendix 2) based on an a priori framework and tended to cover the “lived meanings and the experiential dimensions of consumer behaviour” (Sitz, 2008, p. 182), over the following main themes: (1) sustainability, environmental concerns; (2) organic food motivations; (3) green ‘identity’ formation process; and (4) alternative consumer practices and anti-consumption behaviour. Although the script seems extensive, there was a concern not to follow it or read the questions so as not to break the atmosphere of intimacy that was created. Questions were being posed as the conversation flowed and the script was adjusted. There were, nevertheless, questions that were not posed because the interviewees surfaced the topic on their own initiative.

Almost all the interviews took place in the private space (homes, farms and stores) of each participant (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001) and led to an increased level of intimacy and trust, giving them the opportunity to highlight personal and intimate aspects (Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001). The trust relationship enabled subsequent contacts with the interviewees to clarify doubts that emerged during the transcription of interviews, as well as exchange of ideas. In some cases, the researcher stayed for a few days with the participants having observed and recorded aspects of the participants' daily lives. This participant observation enabled an understanding of the context in which participants live, their lifestyle and the assets they possess (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Bossy, 2014; Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001; McGouran & Prothero, 2016; Moisander & Valtonen, 2006; Moraes, Szmigin, & Carrigan, 2010; Zamwel, Sasson-Levy, & Ben-Porat, 2014). In this way, the context of the interview provided the necessary environment for participants to speak and detail their experiences (Baker, Thompson, Engelkensen, & Huntley, 2006). These observations were also recorded and transcribed, providing empirical material for analysis.

Under these circumstances, these phenomenological interviews (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2006, 2007; Cherrier, 2005; Cherrier, 2009; Connolly & Prothero, 2003; Deshpande, 1983; Holt, 2002; Holt, 1997; Sitz, 2008; Thompson et al., 1989; Thompson, 1997) aim to explore, in depth, the meanings of consumer behaviour actions, the “meaning of a phenomenon” (Connolly & Prothero, 2003, p. 278), as an invitation to self-introspection to talk about consumers’ experiences. Hence, micro issues require a humanist approach (Connolly and Prothero, 2003) in order to explore new forms of subjectivity in terms of ethical choice and a variety of interpretations of consumers’ behaviour, based on participants’ emotions, experiences, expectations and the construction of the moral self (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002). In Autio's (2005) opinion, this narrative approach is described to be idiosyncratic, diverse and deeply cultural. This type of interview is based on the assumption that responses do not represent facts but the experiences of each individual in relation to their "day-to-day practices with symbolism and meanings" (Cherrier, 2005, p. 601). Some works, such as Cherrier (2005), show that using consumers' life stories "can provide a valuable window on the way individuals internalize discourses and practices of ethical consumption behavior" (p. 601).

Due to the nature of the phenomenological approach, the format of the interview raises some ethical issues related to prior consent, its recording, and ensuring confidentiality (Thompson et al., 1989). Anonymity was guaranteed and all the interviewees’ names used are pseudonymous to protect the identity of each participant (Portwood-Stacer, 2012). As the objective is to discuss the experience in the first person, the interviews had a conversational nature (emergent dialog) (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Portwood-Stacer, 2012; Shaw et al., 2006; Thompson et al., 1989), and tending to be "circular rather than linear" (Thompson et al., 1989, p. 138). Before each interview, details of the research were provided by email in order to contextualize the research and allow the participants to reflect on their experiences of consumption (Connolly & Prothero, 2003). According to other studies (Cherrier, 2007; Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001; Shaw et al., 2006; Shaw & Riach, 2011), the interview started by an abstract question (general question), a “grand tour question” such as: “would you share your story about how you

started to develop the preference for organic products?”, which encouraged the interviewee to talk about the evolution of their habits of organic consumption (Connolly & Prothero, 2003). At the same time, the interview was directed so that participants feel encouraged to share their experiences and their life stories (Cherrier & Murray, 2007). During the interviews, particular attention was paid to the frequency, emotion and intensity with which the participants expressed their position regarding consumption (Heath & Chatzidakis, 2012; Shaw & Riach, 2011). Additionally, Thompson et al. (1989) refer that interviewer and interviewee should be in a position of equality, so the questions should be posed as the dialogue flows, always focusing on specific experiences rather than abstract. They suggest avoiding ‘why’ questions in order not to give the interviewer an intrusive role. Moreover, this type of questions can be perceived as rationalization and generate feelings of prejudice and defensive responses.

The field work took place during 9 months (see tables 6 and 7). The initial contact began at the beginning of 2016 and the 31 interviews were conducted over an intensive period of 5 months. Each interview took about one hour and was audio taped. Next followed by verbatim transcription of interviews and field notes (Black & Cherrier, 2010), in a total of 500 pages, throughout the entire process of data collection. Before and after the interviews there were informal conversations of interest to the research, as well as aspects observed by the researcher related to the context in which the interviewees live, their social relations, or where they work, which were also recorded in writing. The transcription process began shortly after the first interview and lasted two months after the thirty-first interview. This process was extremely labour intensive, with about 250 hours devoted to this task, averaging 8 hours for each interview.

It was the researcher’s own option to do the transcripts himself, allowing several advantages: (1) the confidentiality of the data collected was guaranteed from the outset; (2) made it possible to immediately identify important aspects that arose such as ideas, categories and themes that would be deepened in the analysis phase, or to be explored in the following interactions; (3) also allowed for self-criticism and reflection on the researcher’s performance in conducting the interview, allowing him to improve on subsequent interviews.

Table 6 - Field work

Activity	Jan.16	Feb.16	Mar.16	Apr.16	May16	Jun.16	Jul.16	Aug.16	Sep.16
Initial contacts	v	v	v	v					
Interviews and participant observation			18 th	01 st	06 th	07 th	01 st		
			18 th	13 th	11 st	10 th	20 th		
			19 th	22 nd	13 th	10 th	20 th		
			19 th	28 th		12 th	21 st		
			21 st			13 th			
			21 st			17 th			
			24 th			17 th			
			24 th			21 st			
			31 st			24 th			
						25 th			
					28 th				
Transcripts			v	v	v	v	v	v	v

Table 7 - Data Summary

Activity/data format	Details
Duration of the field work	5 months
Duration of the transcripts	7 months
Transcribed material	500 pages
Total of interviews	31
Audio recorded	32 hours
Audio recorded/average per interview	62 minutes

2.3.3 Data analysis

According to Mayer (2015), data analysis is an important step in qualitative research and its application has a major impact on the results obtained.

Moisander and Valtonen (2006) consider that in research on consumer behaviour reality is no fixed, that meanings are constructed in different contexts, so texts must be interpreted as an autonomous body of data. Within this interpretative

perspective, the objective is to identify cultural particularities that represent ways of acting, speaking and relating. However, the authors recommend, as a starting point for interpretation, that the researcher should obtain a pre-understanding of the disciplines that make up the theoretical reference in order to provide an "orientating frame of reference, or horizon, from which texts are interpreted" (p. 109). In addition, the researcher sought to know where these consumers moved in terms of internet sites (see bibliography list).

The entire analysis process was based on NVivo 11, which proved a valuable aid element in the coding and comparison of data. In general terms, the analysis process began with a reading of the transcripts, to have a vision as a whole to create a holistic understanding (Connolly & Prothero, 2003). Early on, the field notes and the transcribed material of the narratives showed to be extremely centred on the experiences of each individual and loaded with subjectivity and meanings. According to Cherrier and Murray (2007), a single story is analysed and interpreted within the context of the text as a whole. This means that the text is analysed from the perspective of the conceptual framework; and the conceptual framework is interpreted based on the broader perspective of informants' narratives and meanings, in an interactive movement. Then, a comparison of the participants was made, highlighting the points of interest (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001; Lee, Fernandez & Hyman, 2009; Shaw et al., 2006). A registry of key phrases and patterns was developed, creating as many codes as those that were needed to capture the points of interest (Lee et al., 2009; Moraes, Szmigin & Carrigan, 2010; Shaw et al., 2006).

During the analysis phase, Moisander and Valtonen's (2006) suggestion was taken into account regarding "de-familiarizing" (p. 121), that is, the ability of the researcher to move away from aspects taken for granted, allowing them to be seen more analytically. Furthermore, this enabled a deeper dive into the phenomenon, changing the researcher perspective and incorporating points of view, similarities and differences in analysis.

During the data analysis, the literature was constantly revisited and kept up-to-date, in order to provide a comprehensive and recent overview of the state of the art.

Throughout the entire process of analysis of the extensive transcribed material, an effort was made to reduce the data, identifying emerging categories and themes (Holt, 1997) and establish interesting relationships among the meanings (Shaw & Riach, 2011; Wetherell et al., 2001). There was also an endeavour to maintain a chronological sequence - narrative movement, to organize events and experiences in temporal order (Thompson, 1997). This aspect was particularly important to identify the phases of the construction of green consumption identity.

By assessing the same phenomenon from the angle of different methods of data analysis, this convergence can increase the credibility of the results (Reinecke et al., 2016).

In this way, in accordance with the complexity of the proposed research objectives of this thesis were followed different strategies that complement each other to analyse the data (see table 8).

Table 8 - Methods of analysis

Methods of analysis	Chapter #3	Chapter #4	Chapter #5	Chapter #5
	Objectives 1, 2 and 3	Objective 4	Objectives 5 and 6	Objectives 7, 8, 9 and 10
Content analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thematic analysis	✓			✓
Hermeneutic endeavour			✓	
Discourse analysis		✓		

In the following sections the data analysis tools are discussed in more detail.

2.3.3.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a widely used tool in qualitative research to determine the presence of meanings, concepts, terms and words when faced with a large amount of information (Mills, Eurepos, & Wiebe, 2010). Content analysis was the starting point for the operationalization of all the objectives of this research.

This systematic approach to coding and categorization allows us to compress a lot of information in all types of recorded communications, such as transcripts of

interviews, discourses, observations, documents, etc. (Mayring, 2000). Its purpose is to determine trends and patterns on words, their frequency, and categories, examining who says what, to whom and to what effect, so as to make inferences about the subject of study, an audience or a particular culture (Mills et al., 2010; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

This research followed an inductive approach to developing categories following the research question and objectives, which in turn have been carefully revised throughout the analysis process (feedback loops) (Mayring, 2000). Two steps were followed in the process of generating codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

(1) Familiarising with data

The first phase consisted of the integral transcription of the interviews and registers. An “orthographic transcript” was adopted (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). That is to say, a verbatim transcription of verbal language and other non-verbal aspects such as pauses, laughs, anger, etc., permitting the researcher to immediately know and understand the collected data. In this phase, one started to take notes and ideas for the codification phase. Transcriptions were read several times to be understood as a whole.

(2) Generating initial codes

In this phase, importance was given to detail in order to carry out the codification process to determine the presence of meaning and concepts, gathering words in content categories (Mills et al., 2010). A code (or node, in NVivo) is the most basic element of analysis and participates to identify, in a later phase, patterns according to frequency and participating in the subsequent identification of analysis units (themes) (Bendassolli, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006). For that, NVivo constitutes a precious tool that permitted to codify, establish connections between codes and facilitate a thematic analysis permitting an immediate visualization of codifications and themes associated, making the interpretation process easier.

This way and looking at the data coding procedure through another prism, four levels of analysis were applied (Mills et al., 2010):

(1) Level of words

During the transcription phase of interviews and field notes, it was possible to become familiarized with empirical material while still raw, and to come to know better the participants, their arguments and their context.

(2) Level of codes

The codes capture the researcher's interpretation of the text and allow the connection between the conceptual level and the empirical level. In this research, three types of code were used: concepts, dimensions, and patterns.

(3) Level of concepts

Discovery of the relevance of concepts, themes and dimensions to research, and understanding of the relationship between them. A conceptual model was created (see figure 6, p. 87), that summarizes the object of study through two instruments: (1) the identification of categories and subcategories, that is, codes that refer to the same concept or theme; and (2), their hierarchical structure within the category, determined by the frequency (number of times the participant referred to a concept during the interview, using NVivo).

(4) Level of memos

Used to assist in the writing of the results and includes reflections, interpretations and actions investigated.

To summarize, content analysis consists of transforming initial codes into more abstract levels of information, using relevant categories and good memos (Mills et al., 2010). Additionally, it can be combined with other qualitative procedures according to the research question and the characteristics of the collected material (Mayring, 2000). Content analysis was the common basis of the process of data analysis, complemented by other more elaborate methods in accordance with the requirements of research objectives.

2.3.3.2 Thematic analysis

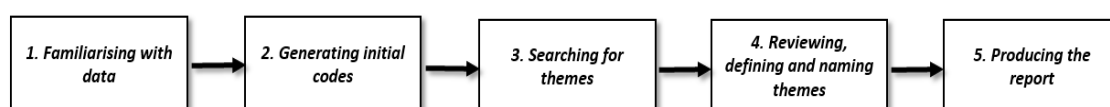
Thematic analysis in combination with content analysis enabled the most appropriate means of analysis to address the research objectives related to the motivations of organic consumers, to understand their context, the barriers they face, and to understand the relationship between organic consumption and anti-consumer practices.

Thematic analysis is a systematic approach largely used in qualitative research that involves the identification of themes, patterns and frequencies, based on the volume of information, using a codification process of transcriptions, interpreting results, establishing relations and theoretical constructs (Mills et al., 2010; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). According to Mills et al. (2010), thematic analysis should not be considered a research methodology but an “analytical approach and synthesizing strategy used as part of the meaning-making process” (p. 926). It is therefore considered a strategy for synthesizing voluminous information, making the researcher familiar with collected data, separating the text into small content units (Mills et al., 2010; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Thematic analysis uses a descriptive approach to codify and interpret purely qualitative and detailed data based on what the researcher collects and identifies as common topics present in an interview or set of interviews (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

In this research, interviews were analysed using thematic categories following the procedures suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), presented in the image below. It should be noted that phases 1 and 2 are related to the content analysis described above.

Figure 2 - Thematic analysis phases



Based on Braun and Clarke (2006).

(3) Searching for themes

After all of the interviews have been subjected to a codification process based on the long list of codes and categories and text frequency, a wider analysis and higher level of abstraction was made, in order to identify potential themes and establish the connection between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, the categories raised in all interviews and the register of the observations were collapsed into themes in the possible segments of analysis (Dapkus, 1985; Ulusoy, 2016). A theme is the integration of part of a text that coherently retains important aspects of data regarding the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

(4) Reviewing, defining and naming themes

In this phase, themes were named in order to reflect and represent the meaning of the related data. Each one was distinct and coherent. Literature was consulted in order to confront the substantive codes (emerged from data) with the theoretical codes (based on reference literature) (Ulusoy, 2016). Themes were then compared and redundancies eliminated (Bendassolli, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Dapkus, 1985).

(5) Producing the report

It is an important phase of the analysis process and the report must be brief, coherent and logical. A 'story' of the research question must be created using extracts of the transcriptions that evidence and represent the content of each theme, that is to say, that capture its essence. The report must go from a descriptive level to an interpretative level, comparing the discovered themes with other results of reference literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In epistemological terms, thematic analysis may assume two forms: (1) an inductive approach (data-driven), when the emerging themes are closely linked to data without the concern of placing them in a pre-defined theoretical framing; or (2), a theoretical thematic analysis, when the researcher is focused on a

particular aspect of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). With this research, the thematic analysis is started with a description process, with data organized by themes that are later interpreted considering the existent theoretical literature references about this subject (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

However, this research was intended to begun detached from the theoretical references. In the following phases, the researcher was concerned about establishing a relationship between the findings and other studies about the researched matter. As Moisander and Valtonen (2006) suggest, each practice must be interpreted in a defined context, in relation to the dominant discourse.

To summarize, thematic analysis provides a flexible approach, easily applied to qualitative analysis of data. It includes a “constant back and forward movement between the entire data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). It is therefore not a linear process. It is indeed a method to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes inserted in data. It may be classified as an essentialist or realistic method, when it is about analyzing experiences, meanings or the reality described by the participants; or constructionist when reporting how these experiences, meanings and realities are the consequence of the discourses that operate inside society (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this research, the approach followed tended to be more constructionist.

2.3.3.3 Hermeneutical analysis

This analysis strategy was appropriate to address research questions regarding how green identities are built and which expressions stand out in this construction.

In order to find meaning in the extensive transcripts, the hermeneutical analysis (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Shaw & Moraes, 2009; Thompson et al., 1990; Thompson et al., 1989; Thompson, 1997), allowed emphasis on a part-to-whole mode of interpretation so that its purpose is to interpret meanings of consumption in relation to the personal consumer history and to a wider context of established cultural meanings. This type of research, also referred to as ‘hermeneutic circle’ (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006; Thompson, 1997), is based on consumers’ stories

generated by “phenomenological” or “long” interviews, resulting in “constellations of meanings” (Thompson, 1997, p. 443). The idea is to develop an integrated and comprehensive report, a “discovery-oriented research” (Thompson, 1997, p. 439) with specific elements and the whole, in an interactive process of interpretation. In other words, the “‘parts’ and ‘wholes’, and back-and-forth movement” (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006, p. 111). Consequently, Moisander and Valtonen (2006, p. 111) describes the hermeneutic circle process as following:

“The task of the interpreter, is to focus on and analyse the specific words and expressions that respondents use themselves, as indicators of their ‘inner experiences’, as the most relevant ‘parts’ of the whole that is to be studied, the ‘whole’ being the transcript of the individual’s interview”.

Under these circumstances, interpretation plays a crucial role in the hermeneutics circle process. Moisander and Valtonen (2006) consider hermeneutics, not just a mere method or technique of producing interpretation, but a philosophy and a “way of being in the world” (p. 124). Therefore, they point out two important aspects in this interpretation process: (1) on the one hand, taking into account that the human being belongs to a social, historical context, the pre-understanding of a given phenomenon should be considered as a starting point for interpretation. Thus, as these authors observe, pre-understanding shapes interpretation and is something that the investigator cannot ignore. Therefore, in this research, it was very important to create an initial understanding of the social and cultural context in which organic food consumers move, as well as deepen academic knowledge about the construction of ethical consumption; (2) on the other hand, during the process of interpretation, Moisander and Valtonen (2006) warn about the focus on cultural discourse that guides and constrains people’s life. Therefore, data “must be contextualized to a particular historical and local discourse space in which have been produced” (p. 112) according to the phenomenological-hermeneutic approaches to qualitative consumer research.

Under these circumstances, in this investigation the phenomenological interpretation phases suggested by Thompson et al. (1989) and Thompson (1997) were followed:

(1) Ideographic phase⁸

- First, the text is completely read to gain meaning as a whole (intratext circle).
- An individual understanding of each interview, identifying key patterns regarding the meanings expressed by each consumers, that is, each “person as a text” (p. 440).

(2) Part-to-whole phase

- That is, a part-to-whole (intertextual) movement across different consumers. In this sense, the data are used to describe the personal history of each consumer, engendering a holistic understand in of consumer stories.
- Also, an interactive movement between consumer narratives and a broader context of the system. The narratives should be contextualized taking into account the background and cultural value systems, in "a frame of reference" (p. 440).
- Another aspect that was considered was the "plot" that constitutes the structure of consumption histories, that is, the chronological order in which events and meanings are organized, which Thompson (1997) calls "narrative movement" (p. 43). Through the meanings that consumers attribute to consumption, they construct their biographical narratives by aligning their identities with the circumstances of their lives to contextualize their choices and their options over time. Therefore, special attention was given to the sequence in order to identify the phases of the construction process of the green consumer identities (past-present-future). After this analysis, the next step was to go through the various narratives and looking for common traits that lead to levels of abstraction and therefore the corresponding stages (Cherrier & Murray, 2007).

⁸ On page 148, the narrative of Leonor's case is representative of this first phase of analysis.

To sum up, it is the purpose of this investigation to understand the sequence with which informants change their consumer lifestyle and the reasons that led them to this. Accordingly to Cherrier and Murray's (2007) suggestion, the interpretation of each story plot should follow an narrative framing, by selecting and highlighting details out of the field of experience; and a narrative movement, by giving to the story a sense of temporal sequence. After this analysis, the next step was to go through the various narratives and looking for common traits that lead to levels of abstraction and therefore the corresponding stages of the green identity construction. The application of this process of analysis allowed to define each phase of the green identities formation process in the context of this sample.

2.3.3.4 Discourse analysis

To understand what organic consumption represents in a political perspective requires discourse analysis. Therefore, the analysis of research objective number 4 involved two methods (Fairclough, 2003; Sitz, 2008; Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000): content analysis and discourse analysis. In an initial phase, using NVivo, key patterns were developed, creating as many codes as needed to capture the points of interest (Lee et al., 2009; Moraes, Szmigin & Carrigan, 2010; Shaw et al., 2006).

According to Titscher et al. (2000), discourse analysis is a “powerful method for studying social phenomena (...) to interpret consumers’ narratives and other consumption-related discourses” (p. 178). Hence, discourse analysis is considered a suitable tool following other successful examples of its application in marketing (Atkinson, 2014; de Burgh-Woodman & King, 2013; Fitchett & Caruana, 2015; Mitussis & Elliott, 1999; Sitz, 2008).

The discourse analysis approach to social sciences began to be used by scholars such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault and has been labelled as postmodernist (Mills, Eurepos and Wiebe, 2010), wherein all versions of reality are “socio-discursive construction (...) where language signifies reality in the sense of constructing meanings for it” (Titscher et al., 2000, p. 176). Some versions of discourse analysis are strongly influenced by Foucault’s work on social

disadvantage, power relations and domination. Other versions are more focused on the conversation analysis appearance (Fairclough, 2003; Kelan, 2016).

The language in a text must be understood in articulation with the specific process and social context (social *locus*) in which the discourse is produced (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2016; Titscher et al., 2000). Thus, the solution is to consider the interpretations of the various narratives, identifying patterns of meanings that are sometimes hidden, which offer interesting clues about context, ideas, values, and other aspects of 'subjectivity' (Atkinson, 2014; Titscher et al., 2000). In this sense, "discourse" is understood as "particular view of language in use (...) as an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3).

Therefore, according to Kelan (2016), discourse analysis sees "the world as socially constructed, with discourse both constitutive of and constructed by social reality" (p. 1179). In a more complete form, Fairclough (2003) describes discourses as follows:

"ways of representing aspects of the world – the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world. Particular aspects of the world may be represented differently, so we are generally in the position of having to consider the relationship between different discourses. Different discourses are different perspectives on the world, and they are associated with the different relations people have to the world, which in turn depends on their positions in the world, their social and personal identities, and the social relationships in which they stand to other people". (p. 124)

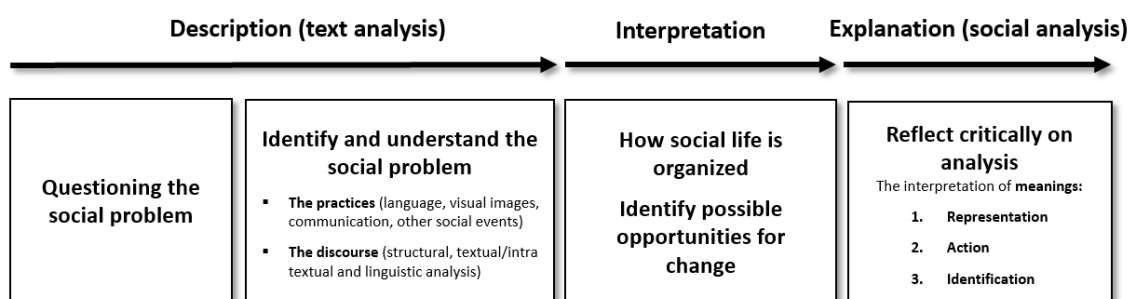
Fitchett and Caruana (2015) presented an application of discourse analysis to marketing and consumer behaviour. They observed that it has enormous potential in terms of supporting reflexivity and research criticality, but "remains a relatively underrepresented approach" (p. 2). Some examples of discourse analysis application in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour are presented by Mitussis and Elliott (1999) who proposed a conceptual model where the language connects consumers and their natural environment; Burgh-Woodman & King (2013), regarding the discourse of human/nature connectedness; Kozinets (2008), concerning the influence of technological ideologies on consumer level thought; Sitz (2008), about the analysis of

consumers shopping identities and narratives; or more recently, Atkinson (2014), concerning discourses on feminist studies.

In this research, discourse analysis is focused on the detail of the language in use in a micro scale (micro-discourse approach - organic consumer context) with the intention of obtaining patterns to generalize to similar contexts (meso-discourse approach - organic consumers). However, Alvesson and Karreman's (2016) warning has been taken into account regarding the problem of making "discourse" into "Discourse," from a "micro" to a "macro" level, forcing it to become too grandiose and not very strict. Accordingly, discourse analysis is positioned at the "micro" and "meso" level, emphasizing the "subjectivity and expression of meanings" (p. 1143), but always located in the specific context.

In order to establish the relationship between different discourses, that is, different perspectives about the world, some of the steps followed in this paper were based on Norman Fairclough's road map, "Analytical Discourse - Textual analysis for social research". According to Titscher et al. (2000, p. 153), Fairclough's method is based on three components: the *description* of linguistic properties; the *interpretation* of the relation between the productive and interpretative process of discursive practice and text, and the *explanation* of the relationship between discursive and social practice. This "explanatory critique" (Fairclough, 2003) includes the following generic main steps represented in the figure below.

Figure 3 - Fairclough's discourse analysis method



Based on Fairclough (2003) and Titscher et al. (2000).

(1) The description of linguistic properties

- Start by questioning a social problem, in order to trigger an emancipatory change.
- Identify obstacles to understanding the social problem and to what extent it is rooted in social life:
 - To study the practices in use in the networks and semiosis within the particular practices, such language, visual images, communication, and other social elements.
 - Analysing the discourse (the semiosis) itself, such as: the structural analysis (the order of discourse); and the textual/intratextual analysis, and linguistic analysis.

(2) The *interpretation* of the relation between the discursive practice and text

Identify possible ways to overcome obstacles and opportunities for change in how social life is currently organized.

(3) The explanation of the relationship between discursive and social practice.

Reflect critically on analysis, which involves an interpretation of meanings at the level of representation, action, and identification.

Fairclough (2003) argues that “the (social) world is socially constructed” (p. 5), and that the texts (language and discourses) have a role in the construction of the social world, where the interpretation of meaning plays an important role in the analysis of text. In this vein, he identifies three important aspects regarding the interpretation of meanings (p 28, 225.):

(1) Representation

Meanings of the world that appear represented in the text. It is related to knowledge but also to get control over things.

(2) Action

Meanings that a text has when it takes an active part in a social event. It is related to others, to act on others and with power.

(3) Identification

Meanings that reflect the construction of identities of people reflected in textual construction. It is related to relations with oneself, ethics, and the 'moral agent'.

As regards specifically to the representational meanings, these can include the following elements:

(1) Process

Looking for words or elements that soften or not the discourse. Events represented in a congruent or metaphorical form.

(2) Participants (social actors)

It suggests the analysis of elements that represent the agency: activated/passivated; personal/impersonal; named/classified; specific/generic; exclusion/inclusion.

(3) Circumstances (of time and space)

Time and space are interrelated concepts and are social constructs different in each society, "within the domain of policy" (p.155). Fairclough's (2003) suggestion is to look for different "scales" of social life (local, national, regional or global); and past, present and future.

(4) Styles and identification

In Fairclough's (2003) point of view, styles are "discoursal aspects of ways of being, identities" (p.159), and are associated with identification, that is, how people identify and how they are identified by others. Individuals participate and act on social events by constructing their identity continuously - "self-consciousness." This element is a precondition for the

process of the construction of social identity in the discourse that leads to the elaboration of the concept of agency, "the way in which situated agents produce events, action, texts, etc., in potentially creative and innovative way" (p. 225).

(5) Other elements

The genre chain (various ways of acting and producing social life); the difference (if they represent a new position); intertextuality (the 'voices' represented, or not, in the text); and assumptions (what is taken for granted).

Fairclough (2003) recommends investigating to what extent these elements are present or excluded from texts and those with higher ledge. One can also compare them in terms of knowing how concrete or abstract these social elements are represented. Then, these elements are linked with other particular social practices (contextualization), associated with genres chains, in order to perceive how social events are arranged, explained, legitimized and evaluated.

2.4 Quality criteria

As noted above, this research is qualitative in nature. Moisander and Valtonen (2006) point out that "interpretative frameworks are culturally constructed through social interaction in historically and locally specific systems of representation and are thus infused with values, norms and role expectations" (p. 22). In this context, the knowledge produced is always "contextual, plural, contested and subject to change" (p. 22). However, Moisander and Valtonen (2006) propose some criteria to ensure the quality of research discussed below which were followed in this investigation.

2.4.1 Validity

The validity refers to the "truth or accuracy of the representation and generalizations made by the research" (p. 24). Moisander and Valtonen (2006) refer that validity is difficult to discuss because truth and knowledge are culturally

constructed “in complex networks of power” (p. 24), so it is not appropriate to speak about objectivity and absolute truth of research results.

Consequently, the methods and the process employed must give a more precise and objective representation of the phenomenon investigated. Moisander and Valtonen (2006) suggest to follow a research protocol and a triangulation process. The premise of triangulation is to combine theories, methods, observations and empirical material, that is, to ensure a methodological pluralism (Atkinson, 2005; Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). In this domain, triangulation is employed to look at the objective of study from different points of view in order to enhance and demonstrate the reliability of research findings (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006; Reinecke et al., 2016). This research followed the recommendation of Reinecke et al. (2016) regarding the methodological triangulation, that is, combining for each theme of the study the most appropriate method for analyse data (content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis and hermeneutic analysis). Moreover, the exhaustive review of the literature contributed to improve the credibility of the research in the sense in which it could compare and contrast its results with other results found in the literature on the subject. Overall, combining multiple methods of analysis, empirical material, perspectives and observations in a single study should also be understood as a strategy to add “rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to the inquiry” (p. 25). Thompson et al. (1989) argue that any empirical material based on texts and the use of language places limits on the way the material is analysed and interpreted, so “there is always more than one good interpretation of it” (p. 26). The authors also reinforce this idea by mentioning that the identification of global issues in consumer experiences is a methodological means that serves to improve the interpretation process and not to meet validation.

2.4.2 Reliability

Reliability is related to ‘replicability’, in the way that other researchers can repeat the research and arrive at the same “results, interpretation and claims” (p. 27). However, in Moisander and Valtonen's (2006) point of view, cultural knowledge is localized, and therefore does not reproduce the same social reality.

Nevertheless, and following the recommendations of Moisander and Valtonen (2006), in this research particular attention was given to methodological coherence (such as the research procedure developed, the analytical procedures of interpretation and the conclusions obtained), as well as the methodological transparency. The interviews followed a phenomenological approach (Thompson et al., 1990; Thompson et al., 1989; Thompson, 1997), field notes were taken and the material date was fully transcribed. In this sense, Thompson et al. (1989) notes that verbatim transcription ensures the following methodological criteria: (1) emic approach, where interpretation is based on the experience described by participants and not from the perspective of researchers and in conceptually abstract terms; (2) autonomy of the text, in which text is treated as a single body of data, and should not be incorporated inferences, hypotheses or conjectures that exceed own descriptions provided by the transcriptions.

2.4.3 Generalization and transferability

According to Moisander and Valtonen (2006), generalization refers to the extent to which the findings and conclusions of a particular population sample can be applied to the general population. These authors argue that in qualitative studies, the logic of generalization cannot be applied and has no utility in the area of consumer behaviour. Firstly, because very small samples are often used, so sampling and statistical inference are not applied. Secondly, cultural research is concerned with understand and interpreting meanings in a particular context where whereby “quantitative notions of generalizability are misplaced” (p. 29). Thompson et al. (1990) also reinforce this idea, arguing that if a phenomenon is put into language it cannot be discussed in the abstract. As this study is based on an existential-phenomenological approach, the experiences of each participant can only be discussed in the context in which they were produced. Therefore, existential-phenomenology is concerned with the meaning of experience for individuals as situated in life-world (Thompson et al., 1990).

In terms of ‘transferability’, that is, the capacity in which readers can transfer study results to other contexts and familiar situations, Moisander and Valtonen (2006) point out that there is no such concern in the area of consumer behaviour. Thus, the goal of consumer behaviour research is to get an understanding of specific

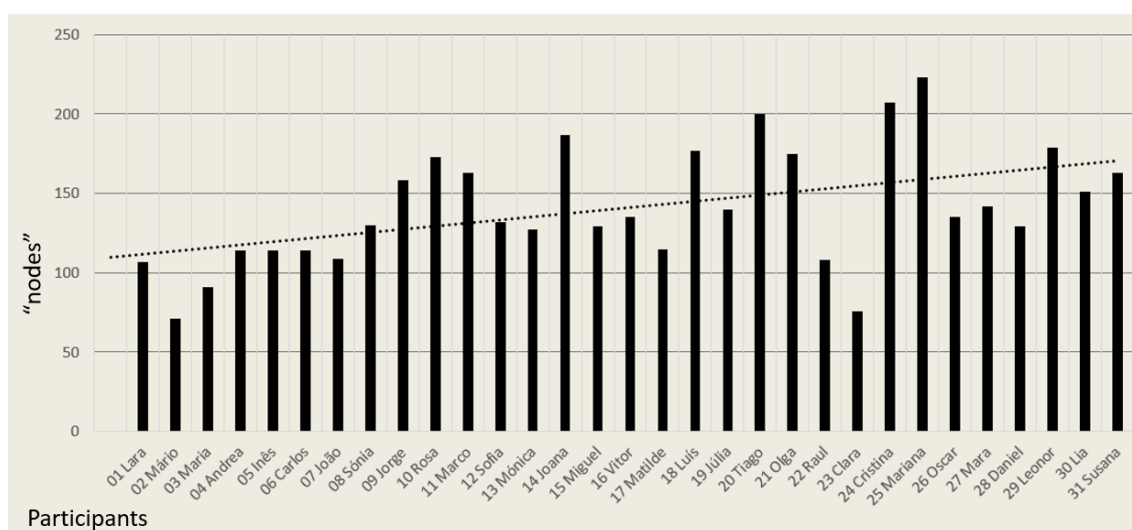
and localized cultural practices and representation systems, such as can only be transferred and applied to similar cultural contexts.

To sum up, considering the phenomenological nature of this research and given that the experiences of each individual are unique facts, findings cannot be generalized to a large population (Connolly & Prothero, 2003). Unlike the positivist tradition, where the researcher tries to generalize the findings to other contexts for being universal, in this research no attempt is made to capture this reality. The goal is, rather, to investigate the meanings and significance due to the diversity of views and experiences. According to Wetherell et al. (2001), there are multiple realities and truths, so that this research is partial and situated.

2.4.4 Theoretical saturation

According to Mills et al. (2010), the argument around theoretical saturation is to assure that the research question was rigorously answered, systematically explored and as complete as possible. In that way, from a certain moment, the information emerging from the interviews becomes increasingly repetitive, indicating to the researcher that the data collection data does not need to be continued. However, these authors argue that theoretical saturation is a "speculative construct" (p. 928) and that a researcher can never be sure that theoretical saturation has been achieved.

Graphic 1 - Theoretical saturation



Fugard and Potts (2015) also argue that in qualitative research the determination of sample size "should not trouble qualitative researchers" (p.680) and that it is intuitively obvious that a large sample is sensitive if one intends to see a subject sufficiently represented in the data.

In this research, given its idiosyncratic nature, the results are not intended to represent the entire universe of organic products in Portugal. It is intended to know the particularities of a group of consumers with deep environmental and social convictions, to understand how the formation of consumer identity is constructed and the extent to which anti-consumption practices are present in the discourse for sustainability. However, from a certain point on, little more relevant information was being collected, the emerging nodes having stabilised (see graphic 1). In addition, and comparing other studies (see table 9) with similar approaches, the large sample size (31 participants) is judged to be sufficient.

Table 9 - Number of participants (reference studies)

Authors	Number of participants
Autio, Heiskanen and Heinonen (2009)	3 consumer narratives
Black and Cherrier (2010)	16 in-depth interviews
Cherrier (2005)	9 existential phenomenological interviews
Cherrier (2006)	9 existential phenomenological interviews
Cherrier and Murray (2007)	12 consumer narratives
Cherrier, Black and Lee (2011)	16 in-depth interviews
Cherrier, Szuba and Özçağlar-Toulouse (2012)	11 existential interviews
Connolly and Prothero (2003)	6 phenomenological interviews
Connolly and Prothero (2008)	14 in-depth interviews
Eräranta, Moisander and Pesonen (2009)	12 interviews
Moisander and Pesonen (2002)	12 life stories
Perera (2014)	20 in-depth interviews

2.5 In summary

This chapter explains the exploratory and inductive nature that was followed in this research. It positions the methodology in the interpretative paradigm to

investigate the idiosyncrasies and particularities of a complex system of organic consumer narratives, in order to perceive how they construct their green consumption identity. It also seeks inspiration in the critical and postmodern thinking (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Firat, Sherry, & Venkatesh, 1994; Ozanne & Murray, 1995) based on the feminist perspective on power and truth.

With this approach, it was intended to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon seen through the lenses of the participants. The goal was not to measure attitudes, but to understand their subjective experiences. Therefore, we can classify this research as 'discovery-oriented' (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Deshpande, 1983; Heath & Heath, 2008; Holt, 1997).

This chapter also explains the technique of collecting, processing and analysing data. Thus, the phenomenological in-depth interviews followed Thompson's et al. (1989) recommendations regarding the context of the interviews, the dialogue, and the way of interpreting the data. Therefore, the interviews are treated as an autonomous body of data, using the hermeneutical circle and the identification of global themes. According to these authors, this approach has as main assumptions the following: (1) describe a contextualise world view; (2) observe the individual within the context in which he or she lives: human-being-in-the-world; (3) focus on the description of the individual lived experience; and (4), consider experience always situated and subjective.

In addition to this methodological perspective, several techniques of data analysis were applied (content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and hermeneutic analysis) depending on the requirements and complexity of the research objectives in order to better answer the research question.

Finally, the chapter concludes with considerations regarding the quality of the research methodology. Thus, it is important to highlight the ontological and epistemological principles guiding this research. Since cultural research is usually based on the understanding that claims of knowledge and truth about social reality are always culturally constructed in complex networks of power, and thus never value-free, in this research it seems inappropriate to talk about the "objectivity" or "objective truth" of research findings (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006,

p. 24). Under these circumstances, this research follows an interpretative and critical approach regarding its validity, since data are understood as constructs that are a result of the interaction between the researcher and the research context (Reinecke et al., 2016).

CHAPTER 3

CHOOSING LOCAL ORGANIC FOOD: CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS AND ETHICAL SPACES

Abstract

In recent decades the organic conventionalization and mainstream agro-food sector is more interested in its commercial value than in its original vision, raising the question of whether these products are truly organic. Accordingly, this research based on 31 phenomenological interviews with committed organic consumers in urban and rural areas of Portugal aims to analyse how ethical motivations and ecological awareness are related to organic food consumption. A qualitative approach based on consumer narratives covered three main areas of research: (1) to understand organic consumer motivations and cultural meanings represented by organic consumption; (2) to identify the main barriers in accessing and consuming organic products; and (3), to identify how environmental concerns and ethical behaviour influence organic consumption. The thematic analysis points up aspects related to society and environmental concerns. For these consumers, local organic products consumption made for significant changes in their lives, aiding in the establishment of a green identity, and involves a 'life philosophy' perspective. This vision of organic is grounded in a political and ecological perspective, beyond the usual organic definition, as a 'post-organic' era. The paper contributes to better understand how an ideological environmental discourse allows to highlight the relation between consumers' environmental concerns and the politics of food, resulting in a possible transition to new sustainable consumption practices.

Keywords: Organic consumption, Localism, Content analysis, Thematic analysis, Pro-environmental discourse, Political consumption.

3.1 Introduction

In recent decades the organic food sector has sharply grown, resulting in its values being subordinated to market forces (Dinis, Ortolani, Bocci, & Brites, 2015), and nowadays, organic conventionalization and mainstream agro-food sector is more interested in its commercial value than in its original vision (Smith, 2006), destroying the original essence (Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003). In practical terms, the organic production and distribution system is becoming large scale, covering up long distances and sometimes being based on a monoculture industry (Delind, 2006). Nowadays, the centralized agro-food production and marketing systems are increasing the distance between producers and consumers (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011), raising the question of whether these products are truly organic (Hjelmar, 2011).

Some initiatives mentioned in the literature, suggest a 'post-organic era' based on local direct marketing and Local Food Networks (LFN) in which the principles and values go beyond the current organic definition (Goodman & Goodman, 2007). However, only a few consumers have the ability to pay an economic premium (Bryant & Goodman, 2004) for organic products and to put into practice their concerns toward the environment (Carrington et al., 2010). There are considerable evidences and barriers to express an ecologically oriented consumption (Moisander, 2007). Despite such decision involving so high costs in terms of effort and time (Young, Hwang, McDonald, & Oates, 2010), some consumers are willing to pay more for socially and environmentally conscious products (Ainscough et al., 2012).

Current consumption patterns are, from the environmental point of view, unsustainable and need to be changed (Seyfang, 2003, 2006). Some authors consider that it is urgent to focus on alternative forms of consumption based on a "hard sustainability", in opposition to the rhetoric "soft views" expressed by the environmental economists (Bryant & Goodman, 2004, p. 349). In what concerns the relationship between environmental friendly behaviour and attitudes towards the purchase of organic food, there are few studies that focus on this subject. Consequently, the proposed theme focus on the reasons for the organic products

choice, their relationship with environmental concerns, and the meaning that these consumer habits represent in consumers' lives.

The literature suggests that the commonly mentioned reasons for consumers to purchase organic products are the perceived effects of organic products on the environment, sustainability, taste, prestige, support to the local farmers, lifestyle, health and nutritional content, quality and product attributes (Baker et al., 2006; Hall, 2008; Pearson & Henryks, 2008). Some consumers would prefer organic products based on health criteria, because of their own medical problems; while some others may purchase organic food in a way to “support a food system that is more sustainable in its impact on the natural environment” (Pearson & Henryks, 2008, p. 99), based in a more abstract reason (Hall, 2008).

Despite social barriers, individual dilemmas and the sacrifice to express an ecologically oriented consumption, there are still some consumers who are willing to put their concerns into practice towards the environment (Ainscough et al., 2012; Moisander, 2007; Young et al., 2010). It is this core of consumers which is investigated in this study. In that sense, a qualitative and phenomenological approach was carried out in order to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) To understand organic consumption motivations;
- (2) To identify the main barriers in accessing and consuming organic products;
- (3) To understand the cultural meanings represented by organic consumption.

In this line of reasoning, it is appropriate it is appropriate to integrate this study into research on the political ecology to understand the emergence of alternatives and its relation to the dominant power established in Western societies (Bryant & Goodman, 2004).

3.2 Literature review

3.2.1 Green consumers – purposes, motivations and typology

The market is experiencing a renewed interest in ecologically oriented issues with a focus on the consumer marketplace (Phau, 2011). Therefore, with the objective to identify the impact of consumers' environmental consciousness on their purchasing decisions, McDonald and Oates (2006) presented two factors to identify a potential green consumer: (1) the degree of compromise, reflected in various ways, such as being available to pay a higher price for a green product, or having to search for it outside one's usual market.; and, (2) the degree of confidence, represented as how sure the consumer is, that the product addresses a genuine issue and represents an environment benefit.

The environmental concerned consumption, involves conflicts and dilemmas. According to Moisander (2007, p. 407), this is motivated by two different types of goals: (1) the (private) individual objectives of consumption; and (2), the collective long-term environmental protection, related to the objectives of society. Under these circumstances, an ecological consumption requires knowledge and skills about consumer options which makes their decision process complex and rational. Thus, "green consumers would need to have sufficiently accurate understanding about the ethical issues" (p. 407), and consequently, it is often expected to play the role of conscious decision-makers and a "rational" domestic managers (Moisander, 2007).

In what concerns the strategies of ecologically responsible consumer, Moisander (2007) synthesizes two perspectives:

(1) The radical green consumer view

To reduce the number of purchase to bare minimum, refusing to buy anything that is not absolutely necessary.

(2) A more liberal view on green consumption

Considering that the radical environmentalist approach is very difficult to adopt in a consumption-oriented society, this soft view is based on consumer choices that have a minimal destructive impact on the environment without compromising the current lifestyle.

A relevant aspect in the literature on ethical consumption has been the understanding of how pro-social and environmental issues are perceived (Newholm, & Shaw, 2007). According to Phau (2011), consumers' environmental attitudes have been documented as complex and are defined as the "degree to which one express concerns about ecological issues" (p. 455), depending on the relative importance between themselves (self-interest) and society as a whole. In recent years, there have been significant developments "focusing on consumer values and how consumers themselves are engaging in various acts of voluntary simplicity, sustainable consumption and/or anti-consumption (with a sustainability focus) behaviours" (Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2015, p. 1189). Likewise, the study in the individual consumer's perspective will always remain important. Despite the interest in individual consumer perspective, this dimension cannot be analysed in a detached way. According to Markkula, Eräranta and Moisander (2010), in several circumstances, individual consumers choices are permanently conditioned and influenced by "marketers and the market, often in ways that work against sustainable development" (p. 73). Under these circumstances, these authors question the individualistic view of the consumer as a political influencer power agent and market actor. The reasoning for this perspective is related to the fact that green consumer behaviour should also be examined not only in terms of individual perspective and responsible choice but in terms of context, in which it appears as well as the relations of power that is affected. The argumentation for this perspective is related to the fact that people are not only consumers or green activists, but also workers and family members, and therefore "there is a need to study the societal and social formations and networks of mutual dependence to which consumers" (Markkula et al., 2010, p.77).

On the other hand, an individual with a collective concern "ignores personal gratification but implies cooperation, helpfulness and consideration toward the

goal of the group” (Phau, 2011, p. 457). Thus, collectivist people tend to be more environmental friendly, so that green purchase intention depends on a consumer’s altruism and motivation (Phau, 2011). These universalism values (concerns for people and nature) have been identified in the literature influencing positively purchasing attitudes toward organically grown food (Dreezens, Martijn, Tenbült, Kok, & De Vries, 2005), and also having a significant influence in the consumption of fair trade products (Doran, 2010).

These two positions (individualism and collectivism) lead us to consider that the green or ethical consumption represents people that act in a rational way, and assume an accurate and deliberate positions about their consumer choices (McDonald et al., 2012; Newholm & Shaw, 2007). On the other hand, green or ethical consumers are not a homogenous group with uniform intentions. According to McDonald et al. (2012), all green or ethical consumers are in a midpoint between grey and green consumption, and even those who are most convinced have grey aspects in their consumer choices. As a result, they propose three groups of individuals who are neither grey nor green but are locked in a tension between grey and green consumption, and typed according to the strategies employed for greening their lives:

(1) Exceptors

- Are the green consumers that have a more coherent, deep and complex understanding about the central issue – sustainability.
- Are focused in a coincident lifestyle with a personal philosophy of consumption, they are willing to change their consumption patterns, take individual sacrifices and reject many of the tenets of mainstream society, and feel comfortable for their alternative options.
- They assume a position of political activism, don’t believe in a consumer society model based on green capitalism, and want a more person-centred economy.

(2) Translators

- Are the typical green consumers of the 80’s and 90’s, unlikely to be a more representative group.

- Are characterized to be green in some consumer choices and grey in others, not having a holistic and complex knowledge about sustainability.
- Despite not having a political agenda, they try to act according to what they consider correct and are passive consumers in relation to information.

(3) Selectors

- Are consumers motivated by only one single green aspect of their lives on which they focus, but as grey consumers in all other aspects. Therefore, they are not interested in sustainability as a holistic way.

Regarding the Portuguese context, very little research has addressed the study of this phenomenon of green consumption. Finisterra do Paço and Raposo (2010, p. 345) categorize Portuguese consumers into three segments: (1) “the uncommitted” (36%); (2) “the green activists” (36%); and, (3) “the undefined” (29%). Although the some percentage of consumers have a favourable position towards the environment through its friendly buying behaviour, the majority (two-thirds) exhibit little or none sensitivity to this issue. These green activists segment has some common features found in other researches, especially the socio-demographic variables⁹ (age, education, income and occupation):

However, although Portuguese consumers, in general, support policies associated with the environment and are aware of the environmental problems, they usually don't convey their concerns through purchasing environmentally friendly behaviour. Their participation is manifested by individualistic attitudes related more to economic factors (saving energy and water) than a genuine environmental awareness (Finisterra do Paço & Raposo, 2010).

⁹ Individuals between 25 and 34 years old and between 45 and 54 years old; high education levels; working in high qualified jobs (managers, intellectuals, scientists and artists); earning high income; large number of women in the "greener" segment.

3.2.2 Organic food consumption and production

In the last years, the organic food sector has expanded significantly, moving from a minority of environmentally minded concerned consumers to a mainstream market (Seyfang, 2003). According to Smith (2006), the organic food movement started in the 1940's among environmental activists with the purpose to return to land to live a lifestyle alternative to industrial and urban mode. In the 1970's, it started to appear some organic producers' pioneers and a small organic market. However, in 1990's, the large agricultural sector caused a split in the organic sector, pressured by supermarkets and consumers demands. Initially, organic was a reaction against the widespread use of artificial chemicals, and gained bad reputation for poor physical appearance and inconsistent supply (Pearson & Henryks, 2008). From a marketing perspective, within the context of all products, organic is considered a niche, and has its largest presence in food.

It is commonly accepted that the organic food sector is linked with the principles of organic agriculture which apply concerns regarding the food production safety, environment concerns, animal welfare, and social justice issues (Browne et al., 2000). Although organic farming and sustainability production are interconnected (Browne et al., 2000), they are not synonymous (Dinis et al., 2015). According to the literature, there are several typologies regarding organic agriculture practices. In the Norwegian context, and based on previous researches, Storstad and Bjørkhaug (2003) classified organic farmers in two main groups: (1) 'cosmopolitical' organic farmers. These who share the same pioneer's principles and have a "strong ideological orientation" (p. 153); and (2), 'locally oriented' farmers, who want to adapt the conventional farming practice, and whose number has increased in the last years. DuPuis (2000) criticizes this second mercantilist perspective (the 'locally oriented' farmers) in what organic products have become. Considers that the conventionalization of the organic food production is "another form of 'Post-Fordist' capitalism, a form of production in which large-scale 'business-as-usual' capitalist enterprises become more flexible than their earlier mass production equivalents, making them capable of meeting new consumption demands" (p. 287).

In this context, agribusiness enterprises are getting more involved by the profitability of this market niche (Dinis et al., 2015). However, some organic initiatives tend to “change the ecologically and social destructive tendencies of the dominant or mainstream capitalist markets in agriculture”, in other words, working “in and against the market” (Jaffee & Howard, 2010, p. 394).

Although organics and sustainability are closely linked, it does not mean that organic production follow all ethical considerations that are required in sustainable agriculture. According to Browne et al. (2000) the inclusion of social concerns to the existing environmental and animal welfare standards in organic production would ensure that these products accomplish the ethical criteria. In addition, in what concerns to the food ethics factor, McEachern and McClean (2002) point out the importance to support local production, the respect for the animal condition and the country of origin criteria.

In this sense, ethical issues should be an important point of interest of organic food choices (Honkanen et al., 2006). Thus, organic food comes from production that avoids the use of artificial chemical fertilisers and pesticides, hormones, genetically modified organisms; which includes concerns about animal conditions, welfare standards, and striving to improve biological cycles (Codron et al., 2006; Honkanen et al., 2006; Jackson, 2005a; Lockie et al., 2004; Seyfang, 2003; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003). In other words, organic “emphasise a holistic approach that combine quality production with sustainable practices and positive impact on resource conservation, biodiversity and animal welfare” (Dinis et al., 2015, p. 39). In a broader perspective, Smith (2006) referred to the organic vision (p. 440):

“A regime that respect natural cycles, draws upon local and renewable resources, maintains the long-term fertility of soil, manages farm production as a mixed system of mutually interdependent crops and livestock, produces nutritional foods, treats animals humanely and allows them to express their natural behaviours, fosters local and regional food production and distribution, provides farm workers with a good quality of life, and promotes farm biodiversity”.

3.2.3 Profiling organic food consumers

Profiling organic food consumers is a complex task. Based on Lockie et al. (2004) research regarding organically food purchasing in the Australian context, this type of consumers are concerned about political, ecological values (environment, animal rights and country of origin), and natural foods. They are more responsible about their shopping options, and less concerned about sensory and emotional appeal and about convenience. Under these circumstances, what distinguishes organic consumers and occasional organic consumers is the level of commitment in relation to the natural food.

Seyfang (2003) conceptualizes three cultural organic food modes of consumption:

(1) Egalitarians

Consider organic food as a way to return to a small-scale farming system, more sustainable and environmentally friendly. Also, 'egalitarians' consider the social aspects of organic food in a way that supports the local economies and connects consumers and producers.

(2) Hierarchists

Consumers that are willing to pay a premium price for organic food, using it as a "status symbol" (p. 21). Are associated with elite cultures of gastronomy and for that reason organic food eventually enters into mainstream culture.

(3) Individualists

Favour organic food because of their healthy value, nutritional benefits and safety.

In the literature, there are several socio-demographic characteristics that profile and characterize the behaviour of consumers in relation to the option for organic products. As Tsakiridou, Boutsouki, Zotos and Mattas (2008) referred, organic

food attitudes are influenced by age, gender, income, level of education and presence of children in the household.

In the literature results are inconsistent regarding the influence of 'age' on the decision to consume organically. Some studies suggest that young consumers are more likely to demonstrate a positive attitude towards organic food (Finch, 2006; Magnusson et al., 2003), while others indicate that older consumers are more willing to present an environmental and ethical behaviour because of their concern regarding the convenience of food (Lockie et al., 2004; McEachern & McClean, 2002).

Gender is a more consensus variable, suggesting that women tend to be more ethically concerned about purchasing organic produce than man (Browne et al., 2000; McEachern & McClean, 2002; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003; Zander & Hamm, 2010). Furthermore, Lockie et al. (2004) argues that women usually take the responsibility for food provision with their household and look after their children. Thus, they are more concerned regarding the "naturel [ness] of food, political and ecological values and the fairness of paying a premium for environmentally sound food production" (p. 143), demonstrating that they play an important role in determining consumption of organic food within the family.

As well as in the age variable, in the literature, results are quite contradictory regarding income. Tsakiridou et al. (2008) found that income level has a positive correlation with food safety and environmental concerns regarding organic food, because, in general, it is more expensive than non-organic food (Hjelmar, 2011). In contrast, Lockie et al. (2004) found an "indirect (but very minor effect) through both political and ecological values" (p. 142).

In Storstad and Bjørkhaug (2003) research, they found that organic consumers had the highest level of education. As Hjelmar (2011) noted, to be an organic-minded consumer is a hard task because it requires "knowledge which many consumers do not have" (p. 339) and "generally they do not understand the complexities of organic farming practices and food quality" (p. 431). In the same way, Zahaf (2009) stated that organic consumers want to increase their knowledge regarding the source of products and the production practices,

trusting in local farmers, with whom they can get more information about the products. This is one of the reasons why organic products consumers rarely do their shopping in supermarkets because these places do not have enough information about these products (Lockie et al., 2004). Otherwise knowledge is an important factor in explaining organic food choices (Pieniak, Aertsens & Verbeke, 2010), Lockie et al. (2004) found that education had a marginally influence organic food purchasing. However, researching the impact of information in the consumer decision making process, Pieniak et al. (2010) concluded that subjective knowledge¹⁰ was a better motivator and predictor of behaviour than objective knowledge¹¹. This implies that, as Hjelmars' (2011) study has shown, personal reflexion is an important factor in explaining organic food purchases in what regard to ethical minded consumers. In contrast, in this same research, Hjelmars (2011) presents the concept of 'pragmatic organic consumer'. For this type of consumer, ethical and political consideration play a secondary role in relation to their priorities and he referred they "need to be convinced that organic food confer high perceived value" (p. 341). Also, Lee and Yun (2014) point out that consumers' intention to purchase organic food are influenced by utilitarian and hedonic attitudes. These motivations are conditioned by the favourable perceptions of the nutritional content and ecological welfare attributes, as well as their sensory appeal (pleasant) qualities.

Values also provide a good explanation about consumers' behaviour patterns behaviour (Chryssohoidis & Krystallis, 2005; Codron et al., 2006). Regarding to consumer environmental products, Codron et al. (2006) mention that values tend to be mixed: "(1) universal values, such as the protection of the environment; and (2) self-centred values, such as one's own (or one's family's) health, tradition, or pleasure" (p. 293).

Codron et al. (2006) mention that studies have shown that ethical consumers tend to be "motivated by universal values rather than by consumerist or self-centred values" (p. 292). In addition, a comparative analysis on the values shown by consumers of genetically modified food and organically grown food

¹⁰ "Peoples' subjective perceptions of what or how they know about (...) a product based on the own subjective interpretation of what one knows" (Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 582).

¹¹ "The accurate information about the product stored in consumer's long-term memory" (Pieniak et al., 2010, p. 582).

consumers, found that organic consumers demonstrate a great adherence to the value of 'universalism', but a low adherence to the value of 'power' (Dreezens, Martijn, Tenbült, Kok, & De Vries, 2005).

3.2.4 Organic food motivations

Organic and local products have been studied in several countries (Dowd & Burke, 2013), confirming that beyond demographic variables there are several differences regarding consumers values and beliefs (Didier & Lucie, 2008; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Zepeda & Deal, 2009) and suggesting that choosing organics seems to be an entirely rational decision (Hjelmar, 2011; Lockie et al., 2004). From the marketing point of view, the brand 'organic' and what such products represent, suggest a symbolic and intangible dimension (Hall, 2008). The organic food motivations can be classified under two main categories: health and environmental motivations. The first relates to the egoistic dimension, benefiting the individual himself or his family; while the second implies a more altruistic consideration, benefiting society concerns rather than the individual's (Magnusson et al., 2003).

Previous research has shown that health reasons are one of the main reasons to purchase organic food (Dowd & Burke, 2013; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Hall, 2008; Hjelmar, 2011; Lyons, 2009; Tsakiridou et al., 2008), demonstrating that egoistic and hedonistic motives are make for a better predictor than altruistic motives and environmental conscious (Chrysohoidis & Krystallis, 2005; Magnusson et al., 2003). However, this motivation has been losing importance (Honkanen et al., 2006).

On the other hand, an individual decision consumption choice can also express an ethical value by choosing organic food (Zander & Hamm, 2010) taking into account the political, economic, social and environmental effects (Truninger, 2004).

The 'environmental ethic' (Seyfang, 2006) is another frequent reason for purchasing organic products and appeared to be equally important as health

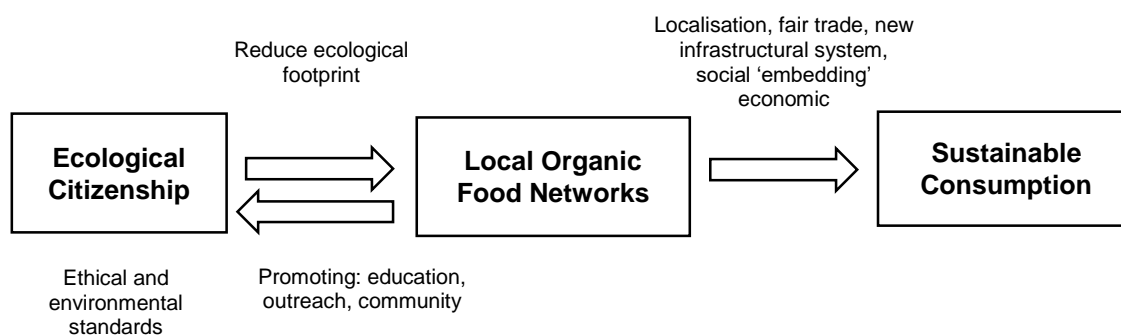
motives (Magnusson et al., 2003). However, the consumers buying behaviour related with environmental considerations is much more abstract than health reasons (Hall, 2008). As Grunert and Juhl (1995) asserts, motivational domains such as universalism, benevolence/welfare, and spirituality/meaning in life are positively associated with environmental attitudes because they reflect collectivistic concerns rather than individualistic interests. Such aspects are focused on enhancement of others, transcendence of selfish interests, and endowing life with meaning. In addition, it may be referred that altruism, which is associated with these three motivational goals, would influence other ecological behaviours such as, for example, recycling (Grunert & Juhl, 1995). In the same vein, it has been found that environmental concerns demonstrate a deep reflection about society and of how a responsible consumer must act (Hjelmar, 2011). Moreover, regarding the influence that social and environmental concerns have on consumer decision-making, studies have shown that consumers are willing to pay a higher price for these green products, suggesting a potential marketplace (Ainscough et al., 2012). Besides, consumers show preference for companies that show concerns for social responsibility, paying fair salaries to local workers, supporting the local community (Ainscough et al., 2012). Under these circumstances, knowledge regarding agriculture practices in protecting the environment and supporting the local community seems to be relevant in obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace, (Ainscough et al., 2012).

The environment argument is associated with environmentally friendly agriculture, a 'production technique', more concurrent with the environment and local ecosystems (Seyfang, 2006). From the production perspective, some farmers are opting for an organic solution as a way to ensure better sustainability regarding the conventional sector and price reduction (Seyfang, 2006). Also, organic means an opposition to the conventional farming system, associated with pollution and degradation (Lyons, 2009), in the way such products are valued because of their naturalness, authenticity and small-scale production (Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003), contributing to a sustainable agriculture practice and a healthy environment (Lyons, 2009). From a more extreme position, organic farming can

also mean livelihoods perspective related to a political ecology and a farming activism (Goodman & Goodman, 2007) .

Another expression of environmental ethics is the 'ecological citizenship' proposed by (Seyfang, 2006) in figure 4.

Figure 4 - Relationships between ecological citizenship, local organic food and sustainable consumption



Based on Seyfang (2006, p. 388).

The concept is based on the argument that by adopting an ecological citizenship guided by social and environmental concerns rather than finance pressures, it will be possible to minimize the ecological footprint. Therefore, an ecological citizenship could be a driving force to achieve the sustainable consumption by purchasing local organic food. Moreover, it is also emphasized the importance of LFN in promoting an ecological citizenship.

Literature has shown that consumers are also concerned about reducing 'food miles' (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009), that is, the distance food travels between the place where it is produced and where it is consumed (Seyfang, 2006), avoiding pollution in transportation and cutting the environmental impact around the world. This means that the products should be consumed quite near to the point where they are produced (Honkanen et al., 2006).

Consequently, this point leads us to another concept – 'localism'. Recently, there is a new association with organic food in consumers' mind between organic food and locally produced food (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009). Local food production refers to food that is "produced, retailed and consumed in a specific area" (Autio et al., 2013, p. 565), representing concerns and support by rural policy objectives such as local employment, regional economies, cultural heritage, small-scale and

artisan production. Localism is also associated with the concept of Community Support Agriculture (CSA), as a mechanism for community-building (Seyfang, 2006), where “the money goes to the farmers” (p. 566). In this way, this perspective focuses attention on social issues and the problems of small producers (Autio et al., 2013), putting in practice social cohesion, expressing egalitarian and alternative values about society and the environment, rather than economic priorities (Seyfang, 2003, 2006).

Localism can also be understood from a political perspective, in the sense that it can express an alternative, in order to reduce further social and environmental border (Smith, 2006). In the same vein, (Goodman & Goodman, 2007) referred to a ‘reflexive localism’ where local initiatives are “negotiated democratically in an open local politics” drawing attention to the “social relations and the politics of power” (p. 29). Therefore, local food consumption can also mean a counter-cultural movement (Seyfang, 2003).

Another important issue also linked with organic consumption is fair trade. Fair trade can be defined as “trading arrangements which guarantee to pay farmers a better price for their produce than the market normally provide” (Seyfang, 2003, p. 14). This is an alternative trading mechanism to support small and marginal producers (Seyfang, 2003) based on the solidarity, is linked to the universal values of consumers regarding the well-being of workers and farmers, mainly in developed countries (Didier & Lucie, 2008).

According to Browne et al. (2000), fair trade and organic movement are moving closer together and the fair trade premium has been the justification for converting some conventional farms into organic ones. However, these authors realised that organic consumers’ motivations are based on health and environment criteria rather than on workers’ welfare. Despite this, the inclusion of social criteria seems to be “an ethical bonus for the organic movement and its consumers” (p. 87). As suggested by Seyfang (2003), if it will be taken into account that a certain organic product is produced according to defined standards, especially working conditions and environmental concerns, then it is up to the concept of “ethical trade”.

An essential factor in the food sector that is suggested in the literature refers to trust and confidence. Regarding the Danish context, Hjelmar (2011) found that consumers value the labelled and certified products, relying on their quality and origin because they contains information to help them to make the right decision. Moreover, Zahaf (2009) found that Canadian organic consumers show a great confidence in the local producers, with whom they also seek to obtain information about these products. But in reality, there are some scepticism about the organic label products in some countries (Hjelmar, 2011). This is the case of the Portuguese consumers who distrust control mechanisms and certification (Truninger, 2004). Therefore they use additional criteria for selecting organic food for their daily consumption, valuing nonhuman aspects in food: the presence or absence of bugs, the appearance not polished or the presence of caterpillars (Truninger, 2013).

Another interesting aspect in the organic context identified in Lyons's (2009) research was that many of the participants grew their own organic food - self-sufficiency - spending a considerable and pleasant time in this activity. As Lyons concluded, this represents a consumption policy dimension that can be understood as an expression of "opposition to the fast-food lifestyle", "consumerism and unhealthy diets" (p. 160).

As referred above, reflexive consumers play an important role in organic food movement paying attention to the surrounding network, from production, media, experts, health considerations, personal network of friends and family (DuPuis, 2000). The reflexive behaviour consumption is considered a vital aspect in forming modern identities in the way that through a rationalization process, consumers try to change attitudes such that suits to their new behaviour (Hjelmar, 2011). This type of change, sometimes radical, may involve the construction of a new personal identity project, stressing the path of each individual (Truninger, 2004).

This formation of new identities is closely linked to the adoption of new lifestyles. Essoussi and Zahaf (2009) found that most Canadian organics consumers were vegetarians. As stated by this author, a new lifestyle involves several motivational elements such as ethical convictions, spiritualism and naturalism. Truninger

(2004) also found that in the Portuguese context these consumers are involved in a healthy lifestyle, by practicing sports, yoga or meditation, and, in their everyday lives, they consolidate these sustainable practices with environmental protection.

This leads us to deduce that the preference for organic products is also related to high quality and authenticity (freshness, localism and seasonality) (Hjelmar, 2011). These sensory attributes present in the organic products were highlighted in several studies: perceived quality and taste (Hjelmar, 2011; McEachern & McClean, 2002), the importance of high standards of production (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009) and the origin and the naturalness of food (Hjelmar, 2011; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003). According to these criteria, results confirm that political/ethically minded consumers consider that organic products are better than the conventional products.

3.2.5 Barriers to organic consumption

In the literature there are several factors that limit organic food choice and influence the level of permeability and commitment. One of the most common mentioned reasons is the lack of information available (Codron et al., 2006; Zepeda & Deal, 2009), so consumers need to be confronted with more information in order to increase their knowledge about organic products (Pieniak et al., 2010).

However, although organic products are considered better for the environment and for the individual, one of the most important obstacles to sustainable consumption is the price. The final price of local organic products externalises social and environmental costs, their benefits and the production process, resulting that organic produce is much more expensive than conventional grown food (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Seyfang, 2006). Although the final price act as one of the most important barriers (Buder, Feldmann, & Hamm, 2014; Didier & Lucie, 2008; Zepeda & Deal, 2009), influencing negatively consumers perception attitudes (Lee & Yun, 2014), the increase of availability of organic food will encourage its consumption because of its price would decrease (Finch, 2006).

Accordingly, some consumers have the knowledge that organic food translate an ethical meaning so they are willing to pay an extra price for those products (Browne et al., 2000; Zander & Hamm, 2010).

However, even if limited by financial constraints (Tsakiridou et al., 2008), others consumers express preference for organic products (Hjelmar, 2011). Pearson and Henryks (2008) presented some reasons why only a minority of consumers prefer these products. The reasons are related to the substantially high price compared to conventional products and the seasonality they have in the market. For that reason, most consumers are occasional and only a small percentage exclusively purchase organic products. Likewise, seasonality works also as an obstacle to organic purchasing (Buder et al., 2014), and that explain why non organic consumers tend to be more 'occasional' during the summer because products are less expensive and are more available than during the winter (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009). In the same way, weak distribution was found to be the main factor that obstructs organic purchasing (Chrysohoidis & Krystallis, 2005). This is more evident in the countryside because these consumers cannot easily find organic products in their local supermarkets (Hjelmar, 2011).

In a recent study in the Norwegian context, Vittersø and Tangeland (2015) found that the perception of consumers in relation to organic products has developed negatively due to lack of trust in the labels and product quality.

The social embeddedness and family decision tend to limit the individual (pragmatic) consumer purchasing food according to the household preferences. Hjelmar (2011) found that in the Danish organic context, purchasing is not only influenced by an individual decision but also by the family dynamic. Correspondingly, convenience was also considered an important obstacle (Lockie et al., 2004). As Hjelmar (2011) referred, because most consumers tend to be pragmatic, if the supermarket does not have a wide selection of organic food, many consumers will end up buying non-organic food.

3.2.6 The Portuguese organic context

Whereas the majority of the studies regarding organic food have been conducted in European countries¹², United States and Australia, very little is known about the motivations and the meaning that the Portuguese consumers and literature is almost inexistent (Martinho, 2014).

Nevertheless, data confirm an emerging consumption of organic products in Portugal, mainly in urban area such Lisbon and Oporto (Costa, Sottomayor, & Ribeiro, 2005), the organic farming sector in Portugal is still very small, representing a minor proportion of the total agricultural area (Costa et al., 2005; Martinho, 2014; Rosa, Mili, & Briz, 2009).

Studying the potential of border regions of Portugal, Baptista, Tibério and Cristóvão (2010) concluded that these regions are well positioned for organic production because of the ancestral knowledge of these people, as well as the genetic heritage and local biodiversity of these territories. These production units may stand out for its particular nature and rarity of their products.

Regarding the domestic organic supply, it is mainly from extensive farms and is not sufficient to satisfy demand which is fulfilled by imports from other European countries, mostly France and Spain (Rosa et al., 2009). Considering that production units are small, diversified, producing in small quantities, and considering the high costs of distribution and certifications, most farmers do not opt by product certification (Baptista et al., 2010).

Costa et al. (2005) presented some limitations regarding the organic sector in Portugal:

- Consumers' lack of information about organic products;
- Low per capita income of the Portuguese population;
- Long distance between farms and the main organic outlets;
- Absence of organic markets and distribution channels.

In an attempt to profile organic farmers, Dinis et al. (2015) identified the factors that go beyond the limits imposed by certifications, followed some criteria (such

¹² Mainly in United Kingdom, Germany and Scandinavia.

as the number of the crops, presence of livestock, own seed production, and the involvement in local markets) realised that 60% of the certified organic farmers could be considered “deep organic” (p. 44). Also, they found that “farmers managed by women and early entrants, as well as family farms, tend to be less conventionalised” (p. 44).

The consumption of organic products is mainly concentrated in major urban centres. According to Costa et al. (2005), the upper middle class are urban consumers, driven by health interests. In their study, Costa et al. (2005) also noted a general predisposition of the Portuguese consumers to adhere to organic products.

Another characteristic highlighted by Rosa et al. (2009) common in Portuguese consumers is their considerable lack of general knowledge about organic products (60% of participants have never even heard about this type of product). With regard to the motivations of consumers of organic products, they are fundamentally focused on individual interest: health benefits, taste, nutritional value, absence of preservatives and environmental conscious. Moreover, found that consumers with more knowledge about organic products are those who are more motivated by health benefits and therefore are willing to pay for these products.

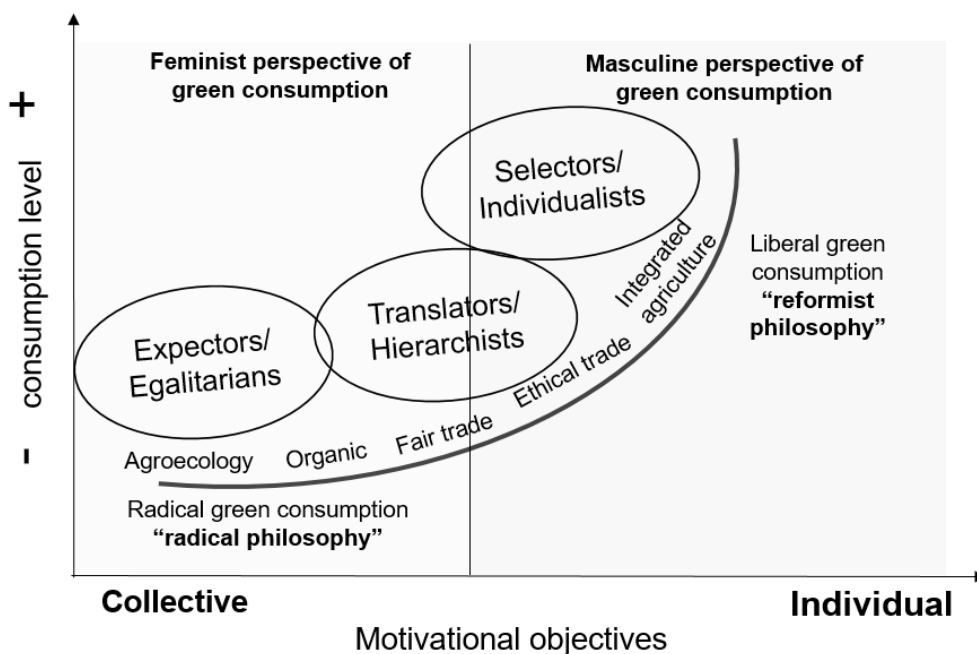
Truninger (2013) found that organic food makes these consumers feel connected to the context where the products were produced and displayed, thereby operating a sense of belonging to the community. Other narratives identified nostalgic food memories. That is, experiences that lead consumers to images of rural lifestyle, the past experiences in the field, sometimes romanticized (Domingos, 2014).

3.2.7 In summary

This chapter characterizes ethical consumers, in particular consumers of organic products, their profiles, their motivations, obstacles and contexts. As a synthesis

of what was explained above, the following figure summarizes the key perspectives and positions in relation to green consumer behaviour.

Figure 5 - Main perspectives and positions in relation to green consumption



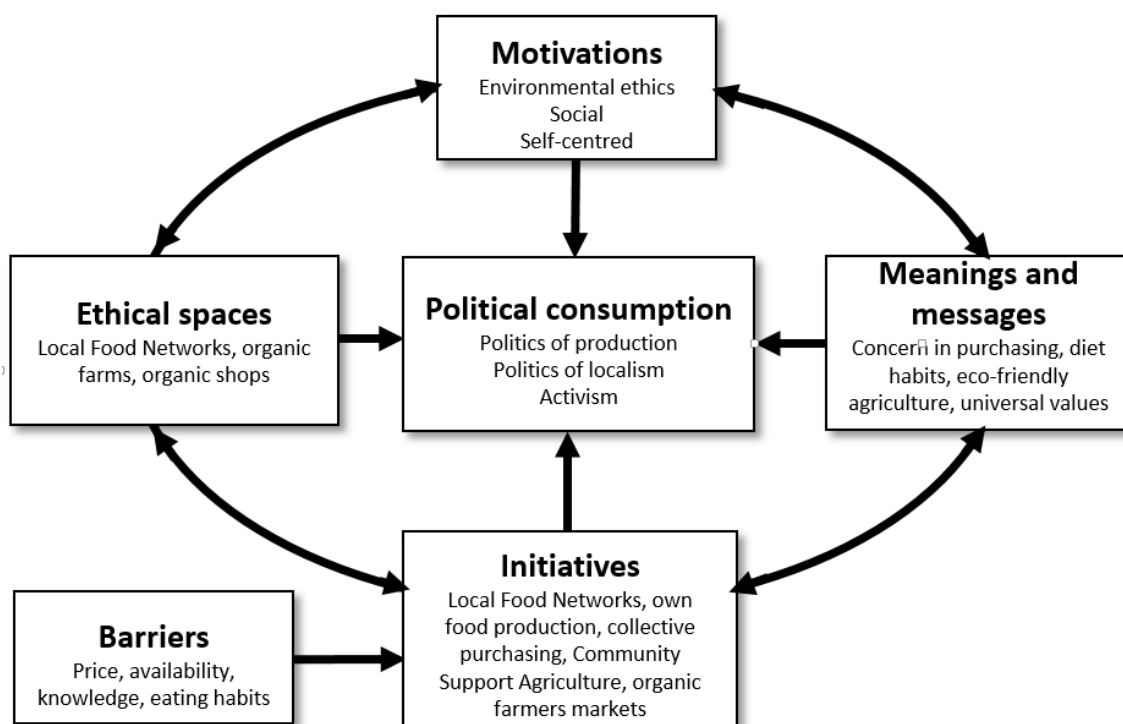
Based on: Codron et al., 2006; Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011; McDonald et al., 2012; Meriläinen, Moisander, & Pesonen, 2000; Moisander, 2007; Seyfang, 2003).

The literature suggests that the commonly mentioned reasons that consumers purchase organic products are: the perceived effects of organic products on the environment, sustainability, taste, prestige, support the local farmers, lifestyle, health and nutritional content, quality and product attributes (Baker, Thompson, Engelkensen & Huntley, 2006; Hall, 2008; Pearson & Henryks, 2008). Some consumers would prefer organic products based on health criteria, because of their own medical problems; or some other may purchase organic food in a way to “support a food system that is more sustainable in its impact on the natural environment” (Pearson & Henryks, 2008, p. 99), in a more abstract reasons (Hall, 2008). According to the literature (Clarke, Cloke, Barnett & Malpass, 2008) organic food, and what is behind the corporate and environmental responsibility farming, privilege the “regional-scale business which act as a new value chains by seeking to incorporate and practice the values of environmental sustainability” (p. 221). However, the social and environmental concerns about consumer decision making for green food and household products remain unchanged (Ainscough et al., 2012).

3.3 Research findings and discussion

Content analysis and thematic analysis made possible to understand the main motivations of loyal consumers of organic products within the Portuguese context, as well as to identify the principal barriers to the consumption of products and the alternatives found. The nature of this research is exploratory and the essential subjects extracted from the data analysis process converge to a hard discourse regarding political consumption¹³. Figure 6 shows a conceptual model which will be detailed below, framed by ethical consumption as the main theoretical framework.

Figure 6 - Organic consumers' conceptual model



3.3.1 Organic consumer motivations

In this research, one tried to understand the main motivations that justify, in this group of consumers, the option for organic products. Several motivations have been gathered in four main categories: environmental, social, activism and political arguments, and self-centred interests.

¹³ The central part of the conceptual model concerns consumption from the political perspective will be addressed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

3.3.1.1 Environmental Ethics

In this research, one tried to understand the main motivations that justify, in this group of consumers, the option for organic products. Several motivations have been gathered in three main categories: environmental, social and self-centred interests.

In these cases, the option for the organic later evolved a more developed criteria related to environmental and social concerns. There is in fact an environmental and/or social background that truly influences the search for organic products. As referred by Tiago, organic food “was a bridge to other things”. The texts below, from Marco, evidence that evolution.

This awareness did not appear in just one day. There was a process... based on information, right? We are becoming aware, opening our mind and realizing what we are doing in terms of ecosystems, of environmental and social subjects... There is another approach which is... if I am coherent, I will change my food and I will feel better. I feel much better with my diet today... (Marco).

In this research, the most relevant aspect for organic consumption is environmental concerns. Organic consumption was a consequence of a critical and reflective process. Several participants stated that their environmental concerns already existed long before their preference by organic products. This corresponds to the notion of the immediate impact of agriculture on the environment.

To these participants environmental criteria are positioned in a priority level that is higher to any other else, particularly the health ones. This motivates them to produce their own food and purchase only if there is no other possibility. Even the fact of choosing to buy organic products it is in her opinion a very restrictive criterion, including the phase of production, packing and distribution.

These are not health questions! Of course one must have health concerns when consuming a product that is industrially produced with many chemicals and that worries worry! But it is not my greatest concern... It is the impact that my consumption leaves on the soil, in the air, the carbon emissions, large scale agriculture productions, the dehumanization of all this, because the large companies make everything, starting with

the almost slavery of people that work there. That is my great motivation for consuming local organic and producing as much as possible. (Mariana)

Another aspect that is evidenced, also related to environmental concerns, is eco-friendly agriculture. A common aspect was the frequent criticism to conventional agriculture as responsible for great part of pollution and destruction of natural ecosystems. João, who practices a biodynamic agriculture, distances himself from conventional agriculture. The text below evidences this argument.

Well, what I think is that there is an agriculture that produces products that are against life. Industrial agriculture produces dead products... And the organic agriculture system stresses out the living forces, without antibiotics or pressures, and everything is focused to support life. For me, this is very important and I want to support this type of agriculture. I consider this agriculture as belonging to this century and conventional agriculture as belonging to the last century. This is the future... (João)

Some of these consumers attribute a high level of trust to producers who practice an artisanal, home and local agriculture “to maintaining nature as it is” and “eating what it is around nature”. They also consider artisanal, home agriculture the “most organic”. These consumers try to produce these products themselves. To them, the organic product concept must be based on agro-ecology. The text below evidences the dimensions associated to agro-ecology (environmental justice and social justice), according to Mara’s perspective.

For me, it is still a philosophy and I am very careful when I talk about organic in specifying what type of organic I am referring to. Because there is not only one organic but several! Mine is the initial one, the one that has to do with social and environmental justice, to keep the scale small, “small is beautiful”... So, it is not only related to eliminating pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. It is has to do with an agro-ecologic approach... I may say that my vision of organic is agro-ecology. (Mara)

Participants evidenced a preference for products produced and consumed locally, with the objective of reducing the impact of the transport of products in the environment (food miles). Jorge, CSA local promoter, stresses out the relation of local products with environmental concerns.

For me, the first motivation is environmental concern and respect for the Earth. Of course health is part of this but I do not consider only the question of personal health. This is why I do not like to buy organic products that come from the other side of the Earth, because

this does not respect the environment. Even if I see that the products are good! So, I insist on buying organic products that are local, that are produced nearby and respect the environment. (Jorge)

These consumers evidence a high level of environmental concerns, the awareness that when consuming organic products they are supporting several environmental friendly agricultural techniques. This evidence is consistent with other studies (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Honkanen, Verplanken & Olsen, 2006; Lockie, Lyons, Lawrence & Grice, 2004; Lyons, 2009; Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Lars, & Sjødén, 2003; Tsakiridou, Boutsouki, Zotos & Mattas, 2008), in which the ecological values have a positive influence in relation to organic products purchasing.

It was also found that these participants prefer to support environmentally friendly agriculture (traditional agriculture, biodynamic, agroecology, agroforestry) and distance themselves from these organic products that came from organic farming 'conventionalization' (De Wit & Verhoog, 2007). According to these authors, organic agriculture in the context of Nederland has become the slight modified version of modern conventional agriculture: intensification, large scale, machinery, certification process and monoculture. That is, the conventionalization of organic agriculture collides with basic principles: ecology, health, care and fairness.

3.3.1.2 Social concerns

Participants pointed out that their preference for local organic products is also motivated by social and economic reasons. However, environmental concern cannot be separated from social awareness because consumers expressed interest in knowing the story behind the product. Therefore, the preference for local products is also related with the intention of supporting economically the local community, particularly farmers that produce organically – CSA. That is, the option of organic and local has an ecological basis but also a human and social dimension.

When I found out the CSA system, I found something that fits perfectly what I think: It is essential to recreate localism and solidarity partnership between consumer and producer. Obviously, these solidarity partnerships cannot only be made at local level. They can be done at distance but it is more complicated. It is much easier at local level. For this reason and for environmental and social reasons, I think that we should give absolute priority to local products. (Jorge)

What the literature seems to suggest is that there is an attempt to differentiate what is organic and local (Zepeda & Deal, 2009). However, as the results of this research also suggest, consumers who are concerned to give priority to buy organic products tend to buy locally because of the trust established with the producer or seller, giving less importance to certified organic products (Dowd & Burke, 2013). In that sense, organic products and local food purchasing are not (yet) considered mainstream (Autio et al., 2013).

The results of this research demonstrate that these participants are very active and aware of their role as consumers, recognizing the consumption of organic products as a resilience act towards the corporations that dominate the agricultural and industrial systems, that is to say, in a political perspective. They therefore want to preserve the environment through organic consumption, by influencing food habits of other people. With this motivation, they aim at a greater autonomy and sovereignty towards food. With this result, the thesis of Seyfang (2006) is supported: the ecological citizenship is a driven force for alternative sustainable consumption through the consumption of organic products. Furthermore, the concept of 'reflexive localism' (DuPuis & Goodman, 2005; Goodman & Goodman, 2007) is reinforced, considering the local, social and political relations of power.

Participants stressed out the option of being vegetarian by reasons of animal well-being. One may therefore conclude that people who identify themselves as 'green consumers' will more likely purchase organic food (Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010). These consumers prefer to consume organic products near the location of their production. As referred by Connolly and Prothero (2003), "sustainable production and consumption are essentially two sides of the same coin" (p. 277). This is not merely the result of environmental concerns but also to support farmers who use

these environmental friendly techniques and therefore contribute to the development of local economy, within a social perspective.

3.3.1.3 Self-centred interests

To most organic products consumers, the option is mainly based on environmental and social aspects. Nevertheless, to a small number of consumers, the health and nutritional benefits provided by organic products are the main factor that makes them consume organic.

An interesting aspect perceived in the interviews was the connection between organic products and enjoyment and pleasurable aspects of life. To many of the participants, organic products appeal to sensory questions, being very different from conventional products for their higher quality. When sold daily, they do not lose their quality as rapidly as conventional products. For these participants, once started to consume organic products, they probably will not change. Furthermore, participants pointed out that they value the simplicity of food, that is, as basic, simple and fresh as possible. To some, eating organic food is similar to “eating ancient food”, triggering them a sense of nostalgia. Another category included in the self-centred interests are well-being motivations, in the sense of the individual looking for a balance with the environment in which they are inserted, looking for a simpler and more natural lifestyle. For this reason, Joana values the organic products obtained locally from home agriculture, enabling her to be in harmony with herself.

I think that our body is adapted to the place we live in and therefore what is produced in that location is in harmony with the individual, with things that I believe in. It is not a scientific fact but to me it makes sense the connection that you have to the earth to the environment around you. It is not going far, not spending too many resources in transports and purchasing products that are produced in your environment, because sometimes we do not value what we have near and go get it far. (Joana)

Besides sensory issues, emotional and affective aspects that the participants experience when tasting organic food were the most referred in the interviews. They describes the moments in which they consume organic food as family and

pleasure moments, appreciating the freshness of the products, the nostalgia and the memories that they bring them. In this regard, participants present arguments related to the natural and sensorial aspects of food and to the emotional experiences that the moment of a meal involves (Autio et al., 2013; Chrysohoidis & Krystallis, 2005; Delind, 2006; Lockie et al., 2004).

In the same way, Júlia talks with proud about the transformation that occurred in her life, caused by the need to produce her own products using artisanal methods. In her case, the fact of moving to the countryside, of producing and cultivating her own products was the answer to the balance that she was looking for in her life.

It was starting to realize that there are alternatives in the countryside, that it is something that makes me feel good, where I like to be... And I was also tired of the city stress, of schedules and not having free time... working to other people. I always had a garden at home and I noticed that when I arrived home it was gardening that gave most pleasure. I was stressed and tired and after half an hour dealing with herbs I felt great. And I thought "maybe it is time to make a change!" Search something more natural, pure... Eat what we make! Maybe not big in size, maybe small carrots, but real carrots, right? They are the best thing in the world: "my carrots!" And I know how they are produced... We are trying to close the system! (Júlia)

In these cases, organic products served as a facilitator to transform consumers' lives and contribute to the formation of a new identity (Connolly & Prothero, 2003). In this way, the results of this investigation contradict Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Lars, and Sjöden's (2003) proposition that health concerns (related to egoistic motives) can be a better predictor for choosing organic products than concern for the environment. The results of this research stand out altruistic considerations rather than personal interests, confirming the results in which health motivations are losing importance (Hjelmar, 2011; Honkanen et al., 2006; Lyons, 2009; Magnusson et al., 2003; Pieniak et al., 2010).

3.3.2 Obstacles, alternatives and initiatives

In this research two categories of constraints to organic consumption are evidenced: (1) market constraints, such as price and local availability; and (2) social constraints, related to food habits (vegetarianism).

It was clear the recognition by most participants that organic products are more expensive than conventional ones. They admit that they have to make a financial effort and, in some cases, this is a constraint to be 100% organic food consumers. However, this effort is exceeded by a moral reward provided by organic consumption as well as by the fact of believing that they are having a positive social and environmental behaviour. Owing to the cost factor, some consumers need to be more organized and reasonable when planning their purchases, or consider the possibility of producing more.

In the interviews it was clear that these individuals, when purchasing a product more expensive than another one (conventional), are supporting a more ancient agriculture, environment friendly and a more rigorous production process. They value this work and help producers have better life conditions.

There is a very important aspect. As a consumer, I am aware that I have to pay more... But I think that the cost difference is not too significant [considering the technical specification of organic and conventional products]. The cost difference is justified by the appreciation that I, as a consumer, have for those who work with organic products and for my wish that they receive a fair payment and that they provide fair conditions to those who work with them. And for this, it is necessary to pay more! (Marco)

These organic products consumers recognize the difficulty of being a consumer of this type of products within the Portuguese context, owing to the high prices and the limited number of places where they can be bought, particularly in the rural areas. These barriers are consistent with other research (Buder et al., 2014; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Finch, 2006; Magnusson et al., 2003; Seyfang, 2006), in which price is identified as being a clear barrier. However, also referred in this research but not mentioned in the literature of reference are the social and internal barriers that these consumers have to deal with in the Portuguese context. In spite of the barriers and difficulties that these consumers have to deal with, they continue purchasing or decide to produce organic products to reach

their social and environmental goals (Ainscough, DeCarlo & Trocchia, 2012), being their actions consistent with their discourse. In fact, consumption constraints such as price, locations and availability do not prevent organic products consumption. On the contrary, participants are encouraged to find alternatives (collectively or individually), being the more relevant the creation of local exchange spots and own food production. Monica's example is significant. Monica is an urban consumer who experiences the financial effort of consuming organic products. She therefore looks for alternatives (promoting exchange networks, associating for the maintenance of localism and local social currency) to get products at affordable prices.

It depends [the effort of buying organic owing to the prices]. My professional life is not very stable and last year I had less work and less income. So, I was not willing to spend more. I do not give up. If I need something but I cannot afford it, I feel I can create conditions to have access to these products or produce my own products so that I can take part in the exchange network. But in general I do not regret spending a little more money in the products since I know their quality is completely different, the taste is different... (Monica)

Mariana is a consumer of organic products with a very clear idea of the effect of her actions and therefore she permanently questions her consumption habits. As the choice for conventional products is not even an option, its reflection including concerns about the production, packaging and distribution. However, even before deciding what organic product to buy, her initial criteria is to produce. Only afterwards she thinks about local, environment and price. Within this criteria hierarchy, she always buys "as least as possible". The text below indicates the criteria adopted as a result of market constraints and at the same time proves to be an extremely reflexive consumer trying to spread its organic consumption to other areas than food.

I am very critical about what I consume. Of course I always read labels... when I look at something, I see the package. For now, I check if it is organic and even if it is organic, I try to see if it is Portuguese since it is often imported. A criterion is to be rational! Local if possible. But the things I buy are the things I do not produce. And I do not produce them because the soil here is not good for their cultivation. Otherwise I would find them in another local producer. Among organic products, the nearest as possible, in order to have the least environmental impact... Of course price is a constraint, right? And I try to choose

at the most affordable prices, naturally. I try to buy the minimum possible and I always think if I really need that product. When we talk about organic we are not just talking about food. We are talking about everything: cleaning products, which represent a huge difficulty, even more than food. When I talk about organic I cannot limit to talk about food. It covers everything! (...) These are the difficulties that I find... (Mariana)

However, these options constitute a way of reaction considering the market model instituted and to get free from supermarket dependency. One may conclude that ecology has a main role and that these consumers are extremely thoughtful in what concerns their options, being in general resistant to over consumption. This perspective of producing, trading and consuming locally is consistent with Winter's (2003) approach regarding 'localism', which includes a community ethics, where consumers express concern about the environment, agricultural and food sustainability. According to Seyfang's (2006) opinion, this alternative model of consumption acts as a mechanism for cohesion and community construction, bring sustainability to rural livelihoods and enabling the expression of values about society, environment and economy. Therefore, when preferring organic products in a local basis this option constitutes an opportunity of decentralization of ownership and power (Delind, 2006), expressing a localist politics and consumption resistance, based on trust and ecological awareness (Clarke, Cloke, Barnett & Malpass, 2008; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Seyfang, 2006).

3.3.3 The ethical spaces

In this research, consumers were also questioned about the places where they usually purchase their organic products. Moraes et al. (2012) define these sites as 'ethical spaces', as contexts that guide individual members to more consistent and greener behaviours, which emphasize the affinity of the relationship members, facilitating environmentally friendlier modes of consumption. These spaces, are inscribed by a given ethic and emphasize the importance of the group and the community through the relations of production and consumption.

Most part of the organic products consumed are produced according to strict environmental criteria by the participants themselves. Also, other motivations are

mentioned such as the willing to be as self-sufficient as possible, or supporting those who produce according to the same ethical criteria. Likewise, their discourse shows an aggressiveness against large surfaces. For these reasons, Lia considers very important to produce their own food and she talks with proud about them as source of well-being, of income and of health food.

The best of the best are the products from my garden. It is something that I am proud of... Each tomato is different on the table: "This variety is so tasteful!" I am very interested on this food. It is an important part of my day, of my life. Some of the things I eat are not easy to cook. It may take some time. The broad beans that I cook... I prepare them the evening before, when I am relaxed at home... This is very important. It is not just about the moment of eating but the moment of preparing food... and cultivating food. As I said in the beginning, I do not need a lot of money but we all need to have an income source, a source for saving money and a source of happiness, of personal balance! It is my place... My sacred place! I go to my garden to feel good! 200 meters from my house to my garden and it is impressive how the world gets out of my shoulders. Get out of the concrete and go to middle of the woods. I spend my day waiting for this moment! "Thank you! I am very happy for being here!" (Lia)

Another favourite place of organic consumers is the specialty store, mainly among urban consumers. Some consumers only go there to purchase what they are not able to produce. Some of them mentioned that they go to these places in a "religious" way. The hereinafter text of Matilde's case evidences this feeling towards this type of store.

I am not a religious person but it was just like if I were [laughs]. Going to church was not exactly going to church but it gave me the same feeling... This was a different phase for me! It was like the catholic people going to church on Sunday... To feel well, being in a community with people that feel the same way and respect the Planet where we live in. Do you understand? Sharing the same view with other people... (Matilde)

In the interviews, several other 'ethical spaces' were mentioned in which these participants try to know who the producer is in order to have a certain connection with the origin of the product. Consumers go to these spaces to get organic products but not in an exclusive way, since in many places of the country the access to organic products still has constraints. Therefore, besides the existence of a majority that cultivates their own products or purchase them in organic stores, this group of consumers try to attend community gardens, CSA groups, local

farmers (box schemes), local organic food network, and in some cases, harvesting directly from nature. Monica is a consumer who, within the urban context of Porto, is forced to modify her options to obtain organic products.

Yes... I get my products from community farms in Porto. For example, this evening for dinner I ate a salad from one farm here in Porto. It is not mandatorily organic but it is more enlarged concept of organic, of not using pesticides. So, products come from community farms, where several people are currently working. Most of the things, salads for example come from there. Spring is coming, right? And it is great to be able to eat what we planted here. AMEP [an AMLF local group] was a great source of food that is not active at this moment. There is a small market on Saturdays, where several products are sold, like bread, vegetables... I go there on Saturdays and buy mushrooms and olives, for example... (Monica)

Raul is a more extreme case in terms of wanting to feel nature directly from the product, for the freshness, without influences or other intervenient. For this reason, he prefers harvesting directly from nature.

I would say 80% to 90% [the quantity of organic products consumed]. More or less. I mean, they are not all from here. We do not have a lot of production! We eat many wild herbs, a large quantity in fact! We also eat nettles and other things. I believe they are a good option, fresh, organic, they are not difficult to get... It is about going along with Nature! (Raul)

Besides own food cultivation, it was also mentioned the growing tendency to obtain organic products through LFN, mainly among producers and consumers ('prosumers') who live in areas with low organic options. Daniel is focused on food self-sufficiency that this kind of networks provide, without money involve. But in his case, exchanges are sporadic and without planning. In what concerns Lia, from all options available, exchange market is the one that most deserves her trust. The network in Alentejo is perfectly organized.

I think that it has a huge potential! I do not need to produce everything, after joining an exchange market. Even that gives origin to self-sufficiency, to a close circuit, outside the society structure already created. (Daniel)

I was going to talk about something else...About the trust I have in all the organic chain and the fact that I have priorities: first, I like to have a network in which I can move, in which people have everything... The "Cooperative Network", where we all produce things

and get together in several moments of the year to buy and exchange. This is my greatest trust. (Lia)

Participants were also asked if they usually buy organic products available in large supermarkets. None of them referred this as first option. In fact, some of them admitted going to large supermarkets, not very often though. They refer to organic products sold in these spaces as “poor” that are “in a corner, yellow and getting rotten”.

Another approach concerns the large supermarkets is what they represents. In general, the perception is negative. Some still have to go to large surfaces since they are not as self-sufficient as they would like. Others, do not even consider this option. To this strict consumer of organic products, large supermarkets have a strong political connection since they are a symbol of economical monopoly. In Sofia's case, although she buys some organic products in medium size surfaces, she admits that she does not relate with those spaces nor with what they represent. Sofia's text evidences how she feels: she does not identifies herself with that “encouragement to consumption” and how they deal with producers.

Why won't I go to large supermarkets? Because I do not like the environment, the noise, all those people, the colours... That consumes all my energy. I do not have patience and I do not like that kind of transaction. Of course I also go to supermarkets. I do not want to fool anybody. I go to Pingo Doce and I buy many products there. (...) For example, milk, organic milk, I buy it there. And yet I do not relate with large supermarkets I do not like the space, I do not like the stimulation, I do not like the confusion caused by the huge amount of stuff and I do not like the way they function. Even the way they deal with suppliers, how they make pressure, payment terms... They like to 'crush' the supplier and I do not like that. (Sofia)

To Mara, the option of purchasing organic products in large surfaces is out of question. Once again, the reasons mentioned are the capitalist orientation and lack of ethics of this kind of surfaces.

I do not go there because of the prices... Products often cost twice. When small supermarkets become medium or large, it is a model that I do not support. I do not believe in massification models. I prefer the decentralization of food and its replacement, even in the cities! I do not want to support chain models, mass consumption, foreign supermarkets...And national supermarkets pay taxes abroad like Jerónimo Martins. This

is a huge lack of ethics! They are not even supporting their own country! I cannot respect those people! (Mara)

However, the most mentioned space is related to the place where they grow their food. This practice was mentioned as one of the most reactive and it is motivated by several reasons: the willing to be self-sufficient from the food point of view; to reach a certain independence in relation to the usual market channels; the fact that the adopted agricultural techniques do not damage the environment (environmentalism in agriculture); and naturally the low offer of places and products in Portugal.

Another option found is the organisation of a LFN. In these networks the integration between place, livelihood and local development is established, creating what is designated as 'new economic spaces' (Goodman & Goodman, 2007). These authors evidence a new tendency – 'post-organic movement', based on local systems of food, avoiding products derived from a more harmful agriculture from the sustainability point of view (Goodman & Goodman, 2007). Furthermore, some consumers are aware that many organic products that are sold in the large surfaces do not satisfy the requirements in terms of quality, price and ethics. They therefore do not identify themselves with that way of acting. However, the option of buying organic products in large supermarkets is also considered. In an attempt to act reasonably, some consumers purchase in small or medium supermarkets, trying to know the origin of organic products often avoid large surfaces not only for this kind of products but for general consumption. However, they do not feel represented by those large areas. This fact is often mentioned in literature. Autio et al. (2013), for example, refer that Finish consumers are tired of the organic choices available in supermarkets; Johnston, Szabo and Rodney (2011) point out that Canadian consumers prefer to buy in local business than regular supermarkets; or Essoussi and Zahaf (2009), also in the Canadian context, referring to the lack of information about the products or the over-packaging of supermarket products.

The discourse of these consumers includes a very strong political connotation, expressed towards an economic and socio-political dominant system that it can be identified with capitalism, for its lack of ethics, labor conditions and producers

exploration. This behaviour is consistent with Horton's statement (2003, p. 68) when he refers that "shopping in a supermarket is a breach of green cultural codes", passing the thought that consumers of this sample do not relate with the more commercial models of organic products transaction and that are willing to find other options. For most of these consumers buying in large supermarkets is not considered.

3.3.4 Meanings and messages

This section discuss the meanings that organic consumption represent for these consumers. From the analysis of the data it is highlighted the concern in consume organic as much as possible and spread this habit to others; stand universal and social justice values; that consumption of organic products is closely associated with diet habits, particularly vegetarianism, and with the barriers, dilemmas and difficulties involved; finally, a spiritual and philosophical dimension around organic products.

An aspect frequently referred by the participants was the great concern in choosing organic and influence others. Participants consider very important to control the food source, purchasing less manipulated, pure, simple products. Also, the importance of organic products in their lives was often referred. Some consumers admitted "being increasingly willing to consume organic". Others referred that they invest a significant part of their time looking for options (places and products) or dynamizing the exchange network to which they belong. As evidenced in the text below, to Sofia, organic consumption is a consequence of environmental and social concerns and is growingly including a wider range of products.

Yes, of course! Organic products were a consequence of my concerns. But as we learn more about organic products and about conventional production, I think that this knowledge reinforces the decision already taken. In fact, the inclusion of organic products in my life has been growing. I used to have the concern of buying fruits and vegetables but nowadays my concern includes pasta and rice, milk and eggs. I want to these products to make part of my life. (Sofia)

It was also evidenced that organic consumption works as a way to influence other consumers drawing their attention to environmental problems or other production alternatives. This action can be made by giving the example: consuming organic products and supporting local organic agriculture. João, ironically, talks about “recruiting” his neighbour, Mr. Manuel ‘Monsanto’ to be aware of the impact that agricultural techniques has in the environment. In most cases, this influence is ‘soft’, not defying those who are not organic consumers. In Sónia’s case, her initial militancy, more aggressive, has been put aside.

Now, I do not have hostile, direct actions. I have a different attitude. For many years I tried to convince other people to think like me. Otherwise they would be “mean”. You know, the “catholic guilty feeling”. I did not realize what I was doing... But many activists do that. They try to show their view to other people by making them feel bad. I realized that... (Sónia)

The most emblematic example is Leonor’s case. This organic consumer who moved to a distant location in Alentejo, practices an agriculture based on agro-ecology in her 3 hectares farm. To her, it is as if she were in an island, where everything around her is intensive agriculture and monoculture. Her willing and convictions are strong and once again influencing by giving the example remains a hope.

There is the word “inoculation”. What we are doing here is inoculating this region! That is the main aspect, the reason why I am still here! Because at environmental level if I succeed to have here a niche in life, at the right moment that niche will populate this area! And this is real! This may easily give life to everything else; rather than everything else contaminates this to death! (Leonor)

Being consumer of organic products is necessarily related with food habits. As Rosa states “food is not a neutral thing. It is very intimate!”. An often referred aspect in the interviews was vegetarianism and the reason behind this option. Concerning vegetarian lifestyle, generally the process is very personal and gradual, related to an increase of environmental awareness, in an attempt to be coherent with these principles. In some cases, a vegetarian diet had already been adopted before consuming organic products. In others, was a consequence of these products. However, even those who are not strictly vegetarian referred the willing to adopt this diet, the moral dilemma of consuming

meat, the need of reducing its consumption, and the conflicts with family and friends.

Like vegetarianism, organic consumption is focused on the person, in a perspective of spiritual well-being. In Maria's case, this awareness was an emotional and personal process, in a dialogue close to the earth, "literally digging" and learning from the earth.

Easy! This is about health, joy and inner peace. It is about being well with other people. This is all a sequence of living a healthy life at all levels. Because this is not only about what we eat (...) Psychological and emotional support are necessary. I cannot see how it is possible to separate things. To me, separation does not work. Only union works. Only union is coherent. This is my view. (Maria)

The consumption of organic products encourages other healthy practices that made them feel good. Organic consumption stands for healthy food and lifestyle, environment preservation and emotional balance. In a perspective of well-being and life philosophy, some components like the connection with nature are more salient. Like the other participants, Marco considers food a main aspect in his life. Below, he explains the importance of food in his life and his connection to nature.

It is philosophical [his relation with food]. Rather than material. Although I am one of those people who believe that material component is intimately connected to the spiritual component. So, nowadays if people ask for a coffee... if they purchase here or there... organic or not organic... They are giving their contribution to the eco-system. Are they cooperating with the eco-system or eliminating them? It is an action of rough power if considered in this perspective. Many people think: "only farmers have positive or negative impact on nature". No! Our relation with nature is mandatory, daily, it is for everybody and comes from food. Mainly from food. And food is mainly the connection link. (Marco)

In this sense, participants consider organic consumption as a life philosophy that cannot be separated from environmental concerns. Their daily relation with food make them feel close to the "life project and project of this Planet" (Marco).

The importance of these local organic products in consumers' lives seems very clear. Several participants questioned "what type of organic product are you referring to? The guaranteed one or not guaranteed?" A preference was clearly towards the products produced according to non-intensive criteria and consumed

in the region of production. When these participants question about the category of the organic product, the fact of not including synthesis products is not sufficient. The understanding of the organic product goes far beyond the usual definition (Goodman & Goodman, 2007). Thus, the narratives evidence aspects not only related to self-centered values, but mainly concerns for society and nature. In individual terms, it was stressed out the importance of internal coherence, peace of mind and balance that these consumers find in the consumption of organic products. The benefits of organic products, their authenticity (the fact of not being refined, of having different production techniques, not being genetically manipulated and not having chemical products), were considered essential criteria for decision making. Consumers of local organic products focus their discourse on the area of values and environmental concern. In fact, these two aspects have a huge importance in their lives and they are not willing to give up, or in some situations, to become more flexible. For these consumers, organic products consumption made significant changes in their lives, not merely in terms of consumption but also of lifestyle and the way of seeing society. That is to say, local organic products consumption contributed to the construction of a consumption identity, a 'reflexive self', as Connolly and Prothero (2008) propose. Overall, these participants consider that the consumption of local organic products involve a 'life philosophy'. This vision of organic is consistent with the approach proposed by Goodman and Goodman (2007), in which they refer a decrease of the concept of "conventional" organic product and present a notion based on a livelihood perspective grounded in a political and ecological, beyond organic, what they designate 'post-organic era'.

To sum up, constraints present in the Portuguese context reinforce the convictions of these consumers. A consequence evidenced by organic products consumption was the adoption of a simpler and more natural life associated to the consumption of this kind of products. Some of the participants reported a significant reduction of products consumption, the adoption of healthy habits in contact with nature, home cooked meals and dedication of more time to oneself. Since they feel good consuming local organic products and believe that this is the right way, these consumers try to spread this feeling to their friends and lead

them to go to the same exchange locations. This reinforces the conviction to continue consuming organic, despite the deprivations and social pressure.

Furthermore, in their narratives, these participants demonstrate a strong belief in local organic products and what they mean to them. Some have chosen to move from the city to the countryside to follow their dreams, talk about their difficulties, financial effort, and social and family pressure. However, they reported feeling happy with the lifestyle they have chosen. Organic products are an important element in their lives, contributing to personal balance and identity formation.

3.4 Final remarks

This paper research subjects still neglected in the literature about consumer behaviour. Critically examines organic consumers' motivations, the barriers they face, and the meanings they attribute to this type of ethical consumption.

To sum up, as the main motivations to consume local organic, environmental concerns are the most important factor, as well as animal well-being, which influences food habits. In an individual perspective of consumption, organic products are considered important to contribute to well-being, a lifestyle, not being stressed out their relevance for health questions. Therefore, the importance of food contribute to achieve environmental objectives and represent a 'weapon' to achieve political objectives, particularly the opposition to the capitalist and to the market system. Like other studies, market obstacles have been identified such as price, availability of places and products. However, obstacles of personal and social nature appeared to be important factors owing to Portuguese food traditions, giving origin to dilemma and making difficult the diffusion of messages of these consumers. As an immediate consequence of these barriers and considering the mentioned motivations, the majority of these participants cultivate their own food, and practice several agricultural options of low environmental impact (agro-ecology, biodynamic, artisanal agriculture). This option also has a political purpose of expressing their ecological convictions, of increasing food self-sufficiency and independence from large supermarkets. This research also evidences the permanent tension towards large supermarkets for representing,

in the perspective of the participants, the responsibility for environmental imbalances and social injustices. Therefore, these consumers punish those corporations boycotting their products, even the organic products that are sold there.

The argumentation for organic consumption also includes a political motivation. Participants evidence militancy and activism when promoting organic products and their agricultural techniques within their cycle of influence, in order to reach sustainability and environmental preservation. These consumers have the precise notion of the importance of consumption, particularly organic products consumption. They attribute a meaning to organic products beyond their usual definition. Besides the usual conditions regarding the absence of synthesis products, they include a strong ethical, environmental and social component. Therefore, the main contribution of this research was to identify the perspective of the political discourse.

In this way and in order of accomplish the purpose of this research which is to explore the context in which these consumers of organic products are moving and know the motivations behind this ethical option, the best example of this is represented by Jorge's position.

Yes! Organic is one of the aspects of the relation that I have with the world! I eat local organic, trying to buy... trying to make consumption as something completely according to my philosophy. Not consuming much, not consuming meat from animas that suffer, buying in the farmer nearby who I know and that I can help. Consuming organic to respect the environment, to respect Life. So, consuming organic products is one of the aspects of my life philosophy! (Jorge)

Therefore, the context of local organic food consumption acts as an ethical space in which the discourse of these participants converge to three dimensions of politics of food (Bryant & Goodman, 2004; DuPuis & Goodman, 2005; DuPuis, 2000; Goodman & Goodman, 2007; Hinrichs, 2003; McEachern et al., 2010; Winter, 2003): politics of production; politics of localism and activism.

From the marketing point of view, organic food could be seen as a new opportunity to identify new markets, more than the general sense of health engagement, reflecting consumers' values (Hall, 2008; McDonald & Oates,

2006). In terms of mainstream food business, it is a mistake to ignore the influence power of this group of consumers. It was clear, according to market perspective, that organic consumers may have great influence on consumption practices on people within their circle of acquaintances. Ecologically responsible consumers, mainly organic products consumers, are a segment in expansion that cannot be ignored.

CHAPTER 4

THE PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONSUMER DISCOURSE: A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE TO ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION

Abstract

This paper focuses on the need to research alternative ways of consumption and production from the ecological point of view. Based on 31 in-depth interviews with highly committed organic consumer residents in urban and rural areas of Portugal, this paper aims to explore which discourses participate in the environmentally motivated consumption and the meanings that options represent in consumers' lives. To analyse the qualitative data, a discourse analysis was used, complemented by content analysis. It was found that the themes converge towards a hard sustainable consumption discourse according to three dimensions: politics of production, politics of localism and activism. Consumers argue that by producing their own food according to the principles of agroecology, by looking for organic food in a local context, and privileging community based market channels, they are putting into practice alternative ideas of social economy, community and ecology. The results of this research provide a better understanding of a niche still barely known in the literature and demonstrate that the consumption of organic products, and the way they are produced, establish an alternative to move towards more sustainable options from the ecological point of view. The implications of the research results for a possible transition to new sustainable consumption practices are also considered.

Keywords: Organic consumption, Portugal, discourse analysis, pro-environmental discourse, politics of production, localism, activism.

4.1 Introduction

The global capitalist system has been identified by some authors as the cause of the main problems that currently affect the world, such as social inequalities, political and cultural oppression, economic exploitation and the depletion of natural resources (Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011). More explicitly, overconsumption, overproduction and population are viewed as the main causes for the environmental changes that currently occur in the world, and this fact has been the central issue of the sustainable development paradigm (Hobson, 2002). However, considering the continuing conflict between green solutions to solve environmental problems and the prevailing masculine view of the neo-classical tradition (Kilbourne, 1998), some authors propose a shift from the prevailing Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP) discourse, to a feminist perspective of consumption (Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001; Meriläinen et al., 2000). In the field of organic food policies, DuPuis (2000) highlights two antagonistic approaches: on the production side, a capitalist perspective based on certification systems, to satisfy market requirements or that has the conditions to buy organic products; on the other hand, a perspective on the consumption side, concerned with knowing what we eat and its origin.

In the literature on green consumption, much attention has been given to the 'subject' of consumption, particularly in identifying its profile and regarding the decision process (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). However, the approach to political activism and its relation to ethical consumption and consumer choice has not been studied enough (Brenton, 2013). In this way, ethical consumption constitutes a response towards social and environmental deterioration as a result of globalization. Individuals, when consuming ethically, are using their power of influence in a political mode. It is a form of new commitment, making a difference by supporting those who engage in environmental conservation and social justice (Brenton, 2013).

This political approach focuses on the discourses and ecological narratives of consumption, as well as on alternative forms of consumption which have not been sufficiently explained, and it is, therefore, appropriate to address the lack of research in this area of consumer behaviour.

Based on in-depth interviews through self-declared green consumers and committed with the consumption of organic products residents in urban and rural areas of Portugal, this paper aims to explore the discourses underlying the politics of food in environmentally motivated consumers and the power that these consumption options represent in their lives.

In Bryant and Goodman's (2004) point of view, political ecology narratives allow the access to an increasingly significant set of representation practices in relation to alternative forms of consumption. Considering the particular nature of the narratives and their political connotation, we followed the recommendation regarding the use of discourse analysis complemented by another method, in this case, content analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Sitz, 2008; Titscher et al., 2000). Firstly, content analysis was useful to gain access to the main themes, making the analytical categories as transparent as possible. This step was important for a second phase, where a discourse analysis was used to explain the construction of consumption, allowing to identify a pro-environmental discourse through which interviewees give meaning and take a position in relation to organic consumption. This discourse included three interconnected political dimensions: politics of production, politics of localism, and activism.

In order to fill the research objective, this paper begins by analysing the literature on ethical consumption, the main political approaches to food and environmentalism, organic consumption, its relationship with localism and conclude by assessing a review about postmodernism. Following, the methodology employed, explaining the sample and the methodological procedures followed, with particular focus on the discourse analysis. Afterwards, the findings with the three discourses on the policies of consumption of organic products. In the discussion of the results, these discourses are framed in a larger strategy - the discourse for ecology. The paper concludes stressing that, the three interconnected political dimensions (politics of production, politics of localism, and activism) and the organic consumption in this particular context of environmentally motivated consumers is a symbolic and political instrument that materializes in acting locally to obtain a global environmental impact.

4.2 Literature review

4.2.1 Organic food, local contexts and political consumption

Food and the environment in which it is produced and consumed are understood to have political denotations (Lyons, 2009). The approach to consumption in political terms is clearly explained in Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti's (2005) research where they point out that consumption is a weapon used by critical and self-confident citizens who are disappointed with political institutions. Compared to other practices of social participation, political consumption is the most individualized form of activism, a micro-politics resistance (Micheletti & Follesdal, 2007; Stolle et al., 2005). Therefore, Micheletti and Follesdal (2007, p. 168) define political consumption "when consumers consciously use their desire practices as reasons for making choices among producers and products". In this perspective, consumption has become a new activism, as a way in which individuals seek to make a difference, through politicized acts of everyday life, and outside of the traditional political arena (Brenton, 2013; Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Zander & Hamm, 2010). Consequently, Bossy (2014, p. 179) defines political consumption as following:

"a social movement in which a network of individual and collective actors criticize and try to differentiate themselves from traditional consumerism by politicizing the act of buying in order to search and promote other types of consumption".

In this context, the organic movement is a positive manifestation of political consumption. In an individual perspective of consumption, Connolly and Prothero (2008) address green consumption in a context of increasing individualization where consumers are responsible for dealing with environmental risks. In practice, these consumer policies represent actions and forms of activism in order to reduce ecological footprint, by joining boycotts or changing their own consumption patterns (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). Therefore, in a political perspective, green consumption is a strategy for environmental reform, where consumers believe that, through their individual actions, help to solve environmental problems. Accordingly, green products can be used as 'symbolic resources' in building the consumer's identity and achieving a sustainable environment (Fuentes 2014a; Fuentes 2014b).

Hobson (2002) presents a perspective on sustainable consumption where the individual within the consumer society is educated to behave accordingly. This process is called 'rationalization of lifestyles practices' and it is related to its own definition of sustainable development: "economic and social development to meet human needs now without compromising future generations' ability to meet their needs" (p. 96). To achieve this goal, it is expected that consumers develop their knowledge about environmental issues and, as a result, their consumption behaviours will change as well. This rationalisation discourse is constructed within the prevailing environmental frameworks where a "good citizen" is expected to respond to the messages for sustainability within the public discourse that "a good consumer is a good citizen" (p. 100) - the 'ecological citizenship'.

In an individual perspective of consumption, Connolly and Prothero (2008) address green consumption in a context of increasing individualization where consumers are responsible for dealing with environmental risks. This is related to the concept of 'life politics', that is "not only how to live but the right way to live" (p. 131). In this vein, the sustainability of the planet intrudes on the individuals concerns, which in turn are reflected in consumption habits. That is to say that global issues influence the reflexive process of the self, and conversely self-realization projects influence global strategies. In this sense, organic farming and consumption can be seen as an opposition to the mainstream agro food system and a critique to the increasing industrialization, especially in the environment point of view, keeping consumers away from conventional markets, and directing them to alternative options of consumption more adjusted to their ethical requirements (Autio et al., 2013; Jaffee & Howard, 2010; Sebastiani et al., 2013; Seyfang, 2006; Storstad & Bjørkhaug, 2003). In practice, these consumer policies represent actions and forms of activism in order to reduce ecological footprint, by joining boycotts or changing their own consumption patterns (Connolly & Prothero, 2008).

Other organic political expression is also related to consumption reduction and the need to find alternative channels of supply, such as the informal exchange networks (Seyfang, 2006), in a response to the social and ecological destruction within capitalist global food system (Jaffee & Howard, 2010). This orientation allows consumers to express their opposition to the industrialized mass-

production, keeping them away from conventional markets, and directing them to alternative options of consumption more adjusted to their ethical requirements (Autio et al., 2013; Sebastiani et al., 2013).

In the literature, there are equal directions of commitment with core organic values such as direct sales, local food production and the slow food movement (Lyons, 2009); small and medium production structures and horizontal networks (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011); short mechanisms of marketing channels (Dinis et al., 2015); civic agriculture (Delind, 2006); and agroecology (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011; Parrott & Marsden, 2002). Some initiatives mentioned in the literature, indicate a 'post-organic' era, as considering local direct marketing and LFN in which the principles and values go beyond the traditional organic definition (Goodman & Goodman, 2007).

Therefore, the organic consumption theme is closely related with local food production and consumption. Delind (2006) argues that the organic movement helped to create a 'second generation' - the LFN. Hinrichs (2003) points out that 'local' involves a social construction and emerged as a counter-response to "economic concentration, social disempowerment, and environmental degradation in food and agriculture landscape" (p. 33), based on several assumptions such as: (1) look for inspiration in ecology, in which 'food miles' reinforces its environmental aspect; (2) think in small-scale, combined by good environmental practices and local direct market opportunities (farmers' market, CSA or LFN); (3) links morale economy, social capital and relationships of care.

DuPuis and Goodman (2005) argue that localism is synonymous of resistance against the logic of consumption and hegemonic domination. For this reason, the activist discourse is strongly linked to the localization of food systems, sustainability and social justice. In this perspective, 'local' tends to be a space where ethics and values flourish.

In terms of different approaches to localism, Hinrichs (2003) discusses the social construction of 'politics of localization' in a perspective of potential tension between two 'local' visions: (1) Defensive localism, where the boundaries stand to protect the "local" from "non-local others". It is an elitist perspective, appealing to nativist feelings ('food patriotism'); (2) Cosmopolitan localism, where difference

and diversity are promoted. It calls for liberatory project to localism, open to change and where social exchanges can be promoted.

In other investigation within the English context, Winter (2003) had already approached the problem of new food economy and defensive localism. He argues that there must be a strong change in organic production and that localism is the first step towards an alternative food economy that will challenge the dominance of globalised network. This author also claims that localism must be less related to a radical affirmation based on parochialism and nationalism and more to the ethic of care, values and meanings.

In this way, DuPuis and Goodman (2005) focus on the politics of localism as a social movement of resistance against globalization rather than a defensive perspective of local elites to create an territory just for them. They stated that the European perspective to 'localism' is part of a government effort to develop livelihood and the preservation of cultural heritage. In this context, they highlight the concept of 'rural imaginary' based on "small family farms, local markets where producers and consumers interact, regional food cultures, vibrant rural communities, and ecologically diverse moral environments" (p.365). These authors add that rural imaginary of national traditions are operationalized through Alternative Agro-food Networks (AAFN) and Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) as bases of resistance against "globalized, industrial modes of food provision and the McDonalization of regional food cultures" (p. 365).

In Delind's (2006) opinion, organic and local consumptions are essential for "maintaining human and environmental health and security, globally" (p. 125), and as a mechanism for community and trust building, and to develop personal relationships (Zepeda & Deal, 2009).

Morgan (2010) argues that both, local and global food, can participate in the same aim, giving to sustainability "a hybrid and cosmopolitan special character" (p. 1858). By combining these two narratives, it results in a new 'politics of care', which moves beyond the ethical consumer to an ecological citizenship, that is, a shared commitment to sustainability where the global environmental sensitivity influences daily consumption habits (Seyfang, 2006). In this context, alternative agro food narrative incorporates what Morgan (2010) calls 'ethical foodscape', a

combination of ecological integrity and social justice, that is, to be "local, organic and fair-trade" (p.1854). In other words, the politics of care mean that consumers (should) use their "power of purchase to promote locally produced and globally sourced products" (p.1860).

In what concerns sustainable development, three discourses can be identified (Hobson, 2002):

- (1) Consumption is seen as 'locus of power' and ethical consumers are mobilized to exert their influence;
- (2) The environment is the context for pursuing a political project of social transformation - politically focused discourse. This discourse is exercised by militant consumers of environmental groups, social groups, women's groups and anti-capitalist groups;
- (3) The prevailing sustainable consumption discourse, promoted by the State and public institutions.

Concerns about the environment, consumption and social justice have always been central ideas in ecological policy (Bryant & Goodman, 2004). The politically focused discourse and ecocentrism include, as central ideas, the ecological limits in relation to economic and population growth, privileges, participatory and decentralized democracy, and they consider social justice based on the idea of equity and support a reconceptualization of the relations between humans and Nature (Carter, 2004).

These earlier approaches to consumption are closely associated with postmodern positioning. Postmodernism, as an extension of critical theory (Ozanne & Murray, 1995), is an opposition to the western culture, represented by modernism. This research follows some theoretical assumptions, adopting Firat and Venkatesh (1995) postmodernist perspective regarding the construction of an ethical society where the individual can find self-expression through alternative forms of action and participation; and a feminist perspective based on a Foucauldian approach on power and truth.

The postmodern approach is focused on symbolic over the material. Consider the moment of consumption as a fragmentary and emancipatory act in which

meanings, codes, ideologies and realities are represented. In this regard, consumers react strategically by subverting the market, rather than being seduced by it. Accordingly, consumer research cannot “ignore localisms and particularisms” (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995, p. 258) and alternative modes of thinking about localized consumption practices, focused on everyday practices and how consumers negotiate their cultural space.

If postmodernism may be understood as an epistemology, it is also possible to consider such term to define a way of consuming in a particular period of time. Ozanne and Murray (1995) note that in the postmodern era, where marketplace holds a huge symbolism, knowledgeable and well-informed consumers increase their power of decision and influence, making them more active and critical. They define this type of consumer as ‘reflexively defiant consumer’, in which they continue to consume, but can change their position in a given situation to signify antagonism and opposition.

Thus, according to Haanpää (2007), green consumption is a moral and postmodern phenomenon. What characterizes a postmodern consumer society is consumers’ diversity and freedom of choice, highlighting difference, which in turn leads to differentiated forms of identity and lifestyle. Lifestyle becomes the element that determines these differences, causing consumers to group into different “tribes” (p. 479). Moreover, Haanpää (2007) stresses that the postmodern expression of green consumption contains the following elements: lifestyle, identity, ideology, choice, ethics, responsibility, quality of life and health issues.

However, Meriläinen et al. (2000) propose a shift with the dominant conceptualization of green marketing within the DSP, suggesting a feminine perspective to change the dominant discourse. This critical orientation is based on the premise that the mainstream view of green marketing brings the natural environment into the market mechanism and the political system represented by the ‘economic man’. This implies that it will provide “neither ecologically efficient nor democratic socially acceptable policy options to deal with environmental degradation” (p. 155). Under these circumstances, Meriläinen et al. (2000) propose a “humble and unexploitative approach to environmental management” (p. 160) in order to “minimize the damage that can be caused by such

androcentric and universally imposed set of assumptions” (p. 152). From that feminist perspective, these authors consider that this new green marketing approach could bring long-term environmental goals extricating itself from the conventional assumptions about “self, society and nature” (p. 152).

4.3 Research findings

The results of this paper are obtained from the application of discourse analysis (see page 53), following the method suggested by Fairclough (2003). Therefore, it is analysed and described the linguistic properties of the text, following the interpretation of the discursive practices itself, with the dimensions of ethical consumption.

4.3.1 Description of linguistic properties

In terms of *genre chain*, the texts of this research are based on the integral transcription of the in-depth interviews conducted to the various consumers of the different regions of Portugal (rural and urban). Field notes were also used to record direct observation and to contextualize interview material. The fact that the interviews were conducted on the context (farms, houses or stores) allowed to observe and record elements that were very important to frame the discourses of these interviewees. Similarly, the informal environment created a conversational and relaxed atmosphere that allowed stand a more genuine side of each personality.

From the point of view of *difference*, the ‘voices’ in the text that Fairclough (2003) suggest a position of distance from the current model of consumption.

Currently I do not like to call myself a ‘consumer’ [laughs]. (Mara)

These participants recognize that their role as consumers can contribute to make a difference in environmental and social terms.

I think that this awareness of how our consumption interferes with the environment has always been my great concern. (Mariana)

As a person I am not only a passive consumer in the society where I live. (Monica)

As a consumer, if I can, I influence. (Mário)

Despite the multiple views that are presented in these texts, each discourse converges to a socially and ecologically responsible consumer identity associated with Hobson's (2002) ecological citizenship concept.

In terms of *intertextuality*, most participants explicitly speak about themselves and what they represent as a community of organic consumers ('we-community').

For me, organic comes from a movement of people that want to take care of the Earth. (Lia)

For me, as a consumer, I feel that I am now much more involved. (João)

We are participating in a social change". (Miguel)

We have principles that we follow. (Mariana)

In other cases, the 'other voices' are clearly labelled and identified as these who are responsible for environmental devastation and exploitation of resources.

You will be forced to buy what they launch in the market (...). You are their slave. (Luís)

I do not want to take part in it. (Luís)

Today we are controlled by Brussels. Tomorrow we will be controlled by Monsanto and Bayer of Germany! And Nestlé... They want to control everything related to food (...) This is a scam! Manipulative! So, we need to fight against individualism! (Luís)

In this extracts, the position of those who have a "comfortable social situation" and who do not "want to change" is notorious. Luís alter between his position "I", of someone who has already freed himself. These who are controlled are identified by "you", and the others are objectively identified by the pronoun "they", representing, in his point of view, the capitalist system.

Another important feature was the use of irony. For example, João reported that he is trying to "recruit" his neighbour, Mr. Manuel 'Monsanto' to raise awareness of the non-use of pesticides in agriculture. However, the most used style in direct discourse is the use of the pronouns "I" and "we", which suggests an active attitude where each participant is the 'owner' of the 'voice'.

Also in this research it is noticed the use of paradoxical terms. For example, for Julia "simple life" is synonymous with luxury. Or in the case of Leonor sufficiency is synonymous with "abundance".

In this investigation several *assumptions* are assumed, and the main one - consumption, which is one of the responsible causes for environmental devastation - is the one that raises the problem of investigation and as Fairclough

(2003) referred "can lead to an emancipatory change" (p.209). However, other propositional assumptions are also found in the texts. Taking the example of Mariana: she admits that "our" consumption interferes with the environment; her consumption of organic products is motivated by environmental issues; she believes that those who engage in organic agriculture have environmental concerns. These positions are taken for granted and therefore seek to find individual and collective alternatives to overcome these obstacles. In this way, Mariana supports those who practice an agriculture with low environmental impact; produces her own organic products allowing her to obtain self-sufficiency in relation to the conventional market; prefers to consume local products to reduce environmental impact; strives to reduce her consumption; and her participation in the exchange network is a form of activism. With these assumptions, Mariana presents a pro-environmental and a resistance to consumption discourse.

Regarding the *type of relations*, the most notorious is the power asymmetry between what it means to be a consumer of organic products and the large corporations that represent the capitalist system responsible for environmental imbalances and social inequalities. In the texts, many of the statements are declarative and explicit, that is, "realis statement," which means "statement of fact" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 109), implying transparency in statements and determination in attitudes. "Statements of commitment" are also frequent. In Sofia's case, when referring to her involvement in the local initiative of Community Support Agriculture, her degree of commitment to the process she supports and her self-identification with ecological citizenship is evident.

I believe in this kind of projects. I believe a lot in this type of connection projects between consumer and producer, I believe in these small projects that are driven by civil society and for me it joins everything I believe in. (Sofia)

It is interesting to verify that the consumption process of these individuals is symbolically a metaphorically constructed. For example, the use of a metaphor is the case of Leonor in relation to what it means to live surrounded by agroindustry. She moved to a distant location in Alentejo to practice an agriculture based on agro-ecology in her three-hectare farm. To her, it is as if she was in an

island, where everything around her is intensive agriculture and monoculture. Her willing and convictions are strong and influences by giving the example.

There is the word "inoculation". What we are doing here is inoculating this region! That is the main aspect, the reason why I am still here! Because, at environmental level, if I succeed to have here a niche in life, at the right moment that niche will populate this area! And this is real! This may easily give life to everything else; rather than everything else contaminates this to death! (Leonor)

In terms of *participants* (social actors) these organic consumers identify themselves as active agents in the process of moving to a more environmentally sustainable society, assuming a position that aims to be collective.

I think this is a little more than moderating [her role as a promoter of proximity economy]. It is actively trying to create content, interviewing people, putting the information out on the issues... I think it is more than moderating (Monica)

Transformation is made out in the land not in the city. (Leonor)

It is necessary to have a revolution. (Luís)

To me, the first motivation is environmental concern and respect for the Earth. (Jorge)

When I found out the CSA system, I found that this fits in perfectly with what I think: recreate localism and solidarity partnership between consumer and producers. (Jorge)

In these extracts it is represented that organic consumers are aware that their individual acts can have a global impact. That is, belief in ecology is a value always present in the participants' discourse, evidencing an universal values of altruism. Most participants report that the consumption of organic products is associated with a lifestyle and a philosophy of life.

It is a philosophy of life, but not merely for health reasons. If I consume organic products only for my health, I do not care if the product is made here or there, on the other side of the planet, if it is produced by people with low salaries... It does not matter! What matters is if it is an organic product... guaranteed! This is not a lifestyle. This is personal health defence. It is selfish, so to speak... It is just thinking about own health. It becomes a lifestyle and philosophy when included in a global vision of life defence in global terms... Of being the person who makes part of a system and who is happy for making part of it and wants to participate in the defence of that system... and in the well-being of that global system. That is a philosophy of life. (Jorge)

Regarding to *representation of time*, participants refer to the past, portraying themselves as "normal" consumers, that is, "consumerists", "dazzled with

consumption". They also remember the resistance and barriers they faced in order to be accepted by the "others" regarding the changes that the consumption of organic products and associated habits (such as vegetarianism) operated in their social relations. In relation to the present, they describe the changes that have happened in their lives, the new habits of consumption and the new relations that have arisen. However, the discourse is oriented towards the future from the point of view of sustainability and alternatives. These consumers, when they express their own personal sphere, do so with some detachment and without material interests. Therefore, the future is important not in the sense of their personal interest but for the safeguard of the environment and of the habits. In fact, some of these consumers have opted for changing their lives to a simpler style, close to the nature, releasing the troubled professional past and becoming farmers.

I consider this agriculture [biodynamic] as belonging to this century and conventional agriculture as belonging to the last century. This is the future! (João)

In terms of *representation of space*, two perspectives stand out: the space itself where consumers exhibit their consumption option and with which they identify (the farm, the exchange network, the organic products store); and the permanent tension between the concept of local products and those coming from other locations (this aspect will be discussed later). In the following excerpt, Júlia expresses her unconditional preference for the products she produces and for the place where she lives.

I prefer this a thousand times over here, because I know what I'm really eating! Do you understand? That's it! It is a much more artisanal agriculture. It's love! I think this love, to me, makes sense! (Júlia)

As regards the *process*, it tends to be represented by consumers who grow their own food (organically), by those who choose to consume the products traded or marketed in a circuit of local trust and by those who care to influence others to this awareness. It is interesting to point out that in this consumption process construction, products, people, ideals and relationships play an inseparable role.

As regards the interpretation of the discursive practice, it will be addressed in the next section.

4.3.2 The interpretation of the discursive practice: The political dimensions of organic consumption

From an overall perspective the analysis allowed concluding that these consumers feel motivated to consume organic products for environmental and social concerns, but mainly issues related to political consumption. The central aspect in consumers' discourse is always the 'power' and the need to take a political position concerning the meaning of organic products. In this section, we aim to understand the meaning and importance of organic consumption in these people's lives and the positioning they want to express by consuming this type of products. Several political attitudes have been observed, gathered in the following way: politics of production, politics of localism, and activism. These messages are framed by a discourse for ecology where sustainable consumption is the main tactic.

4.3.2.1 Politics of production

Organic food consumption is strongly linked with production. For some consumers and producers, the practice of an organic agriculture of biodynamic and agroecology inspiration is considered the real organic agriculture, aligned by the values that they support. In Olga's case, environmental concerns are the most important factor in practicing biodynamic agriculture.

Soil preservation is essential. For that, we have to do the minimum possible since nature also has resources... In fact, I believe that the function of nature is always improve: the soil, the environment... And so herbs grow spontaneously that people think to be harmful and so they cut them and use herbicide. They destroy the herbs and all the life that exists on the earth. Soil preservation is essential. When we manipulate, we also destroy what took millions of years to be built, what nature made. What do we do? We try to imitate nature, giving nature a hand. Organic and biodynamic agriculture have the concern of giving conditions. (Olga)

Some participants do not prefer "current organic products", supporting familiar or artisanal agriculture, for its flavour, freshness, the "love" that is involved in this production. They consider this way of cultivation and consumption organic products a "philosophy of life", a different lifestyle. Lia, a French farmer who moved to Portugal to accomplish her individual projects does not support the

“conventional organic agriculture”, and even less conventional and mass agriculture. The organic food that she consumes is mainly from her “circle of trust” – her friends of her exchange network. She refers that all her friends practice an agriculture of low environmental impact. She claims that supporting these products she is “experimenting a healthier agriculture to the Earth”. Her vision of organic agriculture is presented as follows:

The important is not to think only about my health! It is to think that many people decided to do this and make an effort to try a different agriculture! I know that there are many people that have doubts but I believe that if we buy these products, there are more possibilities of having a healthier agriculture to the Earth. For me, organic food comes from a movement of people that want to take care of the Earth. (Lia)

Organic consumers consider of great importance the way how organic products are produced, supporting an agriculture that corresponds to their ethical convictions (environmental and social). They are convinced that they are supporting a cleaner production, resolving environmental problems, and participating in a social change. It is also demonstrated how important is to these consumers to produce their own organic food, having some of them left a previous life in the city, to embrace a new way of living. These consumers also pointed out that producing their own food is related to self-sufficiency in a way of reducing their dependency in relation to the distribution chains.

For most of the participants, organic production is considered a way to solve environmental problems, because they recognize the impact that the agricultural and food sector have at a global level. Therefore, they support an agriculture that consumes less resources and uses simpler techniques, without chemicals and without interfering (much) in the ecosystems. The following text from the interview to Marco evidences that position, based on agroecology.

Today I relate much more to the concept of agroecology agriculture maintaining the fertility cycles, maintaining the ecosystems with all the elements, trying to reduce to make it simple, trying to take advantage of diversity... So, in a perspective of agroecology and even organic agriculture, I am convinced that producing like this or consuming like this, I am more efficiently contributing... I will not say to solve these big challenges but at least to not increase them. This makes me glad! (Marco)

Another aspect that was stressed in this research was the connection of some of the participants with their activity (agriculture). Júlia considers her activity in organic agriculture more than just a business. She considers it “an option of life”. It was the way that she wanted to follow, the reason why she is satisfied with the simplicity that she reached, “much more sustainable, and much more natural.” In the same way, João considers his space, cultivated according to biodynamic principles, as a single system, an “individual farm organism”. He is deeply committed, stating that biodynamic agriculture is his “mindset” and the best long term solution.

Yes! Since I am professionally committed in agriculture I cover let's say all the spectrum. For me, as a consumer, I feel that I am now much more involved and interested in biodynamic agriculture after 40 years. If well managed and applied it is sustainable and may achieve better results than the conventional agriculture. And if we talk about my personal health... it is totally viable... I am convinced that this is the long term solution.
(João)

In this group of consumers, it was clear that organic agriculture is a natural consequence of the consumption of organic products. It was found that people who grow their own food do so according to organic techniques. One of the reasons referred to produce their own food was the willing to become self-sufficient and autonomous in relation to the agricultural and industrial systems, like the case of Luís.

To create a certain level of self-sufficiency! Imagine, if today or tomorrow we have that situation [referring to the standardization of agricultural products], you will be forced to buy what they [food sector companies] launch in the market! You do not have a choice! And with that dependency, you are their slave, since you must have money to be able to buy food. If you cannot produce, you must buy! You need money to buy. And this is the circuit they want but I do not want to take part in it! (Luís)

Luís's discourse is centred in self-sufficiency in an optical of opposition towards these great companies (power asymmetries) and his motivation to produce his own food has a perspective of reaching “total self-sufficiency” from food point of view. The political discourse underlying production presupposes a self-sufficient subject, the figure of the hero's force who alone, through the individual self-sufficiency allows the maintenance of collective autonomy. In the same way, Mariana explained her perspective as a way to become less vulnerable to what

is available in the market, emphasizing how easy it is to obtain quality products with the participation of the consumer. To Mariana, own food production is also an “act of love” that enable her to have a simpler life in contact with the earth, demonstrating a romantic side centred on a naturalistic view of life.

I think that when we produce our own food, we are less vulnerable to foreign economy since we do not depend that much on what exists or does not exist. Of course we do not think that they are going to put us economic sanctions [laughs] but if we think about it, I do not need the supermarket around the corner to have eggs because I have my own eggs. (...) (Mariana)

After having started consuming organic products, Luís was encouraged to produce a part of his family food needs. Along the process, he has immediately noticed an effect on the general consumption of his family, being reduced the amount of food taken. He describes this fact as being a consequence of the change of mentality, which have been a pleasurable process against materialism, “natural”, in his point of view.

I did not suffer a brainwash... or anything... but I feel if I compare the way I was living 10 years ago and how I live nowadays, it is completely different! (...) In the beginning, I did not notice that I was not buying! There is not a scheme to live “organically”! You do not notice anything. The only thing you notice is that you need less. It is a natural consequence. There is not a list of “now I do not buy this...” Also because the satisfaction that you get from that job is already commanding 50% of your life daily! You spend in it and it gives you pleasure. It is something different! (Luís)

From the interviews, one may clearly conclude that these consumers consider the way how organic products are produced of great importance, supporting an agriculture that corresponds to their ethical convictions (environmental and social). They are convinced that they are supporting a cleaner production, resolving environmental problems, participating in a social change. It is also demonstrated how important it is to these consumers to grow these products, having some of them left a previous life in the city, to embrace a new way of living. These consumers also pointed out that cultivating their own food is related to self-sufficiency in a way of reducing dependency in relation to the distributions chains and, within a more global perspective, to oppose to the domain of the food corporations sector.

To sum up, consuming organic food grown by themselves involve the following meanings: imitating nature contribute to solving environmental problems; a sense of belonging to a movement that takes care of the Earth; participate in social change; achieve a simpler and frugal life; and, be self-sufficient is considered a counter-power against capitalism and the market.

4.3.2.2 Politics of localism

Local food networks materialize the most salient political expression. Participants' referred that this type of market brings more authenticity to the concept of organic consumption, where all people know each other, where people are in touch with the producers who are also their friends, and where they exchange "mushrooms for oranges". Local agriculture and this informal exchange networks are closely related and based on trust, not only of organic products but also of sharing knowledge. The text below belongs to Leonor's interview and it is representative of how these consumers see exchange networks and localism.

I started by buying organic in a fair trade store that brought products from across the world, and I even promoted events about this type of stores. But today this does not make sense to use my energy to support fair trade stores! What does make sense it is to use my energy to build and support networks that promote humanity and agro-ecology. Supporting each other, ensuring basic needs, the need to drain products, sharing our resources... in order to have a basis of trust, of sharing knowledge. Organic agriculture is awesome but buying organic vegetables from France does not make sense! Absolutely!
(Leonor)

Lia summarizes her perspective of products cultivated and consumed locally looking into the network of organic products exchange to which she belongs, according to three pillars essential to economic, environmental and social sustainability.

In this network, we are going to nourish friendship, create a connection based on the 3 pillars of sustainability, which are: economic pillar, through our trades, environmental pillar, respecting the activity by producing items following high ethical values; and then the social pillar, where we have a proximity level with these people that care and take care. (Lia)

Some of these consumers, before joining these exchange communities already belonged to 'Transition Towns'. Their discourse is therefore pro-environmental, political and reactive. Susana, an environmental educator, sees the exchange networks as an opportunity to fulfil her needs, access difficulties and also to react to the usual market model. Mariana, supporter of one of these networks, refers that the main point of these participants is to be ecologically responsible and the fact that they are all producers of something or motivated to produce. Some of the participants evidenced the fact that almost all the organic products that they consume are own food production or products that they obtain from their exchange community. Another characteristic aspect in these exchange communities is often enhanced in the interviews and it is the use of virtual currency, the fact of "not existing real money". These producers and consumers – ('prosumers') value the product identified in this virtual currency. From the network members there is the trust that the value attributed to the product is the adequate one. Another characteristic aspect in these exchange communities is the use of virtual currency, representing an attitude of freedom regarding the usual standards of consumption and regarding the capitalist system.

It is the concept of being environmentally and ecologically responsible... We have principles that we follow and support and we compromise to honour these principles. What we would relate to would be the absence of money! Because I believe that somehow money takes some principles away. (...) My ideal would exchange by exchange, because the value of things is the value that I give them. That would be the ideal but I think it is an utopia. (Mariana)

However, in these small groups of consumption, the main question is the respect for ecological principles, where their members have the opportunity to buy products that they do not produce, if possible without using money.

In the consumption group where Leonor belongs, one of the aspects they defend is the support of regenerative agriculture. The idea derived collectively from the need to find solutions so that the community could subsist in the remote place where it is located. Another objective would be to increasingly replace the need to go to supermarkets and the mutual exchange supports.

However, this community of consumers does not support any farmer but those who produce organic, local and in a small scale. In this perspective of preference

for local organic products, an aspect that was often noticed in the interviews was the value of the relationship created between consumers and producers. Óscar, who practices an artisanal agriculture, mentions the importance of the connection between place and people that cultivate organic products, referring to this as a “solidarity agriculture”. Once again, one may notice a detachment from products produced using industrial methods, even organic.

For me it is about living! ...For me, the organic product does not have much values if it comes from an industry. So, to have great value this product must be local, must be produced by people that know each other, that may influence production and help! I am talking about solidarity in agriculture! Really! (Óscar)

From the interviews it was also evident lack of trust from the most part of these consumers of organic products towards the organic guarantee system. Some, like Monica, consider this system as “a business... almost monopoly... with not specific criteria.”

The guarantee process works only to maintain the guarantee system itself and who is in charge does not know how products are really produced. So, I am a little sceptical about this guarantee. Anyway, I give it more consideration than to a product bought in supermarket, in a can, a generic product... This I know it is pure poison, right? I value the fact of knowing the producer, when possible, knowing the farm, the place, knowing where things come from. For me that is the best guarantee. Human guarantee and proximity with the producer. (Monica)

In this text, one may see that trust and knowledge about the product, its origin, are main aspects, replacing the formal guarantee. If she considers the possibility of consuming certified organic products, Lara feels total indifference and lack of authenticity in these products. In her case, it is more the lack of appeal and interest for these product. She does not find them very often since she does not go to large supermarkets. As Lara, Sofia does not consume certified organic products and she does not go to large supermarkets either. Another reason is that these products often come from foreign countries, which, in her opinion, is a negative thing owing to the cultivation method that might be used. In the text below, Sofia evidences that she is suspicious about the guarantee system and the products that come from far locations to be sold in Portugal. Consequently, she prefer a “participative guarantee system” between producers and consumers based on trust.

I may buy a certified product in an organic store but if it comes from France or the Netherlands and everything duly guaranteed. If we think on guaranteed products that come from Peru or China, then I do not want talk about them... I do not even want to see these products... I do not believe in the methods and guarantee criteria that come from these countries, Distance is fundamental but I have strong doubts about an organic product coming from China... (Sofia)

Certified organic products respond to an important expectation of consumers that is health. As above referred, motivations to consume organic products mentioned by this group of consumers are based on environmental guaranteed products do not assume a great importance since they lose social dimension, considering that the contact with the producer is a highly valued. On the other hand, environmental condition is also lost, since the majority of the products come from long distances. Participants have mentioned the Participate Guarantee System between producers and consumers based on trust as a privilege. If the consumer prefers products on a local basis, she/he will give less importance to organically guaranteed products.

Preferring local products, these consumers are therefore refusing products that have to be long distance transported and stored. In fact, this intention is owing to environmental considerations rather than to protect local or national producers' interests. As referred by Raul, "important is not to pollute or pollute the minimum possible". It was clear that when consuming near the production these consumers are contributing to reduce the ecological footprint. When buying products from people they know, they are cooperating with local economy, strengthening the consumer/producer relationship. They feel that they have an impact in those people lives, giving the adequate payment for what they produce and eliminating the chain. Simultaneously, they have a different form of contact and communication, closer and with more willing to help each other, a way to unite the community.

Thus, the participative organisation of LFN, the fact of not using money in these networks, and the intention of becoming more autonomous in relation to the supply chains, are the strongest political expressions of local consumption. LFN represent a sort of bypass mechanism for traditional market models, and a place of alternative expressions, as, in some cases, the absence of currency, the value

of the consumer and producer relation. Also, LFN symbolize solidarity, trust, sharing, mutual support and the connection between place and people that cultivate organic products.

Moreover, the politics of localism also represent respect for ecological principles and enhancing of the social dimension, organic and small scale preference and a link between place and people.

4.3.2.3 Activism

Consumers recognize their role as consumers and they put their power into practice, influencing their circle of direct influence, hoping to have a greater impact. Therefore, two perspectives stand out: a radical activism expressed, through a drastic rupture with the capitalist and consumption system; a soft activism which corresponds to the majority of the consumers of this research, who, expect to change attitudes in their circle of influence through the example they practice.

Identified with a radical political consumption approach, Luís supports the need of a dramatic change in general consumption, particularly in food. To Luís, this change is supported by the argument that, from the ecological point of view, the current situation is unsustainable. For this reason, he supports a rupture with the system that, in his opinion, “manipulates” people.

With evolution is always better, but what has been made during the last generation, was to progressively start food industrialization. This evolution surpasses our possibility to adapt. The human being does not have the possibility to follow this evolution. And ecologically it is impossible! Economically it has been very interesting, everybody applauded. It is necessary to have a revolution! Because with evolution we cannot do it! Our consumption habits have to be adapted but afterwards when people start opening their eyes they feel better. After entering this phase, people spend their free times in a different way, healthier. Now what do people do? They do what it is put into their heads, do you understand? Manipulate people! People ask you what is your goal and you do not know! People do not know what do answer! People are pushed and influenced and confused! (Luís)

However, the majority of participants exercise their civic activism by influencing other people, with the intention of reaching a larger scale impact. For example,

Clara sees her activism “as a seed” that will grow when good conditions appears. Raul promotes workshops to teach people how to eat directly from nature. For him, this option is “to go with the rhythm of Nature!” and because “it does not make sense to be dependent on a supermarket”. To Óscar, his artisanal agriculture is itself considered a form of resistance because he “do not want to do like those 70% of farmers who do not spoil the Earth”. Rosa feels a great need to influence because “Earth needs our help”. The perspective of these participants is global.

I want to promote organic production to save the planet, the environment. I am convinced that another type of production is a completely fake way... the way of conventional agriculture. (Rosa)

4.4 Discussion

As Fairclough (2003) refers, discourses include representations of how things are or have been, as well as imaginaries, new ways of being and new identities, where individuals position themselves within them. The last phase of Fairclough's discourse analysis method – *explanation* - involves three levels¹⁴: *representation*, *identification*, and *action*.

In this research, the three main discourses concerning food politics (politics of production, politics of localism, and activism), converge to a ecocentric discourse (Carter, 2004): small scale, decentralized production, self-sufficient local communities; local exchange, and low environmental impact agriculture. Participants evidenced a hard version of the discourse for ecology, represented in their choices, preferring organic and making significant lifestyle changes. Therefore, they feel the need to adopt green consumption as a strategy to achieve an environmental reform: “think global, act local” (Carter, 2004; Connolly & Prothero, 2008). These three political perspectives are closely interrelated with agroecology (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011), that is to say, to this group, the ethical consumption includes necessarily to consume what is organically

¹⁴ Representation: related with the meanings of the world that appear represented in the text. It is also related with knowledge and how to get control over things;

Identification: meanings that reflect the construction of identities. It is related to relations with oneself, ethics, and the 'moral agent';

Action: related to others, to act on others and with power relations.

produced, locally, in a low environmental impact agriculture, if possible using artisanal methods. Supporting small producers was also evident, highlighting a concern about the asymmetries of power in relation to these discourses. Therefore, they show an attitude of challenge to the 'industrialized' agriculture, a detachment from the globalized food system represented by supermarkets. The more significant example of opposition to the current market that it was noticed in the interviews was the organisation of LFN, whose products are produced by the consumers ('prosumers') (Hamilton, Hewer, & Marketing, 2008; Moraes et al., 2012, 2010). In these networks, there was absence of currency and the use of virtual currency ('Ecosol' or 'Ecosal'). The most evident political demonstration through consumption was own food cultivation. These consumers of organic products give great importance to this practice, whose message is food independence and sovereignty.

These organic consumers also consider of great importance life inside this consumption community (a sense of community), by helping each other, by sharing. Therefore, food has a very significant role in these communities, where people take initiative and not official institutions or government. For this reason, it is at local level that this idea of communitarism (Hay, 2005, 2006, 2010; Holt, 1997) and social ecology is put into practice. It is where consumers feel that they need to be directly connected to the production and process and to the selection making, intending to evolve into an enlarged and more global view (Bryant & Goodman, 2004). Ideas such as agriculture supported community, with a social and agricultural component, are incorporated in consumption practices, where food is no long a strange concept.

These environmental concerned and well informed citizens, created a sense of responsibility and commitment expressed through their ethical consumption behaviours and by their actions inside the community. These attitudes are consistent with ecological citizenship proposed by Hobson (2002), in which they have a commitment to sustainability. Basically, these consumers assume a global environmental sensitivity and incorporate these concerns into their consumption habits. This implies that this discourse allows to build an ecological citizenship evidenced by the consumption of organic products. All the participants, evidenced that organic products make part of their lives in the sense of stating

their political position, expecting to influence other consumers through a positive and negative consumption (Zamwel, Sasson-Levy & Ben-Porat, 2014).

In this research, consumers clearly recognize the importance of consuming organic products as a 'weapon' to influence, in a political perspective. As a participant have referred, "consuming or not consuming organic is to vote", evidencing to be aware of the power as a consumer. Along with Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti (2005), in this research, participants expressed a political attitude and a form of collective activism (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). They therefore wish to diffuse messages preferring organic products, cultivating or obtaining them in closer circles, refusing other products with the intention of influencing society. These tactics are inserted in a greater strategy, the discourse for ecology. Participants stressed out their environmental concerns and dilemma regarding consumption by means of a radical or moderated ecocentric discourse. Rural consumers live in farms, some of them isolated, where they put in practice their environmental sustainability projects. Urban consumers buy their organic products in stores or participate in exchange groups and organize a decentralized form of participation.

To sum up, organic products consumption as a political tool is represented by transition initiatives (own food production and local exchange networks) and by protest and activism (influencing others towards a collective change).

4.5 Final remarks

This research critically examines meanings that a group of 'profess' consumers attribute to the consumption of organic products in the perspective of political discourse of food. Also constitute a contribution to better understand a self-declared green consumers who look for a hard sustainability and the construction of alternatives (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011; McDonald, Oates, Young & Hwang, 2006). The main contribution is to notice that all subjects that have been identified converge into a political discourse about consumption, following three dimensions: politics of production, politics of localism and activism. Additionally, it gives evidences of how initiatives in terms of local politics regarding organic production and consumption can produce a global ecological

impact. This political manifestation represented by the way of production, purchasing and influence, cannot be seen in an isolated form. The three aspects complement each other in order to reach the main strategy – an ecocentric discourse that participate in the construction of an ecological citizenship.

This research presents empiric evidences that these ecological citizens are extremely reflexive, emotional and well informed about their role as consumers, from a political and ethical point of view. In addition, consumption is a major issue for those individuals who relate it to current environmental problems. They recognize that by producing the own food according to agroecology principles, looking for these products locally, privileging community based market channels, they are putting into practice alternative ideas to obtain a global impact. That is, organic consumption represents form a counter-power of political consumers toward capitalist market system and a symbolic political instrument that materializes in acting locally to obtain a global environmental impact.

CHAPTER 5

THE GREEN IDENTITY FORMATION PROCESS IN THE ORGANIC CONSUMER COMMUNITY: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM AND CONSUMER RESISTANCE

Abstract

In terms of consumer behaviour, the application of the 'Processual Theory of Identity' by Cherrie and Murray (2007) has not been sufficiently explored. Therefore, this study has the purpose of identifying the green identity formation process within organic community and the new expressions resulting from this very process. A phenomenological and sequential approach is used with 31 in-depth interviews, focused on daily experiences. It establishes five phases for green consumption identity formation: (1) consciousness, (2) gathering, (3) negotiation, (4) stabilization, (5) and sharing. Along the process, environmental and ethical activism is inseparable from the green identity formation. The identity formation process ends with postmodern elements of consumption lifestyle, in which individuals express an emancipator and resistance position toward the individualistic consumer culture.

Keywords: Organic consumption, Portugal, Hermeneutic analysis, Green identity, Change, Consumer resistance.

5.1 Introduction

Green consumption has been researched from different perspectives, usually as a symbolic meaning that allows consumers to express who they are. However,

concerning the consumers identity, recent literature neither clarified the relation between identity and green consumption, nor how green identities are actually formed (Perera, 2014). To the best of our knowledge, another important component that is missing in the literature is the respective personal development in relation to sustainability (Hay, 2006).

Belk (1988) introduced the concept of 'extended self', in which consumers express identity through consumers' practices, as a continuous process of reflexive building, based on a permanent conflict between consumer choices and the balance upon to environmental well-being. Moreover, Hay (2010, p. 164) refers that while the current dominant paradigm persists, grounded on "anthropocentrism and utilitarianism", the construction of a more "ecocentric" approach will be less examined. Consequently, the identity of each individual is predominantly an individual construction, even though it is also influenced by many other contexts.

'Identity' is manifested through consumer attitudes, such as consumer resistance (Cherrier, 2009), intentional non-consumption (Cherrier et al., 2011; Lee, Motion, & Conroy, 2009), radical ecological oriented citizens living in eco-communards (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002), green consumptions practices (Perera, 2014), identity formation among consumer resistance movement (Cherrier, 2007), or green identities' positioning accordance with ecological and ethical consumer ethos (Autio et al., 2009). However, in an analysis conducted for this research, studies regarding sustainable consumption have not taken into account the role of green consumer identity formation, nor how consumers define their identities in relation to recent adopted communities and disassociating from nonethically concerned contexts (Papaoikonomou, Ryan, & Valverde, 2011; Perera, 2014). Besides, there seems to be a gap between how the formation of green identity is constructed and expressed among the consumers of organic products, and how these identities reflect the motivations for their engagement.

Drawn in a postmodern epistemological perspective (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995), in the way that consumer identity is a product of the act of consumption, this paper pursues two aims: (1) to analyse how organic products contribute to build new green consumers identities; (2) to understand the new expressions that stand out

in the formation of those green identities. In doing so, we investigate a devoted organic consumers' community by adopting a phenomenological and existential approach, using a purposive sample of 31 organic consumers. In this regard, and for the study of identities, Cherrier and Murray's (2007) Processual Theory of Identity is particular relevant. The approach followed by these scholars was to identify the cultural resources and central discourses of green identity (cf. Autio et al., 2009), rather than to explain individual behaviour.

This paper begins by analysing the literature on identity consumption and about how green identity has been studied in relation to behavioural changes. Afterwards, the findings with the five phases of the green identity formation process are outlined. Finally, the discussion of the results are presented, stressing the idea that individual ethical consumption practices are subordinated to a societal formation process, and that organic community is conducive to postmodern expressions of identity.

5.2 Literature Review

5.2.1 Personal self and social self

The term "identity" is commonly used in various fields of social science to distinguish a person from the cultural environment (ethnicity); to refer to a common identity; used in the study of social movements; or to refer to the meanings that are attributed to the multiple roles that individuals normally play in contemporary societies (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Identity is dynamically constructed and developed in the context where it is embedded, organizing the own experience and allowing to make predictions about oneself in relation to the response of others (Oyserman, 2009; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Identities are intrinsically relational (Cherrier & Murray, 2007) and also have a temporal characteristic that describes the person who has been, is and who will become (Oyserman, 2009; Stryker & Burke, 2000).

The 'self-concept' is a cognitive structure consisting of multiple competing identities and linked to different networks or social relations with their own

agendas and expectations and constructed in relation to others (Cherrier, 2007; Oyserman & Destin, 2010; Stryker & Burke, 2000). According to Oyserman and Destin (2010), these identities can have two dimensions: (1) a personal dimension, the self-identity, which includes its own self aspects making the individual unique; or, (2) a social dimension, which includes self aspects rooted in group memberships focusing attention on the social-cultural context effects. In this context, the literature presents two theories:

(1) The identity theory

Identity is related to internal and individual behaviour. Therefore, it has a multiple and hierarchical nature, where each individual assumes his own identity according to the group, the networks where they are inserted and the position they occupy in the social world. It is therefore influenced by social factors (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995; Hurth, 2010; Stryker & Burke, 2000).

(2) The social identity theory

Explains the group process and their behavioural interactions as group members (Hay, 2010; Hogg et al., 1995). It focuses on aspects of our behaviour as being betrayed by “a tendency towards intra-group solidarity and inter-group competition” (Jackson, 2005, p. ix).

Stets and Burke (2000) establish a detailed comparison between social identity theory and identity theory, by proposing a “general theory of the self” in order to explain how identity is seen and constructed by both theories. They refer that the two theories complement each other and are useful to understand the conditions under which an identity can be activated in different situations, since the identity role of each cannot be separated from the group and its own social identity.

In this line of reasoning, in Cherrier's (2006) research about the symbolic use of green shopping bags, it was found that ethical consumer's conscience is developed and influenced both by self-identity and social norms. She identified the following ethical identity components:

(1) Self-identity

Personal choices arises from individual choices in which consumers look to their own conscience, emphasising the participation in political and social activities. This perspective argues that consumers are "active individuals and ethical voters" (p. 512).

(2) Social norms

Consumers must obey to a prescriptive set of ethical norms to consume ethically (the cultural conservative view). Cherrier (2006) argues that ethical practices of consumption should be externally; that consumers are passive and tend to behave ethically in order to be social accepted. The author shows that a single practice (the use of green bag consumption) "plays a vital role in shaping his (consumer) identity as an ethical/green/environmental conscious consumer" (p. 521). This ethical conscience reflects a process of learning and contributes to consumers' identity formation in the way that the symbolic meaning of these practices help to reach "a new level of ethical reflection" (p. 521) encouraging to change other daily practices.

In this regard, Rettie, Burchell and Riley (2012) use the term "social normalization" to describe the role of sustainable marketing to influence the behaviour of people in order to consume and adopt sustainable practices, triggering this behaviour to be considered normal, repositioning it as "mainstream".

Belk (1988) introduced the concept of "extended self" as a way to define the individual by his possessions, a sort of "second skin" (p.151). He analysed the relation between possessions and sense of self, in order to understand the meanings that consumers attach to possessions. Noted that objects are a component of the self (food also), "act[ing] as reminders and confirmers of our identities" (p. 141). Possessions can bring memories and feelings that are connected to our sense of past and nostalgia. Furthermore, Belk (1988) argued that the extended self works not only on the individual level, but also on a collective level, such as "family, group, subcultural and national identity" (p. 160).

In the same way as possessions, products and brands are also identity related (Oyserman, 2009) in the way that they symbolize values, may possess a certain personality congruent with their personal identity, so that can reinforce group identity (Shavitt, Torelli, & Wong, 2009).

Clarke et al. (2000) studied ethical issues embedded within self-identity and how these attitudes and behaviours have become an important part for consumer's life. They find that consumers make ethical consumes choices because, for many of them, what is important is not only their self-interest, but rather their ethical and moral concerns. This aspect is related to the concept of 'Identity-Based Motivations' (IBM) introduced by Oyserman (2009). This theoretical model built from the theories of self-concept and identity "focuses attention on the motivational pull toward identity-congruent action and identity-congruent cognitive procedures" (p. 252). That is, this model is based on the assumption that people are motivated to act in the sense that their actions are consistent with its contextualized identities at a given time and in a given context. However, this is not always so easy to do. Soron (2010) researched self-identity in the way that ordinary people face struggles to respond ethically to social and ecological problems on their own everyday life-activities, as he referred, "a person responsibility to global problems" (p. 179). Overall, the IBM sustain that the cognitive component (self) cannot be separated from the context (social) but dynamically built together.

5.2.2 Green identity formation and environmental behavioural change

Green consumption literature has shown that environmental awareness and consciousness affect consumer behaviour (Peattie, 2001). Although some consumers show little interest and scepticism towards environmental issues, to others, the "consistent ecologists", consumption habits are entirely influenced by their environmental convictions (Peattie, 2001, p. 196).

According to Horton (2003), environmental issues can either be seen as a political force (a class-based politics, as a critique to the voracious demand for economic growth and hegemony of overconsumption) manifested by a marked

environmental profile, or simply reflected on everyday routine practices. However, in Western societies, many consumers are locked into the current practices of unsustainable consumption, deeply embedded in social and institutional contexts (Jackson, 2005). The change of consumption patterns is adjusted either by individual beliefs (consumers, having appropriate values and attitudes are free to adopt pro-environmental behaviours), and external conditions (which exert a great influence on individual behaviour). In this process, identity is constructed and matured gradually in the context (family, social and natural) (Hay, 2010; Jackson, 2005b).

In these circumstances, Jackson (2005) points out that one of the moral approaches that best justifies pro-environmental behaviours is the Ecological Value Theory, arguing that such behaviours flow directly from pro-social or moral values and that those who have values centred on their own interests are less likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviours. This theory is framed by the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) proposed by Dunlap and Van Liere (1978), which contains a set of fundamental values that differ from the Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP), and which emphasize respect for the limits of nature and the importance of preserving the balance and its integrity. However, it is difficult to commit to an environmentally friendly behaviour (Soron, 2010), because individual options are extremely influenced by feelings of belonging to social groups, due to their emotional ties and values (Jackson, 2005b).

In this sense, environmental consumption practices can be seen as a political force (a class-based politics, as a critique to the voracious demand for economic growth and hegemony of overconsumption) manifested by a minded environmental profile, and reflected in everyday routine practices (Horton, 2003). The consumer identity is then constructed and matured gradually in the context (family, social and natural) (Hay, 2010; Jackson, 2005b), and different types of identity may be implied (Autio et al., 2009). Besides, the formation of identity also involves “not only one’s individual identity to consider, but also group, social, place and national identity” (Hay, 2010, p. 164). Therefore, the construction of the self cannot be separated from consumer culture (Cherrier & Murray, 2004; Cherrier, 2005), so that consumer identity is “dynamically constructed in [a] particular context” (Oyserman, 2009, p. 250), and it is a continuous and never

concluded process (processual) in which different dimensions of the self are open to negotiation (Cherrier & Murray, 2007).

Understanding how green consumer identities are constructed is of particular importance. Research sustains that environmental (and social) crises that modern Western societies face are due to a capitalist system (Hay, 2005) strongly associated to an excess of consumption (Arvidsson, 2005; Dobers & Strannegård, 2005; Hobson, 2002; Jackson, 2005b; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008), and a materialistic lifestyle (Hay, 2005). Thus, it is essential to change the values and beliefs that guide individuals' consumption behaviours (Hay, 2005; Kilbourne, 1998). It is also necessary to be inside creative and progressive cultural contexts linked to environmental, activist, and altruistic groups that promote sustainability. Moisander and Pesonen (2002) argue that through personal environmental ethics it is possible to encourage new forms of subjectivity that reject an individualist approach to consumption.

In fact, in Western societies, consumers' behaviours are gradually changing. Some wealthy consumers show more willingness to act environmentally and to adhere to green consumption faster than those with low income (Hurth, 2010). Other consumers adopt a simple life in green communities (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002, p. 340) building ways of living in accordance with nature, in a search for "change the world" and "change themselves". Other consumers, in their eagerness to reach a more satisfying life towards the "hegemony in the marketplace" (Bekin, Carrigan, & Szmigin, 2005, p. 414), opt for voluntarily simplify their lifestyle. Based on previous research, Bekin et al. (2005) state that, although this change in consumption requires enormous personal and financial adjustment, these consumers seek greater control over their lives, and this lifestyle presents an alternative to the "paradoxical work-to-consume ethic" (Bekin et al., 2005, p. 416). However, green identities' consumption may be constructed by several different discourses: from a more reformist discourse, where the emphasis is the adoption of clean products and greener technologies; to a more radical discourse that stands for the need to reduce consumption and changing the capitalist society (Autio et al., 2009). Consequently, and according to Moisander and Pesonen (2002), the DSP tends to normalise the 'reformist' green

identities, and to marginalise the radical green identities, positioning them as the 'others' in a dominant discourse.

Bekin et al. (2005) investigated radical forms of voluntary simplifier groups in communal lives and found that the adoption of this new lifestyle is perceived by the group members as a way of resistance to marketing sovereignty and to achieve self-sufficiency, redefining their position as consumers. Bekin et al. (2005) also found that the members of these communities pursue strong consumers' decisions, such as reducing the amount of purchases, opting for buying organic products and its own food production. However, these authors also question the universalist character of these communities, since they "seem to be more about individual aspirations and responses to particular issues than actual collective, communal lifestyles guided by common principles" (Bekin et al., 2005, p. 423). Moisander and Pesonen (2002) argue that all green consumers are (or should be) "rational" actors due to their pre-defined system of moral standards for "rational deliberation". Nevertheless, an ecocentric personal ethics, resulting from the integration of personal and environmental concerns, may lead to the social normalization of sustainable non-consumption activities (Autio et al., 2009; Cherrier et al., 2011).

Green identities consumption performance may include several discourses from more radical perspectives where it stands the need to reduce consumption, to a more reformist position, approaching the theory of ecological modernization, where the emphasis is the adoption of clean products and greener technologies (Autio et al., 2009). According to Moisander and Pesonen (2002), some types of green profile are normalised so that the DSP attributes a version that seems to be as "reformist"; and others, are marginalised and considered socially deviant (the radical green consumers). However, according to Moisander and Pesonen (2002) the marginalised green consumers are considered as "the others" in the dominant discourse, but they represent the moral agents, as the resistance against the "prevalent materialistic consumption" (p. 332). This green consumption representation can be considered as individualistic in the way that it "accentuates the primary importance of the individual and independence of social and institutional environment" (p. 333).

Drawn in the social movement approach to ethical consumption/postmodern perspective, Cherrier (2007) studied the identity formation among consumer resistance. According to Cherrier (2007), the process of change of the consumer identity goes through a self-reflection associated with a feeling of dissatisfaction with life, being this the reason for triggering an ethical consumer lifestyle, and implying that the act of consumption must reflect the essence of who the consumer is. However, this change is only possible for those who lived in a postmodern context that allows them the opportunity to freely consume and build their own identity. Thus, the author mentioned that consumers' identity formation is highly influenced by the social dimension and the shared identity (see also Cherrier and Murray, 2007; and Dobers and Strannegård, 2005). In this sense, individual ethical consumption practices are often subordinated to societal formation process.

The best way to study the ethical consumer identity is to observe how it forms gradually in the context, as a shared construction, a sort of consumer in transition. Therefore, consumer identity is “dynamically constructed in the particular context” (Oyserman, 2009, p. 250), it is a continuous process that is never concluded (processual) in which the different dimensions of the self are open for negotiation (Cherrier & Murray, 2007). According to Cherrier (2007), the “best way to study ethical consumer identity is to observe how it forms gradually” (p. 332), a “co-productive, co-constructive approach” (p. 323), a sort of consumer in transition. However, ethical consumption practices must be developed in accordance with the acceptance of the differences between themselves and others, that is, the “interaction between individual and collective identity” (p. 332).

The Processual Theory of Identity proposed in 2007 by H el ene Cherrier and Jeff Murray, refers to ‘identity’ as a “continuous process of negotiation [of] dimensions of the self” (p. 2). The theory is based on three specific concepts: identity transition, downshifting literature and Fromm’s ‘having/being’ modes of existence. Thus, using a intertextual analysis, Cherrier and Murray (2007) discovered four main stages regarding identity consumer formation: sensitization (to engage in a process of critical reflection about the attitude towards consumption); separation (from the dominant forms of socialization allows consumers to find freedom and choose new expressions of socialization among

others); socialization (to access to a social circle provides support to reorganize the new identity and consumption lifestyle); and striving (consumers learn to live in a new reality with themselves and with others).

In a later study, among young Australian environmentalists, Perera (2014) tested the applicability of Cherrier and Murray's (2007) four-stage Processual Theory of Identity. Each stage of the formation of green identities shows how young environmentalists continually position themselves and negotiate their own identities. The four stages of identity formation proposed by Perera (2014) are: control (being informed and active consumers will enhance control over consumption decisions); create (the attempt to disassociate themselves from social stereotypes, creating own 'identity' projects consumption practices); compromise (consumers negotiate compromises to their 'green identity', reducing conflicts and rejection); customize (involves striving to customize green consumer 'identity' to harmonize social relations while engaging in countercultural consumption practices).

However, to the best of our knowledge, research focused on identity formation among alternative communities is still scarce. This study aims to contribute to call for alternative models of consumption (such as the organic consumer community), and the change of everyday consumption practices, by establishing a social and collective basis for personal 'identity' (Soron, 2010).

5.3 Research findings

As a result of the initial phase of the hermeneutical analysis process (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Thompson et al., 1990), Leonor's case is representative of an hermeneutic analysis and precedes the thematic (intertextual) description discussed below. Of all the participants, Leonor is the one who seems to have her green consumer identity more complete and mature. At the time of the interview, Leonor was a neo-peasant, dedicated organic consumer, and committed to her recent project of self-sufficiency.

5.3.1 The case of Leonor

Leonor, in her childhood, had a strong influence on environmental issues. Although she had lived in a deeply rural region of Portugal and always had contact with home-grown products, she had never wondered whether they were authentically organic. Later on, at the university, Leonor studied environmental engineering and she got inspired by a lecturer to become aware of the importance of agriculture and industry problems. That was the triggering event. There, her first major change in relation to consumption was to become vegetarian for an environmental and animal welfare reasons. But then the problems started with her mother due to the new diet acceptance. Becoming a vegetarian forced her to cook for herself at home, feeling “aside” of her family. So, Leonor joined an environmental group, whose members were also consumers of organic products, to obtain information and feel supported. She refers that her consumption was influenced by collective consumption (of the environmental group that she joined) and gave her the moral support she was looking for. She started making strong decisions about consumption and became intolerant to conventional products. She started to consume less and spread this message to others, taking part in actions like “buy nothing day”. Travelling for a year reinforced her the notion of living with only a few things in her “backpack”. Then, she decided to change her lifestyle and build her self-sufficiency project in the countryside to become more self-sufficient because she did not have the support that she expected from her mother for becoming a vegetarian. She referred that for a certain period she only “ate green”. By saying this, she refers not only to food but also to the absence of “others” in her life. The solution was to become closer to people with the same vision in the exchange network.

During the first year I only ate green! For 4 months only green. I need colours in my life! I need different flavours in my life! I was so focused on eating only what I had in my farm that I did not follow the abundance pattern but the scarcity pattern. Then, I experimented a huge feeling of frustration! There I was, feeling frustrated... And I got close to the extra “me” community. The Network was essential! The Network and the people that work in the land. These people that live from micro-projects, from micro-production and who also seek sustainability. They brought colour to my life and inspired me. (Leonor)

In this extract, Leonor explains that she tried an initial separation from her family context. In this process of lifestyle changing, she refers that she did not let important “things go”, but she made significant decisions. The most important ones were stop shaving and not having a job. She refers that she needed to be recognized with authenticity and not just do what other people wanted her to do. In this process, she began to change internally. Then she considered the material aspect: her career, consumption habits, and the farm. However, she does not consider that she had let go many material goods, since she was used to live a frugal life. The isolation on the farm with her self-sufficiency project, and the need to be surrounded by people who share the same convictions, led her to join the exchange network to share and influence.

She exercises her activism near the local community, by promoting actions to draw people’s attention to organic products, hoping that her farm, the only organic farm in the neighbourhood, can be a model. The activist role is always present in her discourse. When questioned about something concrete related to organic products, Leonor’s answers also covered other aspects, letting understand the wide range of important benefits that these products have in her life. Eating habits and the benefits associated to the consumption of organic products are extremely important to Leonor.

In this research, despite the idiographic nature of Leonor's narrative, the reading of the various interviews suggests several stages common to the green identities formation process: (1) consciousness, (2) gathering, (3) negotiation, (4) stabilization, (5) and sharing.

Figure 7 - The green identity formation process



5.3.2 The phases of the green consumer identity formation process

5.3.2.1 Consciousness

From the analysis made, two types of consumers were identified: those who discovered organic products in a later stage of their lives owing to a critical event perfectly defined or to a set of circumstances or events; and those, a minority among the sample, who always (or from an early stage) had a strong connection with organic products. In this second category, there are the cases of Jorge and João, which are very similar. They have always been inserted in a health food and respect for the environment context. In João's case, a "rare bird", as he calls himself, was raised in a family that already practiced bio-dynamic agriculture. For this reason, he has always been linked to organic food and environment friend agricultural techniques. Later on, he started working in this area, first as a consultant, afterwards as a bio-dynamic farmer. In Jorge's case, he got in touch with organic food early in his life. Since an early age he was aware of the importance of organic food. Already at the University, he studied Agronomy but given the classic formation based on intensive agriculture he realized that this model was still incompatible with his convictions. He had been the only agronomy student to choose organic agriculture. The following text evidences his vision of conventional agriculture:

I think that intensive agriculture is based on simply understanding life. And it is an almost mathematical thing. If you make an herb grow, you add a certain amount of fertilizers, nitrogen, potassium and phosphates. And the plant grows... But life is a complex thing. It involves an interaction between the sun, the herb and the life that exists in the land. All organic processes are forgotten in intensive agriculture and there is also the question of pesticides. To me, this is simple question: there is a predator, so, I am going to attack it. I am going to kill it. The system is not considered as a whole and to me that was also a problem since I thought it was a conceptual mistake and this matter should be reconsidered in a much more integrated way. For all this, I have always been interested in organic agriculture. I have always been a supporter. (Jorge)

Jorge evidences a vision on food cultivated according to organic agriculture beyond physiological motivations, based on environmental concerns. This was

an influence of his father who was very sensitive to environmental issues and who introduced him to natural food and ecology.

My father was very sensitive to these questions. He used to give us lessons about this... We used to live in the countryside and he even showed us that the taste of our products that were naturally produced was much better if compared with the products that we ate outside. I was in the fields and found things I could eat. It is a culture that I have since I was child and that marked me forever. (Jorge)

However, the other category of consumers, which is the most representative of this research, who discovered organic products in a later stage of their lives, when a “triggering event” (Cherrier & Murray, 2007, p. 14) caused a reflective process about their lifestyles. This is the first phase of the green identity formation and organic consumption: consciousness.

During the interviews, participants have been questioned about the event that caused the change to organic consumption. Some of them were not able to give an immediate answer. However, after a certain reflection, they referred to the moment or circumstance that resulted in behaviour change. This research led to identifying three categories of critical events (see table 10): (1) experiences and personal circumstances (e.g.: death of a relative or friend, birth of a child, a travel, among others); (2) social influences (e.g.: influence of father or mother, a teacher or friends, among others); and (3) environmental and welfare concerns (e.g.: awareness caused by a specific event like the visit to a water treatment plant, or the change of diet for reasons of animal welfare).

Some of the participants were not able to mention only one critical event but a set of events that led to the change, either in terms of organic products consumption or, in a first stage, of consumption behaviour, which led to an organic consumption.

Cristina did not have a “background”. Only recently she got in contact with organic products, during a spiritual retreat. Until then, she had never questioned the origin of goods, where they are produced, labour conditions of the people that produce them and environmental consequences. After that, food gained a greater importance. She then experienced a short period of reflection until she decided to purchase in an organic supermarket. The argument for the initial resistance

was the trouble of not having car which made more difficult to go to those places. She took an hour to go to an organic store.

I never thought about this. I never questioned where things come from. The origin of products. And that was the seed... And the seed made me think and question “Ok, where do things come from? Where is this produced? What are the working conditions of these people? What are the environmental consequences?...” And also... the retreat had an impact on me... There are other forms of feeding! (Cristina)

Table 10 – Critical incident or circumstances

	Critical incident	Participants
Personal experiences	Birth of a child	Lara, Mário, Tiago, Clara, Óscar, Susana
	Beginning of a process of spiritual transformation	Maria
	Death of a spouse	Andrea
	Option for a different diet (macrobiotic, vegetarian, organic products)	Inês, Raúl, Rosa
	Financial independence	Rosa, Sofia, Mónica
	Beginning organic agriculture (professionally)	Marco
	Living in a tropical country	Sónia
	During adolescence having read a Greenpeace book	Vítor
	Casually meet an organic store abroad	Matilde
	Realization that life as it was did not make sense	Olga, Luís, Júlia
	Initiation of a reflection process on food (awareness)	Tiago, Clara, Mara
	Volunteer "woofing"	Tiago
	Participation in a spiritual retreat	Cristina
	Living in a bio-dynamic farm	Óscar
Starting home cultivation	Daniel	
Travel and meet new cultures	Leonor, Lia	
Social influences	Childhood memories (family, village, nature)	Olga, Inês
	Parents influence	Sofia, Mariana
	Contact with the cooperative model	Monica
	Influence of the circle of friends (University, exchange network, environmentalist group)	Monica, Leonor
	At the University, the influence of a professor	Vítor, Leonor
	Inspiration on a (simple) lifestyle of a friend	Luís
Environmental concerns and animal well-being	At the University, classical training on conventional agriculture	Jorge
	War environmental and social devastation	Rosa
	Environmental awareness during adolescence (ozone destruction, Chernobyl accident, visit to a water treatment plant)	Sofia
	At the University, get in touch with practices opposite to animal well-being (intensive production, animal sacrifice for research purposes, etc)	Andrea, Mariana, Joana, Susana
	Change of diet for animal well-being reasons	Vítor, Rosa, Leonor, Lia

To Sofia, consumption is clearly linked to environmental concerns and organic products. During her adolescence, three events were important for building her environmental consciousness: the ozone layer problem, the Chernobyl incident and the visit to a water treatment plant in her region. These events were a “positive reinforcement of a decision that she had already taken.” However, she only started consuming organic products after leaving her parents’ house, when she could make her own consumption choices.

I started consuming organic products 20 years ago, when I could make my own choices and my own purchases. That was when I left my parents’ home. At the time I was concerned about health food and the impact that our food has on Earth, because I am a consumer with a specific concern about animal welfare. I think I have a global concern, I do not know how to explain it... But 20 years ago when I started consuming organic I used to make punctual purchases. (Sofia)

Mariana, a veteran organic consumer, is a case in which her convictions and environmental awareness were reinforced by an event. It was during university, when she studied the best way to feed animals. She was shocked to know how these techniques had a negative impact on the environment. Consequently, she started reflecting on her consumption concerns, trying to find a way to eat whilst respecting the environment. Her current main great motivation is to consume locally and organically.

There were several things. We were faced with several things, which shocked me! I was already environmentally aware ... I think that it does not make sense that I consume without thinking about the origin of products, how they were produced. (Mariana)

Some of the participants evidence that vegetarianism precedes to organic products consumption, for nutritional and animal welfare reasons. Also, a large majority mention environmental concerns and consciousness as an aspect before starting to consume organically. Lia, a French organic farmer living in Alentejo, is representative of this fact. Before knowing organic products, she chose vegetarianism due to animal welfare reasons. She then travelled to many countries seeking for inspiration for a simpler life. After university, she experienced her most relevant moment: she worked on conventional farms. The contact with reality, knowing how things are produced, made her look for organic

products and this changed Lia's life completely. In this process, Lia left behind her past and started a simpler and less mainstream style of life.

I grew up in a conventional part of society... nobody asked questions... in the nineties, in France, nobody had a garden to grow vegetables. That belonged to the past! It was normal to watch television, we are very cosmopolitan, we make visits, we go to European cities... we travel... a modern life that seems to be normal. And I started to leave all that, entering in a world where I do not receive a lot of money when I work and I do not look for work that gives more money. (Lia)

The case of Marco, an organic farmer, was different from Lia's. His environmental concerns emerged when he got in contact with organic production and only then he started consuming these products. His initial agricultural training was oriented towards conventional production based on a purely economic perspective, "regardless of any ethics". Marco considers his relation with consumption before getting in contact with organic products, as follows.

How did I meet organic? Not as a consumer. For many years I did not have any concerns. I remember those years, in the nineties, I used to drink more than one litre of Coke per day. My food dream was achieved when the first McDonald's came to Portugal. I remember the eighties... we used to live under the influence of the United States at all levels. (Marco).

The approach to organic and adopting an organic agriculture are the circumstances that changed Marco's life. The following extract shows the interest in obtaining information and the "awakening" to environmental concerns.

Consumption was a consequence of the environmental awareness, of becoming concerned and looking for information about possible solutions. I built my own consumption since I tried to be coherent with my conscience. It was production that led me to awareness, and awareness led me to consumption. (Marco)

In this research, it is clear the diversity of experiences and contact with organic products. However, the narratives show some aspects that are common to all participants (see table 11). The prior period to the critical incident is characterized by the absence of questioning about consumption and meaning of life. Consumers have a "normal" life as regular consumer, whilst being unsatisfied with their own lives. However, some sensitivity is shown towards environmental concerns. In this phase, consumers are more concerned about materialistic

aspects, what Cherrier and Murray (2007, p. 4) called: the “having mode of existence”.

Table 11 - Representative quotes

Before the event	"I already had a kind of sensitivity to environmental issues." (Jorge)
	"I was the ideal consumer", "without thinking", "slave", "pushed by the system" (Luís)
	"Lack of knowledge", "nobody asks questions", "we are very cosmopolitan" (Lia)
	"What am I doing to my life?" (Júlia)
	"A modern life that seems to be normal." (Lia)
Triggering event	"Awakening" (Mariana)
	"It was the seed that made me think and question" (Cristina)
	"Consciousness" (Mariana)
	"It was a drive I made." (Marco)
After the event	"It does not make sense consuming without thinking about the origin of things." (Mariana)
	"My consumption is linked to environmental concerns." (Sofia)
	"Coherent with my conscience." (Marco)
	"Feel less need to consume." (Lara)
	"It reinforced my life", "simpler" (Olga)
	"I have to better plan my purchases and be more rational." (Mário)

The “triggering event” marks the transition between ‘before’ and ‘after organic’ consumption, what Cherrier and Murray (2007) define as the “turning point”. That is, an event that “interrupted informants’ lives, causing them to take pause, think and reflect out their situation” (p. 14).

This phase demonstrates that consumers tend to be more conscientious about consumption and do not want to take part in a consumerist culture. Expressions such as “look for”, “coherence”, “awareness” or “concerns” are frequent in the discourses of these consumers, indicating a transition to a new identity of consumption, detaching them from a “normative background of life” (Cherrier & Murray, 2007, p. 16). This fact leads us to the next phase of building green consumption identity, which is that of “gathering”.

5.3.2.2 Gathering

Like Perera's (2014) study, in this phase participants start to exercise their control over their new consumption choices. They feel the need to relate and share their convictions and information with others with the same ideals. Besides the organic products consumption, these consumers adopt other practices related with food and lifestyle, which function as pressure factors to abandon previous relations and that, in turn, justifies this gathering. In fact, their previous relations are perceived as a constraint to the adoption of a new consumption identity.

Accordingly, two types of positions have been identified: the radical cut with previous relations, confirming Cherrier and Murray's (2007) study; and the attempt to maintain a balance between those two worlds.

For Mara, an environmental activist, the proximity to new relations and the detachment from previous ones is a natural consequence.

It was something natural... not intentional. At first I invited people from a previous life to come live another and collision happened! They were not comfortable with it! [laughs] (Mara).

She also admits that the new relations helped her developing her personality, initially more “reactive”, into a more “sophisticated” posture about food based on “food sovereignty”. This process enabled her to change from “individual activist” to more collective forms of protests. The new context that allowed her such self-transformation was the environmentalist group that she joined.

To other participants, previous relations continued to be part of their lives. Daniel refers to the following: “I do not put anyone aside! I respect people”. Also in Marco's case, he did not isolate himself from other people. Living in a traditional context and being vegetarian brought him uncomfortable moments and a lack of consideration from those around him. Nevertheless, he states that he always took a conciliatory attitude and did not break away from his relationships.

A common aspect to all participants was the reference to new organic community that they encountered when they started consuming organic products. Cristina refers that her life suffered a significant transformation. She admits that she is still

trying to adjust to groups which she identifies with. She therefore looks for new contexts, rather than maintaining the previous ones. She talks about her new “family” that inspires her and with whom she wants to be. Cristina expresses interests that stem from her consumption of organic products that originated from her new context where she is integrated in, therefore proving the importance of the others to build a new identity.

Other participants refer to the importance of new relations, the complicity that exists between people that “think the same way”, “that have something in common”, to feel “supported”, and to “share”.

As Cherrier and Murray (2007) identified, these consumers try to escape their past, leaving behind some aspects of their lives, such as jobs (like Leonor and Júlia), lifestyles (Luís), or families (Miguel), looking for a new subculture. However, in the identity formation process there are still conflicts to legitimize the new identity of organic consumption. This is the phase designated ‘negotiation’.

5.3.2.3 Negotiation

In this phase, participants try to find balance between before and after organic consumption periods. However, this change has brought conflicts, frustrations and dilemmas. Not necessarily for reasons of organic consumption but because of food habits, lifestyle and new socializations that they have adopted meanwhile. The most remarkable of these is vegetarianism. However, the discourse is, in most cases, conciliatory. For example, Rosa, a Dutch organic farmer, states that being a vegetarian and consuming organic products brings her a lot of resistance from others and she often feels left out. However, she neither considers herself as being a fundamentalist, nor does she confront people and she respects those who do not comply with her ethics (e.g. consume meat).

I often feel aside! It is so hard! But I feel good with this. I learned a long time ago that I should not talk much about these subjects because people feel uncomfortable. They do not want to know. It is complicated... I try to never bother people. If a person does not know that I am a vegetarian, I won't show it. (Rosa)

Rosa understands other people's position and she avoids confrontation, but she is strict in her positions assuming that she would rather "risk being hunger" than to contradict her convictions.

Vegetarianism negotiation is more complicated between family members than between friends. In a traditional society like the Portuguese one, in terms of food, vegetarianism is a source of conflict. Cristina refers to the shock that her family felt when she became a vegetarian and she blames Portuguese tradition for denying her social acceptance.

Well, it was not good! It was a kind of a shock! When I said that I did not want to eat fish... it was complicated because my own family did not accept it well. They thought that I was doing a very strange, meaningless thing. It is the kind of thoughts that gives you strength... This change was in the sense of questioning why do I eat what I eat? Because people do not ask these questions! They just eat automatically... It is tradition! They just follow tradition. (Cristina)

Another aspect is the fact that these consumers avoid imposing their point of view to others. To some, their posture is "not going around lecturing about vegetarianism". To others, they do not want to "convert anybody".

In this research, it is evident that participants show some reluctance in manifesting their new identity in their respective circle prior to their change, looking for new relations with those sharing the same convictions about food and having a similar lifestyle. However, they try to keep a balance between the two worlds, negotiating identity in a constant struggle to be in peace with the past or previous relations. As in Perera's study (2014), vegetarianism stands out as difficult to be accepted. Participants avoid to show that they are vegetarian, being most careful to not impose their option to others. As Monica referred, it is difficult to talk "to those who have not understood it yet".

After breaking with the past at a certain level, and harmonizing their social relations, participants practice their new consumption habits and lifestyle coherently with their new identity, leading us to the next phase: stabilization.

5.3.2.4 Stabilization

The research data analysis show two interesting aspects for the stabilization of green consumption identity. One is the direct influence of organic consumption; the other one is the influence of others for experimenting a new consumption community. Organic products consumption contributed to the consolidation of the identity, enabling awareness towards ecology matters (Maria), a physical well-being (Inês), being part of a life philosophy, and defending that it is possible to live in harmony (Jorge).

Organic products also influenced consumption habits in general. Thus, to Susana, the new consumption perspective brought her some personal maturation; in Matilde's case, she became more selective when purchasing; or in Luís's case, he naturally reduced his consumption and got satisfaction from this very reduction. Marco's statement also describes how his relation with consumption evolved, from the moment he started consuming organic products.

I was born in the consumption era. I was born when 'el-dorado' of consumption was sold. I used my conscience to try to refrain that and consume in the right way. It does not mean that consumption does not give some satisfaction... We are talking about shopping... I buy some sports items... It gives me satisfaction to buy a surfboard once in a while, a snow article... That gives me satisfaction... But it does not give me any satisfaction to buy clothes... I buy my clothes in low cost outlets for years... I understood that consumption is a very immediate satisfaction. (Marco)

In his quote, Marco makes a description of his adolescence and the beginning of his relation with consumption, how he put consumption "in the right place". He, therefore, consumes logically and rationally. He considers that consumption, his conscience and personality "have links and communication with everything".

Environmental concerns and the need to adequately feed her son made Susana's consumption habits more rational too. She increasingly reduced the quantity of material goods at home and gradually became detached from those material goods. She felt relieved by living with few possessions, certain that they were what she really needed. Whenever possible, she prefers to make her own products, instead of buying them.

This phase also demonstrates the effect of the others in the construction of a green consumption identity. Some, like Miguel, state that “without others they would be no one.” Susana is a significant case of influence to others and of organic consumption self-reflection. She mentions that she is surrounded by people with the same interests.

There are people that influence us. They didn't even notice it. They just said something and that was enough. I think it is mutual! Yes, there were inputs from the outside. But then I had to do some internal work, alone, and let it come outside... (Susana).

The participants look for new organic contexts where they can express their new green identity, without boundaries, feeling supported, such as: exchange network (Susana and Leonor); transition cities (Raul and Clara); CSA (Sofia and Jorge); localism initiatives and social currency (Mónica and Mário); environmental groups (Mara and Lia); organic markets (Daniel and Tiago); and organic stores (Miguel and Vitor).

The process of constructing consumer identity is never finished. Mariana, for example, feels good with the simple and frugal life that she adopted. However, she wants to live in a simpler way: “I could live perfectly without electricity”, “I would like to be able to not having a car”. She says that “the others” appeared naturally in her life and she “was never looking for anyone” because people gather around common interests. She considers contact with other people very important and she gets inspired by some people “who are a step ahead”. She would like to “be more often with the group and share more ideas, not only to be a self-sufficiency individual project”.

This research contains some similarities with the study of Cherrier and Murray (2007). The importance of the influence of “others” in the process of identity formation was clear. These consumers look at the example of others, look for their support and adopt the same practices and consumption habits. Social influences facilitate the change for a different kind of consumption, also enabling to adopt different lifestyles. Inspired by these consumers, they feel encouraged to influence others and pass on their knowledge and new lifestyle, which leads us to the last phase of the process of green identities formation: influence and sharing.

5.3.2.5 Sharing

After stabilizing their new identity, participants tend to influence others and share their new lifestyle. Rosa feels a great need to influence because “Earth needs our help”. Her perspective is global.

I want to promote organic production to save the planet, the environment. I am convinced that another type of production is a completely fake way... the way of conventional agriculture. (Rosa)

In general, a soft activism is exercised near their core of influence. Júlia, for example, practices her activism and influence near her garden, drawing attention to the absence of use of pesticides in agriculture. However, she does not consider herself as being morally superior to change habits that are very strong in people. She tries not to be aggressive in her approach, not creating any conflicts. In her opinion, this behaviour has been changing her neighbours' attitude.

I do not like to give lectures! I do not want to be the key! I do not like that. I try to talk to my neighbours whenever possible. Each time we talk, I try to explain something, but I do not like to... well I am not an example to anyone! They have been adding fertilizers for 40 years, right? More or less... I do not want to bother people, but I try to talk to them and sometimes I have good results... I say what I think, but I try not to get in conflict. Each person has his/her own opinion. I just try to express mine. (Júlia)

Óscar, for example, raises his children with total freedom, on his farm. So, from an early age, they have realized the importance of food as well as other social values.

They are raised like this [with freedom]! They are on the farm, eating products, learning that animals are important. They know that each animal is interesting and that's it! They are being raised in this sense, with conscience and knowing that somebody is there, far and suffering... “You buy this toy and...” Well, it's early to have this conscience but then they say: “Not that!” [laughs]. (Óscar)

5.4 Discussion and conclusions

This study focus on green consumption identity formation within a motivated organic community in terms of ethics and environmental issues. Its purpose is to

identify the process of green identity formation, as well as the inherent difficulties and constraints and the new expressions resulting from this process. Like Perera (2014), the applicability of the 'Processual Theory of Identity', using a phenomenological and sequential approach (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2005; Thompson, 1997) was useful to enlighten the role of consumption for identify construction:

- (1) Five stages are established for green consumption identity formation: consciousness, gathering, negotiation, stabilization, and sharing;
- (2) Environmental and ethical concerns are inseparable from the green identity construction process;
- (3) This process ends with postmodern demonstrations of consumption identity, in which individuals express their values through consumption based on an emancipator and consumer resistance position.

In the previous stage to change, the consumption habits of these individuals were marked by the image of a rational individualism (Jackson, 2005a, 2005b) towards consumption, and the absence of reflexivity about consumption and lifestyle. Afterwards, an event or a set of events (turning point) marked the life of these individuals: experiences and personal circumstances; social influences; or environmental and welfare concern events. These moments determined a discovery process encouraged by the input of information and the growing awareness towards ethical issues. The changing process includes a deep self-reflection about the meaning of life and pre-established rules (Moisander and Pesonen, 2002), associated to a feeling of dissatisfaction and insecurity that results in a new lifestyle and ethical consumption (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2005). This research also covers several experiences associated with the discovery of organic products. However, almost all statements refer to organic consumption as a consequence of previous environmental and ethical concerns, reinforced by a critical event. In most cases, vegetarianism is also connected with organic products consumption, either before the event or as a consequence (Dreezens et al., 2005; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Honkanen et al., 2006; Povey, Wellens, & Conner, 2001; Zepeda & Deal, 2009).

Moreover, consumers try to get away from people and contexts linked to a materialistic vision of consumption and lifestyle, realizing that this has a negative impact on the environment (Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Perera, 2014). Nevertheless, the new consumption practices and lifestyles create a certain antagonism towards previous relations and lifestyles. Some people break completely with their past and become isolated; some others try to maintain a certain balance between their lives before and after converting towards organic food consumption. In this phase, we notice that individuals start controlling their consumption practices (Perera, 2014), getting to know new contexts and “new families” where they seek for inspiration and being able of expressing a new identity that is in construction. However, despite getting away from their past, some conflicts still exist in the legitimization of the new green consumption identity.

These consumers then enter a negotiation phase, confirming their identity. This phase demonstrates that conflicts are caused by their adopted lifestyle and their new acquaintances. It emerges from the data that in contexts prior to the change, these consumers tend to avoid exercising their new consumption identity openly, in order to avoid conflicts. Like in other studies (Dreezens et al., 2005; Povey et al., 2001), it is clear that environmental concerns and human values have an important role in adopting a vegetarian diet. However, to these organic consumers, ‘negotiation’ of vegetarianism acceptance can cause fracture and it is a source of conflict.

After achieving a certain separation from the past and the normalization of relations, it is time for the stabilization of green consumption identity, where consumers adopt new consumption expressions and a new identity. Organic products contribute to the consolidation of the new personality.

Similarly to Cherrier's (2006) study, organic products' consumption also contributes to consumers' identity formation in the way that such symbolic meaning helps to reach "a new level of ethical reflection" (p. 521), encouraging other daily practices' change. Therefore, in this research, some of the following identity demonstrations have been identified: a more rational consumption; reduction of goods at home; reinforcement of ecological awareness; home food

cultivation; living in the countryside; joining exchange network groups; activism for the environmental cause; autonomy and subsistence; vegetarianism; resistance to consumption. These manifestations are what Horton (2003) defines as “materialities” (p. 63), assuming a performative role and acting as factors for producing and reproducing identities and green lifestyles “according to green cultural codes” (p. 64).

The green identity formation process does not only imply the organic products consumption, but also new consumption habits and acquaintances that are meanwhile established. These new lifestyles and the organic products that are consumed play a performative role to produce or reproduce an identity according to the green cultural code, mainly through vegetarianism. These ‘green scripts’ (such as living in the countryside, supporting organic production or being a vegetarian) play an important role on the performance of green identities (Heiskanen, 2005). In this phase, there is also the need to seek for new groups to protect from family and previous friendships hostilities. In fact, these consumers leave a ‘group base identity’ (Stets & Burke, 2000), through commitment and intra-group solidarity bounds (Hay, 2010; Hogg et al., 1995; Jackson, 2005a), where they find support and safety. These new groups of belonging have a significant role in the contribution to the strengthening of the new consumption identity. In this sense, participants imitate the new practices of the group subculture and consumption lifestyle. In this case, individual identity is shaped by the collective identity (Cherrier, 2007), that is, the organic community.

In this research, it is important to stress the importance of commitment to understanding change, in some cases, of a radical nature in terms of convictions and behaviours of the consumer. In the taxonomy of different combinations of commitment towards the group and identity, Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (2002) support that a strong individual commitment leads to a pro-social behaviour. Consequently, individuals construct their identities based on the social categories in which they are integrated (Stets & Burke, 2000). According to Thompson (1997), the subsequent identity formation always involves a certain commitment, resulting in tension between stability and change.

The permanent identity construction (Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Dobers & Strannegård, 2005; Murray & Ozanne, 1991; Soron, 2010), the context in which the individual is integrated, provides feedback regarding the position that each one occupies in the group. Because the personal self and social self are closely related, the approach to the construction of identities necessarily involves these two dimensions (Stets & Burke, 2000). However, the identity formation process is never concluded (Cherrier & Murray, 2007), partly because of the multiplicity of identity positions that are culturally available (Thompson, 1997). These consumers of organic products construct an identity and individuality by choosing organic products which contribute to individual construction (lifestyle) (Haanpää, 2007). After abandoning their consumerist and cosmopolitan past, these consumers stabilize their new identity, trying to influence others and share their new lifestyle near their sphere of influence, actuating as agents of change (Moisander and Pesonen, 2002).

Another important contribution of this study was to empirically verify the manifestations of a postmodern identity, throughout the process of formation of green consumer identity. These individuals, at the beginning of the construction of their green consumer identity, also initiate a process of detaching from family and social relations. The reflection and refusal to reproduce social codes make consumers resistant to the traditional notion of consumption, making them more independent or redefining their needs in relation to the market. In this study, organic community strives to assert an emancipation position on consumption, as it represents one of the ways for people to express their values through consumption (Murray & Ozanne, 1991). This is what Ozanne and Murray (1995, p. 516) defined as "reflexively defiant consumers" (p. 516), these consumers became more radical and critical about their involvement in the marketplace (Tadajewski et al., 2014). In a postmodern consumer perspective, alternative forms of consumption (such as consumer resistance and anti-consumption) emerge in insurgent subcultures (Ozanne & Murray, 1995), allowing consumers to express their values, ideas and identities in relation to their new social, environmental and political context (Cherrier et al., 2011).

In line with other authors (Belk, 1988; Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2009; Murray & Ozanne, 1991; Shankar & Fitchett, 2002) this research also highlights

aspects that are close to Erich Fromm's (1976) humanist postmodern view of consumption. These consumers, after beginning the process of transforming their consumer identity, abandon a "having mode of existence" in which things, experiences and life are seen as possessions that can be bought and retained (Belk, 1988, p. 146). By reaching power and control over their own consumption and by sharing the same ethical values, organic community consumers affirm a position of resistance and emancipation towards the individualism of Western consumer culture (Cherrier, 2009). These postmodern consumers learn to cope with their earlier dissatisfaction, "the desire to have" (Shankar & Fitchett, 2002, p. 507), and they gradually go through a complex marketing network. Once placed in a "sustainable state of being", these organic consumers will also be able to design their own lifestyle.

CHAPTER 6

ALTERNATIVE CONSUMER PRACTICES AND ANTI-CONSUMPTION ATTITUDES FOR SUSTAINABILITY: THE PERSPECTIVE OF ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION

Abstract

Based on 31 existential phenomenological interviews to organic products consumers motivated by environmental reasons, it was intended to study how anti-consumption practices are present in the discourse defending sustainability and how they influence the level of well-being and satisfaction. From the analysis made, one may conclude that organic products consumption act as a transformative practice that, by reducing consumption based on voluntary sufficiency and simplicity values, promotes an increase of individual well-being. The main contribution of this research is to demonstrate that anti-consumption, as a political manifestation, is an essential element to change people's lives, constructing an individual identity. However, in this community of responsible consumers, the persecution of a sustainable environmentalist lifestyle is a state of transition to reach sustainability in terms of community. The results of this research enhance the understanding of the impact that anti-consumption behaviours have on sustainable discourse and contribute to the discussion on how, by reducing consumption and adopting alternative practices, we may contribute to subjective well-being.

Keywords: Sustainability, Sustainable Rooted Anti-Consumption, Voluntary Sufficiency/simplicity, Subjective well-being.

6.1 Introduction

Currently, levels of production, consumption, the use of resources and the importance given to growing and materialistic lifestyle, are the main causes commonly attributed to having a negative impact on the environment (Alcott, 2008; Visconti, Minowa, & Maclaran, 2014). In this sense, anti-consumption can constitute one way for environmental sustainability (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Black, 2010; Cherrier et al., 2011; Egea & Frutos, 2013; García-de-Frutos, Ortega-Egea, & Martínez-del-Río, 2016). Anti-consumption is an important component of the marketing and consumption process, although it remains one of the most neglected and under-theorized areas of consumer research (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Hogg, Banister, & Stephenson, 2009). Being a relatively new field (García-de-Frutos, Ortega-Egea & Martínez-del-Río, 2016), it has drawn a growing interest in the academic community, among managers and consumers, in their discourses and practices (Portwood-Stacer, 2012; Lee, Conroy, & Motion, 2009), within the context of sustainable lifestyle (Cherrier et al., 2011). Anti-consumption is a complex subject to research because it arises from the consumer subjectivity and includes concerns focused on the individual or socio-environmental motivations (Cherrier et al., 2011). However, the scarce existing literature on the subject does not yet have a broad understanding of anti-consumption and its related themes (Lee, Fernandez, & Hyman, 2009; Lee et al., 2009).

According to Zavestoski (2002), anti-consumption attitudes can be manifested in several forms, such as: a material product rejection symbolizing an ideal or a political intention; the change in consumer habits by adopting voluntary simplicity practices and ethical consumption practices; or an opposition against the aggressive and monopolistic marketing practices. According to the literature, anti-consumption is related with other concepts: voluntary simplicity, downshifting, and consumer resistance. Cherrier et al. (2011) refers that anti-consumption may include a perspective of broader opposition against consumption (a macro perspective) or a more practical position, centred on the individual and his 'identity' project (a micro perspective). Therefore, it can assume a position of antagonistic active resistance, as it is the case of consumer resistance (Cherrier et al., 2011). Chatzidakis and Lee (2012) establish a significant difference

between anti-consumption and consumer resistance. They developed that anti-consumption is focused on specific conditions of acquisition or avoiding certain goods, and some form of resistance as not necessary required. Consumer resistance, on the other hand, implies consumers opposing to a “force of domination” (p. 191) and resist to the unbalance of the market. Resistance may be expressed through consumption of a good, service or trade and simultaneously detachment from others, like the case of preferring organic products and refusing to purchase conventional ones.

Anti-consumption can assume a perspective driven by the desire of living better or improving the levels of happiness, that is, a voluntary lifestyle of simplicity. This voluntary simplicity might include self-centred concerns and/or altruistic considerations (Shaw & Newholm, 2002). Otherwise, assuming that the extravagant consumption driven from economic growth has been pointed out as the cause of ecological devastation and social injustice (Aslanbay & Varnali, 2014), through the expression of ethical consumption or voluntary simplicity, it would be a way to decide to live within consumer capitalism (Zavestoski, 2002). Under these circumstances, this topic is strongly rooted in the green consumer discourse, as a form of opposition to the Western consumer culture (Huttunen & Autio, 2010). Shaw and Newholm (2002, p. 167) present another interesting term called ‘ethical simplifiers’ to characterize the behaviour of voluntary simplifiers that respond ethically to social and environmental concerns and its impact in consumer society.

The question which arises is why organic food consumers adhere to these practices? The literature proposes some answers, in the sense that, through the act of consumption, individuals reach means of finding non-material ways to re-establish feelings of authenticity in their lives (Cherrier et al., 2011; Zavestoski, 2002). Indeed, in the context of ethical consumption a clear relation between a controlled-consumption and ethical issues has been found. This includes aspects such as environmental awareness, affecting their own levels of consumption (Zavestoski, 2002). In this way, among participants who had consciously changed their lifestyle to reflect their growing environmental awareness, Cherrier et al. (2011) found that non-consumption can manifest itself both as a way of expressing protest, and as including self-interest concerns. Some anti-

consumption practices adopted by voluntary simplifiers, within the consumption system, are seen not as an aggressive form of resistance against a particular situation, but rather in terms of personal reflection and individual fulfilment. Thus, Cherrier's et al. (2011) analysis shows that the act of anti-consumption help to develop consumer 'identity'.

Also on an individual level (Binder & Blankenberg, 2017; Iyer & Muncy, 2016), some authors point to the concept of subjective well-being related to people's perceptions of their own well-being. Ultimately, what matters to an individual's well-being is not income and consumption but the subjective well-being enhanced by the adoption of a more sustainable and green lifestyle. In this way, pro-environmental behaviours may improve subjective well-being (Iyer & Muncy, 2016).

From a macro perspective, Jackson (2008) discusses the concept of "wellbeing dividend" (p. 704). This 'paradox', as it is also called, is based on the fact that rising levels of income and consumption do not seem to contribute to the well-being of society. In this way, Jackson (2008) suggests a potential reduction or redistribution of consumption without compromising levels of well-being, reaching a more sustainable society. The author also points out that at the individual level the well-being dividend is reachable through "marginal strategies" such as downshifting and voluntary simplicity (p. 704). In his study regarding life satisfaction in 27 European countries, Jackson (2008) found that in low-income countries, there is a strong correlation between life satisfaction and income. However, as income increases, this correlation tends to attenuate. In addition to this, author reached other interesting results. Firstly, the growth of consumption can harm the well-being of people. Secondly, it may be possible to live better by using less resources and redistributing them more equitably. Finally, the growth of consumption undermines the environmental conditions which in turn are also a requisite on long-term well-being.

In this research the perspective of Shaw and Newholm (2002) was followed. This means to look to a group of ethical consumers (organic food consumers) in order to understand why they deliberately chose to change aspects of consumption, their lifestyle, and ask about their alternative practices and resistance attitudes.

Thus, considering the complexity and particularity of this theme, the intention is to complement the knowledge deepening the relationship between environmental concerns, anti-consumption, alternatives practices of consumption and subjective well-being, in the organic products context. In addition, there is also little discussion in the existing literature about the possibilities of being able to help the planet by reducing consumption (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012). Therefore, this paper aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) to understand the influence of environmental and ethical concerns in consumer behaviour change; (2) to investigate the extent to which anti-consumer practices are present in the sustainability discourse; (3), to see how the new expressions and alternative consumer practices that stand out in the formation of new identities influence other consumers; (4) to investigate how anti-consumption practices contributes to the well-being and life satisfaction.

6.2 Literature Review

6.2.1 Anti-consumption: definition and scope

The consumer behaviour literature has considered anti-consumption practices distinctly ideological and involving political agendas (Portwood-Stacer, 2012), so that can may provide a powerful voice in the marketplace (Shaw & Riach, 2011). The study on anti-consumption had initially focused on market activists and anti-loyal consumers (Iyer & Muncy, 2009), and the term 'anti-consumption', from a macro perspective, can be literally understood as an attitude against consumption in general (Black & Cherrier, 2010; García-de-Frutos et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2009). From a micro perspective, it may not represent an opposition to consumption in general terms, and can be directed at specific targets such as "products, brands, companies, or nations" (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016, p. 2). This implies that the phenomenon focuses "on specific acts against consumption" (Cherrier et al., 2011, p. 1758), leaning up on localized and subjective aspects of consumer practices, represented by identity projects or even a philosophy of life (Cherrier, 2009). In other words, anti-consumer practices can be motivated by self-interest or also based on more altruistic intentions, such as social or

environmental concerns (Cherrier et al., 2011). As referred to by Cherrier (2007), anti-consumption attitudes are preceded by a critical reflection and by self-inquiry about personal ethical concerns.

Lee et al. (2009) establish the relationship between anti-consumer and what they call “alternative, conscientious, green, and sustainable consumption” (p. 145). They refer that anti-consumption is related to the reasons to avoid or show opposition to the consumption or motives to avoid a product or brand. They point out that, in many cases, consumers can express a rejection position because of their ethical opinions or concerns towards sustainability. Under these circumstances, Black and Cherrier (2010) argue that, besides the usual focus of anti-consumption that is grounded on the reasons that are behind products and brand avoidance, some anti-consumer practices have “elements of sustainable lifestyles” (p. 439). Therefore, consumers attempt to meet products and brands with their ideologies. An evidence of this complementary relationship is the refusal to choose products that damage the environment by green consumers. Another example mentioned by Black and Cherrier (2010) in relation to ethical consumption is fair trade, by the rejection of products from socially irresponsible businesses.

Anti-consumers practices can range from the resistance to rejection. Hogg et al. (2009) referred that this can take the form “of active behaviour in the marketing place” (p. 156) such as boycotting, ethical consumption or voluntary simplicity. On the opposite side, ‘rejection’ represents a more passive form of behaviour, involving not to choose certain products or brands. Consequently, García-de-Frutos et al. (2016, p. 3) stated that there are two main patterns that differentiate anti-consumer attitudes: (1) ‘consciousness’, in the sense of being intentional and conscious; (2) ‘self-expressing’, because it allows consumers to communicate the beliefs and values they actually possess.

Regarding the purpose of the anti-consumer, Iyer and Muncy (2009) state that it can vary in accordance with the political guidance, personal or environmental concerns. As shown in the following table, these authors defined four anti-consumption categories: according with the purpose, which includes social intentions and personal interests; and according with the object of anti-

consumption, related with reducing consumption considering a general perspective, or a consumption reduction of a particular brand or product.

Table 12 - Four types of anti-consumers

		Purpose of anti-consumption	
		<i>Societal concerns</i>	<i>Personal concerns</i>
Object of anti-consumption	General (all consumption)	Global Impact Consumers	Simplifiers
	Specific (individual brand or products)	Market Activists	Anti-Loyal Consumers

Iyer and Muncy (2009).

Iyer and Muncy (2009) focused their analysis on two of these groups: simplifiers and global impact consumers in the urban United States context. One of their most important findings was that the 'self-consciousness' have a significant effect on 'global impact consumers'. The justification was that these consumers would be more interested in demonstrating behaviours that convey to the world by demonstrating and supporting altruistic causes, giving them the feeling of "achievement" (p. 166). On the other hand, 'simplifiers' (at the individual level) have less need to affirm their beliefs to others, so they are not forced to do what society dictates to them.

The following sections of the literature review that follows is based on Iyer and Muncy (2009).

6.2.2 Anti-consumption categories

6.2.2.1 Global impact consumers

According to Iyer and Muncy (2009), global impact consumers are motivated to reduce their consumption levels so that they can benefit society and the planet. These authors point out that the two main reasons that consumers have to justify the anti-consumption are the environmental concerns and material inequity. As

regard to the first problem, they argue that over-consumption is causing irreparable damage to ecosystems. The second problem is also related to the over-consumption in the sense that nations or privileged classes are contributing to the worsening of the poverty in most disfavoured classes.

Black and Cherrier (2010) conceptualized the difference between anti-consumption and green or environmentally friendly consumption as a means to live a more sustainable lifestyle. These authors argue that “practices of anti-consumption for sustainability are constructed through the collaboration between the needs of the individual and the needs for environmental preservation” (p. 437), attempting an integration and a balance in daily and simple practices (of anti-consumption), getting pleasure and personal fulfilment. These authors call this group of consumers as “ecological citizens”¹⁵ (p. 439). They represent those who share their commitment to sustainability and act to reduce “their impact on others and on the environment” (p. 439). The study points two key contributions. On one hand this is done by adopting a sustainable lifestyle, consumers can express their true identities or who they wish to be. On the other hand, anti-consumption is part of an attempt to live a more sustainable life, and acts of rejection, reduction and reuse of consumption are key elements that contribute to sustainable consumption.

Anti-consumption can also assume a symbolic role. Hogg et al. (2009) present a conceptual framework about the symbolic consumption stressing that the interaction between avoidance, aversion, abandonment, can takes symbolic meaning. In the same vein, in Shaw, Newholm and Dickinson's (2006) ethical consumer narratives research, consumers embrace in a “voting metaphor”, reflecting their values by choosing whether or not to consume as an ethical and political manifestation (p. 1051). These authors argues that the problem of unethical practices is no longer just confined to marginal activist groups because, due to dissemination of information, there are manifestations of "consumer empowerment directly targeted at changing traditional marketing and business

¹⁵ This concept, ‘environmental citizenship’, was proposed by Hobson (2002) where concerned and well informed individuals act environmentally. It presupposes mobilized and active citizens, rather than passive and bordered by rights and privileges, as the neo-classical theories suggest. This way of thinking environmentally creates a personal obligation and a responsibility to the community and toward own consumer choices. Likewise, Seyfang's (2006) also suggested a model in which relates ecological citizenship, sustainable consumption and local organic food networks.

behaviour" (p. 1050). Shaw et al. (2006) presented the two key positions of resistance manifestations: (1) boycotting and protest, punishing companies, producers and suppliers that show unethical behaviour; and, (2) through boycotting or positive buying, rewarding, by their choice, those who manifest behaviours and ethical credentials. In their study, the authors stated that these two manifestations can be seen, in the first instance, on an individual level but with broader effects (collectively), putting consumption "in an ethical and/or political context" (p. 1061) and consumption behaviours compared (metaphorically) as "political voting" (p. 1061). This motivation to act based on the feeling of duty, indicates that individuals are part of a larger group of concerned consumers (Shaw et al., 2006). Thus, regarding the freedom of consumer's choice, it can be understood within the freedom of each individual, or according to the role of "consumers and manipulated victims", where the current market system creates superfluous needs, as well as ways of pleasure and artificial gratification (p. 1054). An interesting and apparently contradictory result in Shaw's et al. (2006) study is that participants look to the dominant capitalist system as a solution to their own problems, lifestyle and ideals, as it permeates all aspects of consumer culture, promotes the empowerment of the consumer and promotes the ideology of individualism.

The "economic votes for change", as Shaw et al. (2006, p. 1060) referred to, is understood as a search for ethical alternatives in order to support agriculture in a position against the exploitation of labour or environmental degradation. Some of these alternatives are presented in the work of Sumner and Wever (2015) as a way to cultivate alliances "among co-ops members, through the creation of networks, with other types of organisations, and other social movements" (p. 65). This strategy, reached through the co-operative movement, helps to foster a more alternative and more sustainable food system, inserted in the new social economic movements. According to these authors, the co-operative model and the network associated with it allows the participation and support of a business model that is aligned with values supported by the community. These politics of alternative food systems are associated both with environmental sustainability, local food movements and also linked to organic movement as a "reaction to the industrialization, marginalization, and destruction of rural (...), community

disintegration, or environmental degradation” (p. 74), and also as an alternative model of eating and living (Sumner & Wever, 2015, p. 74).

6.2.2.2 Simplifiers

In this category, consumers prefer to move away from the high consumption of society and follow a more calm and simple lifestyle. They seek, therefore, to achieve a happier lifestyle by reducing their consumption levels. Iyer and Muncy (2009) also mentions the presence of the spiritual and ethical component demonstrated in their convictions to anti-consumption.

Generally speaking, there are two categories of voluntary simplifiers, according to their motivation and commitment level to instigate behavioural change (Bekin et al., 2005; Huneke, 2005; McDonald, Oates, Young, & Hwang, 2006; based on the work Etzioni's, 1998 and Shaw & Newholm's, 2002 work): (1) downshiffters; and (2) the strong simplifiers, simple living movement or ethical simplifiers.

6.2.2.2.1 Downshiffters

Downshiffters are the more moderate voluntary simplifiers' consumers, choosing to give up some of their luxuries but not lifestyle. These consumers are more focused on a self-centred motivation based on unsatisfactory lifestyle responses to the perceptions of society, in an attempt to achieve a balance considering the comfort of the consumer society and the satisfaction of material needs. In this area, ecological awareness can take a secondary space. However, some authors (Shaw & Newholm, 2002) are sceptic to accept that this category fits as voluntary simplifiers because they don't fully adhere to their ideals as they are primarily focused on solving issues and conditions of their own existing life.

6.2.2.2.2 Strong simplifiers, simple living movement or ethical simplifiers

About this second category of simplifiers, various designations of it can be found in the literature. This group of voluntary simplifiers differ from the downshifter in the sense that they are less predictable and are the individuals, who radically change their life, giving up high salaries, employment and stressful lifestyles, to opt for alternatives that bring them more meaning to their life. Therefore, they are the most dedicated of voluntary simplifiers. They usually move to countryside and are guided by an anti-consumer philosophy. Consequently, their lifestyle is distinctly simple and is characterized by a very low consumption level and are motivated by social guidelines, ethical, or animal welfare issues, or/and environmental concerns. As a result, they recognize the impact that consumption has on society and develop a debate around environmental and social issues.

In the literature it is commonly accepted that people who adopt this simple lifestyle, have to maximize their control over daily practices and increase their independence from the business organisations (Huneke, 2005), changing their type of consumption or even refraining from consumption altogether (Shaw & Moraes, 2009). Therefore, the requirements that best define the lifestyle are the following (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Huneke, 2005):

- They have the ability to freely choose a simple lifestyle, in order to get control and personal fulfilment - self-determination;
- They practice the minimum consumption as possible - material simplicity, but without adopting a life of poverty;
- They are focused on people and communities - human scale;
- They are focused on a balance with themselves and with the spiritual enrichment - spiritual growth and self-development;
- They are focused on environment – ecological awareness.

In general, and in relation to socio-demographic factors, there seems to be a consensus that voluntary simplifiers have access to resources such as wealth, education, and skills that it would enable them to earn a high income (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; McDonald et al., 2006; Shaw & Newholm, 2002). Regarding education level, Huneke (2005) confirmed that voluntary simplifiers practitioners

are generally more highly educated than most of the population. Concerning income, the author has also found that these individuals are more affluent than the general population. However, she also found that income, in most cases, significantly changed for most of those who adopted this practice. She stated that individuals with moderate incomes are those more likely to practice voluntary simplicity.

Zavestoski (2002) also added that this simple lifestyle comes from a system of beliefs and practices centred on the idea of personal satisfaction, fulfilment and happiness, and a commitment to nonmaterial aspects of life. This author referred to the fact that this lifestyle choice is a popular way to translate an anti-consumerist attitude. He adds that the reduction in consumption is an important component as well as the creation of “peaceful personal space to enjoy life” (p. 150).

In the literature there are several approaches to voluntary simplicity. For example, Moraes et al. (2010) underlined the link with personal development by new learning experience skills, attitudes and different forms of interaction with the community and its individuals, implying a sense of sharing and spirituality.

In the same vein, Shaw and Moraes (2009) examined the relationship of these consumers with localism. They found that voluntary simplicity create different forms of community relations, choosing to live in rural areas, “the choice of context” (p. 222), as an alternative balanced motivation with their “macro concerns” (p. 219). Thus, a pattern common noted by these authors is that consumers produce their own food, repair their own items and prefer to consume organically and locally produced. In the same way, Craig-Lees and Hill (2002) studied the link between lifestyle choices and materialism in the context of environmental voluntary simplifiers in Australia. They found common concerns on the way products are produced by choosing, in most cases, organic products or macro-biotic products, purchased locally.

With regard to brands, Oates et al. (2008) stated that, in general, followers of voluntary simplicity are opposed to multinationals, and what these brands represent, considering them as unethical and, from the moment this idea is

formulated, hardly ever change their opinion. In a general way, they consider that voluntary simplicity relies on a complex decision process, by seeking information beyond what is provided by brands. Therefore, the search process is more important than the choice of products itself, through alternatives such as internet sites, environmental groups, newsletters and conversations among friends. Furthermore, Oates et al. (2008) add that the choice of this lifestyle is beyond personal reasons, unlike downshifter, but more related to social motivations, such as “environmental protection, ethical concerns, green consumption, or community development” (p. 352).

Another interesting perspective, and one which this research is followed is suggested by Cherrier (2007). Here, the voluntary simplicity phenomenon is seen from the perspective of identity construction, not only through a change in consumer style itself, as a disengagement from consumerism, but also as an option to a simpler life by decreasing the possession of material goods. For this author, voluntary simplicity means the adoption of a “simpler lifestyle by reducing consumption and the hours spent working, which decreases stress, increases time spent with children, friends, and family or contributing to the community, and enhances well-being” (p. 326).

Overall, voluntary simplifiers seek to improve their quality of life and refuse to choose items that do not match this purpose, choosing to live with less, as an alternative way of living (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002).

6.2.2.3 Market Activists

This position is characterized by avoiding consuming a particular product or brand by causing a specific problem, cause environmental problems or encourage a negative social behaviour (Iyer & Muncy, 2009).

Lee et al. (2009) conceptualized four types of brand avoidance:

- Experimental avoidance, driven from dissatisfaction and failed consumption experiences (unmet expectations).
- Identity avoidance, based on brand perceived incongruence.

- Moral avoidance, rooted on ideological incompatibility.
- Deficit-value avoidance, which “occurs when consumers perceive brands as representing an unacceptable cost to benefit trade-off” (Lee et al., 2009, p. 424).

Kozinets and Handelman (2004) studied some movements such as anti-advertising, anti-brand (e.g. Nike), and anti-genetically engineered food and crop activists, based on New Social Movement Theory (NSM). According to these authors, this theoretical basis is appropriate to study movements of consumers who seek to transform the consumerist culture and the dominant ideology of Western society. Therefore, these activists combine environmental and social concerns, rejecting pre-made items, conventional and individualist concepts of contemporary consumer society, to adopt a more spiritual and communal lifestyle. In terms of the purpose of radicals consumer movements, Kozinets and Handelman (2004) referred that they put in question “the moral and ethics of social and environmental implications”, p. 703). In relation to radical consumer movements identity, these authors compare them to a kind of "puritan" modern times, drawing from collective identities with the moral and spiritual obligation to enlighten and convert others from the “enemy” – the consumption system (p. 702).

Portwood-Stacer's (2012) work about radical anti-capitalist movements (anarchists) in the context of North America, is a good example of opposition to “consumption-centric social order” (p. 87). In this sub-culture, anti-consumption is “better understood as a lifestyle orientation” (p. 88), not only in the appearance of abstinence toward consumer but also in other forms of provocation the contemporary lifestyle. Portwood-Stacer (2012) identifies a number of these manifestations such as the subversion of the hierarchy, the rejection of hygiene standards, veganism, vegetarianism, non-use of car or television, co-habiting (cooperative housing or collective living), ‘DIY’ (do it yourself) practices, anarcho-cyclism, non-commercial means (share and trade with friends or shoplifting), or in more extreme cases, freeganism. As the author points out, anti-consumption (even when involving consuming something), is a practice of not supporting the capitalist consumption system. Portwood-Stacer (2012) identifies five reasons for the anti-consumption behaviour among anarchists:

(1) Activist motivations

Making this lifestyle and its practices as "rhetorical acts with the capacity to persuade and inspire others", in order to alter a pattern of immoral practice" (p. 97).

(2) Identificatory motivations

Some of the anti-consumption practices pursued by anarchism may be seen as a means of performative values, to demonstrate what is to be an anarchist, also guiding the habits in order to be accepted by peers.

(3) Moral motivations

The moral foundation of anti-consumer practices among anarchists is based on the premise that by reducing the consumption the "complicity with the system or entities that perpetuate these conditions" (p. 98) is also reduced.

(4) Personal motivations

When anarchists reject commercial consumption they are also rejecting their incentive to earn money, keeping away from the exploitation of wage labour or resisting the possibility of being manipulated ideologically.

(5) Social motivations

A sense of community, solidarity and belonging is reinforced by anti-consumption, making the identity of the anarchist movement a "collective vision for social change" (p. 99).

The 'Burning Man Festival', investigated ethnographically by Kozinets (2002), is another good example of using a metaphor about the consumer and community emancipation, through the distance of consumer culture and the market. In this event, individuals participation is focused on not behave as a consumer. Several initiatives are implemented such as 'the vending rule', where it prohibits sales between the participants during the event; to be 'passive' when consuming the service; that transactions must occur without money or publicity; or the fact that

they favour the gift. Basically, festival organizers appeal to participants to position themselves as "resistant consumers" (p. 25), opposing to the "exploitation by powerful corporations and their constricting advertising ideologies" (p. 26). Besides, it encourages the freedom to express individuality through art and promote alternative modes of exchange outside of mainstream market logic.

6.2.2.4 Brand-personal: Anti-Loyal Consumers

According to Iyer and Muncy (2009) this profile is characterized by consumers who "exhibit the opposite of brand loyalty" (p. 161) reflecting a compromise to avoid choosing a particular product either because of their inferior quality or to be associated with a bad experience with that product.

6.2.3 Environmental Oriented Anti-consumption (EOA)

In this review of the literature, it is necessary to study in depth the acts directed against the consumption based on strong convictions and environmental motivations. Accordingly, García-de-Frutos et al. (2016) conducted an extensive review of the literature about EOA leaning on their antecedents and meaning at the micro, meso and macro level. In what concerns to this topic, the literature is fragmented or relates subjects such as green consumption, resistance to consumption or use alternative practices (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016), so that few or none study have focused on the relationship between consumer products and organic anti-consumption.

Therefore, with this conceptualization, García-de-Frutos et al. (2016) define EOA:

"as acts directed against any form of consumption, with specific aim of protecting the environment (...) such as consumption reduction, avoidance, or rejecting and needs to be driven by environmental motivations or concerns". (p. 3)

6.2.3.1 The individual (micro-level) perspective of the EOA

In the mainstream consumer ideology, it is generally assumed that the meaning of life “is to be found in buying consumer goods and services, instead of protecting the world from environment degradation and the resulting social misery” (Autio & Heinonen, 2004, p. 149). Nevertheless, from the individual’s point of view (micro-level), those who support environmental anti-consumption positions expect that their actions cause macro-level impacts in terms of the environment and also hope that their actions would be a source of influence on the market (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016).

García-de-Frutos et al. (2016) consider the knowledge regarding the environment as an important antecedent to those who adhere to the practices of EOA. In the same vein, Egea and Frutos (2013), investigating the socio-demographic factors among European citizens, found an “interrelated effect of environmental knowledge and ecological motivations” (p. 660) that can trigger an environmentally motivated reduction in consumption. Besides the knowledge about the environment, these authors also consider altruism as a “strong and more effective motivational force (than egoism)”, guiding environmental attitudes (p. 671).

Related with EOA, there are several altruistic motivations such as political and social. One of these more closely linked expressions to EOA practices is voluntary simplicity (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016), seen as a manifestation of conscious consumers for change (Shaw & Moraes, 2009). According to Shaw and Moraes (2009), from the EOA perspective, the voluntary simplicity practices are often considered as a sustainable lifestyle supported by practices which respect the environment, shaped and adapted by the individual, society and through the influence of market. In their study regarding the rural context of the UK, they concluded that the voluntary simplifiers show a great sense of community, local ties, communion and reencounter with nature, despite their individualized consumption practices. Shaw and Moraes (2009) also found that among participants, organic farming was closely connected to a more responsible response towards food production system. In this universe of voluntary simplifiers

it is an attempt not to completely avoid the interaction of the market, as Shaw and Moraes (2009) refer:

“resistance to one type of consumption takes the form of another, and the participants’ practices are more about creating healthier, environmentally friendlier and more balanced lifestyles for themselves, than seeking to escape the marketplace”. (p. 222)

Covering another more extreme position in the context of radical ecologically oriented citizens living in eco-communards, Moisander and Pesonen (2002) found that these green consumers, by choosing a voluntary simplicity lifestyle, should correspond to a “certain amount of privation and abstinence” (p. 335). The discourse of these voluntary simple green consumers as opposed to contemporary values such as professional and economic success, urban lifestyle and the values associated with it, as well as the market economy, stressing that this lifestyle is “incompatible with green consumerism” (p. 335). Otherwise, this more oriented radical lifestyle to nature, represents a “back to the basics” (p. 335) and a release from the demands of modern society.

Regarding other focused ecological perspective, in the context of young Finish consumers, Autio et al. (2009) discussed the most extreme position – the anarchist, or the “rebellious consumer” (p. 46), as an radical form of ecological activism, denying social values of consumption, stressing the need to reduce and sustaining the incompatibility of the capitalist society values with environmental and social interests.

Another interesting perspective of EOA is introduced by Dobscha and Ozanne (2001) regarding ecofeminism. They found that these women are very active and intense, even radical, in their intention to avoid market proposals. Their view of consumption, has a complex and strong relationship with nature, which makes them questioning about the market. For them, living "the ecological life" (p. 205) means making less consumption an important component in their lives, relying on creativity, "creating, building and foraging" (p. 208), which indicates that this view of life also works as a force to change one's self. Dobscha and Ozanne (2001) also found that there is an effort to express their environmental activism to the local community. They start by educating and socializing the family context, then the workplace, and finally, in the wider context of public space. In this

perspective, the ecological principles and the breadth and depth of green lives of these women, affect consumption and market vision, challenging traditional concepts, so that their actions are a way of changing by the power of emancipation and affirmation.

Ethical consumption also has strong links with the anti-consumption. Shaw and Riach (2011) states that the fact that the consumption practices of an individual may vary, makes it very difficult to define a 'typical' ethical consumer. However, authors adds that ethical consumers can be described as one that "consider the environment, human and/or animal welfare as important and as a consequence evaluate their consumption lifestyles to take these issues into consideration)" (p. 1052). Therefore, the ethical consumption involves an environmental concern component.

Much of the literature on ethical consumption addresses the perspective of the resistant consumer', who rejects or resists in partake in the market. Shaw and Riach (2011) also consider the ethical consumption as a building of ethical consumer decision-making, in a dynamic process with the market. It means that ethical consumption is "both shaping and being shaped by the dominant market", as a "co-constructed" practice were consumers "built a relation between ethical and dominant spaces (p. 1055).

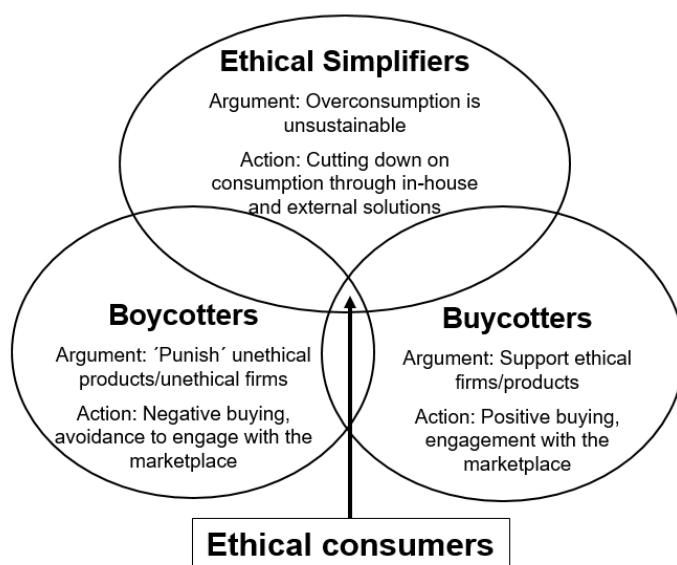
In the context of the urban Spanish context, Papaoikonomou (2013) investigates what is a lifestyle in terms of consumer decision-making. Consumers are now often opting to reduce consumption or adapting and looking for more ethical market alternatives. According to Papaoikonomou (2013), ethical consumers is:

"is the individual that adopts a macro-perspective of the magnitude of the impact of his consumption on the society and the environment" (p. 186).

Papaoikonomou (2013) found that behaviours were considered as competing can fit in a broad consumption lifestyle, due to the existence of a complexity and diversity of ethical considerations and possibilities of behaviours, depending on the circumstances in which they are triggered. As Papaoikonomou (2013) explained, "modern consumers can be placed in-between both positions and flexibly adapt according to the circumstances in the effort to lead a sustainable

lifestyle” (p. 186). However, as the author points out, the idea of flexibility makes these ethical consumers act not always consistently with their ethical self. This individual’s search for sustainable consumption is associated with a variety of projects, from boycotting to boycotting and ethical simplification. Therefore, Papaoikonomou's (2013) ethical consumers are located in the converging point of the following figure.

Figure 8 - The conception of ethics and the behavioural response



Papaoikonomou (2013, p. 187).

Another EOA perspective is represented by Cherrier (2009) and Izberk-Bilgin (2010) regarding consumer resistance identities and related discourses (table 13).

Cherrier's (2009) study highlighted the influence of anti-consumption in the construction of green consumer identities and the author focuses on two dominant discourses: voluntary simplicity and culture jammer. Cherrier's (2009) narratives are deeply rooted in the theme of environmental risks associated with extravagant consumption.

Table 13 - Consumer resistance identities and its related discourses

			Resistance Identities	
			Hero Identities	Project Identities
			<i>Manipulation and enslavement discourse</i>	<i>Agency and empowerment discourse</i>
Market		Realm of domination and manipulation; liberatory perspective: drastic rupture with the market	Realm of self-development and source of identity; market-bound perspective: resist subtly within the market	
Consumption		Exploitative consumption: means of satisfying false needs, false empowerment	Positional Consumption: means of self-expression	
Consumers		Consumers as instruments; defiant consumers; Culture Jammers	Silent consumers; consumers as agents; Voluntary Simplifiers	
Resistance		Political consumption: arena of domination and power struggle; Macro-tactics	Creating consumption; micro-tactics	
Goals		Outer change; liberatory and emancipatory change	Inner change	

Based on Cherrier (2009) and Izberk-Bilgin (2010).

The author suggests two resistant identities, both based on the opposition to consumerist culture: (1) 'hero identities'; and (2) 'project identities'.

(1) 'Hero identities'

A hero identity discourse is ideologically opposed to the economic progress, the current production system, and exploitative consumption. It is based on the assumption that consumers build their identity against a "well-defined system of domination" (Cherrier, 2009, p. 189). It is oriented towards the outside of the individual, the "outer change" (p. 185), expressing values and alternatives to consumer society. Therefore, the notion of 'hero' is closely related to dedication, commitment, self-sacrifice and a consumption lifestyle devoted to environmental preservation and/or social justice (Cherrier, 2009).

(2) 'Project identities'

A project identity is related with the own individual repositioning and in relation to society. Cherrier (2009) points out that the creation of this

position implies, to some extent, to resist. It also involves creativity in relation to “new cultural codes, practices, and alternative market structures” (p. 189), not moving away, somehow, from material positioning. Also defend a lifestyle as a result of a system of codes that shape their lives and guide their consumption behaviour “according to their individual values and concerns” (p. 187).

With regard to perspectives on consumption resistance, Izberk-Bilgin (2010) identifies two paradigms: (1) the ‘manipulation and enslavement discourse’; and, (2) the ‘agency and empowerment discourse’.

(1) ‘Manipulation and enslavement discourse’

It is based on a critical view of consumer culture, grounded on the thought of authors such as Marx, Horkheimer and Adorno, Ewen, and Baudrillard, and characterized by a “denunciation of consumption and a cynical approach to market ideology” (p. 300). According to Izberk-Bilgin (2010), these authors perceive the market as “an arena of domination and power struggle” (p. 306) in which consumption is regarded as a “enslaving ideology and manipulative” (p. 306). In this context, consumers are seduced by the resources and the discourses of consumer culture, but simultaneously are free to challenge and resist¹⁶. According to Cherrier (2009), a reaction to the idea that individuals are mere instrument of the market economy, is the opposition of voluntary simplifiers and culture jammers who build their identity in line with social and environmental concerns.

The marketplace acts as a seductive instrument, so that, according to Izberk-Bilgin (2010), this marketing perspective takes on a “liberatory” and “emancipatory” character about the market system. In the opinion of this author, one of the papers that best represents the enslavement discourse is Ozanne and Murray's (1995) work about reflexively defiant consumers. Under this approach, consumers can be truly critical, if radically separate

¹⁶ In the United States, contrary to resort to strike, as suggested by Marx, the working class chose boycotts. This measure caused the industry to stay aware of the need for consumption carried out by the workers themselves, promote a growth base that is now known as ‘consumer capitalism’ or ‘Fordism’ to sustain the capitalist model. This ideology - consumerism, was vigorously challenged by a group of scholars of the Frankfurt school as Adorno, Horkheimer, Beufamin, Marcuse and Harbermas, which have extended Marx's (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010).

themselves “from the code” (p. 312), challenging marketing and position of the existing structures. Moisander and Pesonen's (2002) research is also an example of resistance to consumption ideology (ecologically oriented citizens) using a radical tactic of distancing themselves from the market, where consumers live in closed communities and thus assuming some domain in consumer practices. However, the inevitable consequence of this option is the marginalization and social hostility towards they are subject.

Rumbo (2002) also addresses a collective perspective of active resistance consumption by followers of anti-advertising magazine ‘Adbusters’¹⁷, about the control and occupation by advertiser on cultural spaces. A strategy adopted by these anti-advertising activists is based on the creation of “ad-avoidance” strategies so that individuals protect themselves in relation to excessive “advertising clutter” (127). This position is based on a “war of position” between consumption and anti-consumption (p. 138).

(2) ‘Agency and empowerment discourse’

According to Izberk-Bilgin (2010), the focus of this perspective is in the ‘micro-tactics’ instead of ‘macro-strategies’. As an example of this approach they refer to Douglas and Isherwood's (1996) work, in which the “focus is on the active role of consumers in skilfully using goods to communicate, mark and classify social relations” (p. 307). Within this dimension, consumption is seen as cultural, ritualistic and creative individuals linking together and rearranging the social order. Rooted in this paradigm and sharing the same principles, Izberk-Bilgin (2010) proposes the market-bound perspective. Its premise is based on a non-opposition to the market but advocates the consumer agency and creativity as a form of resistance to an individual rather than a revolution mass, which market changes may occur subtly by daily consumption practices and choices. As Izberk-Bilgin (2010) points out, the market-bound perspective is more focused in the resistance aspects that are personally enriching and

¹⁷ The Canadian magazine “Adbusters” addresses environmental, social and psychological issues discussed on two main themes: the “colonization” of public spaces carried out by marketing and mass media; and the degradation of the environment as a consequence of economic overgrowth and consumption (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010).

liberating through lived experience (personal gratification or self-expression) rather than a mere critique of consumption. Izberk-Bilgin (2010) positions Kozinets's (2002) 'Burning Man Festival' within this perspective. In this event, each participant moves away from the market and gives rise to their freedom, creativity and implements alternative forms of exchange with the goal of each is to "create an authentic anti-consumption identity" instead of a "grand project" where consumers separate themselves from the Western market system (p. 314).

These two paradigms discussed above fall within the postmodern current suggested by Firat and Venkatesh (1995), because they fit a political rebellion and countercultural position, stressing the importance of consumption as a political ideology oriented to the construction of the individual and the meaning of consumption (Breen, 1993; Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011). It also involves a broader dimension, a "grand project," as Izberk-Bilgin (2010, p. 314) refers to, in order to escape the marketing of large corporations. Under this assumption, it is required that the consumer should have the ability to filter excess stimuli and pay attention to the messages that lie in their internal criteria.

Moreover, Cherrier, Szuba, and Özçağlar-Toulouse (2012) point out that previous studies indicate a combination of socio-environmental and personal reasons, with regard to the motivations to reduce consumption. These authors propose some arguments to reduce consumption. They argue that personal consumers' interests should be defined around the socio-environmental concerns, such as "purchasing less, using less, and wasting less" (p. 400). They propose direct environmental benefits by reducing waste and pollution, and therefore bring benefits to consumers, such as financial freedom, less stress, personal integrity and better quality of life. However, the dominant consumption patterns are a powerful temptation force in Western consumption cultures.

6.2.3.2 EOA socio-demographic factors

With regard to socio-demographic factors associated with EOA, Egea and Frutos (2013) state that age seems to be the one that exerts greater influence, especially

in those who are older. Conversely, in Autio and Heinonen's (2004) research on green consumption among young Finns, found that young people are not prepared for such drastic changes in their lives. As they point out, "young people master the discourse of the green consumer, but are not willing to act accordingly" (p. 150). In their green consumers categorization – light, medium and deeper - Autio and Heinonen (2004) refer that a consumer identity is developed with age, especially as regards the most extreme positions.

In relation to gender, García-de-Frutos et al. (2016) refer the role of women as EOA agents. Also, Autio and Heinonen (2004) came to the conclusion, as well as other studies, that girls and women seem to be more environmentally friendly than boys and men. In the same line of reasoning, Egea and Frutos (2013) also found that women may be more sensitive to environmentally motivated consumption reduction questions.

Regarding the level of education and income, García-de-Frutos et al. (2016) argue that is not always related to EOA attitudes, but often associated with investments and environmental solutions for your everyday comfort. In contrast, Egea and Frutos (2013) found that this socio-demographic indicator can positively reinforce an environmental attitude and therefore an environmentally motivated consumption reduction.

6.2.3.3 Barriers and struggles to EOA

The literature refers to the struggle of consumers to incorporate their green practices in their style of everyday life and the personal sacrifice that it represents. As an example, Cherrier's et al. (2012) consumers abdicated using car, air travel, and consequent faced social stigma, marginalization and emotional conflicts that these decisions involve. As these authors refer, individual needs are socially constructed and consumers have to deal with external pressures, deterioration of family ties, professional disregard and even social marginalization.

Apart from this individual anti-consumption perspective and the conflicts that an alternative practice of consumption involves, they consequently face the

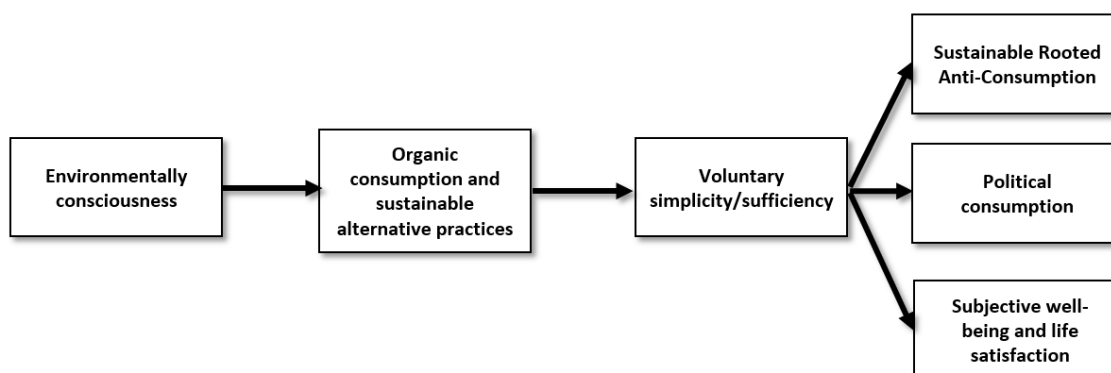
separation from the forms of dominant socializing and the barriers to express new convictions, identities and types consumption. Consequently, consumers try to express this type consumption within circles that enhance this recognition (Cherrier & Murray, 2007). In this context of life in community, there are two different positions. One perspective is represented by Moisander and Pesonen (2002) and Moisander (2007) about life in eco-communities, centred on a clear and radical opposition to the ideology of Western consumer market. These consumers are positioned in a resistance against forms of domination and political struggle. They also put an ideological superiority attitude to their world view, adopting an attitude of austerity and renunciation of pleasures of life. Another more distanced perspective is presented by Moraes, Szmigin and Carrigan (2010) that propose the concept of New Consumption Communities (NCC) in the UK context. As these authors point, such consumers are more interested in practice an "entrepreneurial positive discourses, practices and choices than acting against culture or market" (p. 273). Besides, they add that, from a conceptual point of view "resistance" is "irrelevant" (p. 292). In addition, beyond the entrepreneurial aspect, these consumers also have creative alternatives along with their own production. Some examples found by the authors, such as "cooperative organisation, engagement in economics and local bartering, community business, varied levels of self-sufficiency and food-growing" (p. 284). What is found in these consumers is that ethical consumption may not necessarily mean radically reduce consumption but rather the positive consumption as a way to achieve frugality and environmental sustainability.

6.3 Research findings and discussion

This article explores the transformation that organic products operate in the life of the participants, describing how these consumers organize their lifestyles in order to reach a more environmentally sustainable life. The thematic analysis covered six themes and figure 9 illustrates the close relation between them. The results suggest that organic consumption and its alternative and environmentally friendly consumption practices have as antecedent a strong environmental awareness. These factors, however, lead to transform the lives of these

participants into a simpler and frugal approach. As a result, they inherently engage in anti-consumer practices inspired by these environmental motivations, demonstrate a reactive attitude towards consumption and use consumption as a tool to get their message across. However, the consumption of organic products, and the lifestyle adopted in the meantime, contributes to increase well-being and satisfaction with life.

Figure 9 - Organic consumption and related practices



6.3.1 Environmentally consciousness consumer behaviour

In this research, a fact that most participants highlight is that organic consumption is motivated mainly by environmental reasons. Most of the concerns presented in the interviews are related with water and soil pollution, mainly due to conventional agriculture. Among environmental problems that most concern consumers, the most referred ones were those related with climate changes. As it is shown in the following extract, it was interesting to notice the solid knowledge that these participants have on the subject, evidencing to be well informed, with strong basis and interested on the consequences that this problem brings to the environment and to their lives in general.

(...) there is the question of climate changes that is happening and we find some untruth here! Since the only solution is to stop the production of oil and gas... of all fossil gases. Because we are taking from the underground carbon to put it into the air, right? And we do not know the consequences! But the solution is to stop production. And we do not make that way. We now have the search for oil in Alentejo. That is insane! The production

of shale gas... It is insane! They say "let's stop the climate changes" but facts show that we are doing much worse! (Jorge)

These participants demonstrated an effort to contribute to make a change. To these consumers, environmental problems are the main focus in their lives and consumption in general, and organic products in particular, are intimately connected to these environmental concerns. For this reason, these consumers are aware of the impact of agro-industry and land exploitation, motivating them to find responsible solutions. Marco's quote is representative of the relation between food and that concern focused on ecology and respect for nature.

Is nature very important to me? It's fundamental! It was nature that led me to spirituality. Nature brought me... Everything I believe in is in nature. If I have a bad relation with nature, then I will never be satisfied. And food is the main connection. So, if there is something I like in this planet and that makes me feel alive is the existence of something called 'nature'. (Marco).

In this research, the current market and consumption system is referred as one of the responsible for the existing environmental lack of balance (Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011). Large supermarkets, and business companies in agricultural, food and chemical areas have been mentioned by the participants for representing this market and consumption system.

Participants also confirmed a negative opinion towards the media, marketing and the manipulative effect it can have on consumers.

I do not consider myself as being a radical but I feel very disappointed and sad about the way large companies manipulate us indirectly or directly when go to buy Nike sneakers or whatever it is, through the power that these companies have... so, I am not an anti-globalization activist but there is something that bothers me. (Sofia).

Organic products consumption is therefore a consequence of these concerns and, as Miguel states, "ecological awareness was the first and organic consumption joined that awareness". In some cases, organic products consumption reinforces even more that ecological conviction. In some exceptional cases, like Marco's, the environmental awareness appeared from the

moment the interviewees got in touch with organic products, first as a producer and later as a consumer.

Let's see... There is an awareness process, not only in questions related to food, health and environment. In my early years, I was a pure and simple farmer. I remember that for many years, I was in the area already for 10 years, and I did not know a single bird. I did not know the name of a single bird... No... My focus was on producing wheat, cork, in the most obscene way possible. (Marco)

For those consumers, organic production is a way of corresponding to environmental concerns. Valuing the environmental component is essential and motivates consumers to produce their own food. Therefore, the well-being dimension is also associated in the sense that the consumer feels in balance with the environment. For example, João, a biodynamic producer, is convinced that conventional agriculture “produces dead products” and that is “against life”, while in organic agriculture “all system is drawn to enhance the living forces and is focused on supporting life”.

Many participants choose to create their own self-sustainable projects in harmony with their environmental convictions. Júlia practices artisanal agriculture in the countryside of Portugal. Although her farm is not economically viable yet, she is proud of having built a project where she produces almost all food she needs and that operates in a closed system, in harmony with nature.

I know that this is not only about flavour! I know what there is in there. What really matters is life! It's energy! While the rest is just another thing... These are organic, I get that, but I prefer a thousand times this to the “conventional” conventional. I prefer this because I know what I'm eating! Do you get it? That's it! It's a much more artisan agriculture. It's love! Love makes sense to me! (Júlia)

In Sofia's case, for example, she finds in agriculture a way to give her tiny contribution to sustainability and she is proud because her products have reduced carbon contents.

When I started consuming organic, I naturally had that environmental concern, but that concern has been growing with time and so I guess that the way how food is produced has a huge impact on the environment. (Sofia)

One may therefore conclude that there is a strong connection between organic products consumption and environmental concerns. However, to Mariana, being just a consumer of organic products is not enough. It must include “several behaviours” since “the beginning to the end”.

Consumption is not just what I am going to do to the supermarket. It is also how I get there, the quantities that I buy, how often I go... Because if I go to the supermarket every day, five kilometres by car, buy something, I am having impact, even if I am an organic consumer! Right? I cannot consume organic and be in peace with my conscience if I contributed with many CO₂ emissions. So, organic consumption only makes sense if aggregated to conscious behaviours and that is much easier if motivation to organic consumption is based on environmental concerns. (Mariana)

Organic products consumption reinforces ecological consciousness and it was built in order to make these participants understand better “what it is being done in terms of ecosystems and social matters”. Therefore, organic products act as a key element and the life of these consumers is organized based on them, deeply influencing other routines of daily consumption, strengthening the bonds with nature, leading these consumers to adopt healthier consumption and lifestyle habits. Cristina, for example, “respects the rhythms of Nature” and tries to consume seasonal products. For this consumer, what started only with organic products spread to other consumption habits environment friendly as well. Luís refers that before consuming organic products and having changed his consumer habits he used to feel “slave of the system”. Currently he feels free and happy. He describes his change as “brutal”. He refers that in the past he did not think about the quantity of garbage that he used to produce but he also recognizes that it is also necessary to have courage and self-discipline to say “no”.

10 years ago, I used to live as ideal consumer. Without thinking! I never thought about the way I used to live. I was always travelling, always abroad and of course automatically in contact with several people. I needed to dress according to the situation and to the event, etc. Always because I had to, of course! An obligation leads to another... And I never had time or will to think about my situation... (Luís).

The following figure summarizes the main influences exercised by organic products consumption.

Table 14 - Main influences exercised by organic products consumption

Attitudes	Approaching people with the same philosophy of life
	Central aspect of life
	Consciousness
	Feeling of comfort
	Connection with nature
	Participate is a social change
	Slows the pace of life and simplifies life
Practices	Consumption practices:
	More rational, selective and committed
	Diet habits -Vegetarianism
	Cook at home and avoid restaurants
	Preference for cultural aspects
	Localism and exchange networks
	More durable products
	Second hand articles
	Self-sufficiency and own food production
	Extend to other organic products
	Collective purchases
	Environmental friendly practices:
	Create own sustainable projects
	More close to the nature and healthy habits
	Recycle, reuse and do things themselves
Energy and resources concerns (solar energy, reduce the use of water, reduce the amount of waste and packaging in purchases, reduce the use of wood, the use of wood for cooking and heating)	
Mobility and transports (electric vehicles, the use of bike and walk on foot, public transports)	
To avoid or abdicates	Less need to consume
	More resistant to consumption
	Avoid large surfaces and supermarkets
	Avoid using medications
	Avoid restaurants
	Avoid package products

In what concerns the effect of organic products on behaviour, an aspect commonly referred is the fact that organic products consumers have to be more committed and organized than other consumers, for reasons of products availability, prices and the value of the organic product itself.

Organic product consumer has to be more committed than a common consumer...
Common, ordinary but not in a derogatory sense. This means that I have to organize my

life to find those products. There is a store nearby that belongs to a friend of mine who receives fresh products twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday. So, if I want to buy something I have to go on those days. I cannot think “Ok, the supermarket is opened at any time and it has everything. (Mário)

These consumers are encouraged by clear ideas about their role as consumers, worrying about the impact of their consumption options on the environment and on future generations. During the interviews, there are expressions such as “I educated myself”, “I disciplined my consumption habits”, or “I started avoiding”, clearly showing that they became more critical of the consumer society, of their own habits and more selective and rational. For example, Sofia does not consider herself as a passive person in the context in which she lives, trying to be reasonable in her purchases, knowing the origin of the goods she purchases.

The things I decide to consume have a greater meaning than having money in my pocket to buy stuff. For example, the clothes I buy are so cheap because they have been made by people that earn 10 cents per hour in factories where people work in crowded places. So, I can avoid buying in those places. I do not want to contribute to that industry. (Sofia)

The results of this research suggest that “environmental awareness” and all the concerns it includes (scope of concerns) (Lee & Ahn, 2016) when combined with the information about the environmental impact makes the consumer willing to adopt an adequate behaviour. This is what Zabkar and Hosta (2012) defines as ‘Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behaviour’ (ECCB). So, these consumers collect the information available that enables them to find solutions to their environmental and social concerns, making them what Ulusoy (2016) defines as ‘responsible consumers/citizens’. As Moisander and Pesonen (2002) refer, green consumers are generally seen as ‘goal-oriented individuals’ who take in consideration the effect of their actions on public domain.

Like Cherrier et al. (2011) study, the participants in this research have discourses related with the sustainable practices that make part of the of the identity of each individual. In fact, these organic products consumers are intimately related with deep environmental concerns, making the non-consumption practices standard and normal.

Unlike most consumers, these participants are willing to change their consumption habits and make sacrifices, not only for a question of “pro-social status perception” (Zabkar & Hosta, 2012) but recognizing that their action in terms of consumption may contribute to minimize the impact on the environment.

6.3.2 Organic consumption and eco-friendly consumption practices

Concerns referred by these participants show a deep perspective on the problem of environmental degradation, the origin of the problem being, according to Mara, the political system.

I think that the political system is what worries me the most, the excess of power that corporations, mainly the transnational ones and particularly the North-American and Anglo-Saxon, have on food policy... It worries me more than environmental problems because to me that comes first. Environmental problems in fact are a consequence of that lack of balance in terms of power in the decision making process. (Mara)

Also in an enlarged vision of the problem, Tiago considers that the environmental attacks are caused by the “inefficient” lifestyle of western society that is considered as a reference for the rest of the world.

My main concern is that if we have 7 billion people, you and I are in the 2% top. We are kings of this Planet! Because we are middle class men, we live in a European country... That extremely inefficient lifestyle that we create is seen as an objective or a symbol of success to all the others. (Tiago)

However, environmental concerns and the knowledge of the reality of the world have molded the daily practices to contribute “to a better world”, which corresponds to the “individualistic moral discourse of making a difference” (Autio, Heiskanen, & Heinonen, 2009; Moisander, 2001; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002b).

To me, knowledge comes first and consumption is one of the options I make to try to build or contribute to a better world. (Monica)

In what concerns environmentally friendly habits, it is clear that these consumers are closer to more natural contexts to put in practice their sustainability projects and healthy and environment friendly behaviours. In fact, practices related with

recycling were seldom referred by the participants, probably for considering that practice as guaranteed. However, these participants present alternatives to their concerns in terms of energy and resources reuse and also the mobility level. To Cristina, mobility “is her legs”. Monica, for example, almost stopped using her car and shares it with her brother.

How do I travel? I almost never use my car. I share it with my brother and I use the car... let's say once a month. I used to drive all the time. Ok, I stop spending money on fuel and stuff like that... (Monica)

Concerning own food practices, Clara is motivated to cultivate her own organic food in her backyard following agro-ecology or biodynamic principles. Her garden is impeccably organized and in order according to permaculture principles.

Another important influence of organic products was vegetarianism. Almost all participants are vegetarian or at least resistant to the consumption of meat. The reasons are related with environmental concerns, animal welfare and also for diet and health reasons. Also, another important influence of organic products is the preference for products produced as close as possible of the place of distribution, knowing the producer and supporting those who try to produce following ethical criteria.

Mariana statement is representative of how she integrates in her life the consumption practices above referred without radicalizing her position of environmentally conscious consumer and without conditioning her life, using rational criteria in her consumption options.

I am very critical about what I consume. First of all, I always read the labels. I see if it is organic and even if it is organic I try to see if it is Portuguese. Sometimes it is imported. A criteria is to be rational! If possible local but well the things I buy are things that I don't produce! Or that I cannot have right now. And what I don't produce is what cannot be cultivated here. Otherwise I would look for a producer that would have it. I try to see... organic, among the organic the nearest possible to have less environmental impact... Of course, price is also a factor, right? So, I buy the cheapest naturally! But I try to see if I really need that or if it can be replaced by something that I have. This is a principle that I always follow when I purchase. I always try to buy the minimum possible and even when I buy I try to think if I really need it. When we talk about organic consumption, we are not just talking about food. We are talking about everything: cleaning products, for example,

which are even more difficult than food products. When I talk about organic consumption, I cannot refer only to food. It's everything! Starting with the clothes I wear, right? Where does cotton come from? When I talk about organic consumption... and it is difficult to talk about organic consumption because it cover a large range of things! From backpacks to school material. (Mariana)

However, the ecologically responsible behaviour that these consumers have in their daily life is not limited to environmental responsibility. What distinguishes these consumers from others is the fact that they intentionally changed many of their habits, trying to make their life simpler, reducing their consumption routines, trying to make their lives and the world more sustainable.

Environmental motivations are therefore one of the most important reasons for consuming organically since this type of consumer has a perception of the impact of their individual actions on the environment (Bartels & Onwezen, 2014). Organic products consumption is therefore related with the intention of buying products that make social and ethical demands (Bartels & Onwezen, 2014) or other environment friendly practices (recycling economy) such as: 'do-it-yourself' philosophy, reusing products consumed and reducing waste (Hong & Vicdan, 2016).

By choosing to live in a sustainable way, these consumers use anti-consumption as a way to correspond to that wish, focusing on daily specific actions that contribute to build the identity of the person and increase each one's happiness. As referred by Cherrier et al. (2011), these anti-consumption practices to sustainability are inserted in a postmodern discourse based on the subjectivity of each individual. The same is to say, "it is always situated within subjective narratives, experiences, traditions, culture and practices" (p. 1758) and express what being a non-materialistic consumer is.

6.3.3 Voluntary simplicity/sufficiency

Consuming organic products is participating in a social change (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011), based on a cleaner production, supporting those who take the risk of producing organic. One of the greatest influences that some

consumers referred after adopting the consumption of organic products was the beginning of a process of life simplification, living with few, abandoning many consumption practices and previous lifestyle.

Therefore, and generally speaking, these organic products consumers give great importance to anti-consumption practices. For them, the meaning of this attitude is related with many factors. First, it necessarily requires a change of thought. These consumers refer that since they started consuming organic products, this gave origin in their conscious to a change of mentality regarding consumption and several other areas of their lives. As Leonor states, “the first thing was not letting things go but several decision making and positions taken (...) and then the material aspect came along.” As in Leonor’s case, by adopting a healthier, closer to nature lifestyle, the following step was a consumption reduction.

Another aspect that contributes to the reduction of consumption is the motivation to achieve more freedom and autonomy in the market and economy in general. In Tiago’s case, for example, a symbolic position but that he considered to be necessary to detach from consumption society was to end his mortgage, by “getting rid” of the house which after all did not belong to him. He also “got rid” of other goods that he did not need in fact, such as furniture and clothes. As stated by Seegebarth, Peyer, Balderjahn and Wiedmann (2016), the search for a simpler lifestyle, detached from consumption society, could result in a decrease of the amounts in debt which permits to increase welfare levels. In fact, from all participants Tiago presents the simplest and most frugal lifestyle (but not poverty). He gave up his car, television and other western world goods. Like in the case of Tiago, the participants in this research started by having “almost everything” and voluntarily and progressively become more conscious and adjust their needs, by consuming less (Gorge et al., 2015).

Getting close to people with the same life philosophy also reinforces motivation for anti-consumption practices, looking for “moral support”. Lara found in her new circle of friends who are organic consumers, “different people” from those she knew until then, influencing her perspective about food, environment, interest in sustainable practices and consumption resistance. In fact, social environment and individual characteristics of organic consumers have an important role to

predict ethical and environmental friendly behaviours.

Organic products also act as a consumption moderator, “refraining” in Marco’s case, his tendency to impulsive consumption. In Leonor’s case, with the few resources she possesses, she gives priority to food, using more public transports and going by food. In other cases, such as Inês, owing to the price of organic products and since she values them very much, “she is willing to use them as much as possible, wasting the least possible.”

These consumption behaviours converge into an ethical spirit state environmentally responsible. However, this ethics also includes letting some comfort things go and even personal sacrifices. Lia, for example, is forced to reduce the quantity of organic products owing to their cost and to the low budget that she has. Júlia, if she wants to continue producing her own products is exposed to greater risks and she may not be able to sell her products at the price she considers to be fair. Consuming organic and vegetarian involves resistance and conflicts with family and friends.

In Júlia’s case, the option for traditional organic agriculture, on one hand minimizes the impact on the environment but on the other hand severely reduces her incomes since “people do not understand” the value of her products,

No, it is not [financially] sustainable. It might be one day! But not now! I mean... This does not give any money at all! I have always problems to pay my bills... Because producing vegetables to sell at the scale as we do... We are only two people... We cannot do much more than this. We put a lot of sweat here! We are in a home farm... (Júlia).

Besides these personal sacrifices, it is common among participants to accept that consumption reduction brings them satisfaction. On one hand, owing to the simpler and frugal lifestyle that they adopted by starting to consume organically. On the other hand, since the action of not purchasing also permits them to have a political statement of resistance and activism. Mara, for example, is comfortable with the lifestyle that she adopted and the new people who meanwhile she had the opportunity to meet and that give her the support and (social) safety that she needs.

Yes, ok, values feed us [laughs]. The rest also comes along. When a person takes this option, we end by having friends here, in the area, joining a different world and leaving the other one! In this different world, things are easier. In this world, people invite you to dinner, they feed you, I was never hungry! I always had where to sleep. I am in a more sociable place than I was before! I do not have economical safety but I have an alternative social safety! (Mara)

Sónia is another consumer that chose to live in a distant region of Portugal to carry out her self-sufficiency project. She lives away from civilization and she has an extremely simple lifestyle, coherent with her principles. Her clothes are very simple, but she wears well known trademarks. She wears a lot of wool. To produce energy, she uses solar panels and for heating purposes she uses local resources such as wood. Her car, a second-hand car, is shared with another couple from the community where they live. Her house is being reconstructed with local resources (wood and schist). Workers are volunteer and based on mutual aid. She produces a great part of her food and she is an extremely frugal vegetarian, collecting a lot of her food directly from nature. She has no television but she is very active on line. Sónia's following statement is representative of the adoption of a simpler lifestyle and the attitude of freedom regarding consumption. That is, adopting a 'sufficiency strategy' (Alcott, 2008), reducing consumer behaviours, working less and also having less income. This attitude hides environmental concerns.

I think that people are addicted. Simply addicted in consumption and we grow addicted. I see this in myself! When I am here in contact with Nature I do not need anything else! I just need to be warm. So, I am glad to have warm clothes, being inside the house and feel warm myself. I need to be fed. I am lucky I have money to buy food. I don't need anything else! If I go to a mall for a couple of hours... "this is interesting..." we go there and they take everything from us... all the atmosphere is conceived to "give me this, I can only be complete when I have this and that"... (Sónia)

The change for a simpler and frugal lifestyle also involves a change of the life perspective. Leonor's metaphor that 'Land of Plenty' intends to see sufficiency through the eyes of "plenty" and not through scarcity.

The sense of scarcity makes us go deep in the negative sense of 'plenty', makes us go deep in the exaggeration, in consumption! Now, if you watch the world through the eyes of 'plenty', we don't need to exaggerate anymore. If we live with much, if I feel good in the

place where I am living in, if I see that I have my own production of vegetables that allows me to have diversity and be healthy and that because of that I seldom go to the doctor... We live in plenty! Am I explaining myself, right? (Leonor)

'Land of Plenty' metaphor summarizes what living the volunteer sufficiency means, how consumption and well-being are considered, in a balance between "excess and emptiness" (Gorge et al., 2015, p. 17). This metaphor dares the capitalist system, stressing out another component in this research which is consumption according to a political perspective. Reducing the unnecessary consumption, one is trying to achieve a life with more meaning, changing the focus into more gratifying and satisfying activities (Michael Lee & Ahn, 2016).

The role that a third part have on the process of transforming convictions of these consumers is deep. The almost totality of participants refers that they had suffered a huge influence on food habits and lifestyle change. Sofia refers that she had become surrounded by people with whom she relates and who have the same vision and share the same stories.

Mariana admits that when she started consuming organic products she was influenced by the people that she was related to at the time, "since they had different thoughts", doing their own stuff in their own world". Currently, she promotes local exchange networks, considering important and inspiring the role of community movements for sharing purposes.

The participants' discourses evidence that within the context of organic consumers' community, there is a stronger link between people, more mutual aid and communication.

However, and in spite of the influences and support that exists in this community, most participants admit to make an internal reflection, in order to create viable alternatives at economic, social and environmental level. On the other hand, they feel the need to give something in return, influencing and changing other people's behaviours. As Lara refers, "contribute and share".

In this research, it is evident that change of behaviours includes a reduction of material goods consumption which has an influence in the individual's life (McGouran & Prothero, 2016), also participating in the building of an antagonism

position regarding consumption. Some of these participants may be classified as “strong simplifiers”, leaving well paid careers behind and busy lifestyles, for occupations that permit them to have more free time, satisfaction and coherence towards the principles in which they believe, in spite of the low incomes (Bekin et al., 2005; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Etzioni, 1998; Huneke, 2005; Seegebarth et al., 2016). According to Moisander and Pesonen (2002), leaving a professional career and material values constitute a form of personal development, within a process of life reorientation.

Participants in this research, in a conscientious and voluntary way, choose anti-consumption to reach volunteer simplicity. Furthermore, they have a strong relation with sustainability in the sense that their main motivation is based on preserving the environment and the values of social justice (Peyer, Balderjahn, Seegebarth, & Klemm, 2017). It was also clear that these participants continue to consume but only the quantity that is necessary to their well-being, which corresponds to the sufficiency concept (Gorge et al., 2015). Therefore, concerns about the impact of their actions force them to reduce consumption, limiting the use of resources and changing their purchase options, like for example, choosing homemade organic products, products locally produced and traded, informal exchanges or sharing (Peyer et al., 2017). These consumers evidence a preference for green products and a strong environmental and economic concern, sharing universal values (Peyer et al., 2017). So, this life option requires a deep reflection based on environmental concerns and ideological values that involve a consumption reduction. This fact constitutes the main promoter of sustainability rooted anti-consumption concept (Seegebarth et al., 2016).

However, the real question is what way consumption should be sufficient to combine the minimum to fulfill the individual needs and a maximum that could respect the ecological capacities. This problematic is covered by Spengler (2016), in two discourses: as minimum and as maximum, in which both of them establish a certain ‘enough’ level. The first approach is focused on the perspective of distributive justice and egalitarianism, according to which each individual must ensure a level sufficient to correspond to their essential needs. The second perspective is focused on the maximum limit of consumption that corresponds to a minor impact on the environment in terms of resources use and

emission of harmful substances to the environment. According to the author, the idea is to reduce consumption and change lifestyle, in the sense of maintaining a level below what is considered 'too much'. It is therefore focused on sustainability and concern for future generations. A way to correspond to the decrease environmental impact is sustainable consumption, based on the efficient use of resources and change of paradigm of fossil fuels. Another form is the change of lifestyle and consumption behaviours (such as reduction of meat consumption, collective forms of consumption, abandoning the use of car...). In fact, the intention is to develop consumption patterns that permit a change starting in an individual strategy towards a collective level. However, this phenomenon is more visible in developed countries or, in the case of this sample, in individuals with their basic need fulfilled and whose absence does not influence their level of happiness. Therefore, in these cases, values based on materialism have a negative impact on consumer's well-being (Lee & Ahn, 2016).

As evidenced in the study of Gorge et al. (2015), this research confirms the difficulty in living an individual sufficiency, isolated and often subject to social lack of consideration. This fact influences the organisation of individual and collective networks, as a form to compensate that difficulty and achieve a global dimension. Feeling the support of the community in which consumers are inserted, these participants feel free to express "their real inner selves" (Ulusoy, 2016, p. 289) without suppressing that identity in their daily lives.

6.3.4 Sustainability rooted of anti-consumption

A fact that these participants reported since they have initiated organic consumption was that they felt a much lower need to purchase, moderating their consumption in general, becoming therefore more resistant to consumption. Some of them became aware of environmental questions (the most referred); others were already disconnected from material goods; or even others that adopted a new lifestyle which does not allow them to have high financial resources. The extract of Lara's interview is representative of that position.

I feel a growing need to buy food in small places, to small producers. This is a question. The other question (...) is related to feel less need to consume (...). In general, yes I feel less and less need to buy other type of goods which I know is unnecessary. And in this perspective, they are also harmful to me and to the environment. (Lara)

Other consumers, like Júlia, being concerned with environmental problems, try to contribute to minimize the problem putting in practice all their sustainability projects in isolated places in the interior of Portugal, close to Nature, far from mainstream society (Hong & Vicdan, 2016). Also in this particular case, she considers that consumption excess is responsible for most environmental problems.

That is a huge problem! Why am I here [in the far away farm]? [laughs] There is nothing going on here! [the world] Is scary! There is too much consumption, too much pollution... Right? The weather is changed and this does not look good! People are more aware of that... (Júlia)

These consumers are strongly resistant to consumption, avoiding medicines, plastic packages, travelling by plane or car. Another aspect often referred by consumers is to avoid or even completely stop going to supermarkets even if to purchase organic products and prefer local stores.

These actions to reduce or avoid consumption are related with food and other general practices. Food was referred as a priority above the remaining needs. However, the most mentioned aspect by the participants is reduction of meat consumption for reasons related with animal welfare, the impact of animal exploration on the environment and health. The criteria for selection of organic products, even those without certification, was an aspect also referred by the participants. Cristina, for example, prefers to purchase not certified organic products in her exchange network and avoid going to large surfaces. She avoids purchasing products that are not from national organic production owing to the “transport ecological effects” and she avoids buying transformed products, preferring those as natural as possible. In fact, food has a main role in the life of these consumers but the options to reduce consumption are not limited to this category but also linked to several other daily practices, such as reduction of superfluous goods, concerns with mobility by reducing the use of the travels by car or plane and reduction of energy consumption.

Also, consumption reduction is indirectly shown by purchasing durable, better quality or even second-hand goods. Mariana is an example of a consumer who lives in a city and tries hard to practice some of these strategies to reduce consumption.

Use the car as less as possible... At home we use ecological lamps and try to use reasonably the equipment's (not all at the same time). I am very concerned about water consumption. It is one of my greatest concerns. Our clothes, for instance... For my son I use many things that my friends give me. I have a network of friends and their clothes come to my house. So, I have clothes for 10 years old, 11, 12... I put them in a box in the basement and I seldom need to purchase any clothes or shoes. (Mariana)

The transformation of the perspective on consumption in the life of these participants was slow and gradual. According to their discourses, this did not involve worse living conditions. As in other studies (McGouran & Prothero, 2016), participants agreed that limiting consumption brought them more freedom and satisfaction. Luís stresses out his current relation with consumption and his new lifestyle that are nowadays part of his daily life.

In principle, nobody notices that I do not purchase! There is no scheme on living organically! We cannot tell how we do it. The only thing is that we need less. It is a natural consequence. There is not a list "now I do not buy this..." The satisfaction of doing this job is already 50% of your life (organic agriculture)! It gives you how to occupy your day with satisfaction. Those who live like me or even those that live in a more extreme way, and I, we do not need to travel to certain places. No! We take all we need from work. (Luís)

For Andrea it was a natural process after having left her consumerist habits. Organic consumption started after a period of reflection about the meaning of consumption, personally, for reasons related with her participation in the contribution to sustainability. It started by limiting her consumption, changing completely her life perspective, "slowing down the rhyme of life". Jorge considers that, when people are recognized by society, try to find a meaning for life, compensating the things that are missing with consumption habits. He confesses that he does not feel the need to consume much and he finds satisfaction from this fact since he considers this is a good contribution to achieve balance with the environment. Also to Susan, living with few is a "very healthy way of liberation", "a great relief".

However, these consumers continue consuming even if a different way from the past, which gives them more pleasure. Joana finds several ways of getting satisfaction using the exchange market. She gives mushrooms and receives oranges, in a context where money is not necessary. Other participants point out that they started to give privilege to articles made by themselves and that they get satisfaction from this. They also refer their interest on attending cultural events or others that may provide personal knowledge. Cristina is a good example of this.

I feel great not consuming. In fact, I could say that my consumption is more related to services. I like to attend an ethics finances forum in Faro. I feel good if I go to a cooperative meeting in Abrantes. That is to say, I am also a traveler [laughs]. I am a little shy but I like to meet other people. So, if we consider this as a form of consumption, I may say that this is where I consume the most. I'm going to exaggerate but I probably go every 3 months, at least... I give great importance to knowledge... (Cristina)

These participants also associate not consuming to a detachment from the material aspect in our lives, enjoying quality of life. This means to adopt a simpler lifestyle. Júlia refers to her option of leaving the city where she had a well-paid job, to move to the countryside and dedicate her life to organic agriculture.

It was my option. It was a much more sustainable and natural path. It is a privilege! (Júlia)

Tiago also considers a “privilege” to be able to do what he believes in. By reading their discourses, one may conclude that they do not seem willing to change. Currently, Olga considers that she “does everything she wanted to do”. Even if sometimes she has to sacrifice her well-being, reducing consumption gives her “pleasure” and she feels that she is being coherent with what she stands for.

According to sustainability perspective, anti-consumption means that intentionally an individual decides to change their lifestyle to another, a simpler one, which brings as a consequence the reduction of consumption, with the objective of corresponding to environmental and social concerns. Therefore, they become ‘ecological citizens’ (Seegebarth et al., 2016; Seyfang, 2006).

Under these circumstances, the participants of this research also fit the concept of ‘Environmental Oriented Anti-Consumers’ (Egea & Frutos, 2013), based on

strong environmental convictions that in turn direct acts against consumption in order to protect it. This motivation towards environmental causes therefore leads to a consumption reduction and stresses the altruistic aspects of the personality.

Consequently, anti-consumption behaviours are motivated by major considerations like environmental concerns and other altruist pro-social considerations (Lee & Ahn, 2016) and not merely against consumerism (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012). These individuals use their power to reject goods and services that do not follow their ethical values.

This research evidences the need that these participants have to control own food production and consumption, with the purpose of getting more autonomy, fact that contributes to greater well-being (Hong & Vicdan, 2016; Lee & Ahn, 2016). As other studies show (Cherrier et al., 2011; Lee & Ahn, 2016), also this research evidences that consumer's well-being is focused on a subjective dimension (achievement of satisfaction and happiness), to the detriment of objective components (like material goods). The persecution of a simpler lifestyle cannot be separated from anti-consumerism, since these individuals consider the excess of materialism to have a negative impact on environment and individual well-being (Lee & Ahn, 2016).

Consequently, this type of consumer develops a capacity to become less receptive to marketing, not being easily seduced and use that criticism and volunteer rejection to excess of consumption to increase their control level (Lee & Ahn, 2016).

Anti-consumerism is therefore present in the sustainable discourse, being considered an alternative (Black, 2010; Cherrier et al., 2011) and the most powerful and immediate mechanism for individuals to have control over consumption.

6.3.5 Organic products consumers as political agents

In this research, the meaning that participants give to organic consumption and their commitment may be considered as a political tool outside the formal

process. The political commitment is made beyond the traditional arena and voluntary simplicity is an initiative in which consumers seek to create alternatives (Zamwel et al., 2014).

This research evidences the close relation between consumerism and organic production. To these participants, activism and resistance means home food production. Raul refers: “four years ago I heard a voice... you must be completely independent... total freedom”. To Daniel, his great goal is to become self-sufficient, not depending on anyone. Following this counter-culture perspective, some of these participants defend a nostalgic artisanal agriculture, based on old-fashioned artisanal practices, of low environmental impact, in opposition to easy immediate solutions.

Another way of influence is consuming products produced and traded in close spots, “consume what I have around me”, being an option that contributes to minimize environmental problems. As previously referred, there is a strong connection between environmental concerns, organic products consumption and the link that these consumers establish with nature by following their lifestyle. Environmental component is the most relevant aspect of the motivation to consume organic products and in most cases related one notices the detachment of “me” in benefit of the environmental cause. Organic products produced in an extensive scale, home-made, traditional, and traded or exchanged locally, knowing the network between producers and consumers are those that grant a major authenticity to the concept of organic product.

Most of these participants exercise a discrete influence within their community, without the intention of “convincing other people”. The transformation occurred in the lives of these participants led them to recognize the meaning that organic consumption has in their lives. First it is evident the awareness and knowledge of these consumers about consumption, how they can have an influence and take a position. Joana, an organic farmer, considers consumption as a “voice” and a form to “exercise influence”.

To me, consumption is a voice too. It is an attitude. It is the way of telling that I do not have to consume or be aware... I believe that we are all manipulated by marketing and by messages and we don't even realize it. If you get a little bit apart from that and have a

voice... If you don't consume you are already making a statement... Consumption commands our society. Either you consume or not! If you don't consume, you are already making a statement... (Joana).

This type of consumer believes that actions and consumptions may have a greater influence than the act of voting itself (Zamwel et al., 2014). Sofia's discourse is clear, evidencing a political perspective on organic consumption. To this urban consumer, process begins by becoming aware and informed on "how things arrive, how they are made and how people are rewarded by their work". To her, the product of organic products is related with autonomy, freedom, food sovereignty, with ideas of political, ideological and transformation character. Consuming organic constitutes a political action since it intends to influence the production cycle and its effect on ecosystem, changing consumption habits. Therefore, she considers herself as an active consumer because "the thing that we decide to buy means more than having money in our pocket to buy it".

This influence is exercised in two ways. One is related to the changes in daily life derived from organic consumption due to its benefits and environmental component, as in the case of Andrea.

I try to spread a message, alert people, at least those that are close to me, in order to open their minds to the type of production, to know how things are produced, meat, dairy and several others... Production is as we know: terrible! Besides animal well-being, it has deep ecological consequences. The great rate of agriculture is made to feed the cattle for human consumption. This is frightening! When you start seeing this and becoming more aware of what happens and you watch some documentary movies about it, it is scary! It is also a way of saying "attention!"... I am not a radical. I do not tell people "don't eat meat". But sometimes I suggest "what about not eating meat on Mondays?" This is a funny habit that can make a difference. Eat less meat... It has an environmental component. (Andrea)

Another influence, probably the most relevant, is activism, mainly concerning environmental questions. The type of influence of these participants is related with actions of environmental awareness or food care within children, participating in initiatives for seeds preservation, workshops on eatable plants or exercising influence near the local authorities particularly for not using herbicides in public places. Most participants refer preferring to perform activism by giving

the example, demonstrating that it is possible to operate changes in the rules established in the capitalist consumption society (Zamwel et al., 2014).

Leonor, for example, feels that “action must come before words”. She is determined to make her organic agriculture project work and be an inspiring example to others. She is also rather active in the exchange network, promoting alternatives to “survive” in a poor region. In other cases, like Tiago, a direct action is exercised on the local community to which he belongs through the environmentalist group of which he makes part.

My influence... I am not concerned about the rest. It's sad to see the coral reefs disappear but I'm part of a branch of people that help changing things. There was not an organic market, the environmentalist group were almost dead... People didn't know what composting was... It's a titanic job! One thing at a time.... (Tiago)

However, most participants consider themselves as being a moderate activists, with pacifier character. To Rosa, this activism and militancy for environmental causes is shy and discrete because the main objective is not getting into confrontation.

I am a lot about talking and giving opinions. I am a pacifist! I think, I believe, that once violent means are used, violence is created. That's what I believe! I am a reasonable person by nature. I do not relate to radical attitudes in any way. I am not a radical. I am a moderated environmentalist. (Rosa)

Others consider that the problem is not at the level of what is exercised on the environment but at the level of acting in the society, exercising influence through the social networks. Cristina, for example, considers herself as a “silent activist”. She also considers herself as an “activist that gives the example” and that was her greatest transformation after having started consuming organic products. However, other consumers exercise more direct actions, either within environmental groups, by participating in environmental campaigns, or promoting “free seeds”. Sónia's case is the most extreme one. She participated in campaigns against genetically modified food, destroying cultures and/or mining equipment. Mara's case is also representative of a life devoted to activism. She even abandoned her professional career.

I'm being an activist for 8 years! Yes! I got out of the system! I left my career and everything to become an activist and the, well, money would come if it would come! But I managed to survive until now with small jobs... Greenpeace hired me. I survived like this but 9 years ago I left that part of the system, a system based on having a career. This happened 9 years ago! My father almost cried! [laughs]. Until 2015 I was "hyper-intensively" involved in activism. (Mara)

Conscience, attitudes and consumption practices are followed by the participants express as being ecologically responsible consumer (Hobson, 2002; Seyfang, 2006), with a simple message: trying to be part of the solution and have some freedom regarding consumption. It is, for example, the case of producing energy, using accessible resources and renewable sources. Joana refers that she uses alternative energy sources, like solar energy and she has an electric car. Even if she refers the comfort of dropping fossil fuels, she also refers that she admits that she has to do some sacrifices and she was forced to change her mobility behaviours.

Yes and it's not about the money. In fact I spent more money in a car and I could spend less. My life rhythm is completely changed. For example, it is not easy to charge my car. It is not as easy as to get into a station and just put some fuel. It takes time and it requires a whole change in my daily life since I have to think about the kilometers that I have to do and if the car has autonomy for that. It is a big change that I'm doing and it's hard. But I'm getting used to it. In the beginning I had some doubts about what I was doing... because it's a big change. (Joana)

Mariana, for example, did not find any products that correspond to her environmental requirements and she chose to "follow in the sense of self-sufficiency". She considers "very interesting that way of doing economy". Also Óscar stresses out the strong component of preferring organic local products.

As I said, when I do not talk about "organic products", I'm talking about traditional products: food and medicines. To me, healthy products are those that are not treated, that were born on a rich soil, with a small quantity of water... Those are indeed the products! For the taste, for the quality... To me it's the most important... (Óscar).

In Mara's case, organic products have turned her into a more responsible consumer, partly due to food sovereignty that helped her to understand food policy and the way to create sustainable alternatives.

Organic products were my wakening to an option that I later realized is healthier to me and to the environment. Wake up to a life philosophy which is macrobiotic. Today I don't do it but I have incorporated some elements and I realized that food is politics and choosing food is politics. And the type of production is also very political. (Mara)

Luís is also very selective in his consumption options, preferring national or European articles, avoiding other origins, particularly from China, owing to political questions but also to the social impact considering the production conditions and the environmental impact of their transport.

Currently, it's important to know the origin of the product. I go to the stores and ask: "Look pal, where are these clothes coming from?" Most sellers don't know! And don't care. But I will always try to buy national clothes or at least from Europe and only if it is not all possible otherwise or if I need something really special... If it's made in China, I really avoid it! But this is political question. Only in extreme cases I buy things that are not produced in Portugal or in Europe. Most of my purchases are local. (Luís)

Participants of this research evidence a rational and volunteer attitude of resistance to consumption culture, being detached from the current system of domination and evaluating carefully what they can buy or should not buy, comparing to what they consider to be the ethical values (Cherrier et al., 2011). In a political perspective, participants use consumption according to the definition of Moraes et al. (2011, p. 1060) as a "voting methaphor".

These results suggest that the reasons that may lead to consumption restriction are related with many factors. First, environmentalism appears as a strong political force (Horton, 2003), in which participants are between the category of 'reformists' and 'radicals' (Horton, 2003, p. 65). The former tend to be inserted in a social structure, adopting sustainable practices. The other tend to go around the system, as a bypass (DuPuis & Goodman, 2005; McEachern et al., 2010; Seyfang, 2006; Zamwel et al., 2014), promoting direct actions against capitalist and materialist values. In common to both categories, these participants look for more sustainable, more autonomous (sovereignty) and self-determined lives (Peyer et al., 2017). In this circumstance, the control power that they have on what they should or should not purchase increases their well-being (Moraes et al., 2011).

This research shows similar results to the study of Zamwel et al. (2004) in the sense of using consumption as a 'weapon' to pressure and influence according two perspectives: (1) those who individually look for volunteer simplicity as a lifestyle. In these cases, consumption patterns and lifestyle of voluntary simplifiers must be analysed in terms of individual choices outside the usual political arena (Zamwel et al., 2014) and understood as a position of detachment and criticism towards the capitalist consumption society (Bossy, 2014; McGouran & Prothero, 2016); (2) in another perspective, through those individuals who aspire to be part of a collective action, a social movement, where consumption patterns may be seen as a "political and civic act" (Zamwel et al., 2014, p. 203). In the case of this study, 'Local Exchange Trading Systems' (LETS) are considered an answer to global capitalist system (Pacione, 1997), since they constitute a challenge to relocation of social and economic identity, promoting social economy and making consumption economies more resilient, self-sufficient and sustainable at long term. Therefore, LETS enables people to have control over economic decisions, giving importance to individual skills and where their goods and services are traded using local/virtual currency (Pacione, 1997; Peacock, 2000; Williams et al., 2001).

6.3.6 Subjective well-being and life satisfaction

By the answers given, the intense and emotional relation with consumption in general and organic products in particular is evidence. Organic products consumption constitutes an important component to the well-being of each participant. The results of this research suggest that the well-being component, associated to a low level of consumption and to the elimination of superfluous material goods, leads to a less stressful life, reducing the levels of anxiety and increasing happiness (McGouran & Prothero, 2016). For example, to Júlia, organic products are "therapeutic", promoting internal balance, "internal coherence" with what we believe in "tranquility of mind". They reflect a different lifestyle, following what is considered to be correct.

These participants refer to the fact that after having adopted a new lifestyle, they had more time to themselves and realized that they do not need many material goods. Maria associates organic products consumption with internal well-being since, in her opinion, it is not just about what we eat but also about what surrounds it.

It is about health, joy, internal peace, well-being with people around us. It's about living a healthy life at all levels. Because it's not just what we eat... It must also be psychological and emotional. It's basically everything. I don't see how we can separate things. To me that's not possible. Only union works. Only union is coherent. That's my opinion. (Maria)

Many of these consumers try to live in the countryside so that they can develop their projects, in which consumption is always and closely connected to production. Laura, for example, refers: "I feel strong to do what I do and to live like I live. Slowly, the attitude is changing." The transformation process towards a more 'green' consumption includes a change into a simpler lifestyle, in contact with nature and a natural connection with people with the same perspective and vision. Also, for most of these participants, it is clear that, by consuming organic and adopting this lifestyle, they leave aside questions of personal interest, focused on "myself" and integrate a more global perspective. To Rosa, "motivation is the world, not myself", evidencing altruistic global values (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016; Soper, 2007).

However, it is interesting to notice that the participants present a negative vision on society and future in environmental terms and approach the question of rethinking well-being and its relation with wealth.

In the dialogue with these organic products consumers, several visions and alternatives for the future are presented. First, it is evident the indifference or disagreement towards the capitalist system, responsible for poverty, instability of the current geopolitical system and uncertainty of the planet in environmental terms.

I think that the current economic system is a straight path to the abyss. I mean, there is no way it can work. It is necessary to prepare other systems so that when it falls down there might be a good possibility for our society. Because it is not possible continuing to pollute, it is not possible continuing with these bank schemes involving money... You

have your money in the bank and you don't know where it's used. The pharmaceutical business... All this, all this system is in the self-destruction path. And it's not about fighting it because it's overwhelming. What it's necessary is to create social alternatives, behaviour alternatives so that, when collapse occurs, people may find ways and schemes to allow our children and grandchildren to live. (Miguel)

This criticism and negative opinion regarding several aspects of market economy and consumption society, leads them to question the meaning of life: "work to have money". In Marco's opinion, the current market system is still in a very primitive stage since "it did not include yet the functioning rules of the Planet and ecosystems". So, he believes that "turbo-capitalism neoliberal philosophy", as he calls it, "is going down". Tiago's attitude is ironic and "subversive", but "without making anything illegal" against the system. He just does not support it and he admits that he does not make any loans to demonstrate that it is possible to build "something" gradually.

Considering an unfeasible political and economic system, it is necessary to find alternatives, "helping the economy with ecology". Jorge, for example, believes that it is possible to feed the world based on agroecology, constituting a form of completely changing the current system.

Since the problem is that we have a society that has been marked by a progress and a vision of the progress that was very... very unique... being this progress technical, scientific and producing economic wealth, measured by the GDP. However, having that goal of producing wealth, it's not the final goal of humanity. It cannot be! (...) If we lose our real goal and continue producing wealth, we are pressing the environment and this pressure will destroy it and we will not have any gain from that. Nowadays, we see how society works, very intensively, too much work and people are not happy. (Jorge)

According to the discourses of these participants, overconsumption and materialism is identified as responsible for the loss of happiness and well-being. (Binder & Blankenberg, 2017). Consuming less, working less and having more free time are factors that contribute to increase happiness (Lee & Ahn, 2016; McGouran & Prothero, 2016). At micro level, anti-consumption behaviours tend to bring the conviction well-being and developing autonomy and control over consumption, promoting happiness (Iyer & Muncy, 2016). As referred in the study

of Binder and Blankenberg (2017), it is evident that environmental concerns and a 'green' lifestyle have a positive impact on the 'subjective well-being'.

Rejecting a materialist lifestyle does not mean that these participants assume a lifestyle of financial poverty. On the contrary, they are searching for well-being (Iyer & Muncy, 2016). This research shows that adopting a simpler lifestyle involves being contentious and motivated for a different life, not fearing scarcity but watching the world with a different perspective. In this research, Sónia's discourse about the 'Land of Plenty' metaphor shows the vision that she adopted about consumption, feeling comfortable and peaceful, having just what she considers being enough. This attitude is also provocative to capitalist market system.

6.4 Final remarks

In this research, it was intended to understand the extension of the presence of anti-consumption practices in the discourse in favour of sustainable of the organic products consumers, and to study the impact that these practices have on well-being and satisfaction of these consumers.

The results of this research cannot be analysed in isolation. First, these consumers have strong and genuine environmental convictions which condition and guide their consumption practices and lifestyle. Therefore, principles like environmentalism and social justice are deeply present in the convictions of these participants and could be considered real engines for change and formation of consumption identity.

Consequently, in their daily life, these individuals develop environmentally friendly consumption practices, which are compatible with their convictions, where organic consumption has a main role and is a common factor to all participants. Therefore, through a reflexive process, organic products contribute to environmental sustainability, by promoting civic agriculture, closer to the "local" concept. Concerning identity formation, it also exercises a direct action on

lifestyle of these consumers and on the formation of an ethical consumption identity.

An important contribution of this research was to demonstrate that the process of life simplification begins when these individuals decide to consume organically. Consequently, they become ethically more responsible, committed to the environmental cause and changing significantly other aspects of their consumption habits and lifestyle. These participants have been changing into a calmer and simpler lifestyle. Simultaneously, in this transformation process, organic products consumption served as reinforcement to anti-consumption practices. Consequently, in this research, one may see the adoption of a lifestyle oriented towards simplicity and voluntary sufficiency together with a deliberated change of life habits, fundamentally based on environmental values, involving a consumption reduction to adequate levels having in account the wish for well-being. Assuming this position intends to demonstrate a political attitude regarding consumption, of greater autonomy, initiating individual practices with the objective of reaching collective sufficiency.

In the same way as in the research of Zamwel et al. (2014), these consumers are seen as political agents, trying to influence the system using alternative channels market and eating organically. This does not act only on an individualist level, which is an agreed aspect of the lifestyle. In some cases this results in aspirations of social movement and of collective intervention, that is to say, in a political dimension and participation to exercise influence. The results of this study, like the voluntary simplifiers of Zamwel et al. (2014), converges into the following aspects:

- (1) Anti-capitalist discourse and the discourse supporting the environment cannot be separated, materialized by the opposition to purchase in large surfaces. Therefore, not purchasing or avoiding new products is not merely based on environmental questions, but also owing to the opposition to the consumption culture;
- (2) From the five 'Rs' (recycle, repair, reuse, reduce and refuse), 'reduce' is the most relevant;

- (3) Lifestyle includes a constant adaptation to new practices and it is marked by a political expression in transition, pointing out the role of consumers as political agents, in the search for autonomy in terms of resources and time;
- (4) The willing to exercise influence, since these consumers believe that the act of consuming has more power than the act of voting.

The political approach on consumption by adopting an attitude of protest and resistance towards the current consumerist culture collaborate to building the identity of each individual. The personal quotes provided throughout this paper can serves as potential examples to changing consumption and the market rules.

CHAPTER 7

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

The main objective of this research was to investigate why and how only few individuals are involved in the consumption of organic food and how this engagement is related to environmental concerns, dispossession attitudes and alternative consumption. That is, to understand the 'green identities' formation process in the Portuguese organic food context. This research is set in the field of ethical consumption and consumer behaviour and makes use of the Critical Management Studies, the New Social Movement Theories, and the Theories of Identity, in particular, Cherrier and Murray's (2007) 'Processual Theory of Identity' as its starting point and theoretical reference to analyse how ethical consumer identity is constructed in this consumer community.

An exploratory and inductive approach to operationalize the objectives of this research was adopted. The methodology uses an interpretative paradigm, which was considered to be suitable to explore in detail the subjectivity and particularities of a complex system of organic consumer narratives. As a result, 31 in-depth interviews were conducted with frequent organic consumers.

First, this chapter aims to summarize the main conclusions of this investigation, covering each research objective and answering the research question suggested in the chapter 1. Then, the main contributions to practice (managerial implications for marketing and organic products consumption market), either the theoretical framework are presented. The limitations of this research are discussed, mainly in methodological terms, and the thesis ends with some suggestions for future lines of research, with topics that were not sufficiently explored in this research, or were left open.

7.2 Main conclusions

At the beginning of this thesis a gap between how the formation of green identity is constructed and expressed among organic product consumers, and how these identities reflect the motivations for their engagement was identified. Once the end of this thesis was reached it is time to give an answer to the research question that guided this study:

Why and how do organic food consumers develop their new ethical identity, creating individual projects of sustainable consumption, and leading to important changes in their way of living?

As a result, the main conclusions that have been drawn from this empirical work are now presented for each research objective.

7.2.1 Research Objective #1: Understanding organic consumption motivations

Contrary to other studies, the benefits that organic products could contribute to the health of these consumers was not identified as the main reason for consuming organic. The main motivation for organic consumption is fundamentally based on environmental convictions and also related to animal welfare. In turn, these factors affect the eating habits, acting as a stimulus to vegetarianism and meat avoidance. Also, concerns related to supporting the local economy have been identified demonstrating that these consumers have altruistic concerns and an ecological citizenship. These concerns constitute the main antecedents of the consumption of organic products and are the basis of the influence of the other habits of consumption.

The argument for organic consumption also includes a political motivation. The enthusiasm for local and artisanal organic consumption, constitutes a form of opposition and resistance towards the influence of large multinational companies. Participants' discourse is very strong against the possibility of these organisations having the monopoly over agricultural and food sector. Consuming and producing according to organic techniques constitutes also a political instrument that will

serve as opposition to agro-food corporation threat. By starting producing according organic agriculture and preferring products coming from this type of agriculture, is a way to start changing the whole agro food complex system.

Another motivation to consume organically and related with environmental questions is the power of influencing other consumers. When one tries to change consumptions habits, one is ultimately also preserving the environment. These active consumers therefore demonstrate a very precise notion of the importance of consumption, particularly organic products. Participants evidence militancy and activism when promoting organic products and their agricultural techniques within their circle of influence, in order to ensure sustainability and environmental preservation.

7.2.2 Research Objective #2: Identifying the main barriers in accessing and consuming organic products

The obstacles identified in this research to access organic products are price, availability and the lack of space for organic farming. These aspects frequently mentioned in the literature (see Chryssohoidis & Krystallis, 2005; Didier & Lucie, 2008; Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Zander & Hamm, 2010; Zepeda & Deal, 2009), were also identified in this investigation. However, this research adds a rarely explored but very relevant aspect: the cultural barriers imposed by Portuguese society on this consumer community. Many of the organic consumers also become vegetarians, which brings about conflicts and problems of acceptance, especially among family members. The consequence is to look for (ethical) spaces that allow them to freely express their convictions. The main options that arise are the cultivation of own food, and the organisation of LFN. These options are a result of the lack of options and difficulties in accessing organic products, but also as a symbolic way of achieving independence and self-sufficiency towards large supermarkets and the meaning they represent.

7.2.3 Research Objective #3: Understanding the cultural meanings represented by organic consumption

The results of this research demonstrate that the ethical component of organic products are more valued than the attributes of the products themselves. As demonstrated, these participants devote particular attention to the subjective dimension and the symbolic value that represents the organic consumption, going beyond the common definition. The assumption behind this category of ethical consumers is to deconstruct the dominant values and normative codes of conduct of the current consumer society by affirming values of humanity and respect for nature. Thus, apart from the ethical dimension and attributes of organic products, another very important dimension was noted in this study - the political component. This aspect is reflected in the importance and recognition of organic food as a weapon to achieve environmental and ethical goals.

The strongest expression regarding organic consumption was own food production. This option is obviously related to environmental convictions through the practice of low environmental impact agriculture, but also to the need to achieve self-sufficiency and independence from the usual sources of food - large supermarkets.

Therefore, in this research, participants are involved between two dominant discourses within the green and ecological consumption, which reflects an ideological resistance to consumption, self-sacrifice and a style of consumption dedicated to the environment (Autio, Heiskanen, & Heinonen, 2009; Cherrier, 2009; Huttunen & Autio, 2010; Moisander, 2001; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002):

(1) Environmental hero discourse

The individualistic moral discourse of 'making a difference', that supports the normalization of sustainable practices (such as recycling and use of environmentally friendly products) as a way to solve environmental problems. This position cannot be seen as radical because some of these green practices are already properly rooted in the day-to-day. Autio et al. (2009) call this position the 'environmental hero' due to the fact that these consumers (solitary) make sacrifices in their responsible choices (e.g.:

favouring ecological, natural and organic produce). Therefore, they are well-informed consumers, rational, and socially and morally exemplar, dedicating a consumption lifestyle to environmental preservation. Likewise, these aesthetical and spiritually oriented green consumption are oriented to the voluntary simplicity movement.

(2) Environmental radical discourse

Discourse that represents a countercultural approach to the green consumption, criticizing and denying the consumer society, and acting, according to their strict ethics of green consumption. They are consumers who claim the incompatibility between the capitalist consumer society and environmental concerns. Therefore, the environmental anarchists adopt consumption reduction practices.

7.2.4 Research Objective #4: Exploring the discourses underlying the politics of food in environmentally motivated consumers and the power that these consumption options represent in their lives

Organic products represent a symbolic resource in the way they are produced and by whom consumes them. It represents a special attitude to make environmental convictions prevail, to change their own consumption in general, to oppose the dominance of the mainstream agro-food system and its environmental violations. Consequently, three political expressions of green consumption are evidenced and converge for a 'hard' ecocentric discourse:

(1) Politics of production

The motivation for local artisanal organic food consumption is manifested by a deep discourse based on two main arguments: the preservation of the environment, supporting an agriculture whose techniques contribute to this cause; and the desire for self-sufficiency, by producing their own food. In practical terms, consumers consider agroecology and artisanal agriculture, the real agriculture, and the only possible way to a clean production and to solve environmental problems.

(2) Politics of localism

By supporting the local economy, and in particular small producers of organic products, whose farming techniques meet the ethical and environmental requirements (solidarity agriculture). In this context, localism is represented fundamentally by the establishment of exchange networks of organic products. Local Food Networks, Alternative Agro-food Networks, Short Supply Chains, or Community Support Agriculture, are some of the initiatives that are at the heart of localism. In these close relations, consumers favour direct exchange such as local bartering, and the use of social and local currencies, although this is still in a very early state.

(3) Activism

The politics of production and the politics of localism are a tool of resistance and concern for the asymmetries of power between small farmers and the agro-food system. When one begins to produce and prefer organic products that come from this type of agriculture, it becomes a way of beginning to change the entire agro-food complex, as well as the current paradigm. Another way to resist is to reduce the level of consumption.

These participants consider that by producing their own organic food in accordance with the principles of agroecology, they are putting into practice alternative ideas of social economy, community and ecology, in order to achieve a more global impact. This is done by strengthening local contexts and by favouring community-based market channels.

7.2.5 Research Objective #5: Analysing how organic products contribute to build new green identities

Through a phenomenological and sequential process based on the experiences of organic products consumers, five phases for green consumption identity formation were established: (1) consciousness, (2) gathering, (3) negotiation, (4) stabilization, and (5) sharing.

(1) Consciousness

The results of this research show that there are several reasons that lead to individuals starting a process of green identity formation. In some of the cases, there is a certain dissatisfaction with one's own life and the previous lifestyle, but the strongest reason is related to the ethical beliefs and mainly environmental concerns. In the process of transformation it is found that the consumption of organic products is a consequence of these concerns and constitutes being a facilitator to trigger the process of change. Throughout the process, organic products encourage the approach to new relations and contexts. The participants of this study seek to break with the past by starting this process of building a new identity. Also this change is triggered by an event, or sets of critical events that made them reflect critically about their life situation and begin to consume organically.

(2) Gathering

Consequently, consumers try to eliminate aspects and relationships of their past, looking some personal isolation, reflection on the previous lifestyle, and to look for a new subculture that they might consider useful or compatible. Participants also initiate a phase of discovery and reflection about consumption, gathering information, and imitating the new consumer practices. At this stage, they begin to affirm a position of emancipation towards consumption patterns.

(3) Negotiation

However, in this legitimation of the new identity conflicts, frustrations and dilemmas persist. Vegetarianism emerges as the common aspect of these consumers and constitutes a fractured issue. Thus, in the new subculture they find solidarity to express their new identity, which at that stage is still being developed, through the imitation of the same practices and their way of life.

(4) Stabilization

In this phase, the separation with the past and the normalization of relations stand out. Consumers express the new green identity, already consolidated and emancipated. There, stand out the individual commitment to the group's values and the confirmation of the new (green) identity.

(5) Sharing

Once the new identity is stabilized, they begin to influence and share the new habits of consumption and lifestyle, acting as agents of change. Although activism is most salient at this stage in which identity is matured, it is constant throughout the formation process.

During the green identity formation processes, it is shown that the consumption practices are being shaped and are always subordinated to the social context. That is, the self is never separated from the context, but is permanently and dynamically built together, in the sense that individual actions and consumption are consistent with collective consumption. To sum up, people get around common interests, so social influences facilitate the change to new consumption habits and different lifestyles.

7.2.6 Research Objective #6: Understanding the new expressions that stand out in the formation of green identities

This study contributes to assert that there are alternative and sustainable models of consumption. Consumers adopt an eco-centric discourse based on green consumption practices as a strategy to achieve a global environmental reform. By producing their own food according to the principles of agroecology, looking for organic food in a local context, and privileging community based market channels, consumers are putting into practice alternative ideas of social economy, community and ecology. In the construction of green identities, the participants of this research tend to adopt postmodern expressions such as: emancipation of consumption; consumer resistance; anti-consumption; and the

abandonment of 'having mode of existence' for the adoption of a 'sustainable mode being' (Belk, 1988; Cherrier & Murray, 2007; Cherrier, 2009; Fromm, 1976; Shankar & Fitchett, 2002).

Therefore, it can be said that this eco-centric discourses build a new subject in their relationship with the environment, the social and the economy. That is, a postmodern subject with all the expressions just mentioned.

7.2.7 Research Objective #7: Understanding the influence of environmental and ethical concerns in consumer behaviour change

A common aspect of all these participants is that they have to be well informed and to have a comprehensive knowledge regarding environmental problems and the impact of their consumption, showing an effort to contribute to change. Organic consumers consider the current consumption patterns as one of the aspects responsible for environmental imbalances, as well as the wasteful lifestyle of Western society. In this way, the consumption of organic products is a consequence of these environmental concerns and reinforces those convictions. Therefore, self-awareness has a significant impact on these participants.

The adoption of organic consumption dramatically changes the lives of consumers, bringing other friendly consumption practices. Encouraged by clear ideas about their role as consumers, they show concerns about consumer habits and the future of the next generations. They therefore adopt a set of 'Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behaviour' (ECCB) (Zabkar & Hosta, 2012) and play a responsible role as ecological citizens – goal-oriented consumers. They thus adopt an individualistic moral discourse of making a difference through sustainable micro-practices (e.g. energy efficiency, limited use of resources, recycling, consumption of organic products, vegetarianism, among others), which are perfectly rooted in the lives of these consumers. However, of all initiatives, the reduction in consumption is the most salient.

7.2.8 Research Objective #8: Investigating the extent to which anti-consumer practices are present in the sustainability discourse

These consumers are focused on environmental preservation and ecological awareness and consider over-consumption as a major cause for environmental degradation. Thus, anti-consumption emerges as a way to respond to the aspiration to live in a sustainable way. These consumers use daily specific actions (e.g.: ECCB) that contribute to build the individual identity and increase their well-being. These anti-consumer practices for sustainability are embedded in a postmodern discourse based on the practices and subjectivity of individuals and represented in non-materialistic values.

This postmodern discourse fits into the agency and empowerment discourse (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010), which includes the following elements: (1) the use of micro-tactics rather than macro-strategies with the purpose of having a global impact on the environment; (2) maintaining a distance of the market and of consumerist contexts; the creation of a green identity in parallel with the anti-consumption oriented towards the environment.

It was noted that the reduction of consumption is present at all levels (services and products), regardless of whether or not they meet ethical requirements nor whether they were produced in geographical proximity.

Therefore, the participants of this research fall into the category of 'Environmental Oriented Anti-Consumers' (EOA) (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016). Their anti-consumption behaviours are motivated by environmental considerations and by pro-social altruistic concerns and not just by a mere individualistic reason.

7.2.9 Research Objective #9: Recognising how the new expressions and alternative consumer practices that stand out in the formation of new identities influence other consumers

Organic products play a transformative role both in reducing consumption and in increasing well-being. Through them, these consumers find a non-material way to obtain fulfilment and personal satisfaction. Organic products also assume a

transformative and a 'performative' role. That is, the participants' lifestyle is reinforced by the anti-consumption and the collective perception around the alternative practices created in the meantime.

Some of these consumers have radically changed their lives, progressively abandoning careers, consumption practices and unsustainable lifestyles. For them, the adoption of a simpler lifestyle is a voluntary albeit logical consequence of organic products consumption, resulting from the combination of environmental and social concerns. Voluntary sufficiency, in the perspective of the green identity construction, implies that they must distance themselves from previous contexts, that is, consumerism, and forms of dominant socializing. This positioning is conscious and planned, and once it's adopted, it hardly ever changes again. However, for these consumers, sufficiency and voluntary simplicity does not mean the adoption of economic misery or poverty.

In this process, the main transformations evident in terms of consumer lifestyle were: a change of thought; the adoption of a healthy lifestyle in contact with nature; the need to achieve more freedom and autonomy; the distancing from the consumerist society; the reduction of consumption; the dispossession of material goods; a frugal lifestyle; and being closer to people with the same mentality and philosophy of life.

The challenges of living a sufficient, simple and in some cases isolated lifestyle, leads them to organize networks to compensate these difficulties through mutual support, and moral support.

Voluntary simplicity is also an expression of the relationship between consumer, localism and community. Although many of these consumers do not live physically in a community, they share the same ideals, leading to a close bond, and thus providing them a communal lifestyle. Thus, this research finds elements that accentuate the conceptualization suggested by Moraes, Szmigin and Carrigan (2010) about 'New Consumption Communities' (NCC): creation of local and alternative initiatives; local bartering; community business; self-sufficiency; and own food production.

This research also emphasizes the role of organic consumers as political agents in the sense that they take a voluntary and rational attitude of resistance to

consumption and use their own consumption as a "voting metaphor" (Moraes et al., 2010, p. 1060). The manifestations related to the political attitude towards consumption are represented through environmentalism; using anti-consumption and consumption reduction practices to lower the corresponding environmental impact; and bypassing the system promoting direct links between producer and consumer. These include the creation of 'Local Exchange Trading Systems' (LETS) to gain control over consumer decisions and to relocate local and social identity, and by rejecting some products that do not meet the ethical requirements. Consumption is also used as a weapon to pressure the capitalist system and materialistic values, and also to influence.

7.2.10 Research Objective #10: Investigating how anti-consumption practices contributes to well-being and life satisfaction

The results of this research demonstrate the strong emotional relationship that participants establish with organic products, in which the adoption of a green philosophy necessarily involves a lifestyle change.

Participants demonstrate a critical and negative attitude towards the current market economy and the consumer society and affirm the need to control their own consumption to obtain autonomy and well-being. An interesting finding was that the process of lifestyle simplification begins when individuals decide to consume organically, and that organic products reinforce anti-consumption practices because they represent and symbolize commitment to environmental convictions.

Findings suggest that the well-being associated with the simplification of life, the low levels of consumption, and the elimination of superfluous goods, tend to increase happiness. In this way, findings reinforces the idea that over-consumption and materialism are negatively related to well-being. Anti-consumption therefore contains elements of sustainable lifestyles (Black & Cherrier, 2010).

7.3 Contribution to practice

From a managerial point of view, the results of this research contribute to deepening the knowledge of a segment of consumers that has been growing over the years but is still largely unknown. However, if this segment is mainly anti-consumer, then how useful is for practice to know more about them?

Environmental arguments are the main reason to consume organically, so they cannot be ignored. It is noted that consumers (and producers) of organic products are critical regarding the impact of their actions on the environment, and from the market point of view, these motivations should be considered and practitioners should understand this niche as a target.

Although the organic product market still represents a small portion of the food sector, it constitutes, however, a potential market opportunity, both in terms of trade volume and the symbolic meaning it represents. This way, organic agriculture could represent opportunities for small farmers or for those who choose to implement sustainability projects for their livelihood. The option for organic products may also provide greater possibilities for the development of the local economy, and the corresponding reduction of environmental impact.

As expected, price appeared to be an immediate limitation regarding the consumption of organic products. However, studies also show that ethical consumers are willing to pay a higher amount for these quality products (Didier & Lucie, 2008), which suggests an expanding market with growth potential in the Portuguese context.

As confirmed, their message and convictions are very strong and, as referred to by Stolle et al. (2005) the market is very sensitive to this type of political consumption and activism. In fact, in other international contexts, the organic products market has been expanding for many years and in Portugal the necessary attention is not being given to develop this green niche further. For this reason, practitioners should adjust their offer to this particular segment of ethical consumers, benefiting from this potential market through a strategy of inclusion and not detachment.

As in other studies (Bartels & Onwezen, 2014), these results also demonstrate that consumers with ecological concerns are more likely to consume organic

products. From the policy-maker point of view, it is therefore necessary to encourage and to act on ethical beliefs to bring to society a culture of green consumption. If universal values (such as environmentalism) are important to consumers, if they are stimulated, there will be a greater possibility of increasing demand and organic products consumption. Consequently, if the market for organic products increases in size, it will bring benefits to society in terms of healthy food.

The results of this research also demonstrate that the consumption of organic products and how they are produced constitute a path to reach a more sustainable option from the ecological point of view. Consumers' belief that through their consumptions changing practices they can make the difference (Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2015).

From a management point of view, this thesis may provide a contribution to the study of consumer behaviour, as well as to the interested agents in order to rethink their practices aiming at a more sustainable future. In this niche of consumers motivated by the environment, once this commitment and consumption behaviour is adopted, it is clear to observe that they hardly choose other type of products. For this reason, more attention should be given to this community, and there should be recognition for the active role of these consumers and their search for ethical options, environmentally responsible, as well as for the influence they have on others.

This research confirmed a positive relationship between consumption reduction and consumer well-being (Lee & Ahn, 2016). For management, these results suggest that more people could be interested in increasing their quality of life. Therefore, more attention must be placed on these consumers, particularly the moderately ones, concerning the aspect of valuing the environmental friendly products, like the organic ones, durable products, second-hand articles, etc. Therefore, companies should study these consumers, understand their reasons and give new direction to their strategies accordingly.

These results also suggest that by reducing consumption and individual based on sufficiency strategies, there will be an increase of individual well-being and greater feeling of satisfaction. From the perspective of political authorities, one

could promote a culture where consumers should become “consumer-citizens” (Hong & Vicdan, 2016, p. 135), by making small changes to their personal lives, making people happier and leading to a more fulfilled society. Overall, besides the (radical) ethical consumption dimension, these consumers present as a common denominator a deep motivation for environmental causes, being able of causing life changes and personal consumption practices, encouraging the expectation that their actions may have a reflection on society. However, official institutions and government are not paying the necessary attention to this matter. Local initiatives should be promoted, such as markets, encouraging the consumption of organic products in schools and other official institutions, in order to instigate this green culture within society. The analysis and understanding the individual ethical choices (in this case, for organic food), could bring some contributions to highlight the importance of regional scale business which act as a new value chain, incorporating and practice the value of environmental sustainability (Clarke, Cloke, Barnett, & Malpass, 2008). Therefore, involving these consumers as stakeholders and agents of change, educating in citizenship, would add value in political and business decisions.

7.4. Contribution to knowledge and theory

This study makes an important contribution and brings innovation to the theory by researching into topics still neglected in the area of consumer behaviour, mainly: environmental concerns; organic food motivations; green identity formation process; and alternative consumer practices and anti-consumption behaviour.

Societal concerns are seen as the most important aspects that influence organic food purchases (more than health reasons). More specifically, ecological and ethical concerns are the main antecedents of the consumption of organic products. Therefore, the main motivations for organic consumption are related to altruistic and pro-environmental values, confirming the assumptions of theories of altruistic behaviour (Dunlap & Van Liere, 1978; Schwartz, 1977; Stern, 2000). That is to say that moral norms guide individuals to responsible choices rather

than economic or individual criteria. More specifically, the results of this investigation reinforce Stern's (2000) Value-Belief-Norm Theory of Environmentalism, based on feelings of moral obligation that exert an influence on altruistic and pro-environmental behaviour. Accordingly, the results corroborate the premise that the adoption of pro-environmental behaviours directly flow from pro-social and moral values, rather than self-transcendent values, and manifest themselves in postmaterialistic behaviours such as environmentalism, quality of life and self-expression.

Another contribution has to do with the definition of organic products in itself. Previous definitions of organic products identified aspects related to environmental, ethical issues and the inherent characteristics of products. This research makes an important contribution to the current definition of organic consumption (see appendix 1). It adds a very relevant and valued political dimension in three domains: politics of production, politics of localism, and activism. Therefore, results reinforce the political perspective of green consumption. It has become clear, that through individual and isolated acts these consumers are concerned with contributing to make a difference and to solve environmental problems. It also contributes to the rationalisation discourse Hobson (2002) in the sense that the construction of an ecological citizenship also incorporate a global sensitivity represented in daily consumption acts.

This research adds originality by addressing these three political of green consumption dimensions. In each of them, postmodern values associated with consumption are exposed in this political perspective: communitarian thinking, food sovereignty, resistance, anti-consumption, environmentalism, altruistic values, sharing, decentralized participation, solidarity agriculture, among others.

This study also extends the 'Processual Theory of Identity' by analysing how organic products shape consumer practices and their lifestyle. This thesis establishes five phases for the construction of green identities in the context of organic consumers: (1) consciousness, (2) gathering, (3) negotiation, (4) stabilization, (5) and sharing. In addition, it is verified that since the individual dimension of the consumption of organic products is deeply influenced by the social dimension, it does not make sense to approach Identity Theory and Social Theory separately, as both complement each other. Thus, Stets & Burke's (2000)

'General Theory of the Self' seems more appropriate to complement the explanation of how green identity is constructed.

This research highlighted a concept that has not been sufficiently discussed in the literature - the sufficiency strategy (see Alcott, 2008; Gorge, Herbert, Ozcalar-Toulouse, & Robert, 2015; Spengler, 2016). This option implies an attitude to achieve greater freedom, reducing consumption, working less, earning less adjusting this income to the new lifestyle, but simultaneously increasing quality of life. It is important not to confuse this attitude with downshifting. Sufficiency implies a voluntary choice. In this research, participants choose anti-consumption to achieve simplicity and voluntary sufficiency.

According to Chatzidakis and Lee (2012), only few studies consider a more committed perspective of practicing anti-consumption owing to environmental considerations. The analysis revealed the strict relation between anti-consumption practices, the simplification of lifestyle, the political consumption perspective and well-being. That is, anti-consumption and voluntary simplicity/sufficiency, are closely related. In this research, it is evident the commitment and dedication of these consumers to organic products and the practices associated, with a political aspect that permits them to act as agents of change to society, putting their concerns into actions. The main contribution is therefore to consider anti-consumption as a political protest, a main element to change people's lives, participating to build identity.

The results of the research also suggest that organic products consumption acts as a transformative practice. However, in order to live a sustainable life, choosing 'green products' is not the only condition. Opposition to consumption may also present a position of support the environment.

In terms of implications to the field of ethical consumption, this research reinforces the usefulness of qualitative research approaches to study interactions at the micro-level, to obtain a localized and oriented level of knowledge for this type of category of 'tribal marketing' (Cherrier, 2007). In methodological terms, this research confirms Thompson's (1997) argument that a hermeneutic approach may generate a richer understanding about the meaning of consuming organically and the construction of green identities.

The use of different methods of analysis enhances the quality of research. In a first phase, we tried to understand the motivations and the contexts, using content analysis; from then on, and as the goals seemed more complex, other more appropriate tools were used: thematic analysis, hermeneutics, and discourse analysis. From the point the view of interest to the academy, the combination of different methods and perspectives of analysis in a single study should be understood as a strategy that brings rigor and depth (Thompson et al., 1989). Consequently, this methodology demonstrates to be an appropriate to discover the meaning that 'politicized' consumers hide in their discourses.

To sum up, this research can provide a better understanding about a topic (alternative consumption practices) that is relevant but not sufficiently studied in the literature. On the other hand, this research could add a pioneering contribution regarding the 'green identity' formation process in the context of Portuguese organic consumers.

7.5 Limitations and future research

There are some concerns regarding the operationalization of this research. Firstly, the access to the target population. Considering deep organic consumers a very specific sub-culture, the access to new participants was made by using the snowball sampling technique. Therefore, the success of this research was, in part, conditioned by the references provided by previous interviewees. The first participants were selected from the researcher's personal contacts. Thus, due to its involvement with the theme, its relationship with some of the participants, and the fact that the context in which the study developed is familiar to him, these aspects certainly conditioned the data collection and the interpretation of the results.

Another limitation of the study that can be pointed out is also related to the selection of participants. It concerns the clarification of developmental stages of the formation of green identities. Although the sample resulted in individuals with a relatively high age, the participants were at several different stages of the

development of their green identity, so the identified phases may not consistent to all.

It is often attempted to generalize the results of any study to that of a vast population. However, this type of study does not allow for attempting to generalize the results. Therefore, the fact that phenomenological interviews focused on consumer experiences that are unique to each individual and particular of a specific context (organic food consumers), the results cannot be generalized to a wider population. As Connolly and Prothero (2003) argue, all phenomenological description can only be generalized to another phenomenological description. Consequently, a full explanation of the world is not possible, and also cannot get a universal certainty and inference, or the production of hypotheses. Thus, considering the epistemological position followed, the theoretical approach, and the methodological stance, the generalization of the results was never an objective of this research.

However, as a result of the idiosyncratic approach followed, the formation of the green identity focuses more on the individual level than on the collective identity. Therefore, given the exploratory nature of this study, the next step could be to extend the sample to a population more representative of the profile of the common Portuguese consumer of organic products.

Like identity formation, this investigation is also a process that is not finished. Even though that it was determined by the theoretical saturation that an ongoing data collection and analysis would not lead to richer results, more research is needed. Similar studies should be conducted in different contexts in order to compare the results and better inform research on the topic of this thesis.

One possibility for further research could be to revisit the same sample. This applies particularly to those participants that were in an early stage of the green identity building process. It should be interesting to analyse if they continue on this path, with the same convictions, and observe how they continued their development (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Fromm, 1976; Hay, 2005).

As future research, it would also be useful to further explore the barriers to vegetarianism within the consumption of organic products, in particular the

dilemma that consumers face in less advanced contexts in terms of food as the Portuguese.

This research confirms that organic products consumption acts as 'driver' in the promotion of health habits in environmental terms and in the adoption of new lifestyles. In terms of future lines of research it would be interesting to explore more extreme forms of consumption from a political perspective. The goal would be to determine if consumption practices of organic products and other associated practices in contexts such as eco-villages are related with 'escapism' or 'utopias'; or to find out if they are related merely on the basis of their own interest or rather with the will to reach a wider impact with their consumption actions.

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American Marketing Association (AMA) website

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'Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica' website

<http://www.agrobio.pt/pt/>

'Burning Man Festival' website

<https://burningman.org/>

"Choosing voluntary simplicity" website

<http://www.choosingvoluntarysimplicity.com/>

'International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)' website

<https://www.ifoam.bio/en/organic-landmarks/definition-organic-agriculture>

'La via Campesina International Peasant's Movement' website

<https://viacampesina.org/en/>

'Plataforma transgénicos fora' website

<https://www.stopogm.net/>

'Slow movement Portugal' website

<http://www.slowmovementportugal.com/miss%C3%A3o/>

'The International CSA Network' website

<https://urgenci.net/the-network/>

'Transition network' website

<https://transitionnetwork.org/>

'Transição Portugal' website

<http://transicaoportugal.net/a-rede/transition-network/>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Agroecology

Is a combination of traditional agriculture system (subsistence agriculture and on-farm consumption) and postmodern values (ideological based, political rebellion and countercultural) to solve the environmental and social crisis. Agroecology is also a philosophy for critical and collective action, and also has a strong political message claiming for a hard sustainability (Cuéllar-Padilla & Calle-Collado, 2011).

Anti-Consumption

Volunteer, intentional and deliberated option to avoid consumption, based on decisions and individual values (Lee & Ahn, 2016), focused on reasons against consumption, possession of material goods or on their inadequate use (Peyer et al., 2017). It is related with other phenomena such as: ethical consumption, environmental consumption, consumer resistance, and symbolic consumption (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012).

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Mechanism based on partnership between farmers and members of a local consumer community where the responsibilities and rewards of farming are shared through several mutually-supportive initiatives. The most frequent is the payment of a subscription to the farmer who, in turn, delivers a box of seasonal vegetables every week (Goodman & Goodman, 2007; Seyfang, 2003).

Conceptual framework

System of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support and inform the research conduct (Mayer, 2015).

Consumer resistance

It is focused on reasons against consumption culture and domination systems. It may be expressed through consumption of a good or service (or specific trademark), by detaching from others, or resisting toward the mass consumption in general (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012; Cherrier et al., 2011; García-de-Frutos et al., 2016).

Culture Jamming

It includes what Micheletti and Stolle (2007) designates 'uncooling of consumption', exploring 'antishop' feelings and large corporations vulnerabilities in terms of ethical behaviour. 'Adbusters' magazine takes an essential role in this radical form of expression against consumption.

Critical Management Studies (CMS)

With its inspiration in Marxist theory, is based on critical theory and integrates a critical vision in the field of management with the intention of transforming its practices in opposition to the conduct of business, impact on society and on the environment. Its ultimate purpose is the emancipation of the individual from the dominant structures. Most recently includes a comprehensive critique of corporate environmentalism (Adler et al., 2007).

Discourse analysis

Reflective analysis process in which the language used in the text is understood in articulation with the social context ('social locus') in which is produced. The discourse is understood from the perspective of language in use as an element of social life itself. It represents, therefore, a perspective of this world associated with the individual and collective identities that produce it. The level of analysis may focus on the language issues (conversation analysis appearance); or in power relations and domination (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2016; Fairclough, 2003; Kelan, 2016; Titscher et al., 2000).

Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP)

New-classical economic view, adopted by western industrialized countries based on the economic, technological and political pillars. According to the DSP, economic development, consumption and satisfaction of consumer preferences are essential conditions for achieving desirable levels of profit and capital accumulation (Kilbourne, 1998).

Ecological citizenship

An active and mobilized sense of citizenship where well-informed individuals share their commitment to sustainability and act in order to reduce their impact on the planet, by adopting a sustainable lifestyle (eco-friendly and anti-consumption behaviour) (Black & Cherrier, 2010; Hobson, 2002; Seyfang, 2006).

Environmental activism

Collective action based on the social movement approach. It is based on micro-mobilization processes and a deliberate and enthusiastic involvement of behaviours to support environmental movement, preserve or improve the quality of the environment, and contribute to the public awareness of environmental issues (Dono, Webb, & Richardson, 2010; Fielding, McDonald, & Louis, 2008; Stern, 2000).

Environmental ethic

Environmental awareness is the driving force of ecological citizenship. It is also related to: commitment to justice and fairness in trading relationship, reduce ecological footprints through local food systems, solidarity between producer and consumer, and cutting consumption levels (Seyfang, 2006).

Environmental Conscious Consumer Behaviours (ECCB)

Refers to simple everyday behaviours that are based on an ecologically conscious decision-making process (e.g. recycling or energy efficiency), as well as other forms of environmental activism. Environmental conscious consumers are more concerned with getting benefits for themselves in the future than in the

immediate present. These behaviours are based on concerns regarding attitudes, knowledge, values, norms and perceived control (Zabkar & Hosta, 2012).

Environmental Oriented Anti-consumption (EOAC)

The acts (consumption reduction, avoidance, or rejecting) driven by environmental concerns, and directed against any form of consumption with the specific aim of protecting the environment (García-de-Frutos et al., 2016).

Ethical consumers

Individuals who take in consideration a macro perspective of the range and consequences of their actions either in the environment as in society (Elen Papaoikonomou, 2013).

Ethical consumption

Conscientious and mature decisions about consumption style, based on values and beliefs of the individual, particularly concerns with environment, human condition and/or animal well-being. It is between manifestations in favour of consumption (buycotting) and reasons against (boycotting) (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012; Shaw & Riach, 2011).

Ethical spaces

Contexts that guide individual members to more consistent and greener behaviours, and emphasize the affinity of the members of the relationship, facilitating environmentally friendlier modes of consumption. These spaces also accentuate the importance of the community through the relations of production and consumption (Moraes et al., 2012).

Ethical trade

Requirement that products should be made in companies that enforce concerns regarding with social conditions (rules of the labour code and human rights standards), the environment, and animal welfare (Browne et al., 2000).

Existential-phenomenology

A methodological approach that has as the main assumption the contextual view of the world. That is, it focuses on the description (situated and subjective) of the lived experience of the individual and on the understanding of the environment where he is inserted. In order to operationalize this approach, procedures should be considered, in particular: regarding the context in which the interviews take place, the dialogue, and the way of interpreting the data. In this matter, the interviews are treated as an autonomous body of data, using the hermeneutical circle and the identification of global themes (Thompson et al., 1989).

Fair trade

Direct and long-term relationship maintained among consumers from developed countries of the North, with small producers from underdeveloped countries of the South. The central idea is social concerns. These consumers are interested in securing better conditions, as well as fairness and transparency in the supply chain. Although the main concerns are related with social conditions in which the product is produce and marketed, environmental concerns are also considered (Browne et al., 2000; Bryant & Goodman, 2004; Codron et al., 2006; Doran, 2009, 2010).

Green consumer

Individuals with permanent environmental and social concerns, having a consistent attitude in relation to their choices, ownership, use and disposal, concerning products and services (Atkinson, 2014; Moisander, 2007).

Green consumption identity

The adoption of conscious green consumption practices which are routinely reflected in the day-to-day, and manifested by an environmental consumer profile. These practices are constructed and developed within the context where they are embedded. (Horton, 2003; Perera, 2014).

Green Marketing

Strategy that adopts traditional marketing for environmental issues in order to focus on a specific segment, the green consumers, with environmentally friendly products or services. The green marketing perspective include a global perspective that focuses on ecological sustainability rather than economic efficiency, and a recognition of the intrinsic value of nature and its limits. (Fuentes, 2014a; Kilbourne, 1998).

Hermeneutic

Process based on qualitative (textual) material, in which the researcher develops an interpretive work to understand the perspective of the participant experience. This perspective, sees the 'person as a text' and his personal meanings are formed in a complex field of social and historical relationships (Thompson, 1997).

Interpretative Paradigm

Investigate the social world at the level of subjective experience. Knowledge is captured not from the standpoint of an external and objective position, but from the individual participation in action, through the use of qualitative methods (Tadajewski, 2004).

Local Food Networks (LFN)

Network that links local production with local consumption. Is based on an agrarian localist discourse and on eco-social relations among its members, and resistance to time-space detachment and corporate power manifested by large-scale agribusiness. Aims to promote isolated spaces and the creation of alternatives, moral economy and more human interaction (Goodman & Goodman, 2007).

Localism

Concept related to the motivation of the consumers to opt for food that is produced in a geographic space, near where it is consumed. It is related to the

desire to reduce 'food miles' and participate in the local economy by supporting small farmers (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009; Seyfang, 2006).

Marketing (definition)

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (Approved: July 2013) (American Marketing Association website).

Methodology

The logical order the researcher needs to follow in order to achieve a certain predetermined result. It can be considered as the bridge between the philosophical perspective with the research method (Mayer, 2015).

Modern Capitalism

System that breaks radically with traditional institutions and behaviours. It is based on socioeconomic relations and distinguished by materialism from its antecedents, supplying mass consumer goods. As a consequence, society becomes more individualistic, the process of exchange has become impersonal, individuals more alienated from social causes, and monetary economy becomes the central focus. Consequently, and although individuals have the opportunity to express their individuality, this system offers them opportunities almost inexhaustible of consumption (Migone, 2007).

New Environmental Paradigm (NEP)

Consists of a set of values (altruistic values) which oppose to the DSP, and which emphasize the respect for the limits of nature and the importance of preserving the balance and ecological integrity (Dunlap & Van Liere, 1978).

New Social Movements Theory (NSMT)

Paradigm with origin on classic Marxism but different due to the following particular characteristics: symbolic action, autonomy, self-determination, post-materialist values, anti-growing and libertarian values. It intends to understand

the new social movements (identity, opposition and objectives), emerging in contexts with dominant macrostructures (Buechler, 1995; Cherrier, 2007; Kozinets & Handelman, 2004).

Organic food products

Products obtained from methods and materials that enhance the ecological balance, in particular being produced without pesticides, herbicides, or other synthetic products. It includes a concern for animal welfare and totally excludes bioengineering and genetically modified seeds (Honkanen et al., 2006).

Organic production

Is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved (IFOAM website).

Political consumption

A social movement constituted by a network of activists (individually or collectively) who consciously and deliberately try to move away from the usual consumerism, politicizing the act of buying, in order to promote (in a positive or negative way) another type consumption (Bossy, 2014; Micheletti & Stolle, 2007).

Postmodernism

Postmodernism, as an extension of critical theory, is opposed to the philosophy and sociocultural ideas of Western society represented by Modernism, especially the value system of capitalism and liberalism. It advocates the construction of a society based on ethical values, on alternative forms of participation and a vision of society based on the Foucauldian approach of power and truth. In a Postmodern society, well-informed consumers put their power and influence into practice to make active, symbolic and critical decisions. Green consumption is a Postmodern manifestation that encompasses elements such as: lifestyle, identity,

ideology, choice, ethics, responsibility, quality of life and health issues (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Haanpää, 2007; Ozanne & Murray, 1995).

Processual Theory of Identity

The theory, proposed by H el ene Cherrier and Jeff Murray (2007), explains the construction of ethical consumer identities over four phases: sensitization, separation, socialization and striving. Was initially applied to consumers who voluntarily started a process of material dispossession. The dynamic process of identity construction, demonstrates how the individuals leave behind one's current self, represented by material disposition, reflecting and negotiating with others an ongoing identity. The theory is based on three specific concepts: identity transition, downshifting literature and Fromm's 'having/being modes' of existence (Cherrier & Murray, 2007).

Pro-environmental behaviour

Behaviours related to the intention to reduce the negative impact that an action can bring to the environment (Dono et al., 2010).

Research philosophy

Related to the development and the nature of knowledge. Representing, therefore, a certain vision of the world in the perspective of the researcher (Mayer, 2015).

Responsible consumer

It is the consumer who tries to be well informed about social problems, who processes this information in a critical and rational way, who looks into the future, who moderates his personal interests and who is willing to sacrifice his well-being in benefit of general welfare (Autio, 2005; Black & Cherrier, 2010; Ulusoy, 2016).

Self-identity

A decontextualized description of a traits and characteristics which includes aspects that make the person distinct and unique. It serves both for the individual to distinguish himself from others and to conform to the values, beliefs and

behaviours of the group to which he belongs. It is explained by Identity Theory (Hay, 2010; Hogg et al., 1995; Hurth, 2010; Perera, 2014; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010).

Social Identity

A social dimension that includes traits and characteristics contextualized and linked to a social group or the role that this group can take. These aspects are rooted in group members and in the interaction process, and explained by the Social Identity Theory (Hay, 2010; Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Hurth, 2010; Perera, 2014; Stryker & Burke, 2000).

Subjective well-being

Non-materialistic aspects, related with the cognitive and affective scope of the individual. It is focused on the perceptions that individuals feel about their own well-being. It includes the following aspects: life satisfaction, environment friendly lifestyle and environmental behaviour (Binder & Blankenberg, 2017; Iyer & Muncy, 2016).

Sustainable consumption

Consumption decisions in which its impact is taken into account in society, the environment and the economy, in order to ensure future generations (Ulusoy, 2016).

Sustainable development

The capacity that consumers possess of environmental awareness, develop environment friendly behaviours and adopt 'green' lifestyles (Binder & Blankenberg, 2017).

Sustainable marketing

The process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers in such a way that both natural and human capital are preserved and conjugated (Martin & Schouten, 2014; Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2015).

Voluntary simplicity

It is one of the anti-consumption manifestations. In a conscious and deliberate way, anti-consumption is selected as an action to achieve volunteer simplicity. Consumers keep a strong relation with sustainability in the sense that their motivation is based on environmental protection and social justice values. Therefore, concerns with the impact of their actions leads them to reduce consumption, to use alternative resources and change their purchase options, for example purchasing green products, organic, local or coming from fair-trade, or even opting for home mad food, informal exchanges or sharing (Peyer et al., 2017).

Thematic Analysis

Descriptive approach used to codify and interpret qualitative detailed data. The researcher searches and identifies common topics through the interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Mills et al., 2010; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Theory of Post-materialistic Values

It is based on the premise that cultural and economic factors affect individual values. According to this theory, environmentalism is considered an expression of values such as quality of life, self-expression and freedom (Haanpää, 2007).

Triangulation

The use of more than one approach (theories, methods, observations and empirical material) to investigate the research question, in order to enhance and demonstrate reliability of research findings (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006; Reinecke et al., 2016).

APPENDIX 2 - INTERVIEW SEMI-STRUCTURED SCRIPT

- Researcher presentation;
- To thank the interviewee for the willingness to participate in the research;
- Explain the framework of research and its purpose:

The aim of this PhD research is to investigate green identities in order to know why and how people engage in the consumption of organic food, the motivations, the meanings, the representation, barriers and how such engagement is related with environmental concerns, and alternatives practices of consumption.

- To ask the interviewee to feel comfortable and relaxed. That there are no right or wrong answers. That the interviews will be a conversation focused on his/her personal experience as a consumer of organic products.
- To inform about the confidentiality of the responses and the anonymity of the participants.
- To ask permission to record the conversation
- Ask the interviewee if he/she have any questions before starting the interview. If he/she want that any information should not be part of the research data, must let us know.

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Think about your life from childhood until now. Would you shared you story about how did you started developed the preference for organic products and how it has changed your life?

Subject #1: Sustainability and environmental concerns; organic food motivations

Topic 1 (Research objective 1): *Understanding organic consumption motivations*

1.1 What are the main factors that explain your choice for organic products?

1.2 Where usually do you get your organic products? Do you make use of big supermarkets to buy organic products? What is your relationship with the big supermarkets?

Topic 2 (Research objective 2): *Identifying the main barriers in accessing and consuming organic products*

2.1 What are the main difficulties in accessing (acquire) organic products?

2.2 What motivations and strategies (alternatives) you created to overcome these difficulties?

Topic 3 (Research objective 3): *Understanding the cultural meanings represented by organic consumption*

3.1 Apart from the motivations that you referred, what is the meaning represented by organic consumption? What message and values do you wish to communicate? Why?

3.2 What is the importance or the degree of preference assigned to organic products that are produced locally? What does buying locally means to you, compared to certified organic products?

3.3 How do you describe the experience and the moment when you consume organic products? What do you feel when you close your eyes and enjoy an organic product?

3.4 What is your willingness to buy an organic product which initially is more expensive than a conventional product? What you are trying to support? What message you want to express?

Subject #2: The green identity formation process

Topic 4 (Research objective 5): *The evolution and circumstances: Analysing how organic products contribute to build new green identities*

4.1 Back to the initial question: What were the circumstances that made to think about the importance that consumption could have in your life? What made you rethink the importance that consumption had in your life?

4.2 Do you remember the moment or event?

Topic 5 (Research objectives 2 and 7): *To realise the organic products influence in the formation of environmental and ethical identities*

5.1 After becoming a organic products consumer, what other effects did this option have in your everyday consumption practices? What concerns now you have and previously you had no?

5.2 What is the relationship between the consumption of organic products and your environmental convictions? How does the consumption of organic products contributes to change your environmental concerns, or were environmental concerns that led to the choice of organic products?

Topic 6 (Research objective 4): *Exploring the discourses underlying the politics of food in environmentally motivated consumers and the power that these consumption options represent in their lives.*

6.1 To what extent is that to become an organic products consumer affected your life? Has changed significantly or only in parts? What major changes in your personal and social life have occurred by becoming consumer organic products?

6.2 What kind of resistances and social barriers and the main constrains do you face in your daily experiences to continue to consume organic products?

6.3 How do you think that society see you as organic consumer? Do you think that society looks to organic food consumers with suspicion and

disapproval?

6.4 How do your friends and family see you as an organic products consumer?

Topic 7 (Research objective 6): – *Recognizing what new expressions stand out in this transformation of life and how it influences other consumers in their own process of transformation of identity.*

7.1 What role is that the other people who share the same beliefs have had in your transformation process? You think it's a solitary process or grows with the influence of others?

7.2 Now, how to try to influence others? What strategies do you use?

Subject #3 - Alternative consumer practices and anti-consumption attitudes for sustainability

Topic 8 (Research objective 8): *Investigating the extent to which anti-consumer practices are present in the sustainability discourse.*

8.1 What are the environmental problems that most worry you?

8.2 Do you consider yourself an ecological citizen? In other words, are environmental concerns and animal welfare permanently present when you buy other goods and services? Or this only happens in your organic choices?

8.3 How do you classify your position towards environmental issues? It is considered an activist or a moderate environmentalist? Can you give examples in your life?

8.4 Tell me about your everyday consumption habits. What are the main concerns when you consume? Tell me your story about how you try to be a responsible consumer?

Topic 9 (Research objectives 8 and 10): *In what extent is that consumer behaviour change involves an anti-consumer position and contributes to well-being and life satisfaction*

9.1 How is that consumption of organic products influences your daily behaviour, and the extent that it changes your life?

9.2 Do you always carry the concern to reduce the levels of consumption? Can you give some examples?

9.3 What is the meaning and importance that you, as organic consumer, attribute to the practices to reduce your daily practices?

9.4 What is the meaning that you, as organic consumers attribute to your anti-consumption practices?

9.5 What alternatives do you find to get satisfaction and pleasure when you do not consume?

Topic 10 *(Research objective 9): Recognising how the new expressions and alternative consumer practices that stand out in the formation of new identities influence other consumers.*

10.1 Can you give a definition of what is to be an organic product consumer and that meaning that has in your life? What kind of consumer you are now?

10.2 To be an organic consumer is also a philosophy and a lifestyle?

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- To thank once again for the availability;
- To request some additional information: age, occupation, educational qualifications, personal contacts.

APPENDIX 3 – CONTENT CATEGORIES (MOTIVATIONS AND CONTEXT)

Table 15 - Organic motivations categories

Categories	Subcategories
Environmental ethics	Environmental awareness
	Eco-friendly agriculture
	Animal welfare (vegetarianism)
	Localism (food miles)
Social concerns	Localism (CSA and support local economy)
Self-centred interests	Health and nutritional reasons
	Individual well-being
	Enjoyment and pleasure

Table 16 - Barriers to consumption and initiatives

Categories	Subcategories
Barriers	Marketplace:
	Price
	Availability (products and locations)
	Internal (individual):
	Awareness and knowledge
Mentalities and eating habits	
Collective initiatives	LFN
	Collective purchases
	CSA
	Organic farmers markets
Individual initiatives	Own food production
	Reduction of consumption
	Reflexive consumption

Table 17 - Places for obtaining organic products

Categories	Subcategories
Ethical spaces	Box schemes
	Farmers markets
	Local Farmers
	Local Food Network
	Organic shops/supermarkets
	Own food production
	Mix (community gardens, CSA, harvesting from nature)
The relation with supermarkets	Avoid organic certified products
	Avoid supermarkets by what it represents

Table 18 - Meanings and messages

Categories	Subcategories
Meanings and messages	The importance and concern in purchasing organic and influence others
	The link with a different way of produce food
	Universalism and social values
	Diet habits, vegetarianism and meat avoidance
	Spiritual and philosophical dimensions