



Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots

Transcript of interview with Daniel Leite

Interviewer: Nicole Redfern

Interviewer [00:02]

So, today's date is the 22nd of September 2020 and we are at the Ockment Centre in Okehampton. The interviewer is Nicole Redfern. Can I start Daniel by asking you to tell us your full name, your date of birth and where you live?

Daniel..[00:17]

My full Portuguese name? Oh, I have to change the tone of my voice and my name is Daniel Joaquim Leite. I am 35 and live in Devon for years, about five years now so (laughs) that's pretty much it for me. It's a nice place and that's why I I stayed more around than I thought I would. There is something very calming about it. I find that, you know people have the same perception when they live in different areas of the country. Friend of mine, she lived around Bristol, Birmingham, Coventry area and when she comes to visit, you see times finds time is slower. And that's good – for us (laughs). I like to think that this is like it's it's easy to live in Devon. I don't think you have to prove anything to anyone. That's my idea of it. That's my experience.

Interviewer...[01:45]

And I don't think you came directly to Devon did you?

Daniel [01:48]

No. I came I, I end up in London by mistake because I arranged a job to start in near Gloucester and Somerset. But I had a miscommunication and then I had to find another job. And then I kind of jumped in London. And then when I got a job, I got a call saying, 'Do you still want to come and work for us?' So I said, 'Nah you don't want me to so I'm not'. It was just easy, having had a period of previous experience working in France, it was easy for me. It was very straightforward to go to London because, although the job wasn't one I was looking for, they gave me security and that was what I lacked. Till twelve, thirteen years ago I was in France. Just end up there. This whole thing is just, there you go. You have a paper to find to to prove that you have, as a statement as you are employed by us to the bank, to the agency, even to arrange a phone number. And all these things are very much extrapolating what are getting in Devon with that security and I I don't think I ever get I ever got that in Somerset or Swanage. So that's why I like Devon yeah it's yeah. Like I was saying to you,



living in Devon you see the past, you see the present and you see the future that you cannot afford to buy (laughs). But I like that transitions. I like to know that pubs will still care about things, you know like the copper that horses will carry, the tags, the pictures. I'm not a hunter but it the guns it's part of, it gives you a connection with it. And I think that's my experience. You don't have that very much. I know it helps that it's still very rural county but I think it's more isolated by the fact that Devon works around Dartmoor and Dartmoor is very present in everyone's mind. If, I don't think so much if you live here all your life but, if you come to Devon you come with Dartmoor or Exmoor in your mind as as as a focal point. Often city towns are still quite beautiful so yeah, that's how I see Devon at the moment. So moving along, but not leaving Devon. It's good (laughs).

Interviewer [05:17]

So, I'll come back to ask you a few questions about that. But I just want to take you back a little bit. Could you tell us a bit about the process of coming to Devon, of arriving in Devon for the first time? How did that happen?

Daniel [05:29]

It was job related. I got a job. Until two years ago moving was related with jobs because of my job as a chef. So if you wanted to find a job, by being on my own you just go and find a job. You know, carry two bags and a couple of books and here you go. Initially I would move across near train stations. Something I have in my mind, train stations and buses. Then I start driving, it becomes easy but moving from Swanage to Devon was towards work. But I do remember when I arrange to come and look for places to rent and well, it was in Devon. I went to Wellington in Somerset but it, I came from the A303 I believe, from Dorchester to Honiton. I remember to come from down Honiton and I saw Honiton in the valley and then I went up to Wellington through through the small lanes and that kind of caught my eye because you see hills, you see green and I was, although Swanage is quite a rural area, but something different about it. I think it is the idea of rolling hills that's very much in my mind. Devon now shows that. So I just felt, I wasn't very aware of the difference at the time because I came here on a day but I do I did notice it was differ...I was already different. So I did check on the houses I had to check and then I went home and I took the decision to to rent the place and I stayed for three years. But then, when you drive away from Devon it becomes different again. So the entrance and the exit from Devon from South, from Cornwall up or from East to West. Somerset is different because there is con continuity but you see the situation, the difference. .You see that, I think you see that in Cornwall. If you go towards East Devon not so much because it's still very much the same area or at least the coast but you can see the difference. And that's all. Then when I moved and I start driving around I was, I was very aware of that. Obviously I was never aware of the lanes until I came to , you know. You hear them, you see them in the movies. You know, you know you see the Lord of the Rings and you see the hedges and you see the hills. You imagine, that sounds like Honiton and that was in my mind. I for..for..still is, randomly now but it was very present in my mind at the time. That um yeah. It's just every corner of the hill shows you something different than you day upon day. The cloud changes things. The hill if the sun it just



changes, you know, perspectives. Um yeah, it's not good for cars but it's good for the soul. That's how I see it. And that's why I I I ended up , when I decided to move jobs, I decided to stay around because I really don't felt I had to. That wasn't the reason why I was moving so it became easier for me to. I think I became more observant. Not so because of Devon but because of myself and my interactions and um yeah. It's just me (laughs).

Interviewer [10:10]

And when you moved for the first time, as you told us. Was that directly to Okehampton or to somewhere else?

Daniel [10:15]

No I was living in Ottery St Mary and stayed there for just three years. Lovely place. Lovely, lovely place and because it was so close to work, that was the thing. I decided I didn't want to go to Honiton and so Ottery was so close but, knowing Devon, everything takes a long time to get there. But it was fifteen minutes from Sidmouth, it was ten minutes from Honiton, it was ten minutes from work. But, you know, when I saw the tar barrels I was like,(laughs), what is this? I do remember because I've since thought, saw it as a place where you have a the so kind people who just carry tar barrels, flaming barrels in there. In the sense of you have to move on a pre-covid and party. It was very much like, it was you just feel integrated with it and, you know, they know you're not from there but I don't, I never felt as a novelty so that's , that was something I have noticed. This is not related to moving to Ottery but it felt right. So Ottery offered me that base. But then, from then on I just kind of just expanded my reach, especially by driving and walking. I used to walk in, when I was in Swanage but walking in Devon is different. It's very much about, you know, good for woodlands that can be a bit sca... not scary at the same time because it's not your walking in your area but it always feels, walking towards hedges and you cross the road and, yeah. So you can walk for a long time but you actually don't move that much. It's not like I just drove from, for example it's not like I just walked from Okehampton to Tavistock. You probably do the same distance without moving the area. And that's the thing, you just keep a lot of, yeah , it's it's weird. It's like if you, it's not circular but is very very personal. It's like an experience almost. It's not like an objective driven walk and I I think especially when you walk, when I was walking towards that area that's when I really felt the River Otter is becomes an attraction. And in the evening but yeah, people just taking a turn left or turn right. It makes things very different or you go yeah, it's it's very, I don't know how to explain it but it's very much. It's not objective driven. That's not saying that's the best way to describe it. You just park your car and then you walk there and you don't walk in circles. You just go and you find something curious and you go after it. And then Ottery offered me that. I found the East Strip Hills on the top of Honiton, of Ottery and that's for me the window of Devon. It's probably my favourite place in Devon because you just feel like you entering a scenario. And it never gets old because you start seeing different things. I think it's just the framework. If you have been there it's just a framing, you know, of three trees or four. You park your car there and you have a small slope and you're just like, oh you have just the whole perspective of it. Weirdly enough I found it in the evening. So it's always, I think it's the perfect example of Devon



where the same place at different times of the day, with different emotional um status give you different perspectives. You know, when it snowed it was different, Summer was freak. Although it doesn't move, it just feels it, a small amount of houses. It's not static and that's why it's why it's , I would say it's my favourite place in Devon. Because of that. Because it's not large so I mean yeah, you can say yeah, it's great. It's like Devon. You see green, you see the hills. You see Exeter in the evening, the backlight. You see Ottery but the showcase is Devon. Every single day you see a different single station, a season of the year. So that's why it's my favourite place of Devon. Yeah, it became my became a special place to go. So yeah.

Interviewer [16:27]

Sounds beautiful. I'll have to make sure to visit. I haven't gone there before.

Daniel [16:32]

Yeah. It is, it is great. It is very weird. It's not, it's not weird if you kind of drive around the area. That part of Devon you start realising that the valleys and the hills and that's where it is, on the top of the hill but the way that it's cut is , um it just looks like a window. So for me it is shown me that self-contained and I like self-contained because it's secure. So that frame is, yeah, you look in one direction but you can see so many things.

Interviewer [17:15]

Thank you. So moving to Okehampton. Can you tell me what you remember about the first day you arrived in the town?

Daniel [17:30]

(Laughs). It was deserted. It was a Sunday and Sunday everything closes besides Wetherspoons so I felt, I felt like , I think this is not a bad thing. Well it can be a bad thing. It just felt like the town wasn't there. In a way, that's what you get in Dev in Dartmoor. I know it was around 11 o'clock so everyone was walking, getting ready to walk 'cos that's what you do but I I did felt empty and I don't think that's that good to be very honest because it just shows, oh you don't have um. You know, I know it's Sunday and I know people stay with the families or doing activities but it was empty. And I know it and I felt it. I felt quite sad actually, because it just means that the town is not offering anything or or people are not looking for the town in search of something. Or is the town not looking to offer something more than high teas and full English breakfasts. So that's that's that was my my impression of it. It just feels like like I was saying that things in Devon are a bit more slower. I feel that the town has lost something some times ago. And that idea of being the gate to Dartmoor, at least , that's what I've been told, is actually not very beneficial because , if you cross the gate you don't stay there. So Tavistock people stay there. It's vibrant and it's open and [unintelligible] you have some sort of movement. But having the idea of having a gate is just a place where people pass. I recognise and I I recognise that it's not easy. It's just not because, it's not not easy to control that but yeah, I think it could be a bit more enthusiastic. But, taking that apart,



you just need to drive ten minutes and you get lost in time again. So probably it's just the era of what opens the gates for , in terms of Dartmoor. But because I was invited to go to Wetherspoons to have coffee. I didn't find anything else open. And anything else open was far away. And, guess what, you have to drive. Because it was Sunday it was very closed.

Interviewer [21:03]

And those first early day and weeks you lived in the town. How were they? Did your initial impressions of Okehampton prove to be true or did they change?

Daniel.....[21:22]

I don't know how to answer that one. My interaction, because of my work and I'm not a very sociable or silly person and I'm not, so my relationship with Okehampton became very much a necessity one. And the reality is sometimes it's just easy to go to go online or to go to another place. So I do feel that something more could be offered but, to be very honest, I'm probably not the right person that will go to that kind of places. So probably part of the reason why Okehampton is not as vibrant as, say Bovey Tracey is because of people like me (laughs). So, sorry for that but I know when I come to Okehampton I'm comfortable. I know I don't need to to be stressed and I'm a very anxious person by nature. Um, so and I know I can go to the garden if I want to and just be there. And being there is fine. And that is a positive thing. I did use the library quite often. It's a very functional place but it's actually, actually, I was amazed how much people use it because I would spend my days there studying. So, I think Okehampton is just there and it delivers what people are looking for but it becomes hard I believe because it it is in a weird spot compared with other towns. But, yeah, being close to Dartmoor is a very big big plus for me. That's something that cannot be denied.

Interviewer [23:55]

And how about the people of the town? Would you say there's a strong sense of community here? Is it one you've become part of , you would like to become part of?

Daniel [24:06]

I think the people from Okehampton like to see the vil, the town where they live. My interaction with people from, I'll say, wider Okehampton area is that they they really like the place where they live and they make you feel welcome. That is my my impression from from people I've been dealing with. Like I said before, I'm not, you've got the initial, 'Where are you from?' 'You don't look Portuguese,' 'You don't look English'. You have to go in that. It's just who you are. It's not it's not a reason not to be integrated and I never felt an outsider in this in this town or even in the small villages around. If, I think it's very much, if you have a good heart and you are a good person, you are welcome to go and follow the rules. And I did saw that during Covid, where you only are allowed to walk your dog and I go for walk and the people would be there walking, doing their morning exercise. It would be fine. And that's that's it and um. I think people from this area are very aware of the fluxes, influxes of walkers



and tourists and so on and so on and they are very aware that more people are coming to Okehampton and the villages around to settle. But that doesn't mean that they'll um. I'll give you an example if I may with my previous work. There used to have a very popular pub and I was speaking with someone I was working with was born and bred in this part of Okehampton, South Zeal or these areas and you have teachers from Exeter, that kind of jobs, and the guy was more than welcomed. You come to these parts, you have a pub. I think if you have your pub you become part of the community and, but more important than that, if you, like I said before, if you if you are a nice person people treat you with, as as part of them. So I was trying to get in more community kind of things. But it went complicated so it went down the drain to be honest. But I did notice that, I did notice when I was um. You have an evolution I believe that where when I used to go to the library and do my studies, you become a random person and then you become familiar with, and then you become recognised by and you see that. And I never to to that certain point, I never had actually noticed that like, the way people say good morning and good evening, I'll see you tomorrow. Is different. Again, I'm not the most sociable person but you do see a certain level of familiarity that I actually haven't felt when I was, you don't feel that in London unless you've been living in the same street for ever. But I haven't felt that in in the other places where I was living as well. And that's that's part of the reason again why Devon is so easy to to live with in is because yeah, people are just, it's a weird, but people are just so um, you know, they don't . Again, that's that's my impression is that people don't measure for who you are but why you're here in a sense. If you are here to be part of the community but not piss off anybody, you are welcome to stay. And that's my experience. Um, it's good.

Interviewer [29:00]

When you mentioned people asking you where you're from, was there some tiredness with that question?

Daniel [29:05]

That's the novelty thing. That's the novelty aspect of it because yeah. I I think it's just the curiosity of it. Not that it it becomes a very in depth conversation but you have that basic curiosity of like, why you here now. Because it's not like we're in London or you're in a big urban area. You are in Okehampton or you are in South Zeal or you are in a small village. It's not like you're living in Exeter with a large community of other immigrants from other countries apart from Portugal. You are in Okehampton. Like, three Portuguese people here. (laughs). At least, I know another one that I work with but it becomes, yeah, it's it's that curiosity thing. It's not a big philosophical discussion about it. It is the basic curiosity of why you are here if Portugal is warm. And the answer is , well in Portugal financially it doesn't work so well. Or, 'oh I've been to Portugal'. Let me guess, the Algarve. So it becomes um, and then thinks but as you as you know the person, the fact that I can offer a different um experience, I like to think that changes people's perceptions. And that's something I have noticed, or at least that's my understanding of Brexit. Without taking positions, I do notice that unless you deal with a specific area where the EU is involved in your life, for example like farming, people don't really know European people because, and forgive me if this

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sounds quite bad, English people don't see themselves, the large majority, as Europeans. They are British. That actually a part of the EU. I am Portuguese. I am part of the EU. That's different, it's not it's it's I think that's exacerbated by the fact I came to this country when this conversation was happening, was started to happen. But it became a, very much a conversation I've had since then. Okehampton doesn't offer me that. Devon is very much like, you're fine, you're here, you live here but when I'm talking with someone about my pre my my my birth country, why I came here. Why'd you come here. Why'd you come to Devon and then that relation may develop to a friendship and such and co-worker relation. And it's we talking about, 'oh did you hear the weather in the news?' That's when you see the difference, that's when you see that my experience is very different from yours. And I think that was my point. I think when you having immigrants integrated in your communities that are there to be part of the community, it makes conversation more interesting and more broad because I have a different perspective. I have a different understanding of why things are the way they are, and so is the other person. And so it becomes easy for me to become integrated but it becomes easy, at the same time, easy for the other person to become integrated in Europe or to at least understand why why people come here. You know it's very, forgive me if it sounds very politics but if there's a reason why people come to a country. There's many reasons. But before you think why are English people, why are foreigners coming to our country, you can also do the same exercise and think, 'why is English people going to other countries?' and not just in holidays. Especially in the cheffing world a lot of English people tend to go to Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia for a reason. Because they get better money there and that releases space for other people to come in. You know, you can say, 'why they coming here?' English com, English pub companies, hospital agencies, they are recruiting directly from my country. Why not? So I I do feel that having that experience and when you show to to them what life was like for you and your parents is a bit, if they have if they want to understand what I'm trying to say, it becomes beneficial. When I say to them that my mother had to share a bed with three siblings or I had even, I had to share a bed bedroom bed with my brother, they would be like woah you lack privacy. At least I had a bed. And that puts things, I think makes big problems look smaller. And I think that's good. I think it makes people more aware of what's around them. And I think, that's been my experience. When my Portuguese size side has to interact on a more personal level with people from Devon is that it gives them a different perspective. It is lovely, Devon, but but that that distance between places makes things, like I said, makes things slower and sometimes that slow movement makes things harder. It is actually quite contra contradictory because they will welcome you, but then they don't understand why you're coming here. That's my experience. That's how I see it. But I always lived very individual approach until very recently so, yeah. It's easy, it's easy to to, I think it's easy like that because I'm just one and not a whole community and it's easy to be absorbed into and not shock people so much. But things like that, you know are very much like, oh, why is that happening? Why did that happening? And I think that's the joy of conversations. Something in your mind will suddenly click and make you wondering why that happened. It can be scary but I think it cannot be avoided. You can be in the same village forever but the world doesn't stop with you and I think it's very much that. Forgive me if it sounds like I'm



political but I feel that this country wants to go back to what you was. But what you was is no more. And it is people like me. I came to this country because I made the decision to. I came to this country to be productive. I came to this country to live in this country. And then it becomes harder for me because the fear becomes harder for people from our generation that don't know what is living the past but I've been put into the position where that's what's going to happen or the ones in power want that to happen. And I think that's also been my experience with Devon. Like I was saying initially, you see the past, present and the future in Devon. Is that the future looks um. The past is there for a reason and yeah, you can look at it but sometimes you need to just look at what it is. And me coming with that from a Portugal, from Portugal where that's still very much what we think it is a bit, yeah, is different. It was it was initially it was very it was, I could see the contrast of me and an English person for my age, for my background was very, very different.

Interviewer [39:33]

Can you say a bit more about what those contrasts were?

Daniel [39:40]

Oh. You have a sense of of and we can exp enough. Our world is based in England, UK, America, Australia, New Zealand, Asia have rituals like, oh I just finished some S CM. Oh it's not A levels it's the other one um exams.

Interviewer [40:12]

GCSEs

Daniel [40:12]

Yeah. I finished that. I need to go and find and find myself in Thailand or go and travel. It doesn't have to be foreign. It depends how rich you are. It probably could be both. And it's just like, it becomes a ritual. But for me, I finish and didn't went to University because my parents couldn't afford it and I wasn't that intelligent to have it for free. But it was very much like you have to become economically independent. Fair enough. I have met people that would be very much like that but many of them. It just feels like you have rituals and you have your entitlements. The idea of entitlement was something I found in this country and and that I almost never been confronted by, 'I'm entitled to this,' 'I'm entitled to that.' But what are you giving in return? And that's why here it doesn't work for for British people. Because it's not a clean perfect system. But, for the first time in human civilisation you have a group of countries cohabiting together that are not part of an empire and they kept, they keep their independence. And and that means you have to interact. I feel that when you entitle things you stand your ground because you feel you don't have to co-operate. But yeah, it's also a country of rituals. You know, travelling and holidays and weekends. Yeah, it's like again I know it, you know. You can cut and paste it. I don't need to apologise but I I will because it just feels like it's it's like, how can I say? That entitlement comes with a certain level of arrogance. And, I know you're English, so forgive me but that I see that , I



feel that and for the first time the first time in my life I was dealing with people of a lighter tone of skin. So they were quite different from me and they all looked the same and they all behaved the same. You know the idea of, I was introduced to the idea of lads. You have to be approachable, don't get me wrong (laughs), but upto a certain level. I think, yeah and I I I was I and I felt I was different. I felt I was different then. I felt I was not part of soc soc from society in a way where what I think is important. It was not for for example for chefs I was working with so I learn how to accept it and I still feel that, as a society, it is easy to work, to live in this country than it is in Portugal. But if, if you observe society you know that you were raised with different values and different ideals. My personal experience was not wealthy enough to be or or to have the concept of entitlement. Now, my parents were more worried about making sure. Well we were comfortable enough. They were comfortable enough but um yeah, other things were more important and I think that's very visible. Especially in small towns like Okehampton where things tend to be the same for for large periods of times. So that's that. That that was my experience. It can be positive to interact with people, that you see the differences very clearly. And that's ok. You know, you go to Portugal you can start drinking beer from 9 o'clock in the morning because it's hot enough for that. Here you have to wait until 11 probably but that's that's what I say. If you see it with an open heart and that's what I did and I've been lucky to find other people across my path that, to whom I could identify and go home, to whom I could say. Well, to be very honest, you're 19 or 20 or 21 and you go to Thailand or Vietnam for four months to find yourself. What did you find there? Some people have that adventurous spirit but it becomes a ritual without meaning because it's not a sense of , I'm doing something because I want to , just because it's just easy to because the language is the same because the tourist sea system is fragment is set up to be that way. So that becomes an adventure, it's just becomes like if you are in Portugal and you go on on holiday to Spain, it's just easy. Or you fly to London for a weekend um yeah, it becomes an entitlement. And I do feel that now. When I still read news in Portugal, still match them against this country. You know, the Brexit debate. You see, you see the contrast. You understand why it's happening and that's good. That's very good if you want to know the other part and not shut me off but it can be bad because it can it can exacerbate that sense of entitlement. I think I went away, far far away. That's what I do. Sorry.

Interviewer [47:39]

No it's fascinating. Thank you. So I heard you there mention some of the values you'd inherited from your parents. Thinking about your culture and your heritage, what have you brought with you from Portugal which is present in the way you live your life here?

Daniel [48:00]

I think it did help. Portugal is finally opening. When I I kind of grew up with the last. So if if anyone knows a bit about the recent history of Portugal is that in 1974,5 we had a dictatorship and then you had the period of revolution, or a transformation and then you get in 86 I believe, 5, 6, that we become members of the ECC and then we have a boom and then we have a big down. But that generation, that political generation that took us upto let's



say 2008,9 was very much. Portugal is still a a very um, not now but if. My parents, they are not education people. My mother did primary school. She start working when she was , so I'm thinking, I think she was eight or nine. My dad finish six year. He start working when he was 11. So my mother worked for 55 years. She she just recently retired. My dad is close to it but because she has the age because she has the years. So we kind of grew up. That was the productive generation, the active generation in Portugal, so that's in economic scale, that's not good because we cannot match against other countries. Even countries poorer than you because the comparison we used to do, it happened was when EU opened East and you had Polish economy, Baltic economy and so and so on. They were probably poorer countries but countries with higher levels of education because higher education was actually instigated under communism. Hungary for example. So so we suffer with that. Though now we kind of coming out of that. But my parents always taught me and my brother that the concept of work and you know none of, very few of my family went did University. Some of them, one of them , my uncle did it in the evening, study at night. His family went too. Both my cousins do went to University. But you see the necessities you know. If, for your parents work is important, that's kind of what you going to gravitate with. I was lucky too. I always like history. That became a hobby of mine. History Channel, that kind of stuff and, but I knew I had to work. So that's kind of what I did and that's what I brought to this country. And I think when I took that passion from history with work, there was always a link. I had, when I was, when I came to this country. So you are in London and you go and visit monuments but it's funny because now I can go to, let's say, Tower Bridge. It's a portal of London. You can see why it's there. Before, I was more worried about the King (makes fanfare sound), why he was there. Now I think like, oh why is this why? So I kind of , the way I look to a certain object is, it mutates but I do remember one of the few, when I came to this country and I found out Time Team and I was like,great. Sorry, it was great because you know, you have people that look really like you going to the pub and then they go and dig some holes and find some coins and stones and um that was magical because it was a prime time channel. Doing that was not like a History Channel or Discovery Channel. It was Channel 4 and I was amazed when I found out how long it was on TV. So I downloaded all the episodes and I belie, I think that with Time Team you do. Everywhere I would go in the country I will try to find something that will connect me with that. Marlow was difficult because it's very much, it was always a very perfic perficular area of London but you still see that. You still see the old, you know Tudor Tudor buildings. You still see the river. You still see that kind of stuff. When I went to Swanage it was different because to start having a bigger perception of history, pre-history, fossils. That was a big thing for me back then. When I came to Devon I just wanted to offer um pre-history and that's how um. So yeah, I took what I learned from from as a kid and I just move it across the country and brought it with me to Okehampton now. So yeah, it was it was fascinating for me when I came down here how, you were walking in the woodlands and you will find a hedge, you will find a mound, just there, and you look at it so it's just like, oh, a dog is peeing there. But someone did that with a purpose 3000 years ago and that's the amazing thing about Devon. Is that that present past in you. That other time in in to a certain degree now. It just makes me, my mind just dwells on it and it's just, I know that what you see now is not what it was then, you

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know, but it just makes you think like, 'who did this?' 'why?' You know, I know it's not in Devon but I was in Devon at the time. I went to Maiden Castle, Dorchester. I was just like, so you imagine being there with the Romans, just like 'we want to conquer you' and you have like polished stones to show to the heads. And I saw it. I didn't see it. I'm making light but it's quite scary. But, so I just looked to them and see the effort. And it makes me think like, this is here for us to see and I, so I try to appreciate that. I like to think like that. I'm probably far from being wrong but from being right but I like to think that this did this person consider that someone would see it? I like to think when you see as a random stone or an inscription, why did he do it? Why is it there? And so so that's what history and, my parents actually from being allowed to be to see as much TV as I wanted to (laughs). It took me for, yeah and that's why Devon is so so important to me. It's not because of Exeter and the towns. It's because of what it can offer you . And you can extrapolate you can extrapolate that from the mounds to an old mining building. And it's just there. So, I don't need to go any any other else to go and find it and that's what I like about Devon. It's because things like that make my day easier. Things like that make my day lighter. Yeah, you just become connected. And I think some people, I think that's why people like Devon, or people are drawn towards Devon, not just because houses are a bit cheaper than everywhere else in the country. So yeah, that's that's , it is fascinating for me. Because I don't have that in Portugal. It really upsets me that we still focussing on in time maritime and colonies where you have mounds and complexes as, not as big but as important as Stonehenge and everything else and we just leave them there. And that is really like, went to a dolman last, three years ago in Portugal and it was just there, in a lot of ground, full of dirt and trash. But then I went to one, to a hillfort in another area and I think it was that would be in this country, would be very popular because you have the structure in stones so is a bit like, yeah, everything is there besides the people and and I'm just thinking like it makes me, it did make me really, sad because someone was there, working there working for the council and it was, it did make me sad. And I think when I see this in this country I don't get sad because I do see that the National Trust or English Heritage actually take care of them. I know it's it's a lot to find but I do feel that it's preserved in a better way than it is at home.

Interviewer [1:00:02]

So you mentioned lots of monuments which had to do with stones and I know that you have a particular stone with you today. Would you like to tell us anything about it?

Daniel [1:00:11]

This one, I stole it from Woodbury because the Woodbury hill fort is in East Devon so I went there and it was actually the first time I saw it. And the National Trust I believe, they were, because the mounds are collapsing, they are trying to grow grass in it so it holds together. So I just saw the stone, actually it's two stones but that one is different so yeah, it just became and the thing I was saying about imagining. I know this is just a random stone but one thing I learn is that polished stones, they are not from inland. They're from coast because of erosion. And I learned that when I went to Maiden Castle, where that's one, they used for weapons but this is just very normal. It's half polished stone but it has a funny thing



I like about it is the dentures. When I went to Orkney I went to , they have a small museums and they show us a couple of stones. They would be used to. This this one has a small dent makes me feel someone has used it to, as a finger holder and that's what it makes me think about it. And, you know, it's half-polished so it's, here is flat so you could do this (hit's surface with stone). And I took that because that's probably the way I see it. It allows me to imagine and that's what you, why I get from those places. Why do? I know why they did it, it's a defence mechanism but the effort when they only had, you know deer antlers and wood burners. So this is this was just a memento but yeah, when I, it's like if, it's like a hard cross. When I look at it part of my mind is there cos I know what I was there for and I know the day and I know with whom I was with. Yeah, it just became part of my staying in Devon. And I'm, yeah, it's just again it allows you to imagine. That's what I like about Devon and the archaeological sites and rivers and you are allowed to imagine and that's something very. I think everyone has time to do that. I I definitely don't unless I have to talk about it but it's there. It's there forever so, you know, in an age where everything mutates so fast, this stone means a static moment and that's quite good for me. Yeah, but it's just a dentures. It's not, it's really just fun. You know, half polished, a dred, it's just, it's a good paperweight. A paperweight with a story. So, yeah.

Interviewer [01:04:29]

Thank you Daniel. So I think maybe two more questions for you. We've reflected a lot on history and looking back. So I've got one question about looking back and one question about looking forward. So if you could go back and talk to yourself from the first day you arrived in the UK, what would you like to say to yourself?

Daniel [01:04:54]

Oh, to the one who came back in 2013?

Interviewer [01:04:57]

Yeah. To yourself.

Daniel [01:05:00]

Oh, it's been hard. That's why it's making me tear. I don't think we have found home but is close to it. It's weird. I was scared when I came to this country. You know, London has pretty much the population of Portugal or close to it. Or not of it but close to it.. So it just feel like really strange. I did. But it was a calculated risk and I know that family values, working values all that kind of stuff did help. But it was, it was a journey of discovery. So I like this. So if I stopped now and look back eight years down the line it's been a journey of discovery. It's been good, not so good but I liked, I know I am in a better place personally than I was before and that's that's positive. But I think I became more conscience, more aware, more observant. Been lucky with the people I have met across my journeys and many different people. You know, I had my first foreign Christmas here. That was weird as well. So I think it's been as as very much. It's been a growing situation and that's why I think I entitled to say

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when I don't agree with this country because I know I have contributed to it. I know I have fed a lot of people that had good meals and probably had good ideas after that so I think I am entitled to say that. So that's, that's, that's, that's a positive thing. And I think that's been more exacerbated since I actually moved to Devon because now I'm not worried to move. Well I have to move because, you know, houses are expensive and I took the deliberate decision not to live in the centre of town because it's just too stressful for my, for me. But that person that got out of the aeroplane is still there, yeah. I can I can feel it now. But he was never a bad person but this is, this is, this a more gentle, aware, open person and that's how I see myself now. So yeah. At the time I had one bag and a half. Now I have to rent a van if I want to move. So, this Daniel has a lot more luggage both physically and mentally than the other one. But yeah, is not so afraid of leaving things behind this one. You know like Devon. You leave the stones there today, they they'll still be there tomorrow. And then they'll be there for as and when you want to see them. If not, until I'm functional in thinking I can I can go back and think about them. That's what this stone offers me. Just like a token for periods. And I think I become quite good at it actually to look at objects and think, oh, I remember this, I remember that, I didn't like that and then but in connection with your environment and and I think that's the best thing you can do. And that's something that Devon does offer me. Very much. So this is fine. That guy's fine. He's fine. We been ok. Thank you.

Interviewer [01:10:19]

Thank you Daniel. My last question is looking forwards. As you know, we're going to keep all our oral histories in an archive so it will be available for many years for people to listen to. Do you have a message you would like to leave for people in the future?

Daniel [01:10:34]

Oh (laughs). That's weird. I don't know. Stranger. Well I really don't know because, I don't know. But I do know that smile makes things easier and connections make your li, your life more bearable and, again I'm not the most sociable person and um yeah, connections and places. Even if the connection with an object or whatever, they they they are positive and life is not that. I think if the idea of entitlement is something that is becoming more is becoming more um, how can I say it? Don't expect anything. That's what I want to say. Just just yeah, just put yourself in the other people's feet because that's what I kind of do. That's what Devon offers me. That's what I do when I go to a stone hillfort, whenever I see a henge. Why did they do that? And, while doing that you take your place in the world. You're not is, you're not away from it and I believe that's that's the important thing is that whoever reads that is curious about something. So, if someone is reading or listening to what I'm saying it's because they are curious to know how life was back then. So just think that I was curious about life, people's life back then. You know that, just forgive me, just something occurred to me. I was just looking at the picture a few months ago, there was a picture in Yelverton, in the pub there. It was a picture of a proud assuming company or battalion marching down to Plymouth to be embarked to go to fight in the First World War. It's far, it's still a far picture. You don't see faces and it's a perfect example of knowing what happened,



what they were thinking and you see those men and you see those people and yeah. You you can put yourself in their shoes and yeah. I like to smile so someone is studying that more often. I wasn't a smiler and I like to and yeah. Whoever reads to this just carry something of value and move it forward because probably someone will do exactly the same thing. Yeah, it's not an advice, far from it, it's just something I I do believe. I remember as a kid I used to love to hear old stories because it gives you a context and I've done that here. I learned that by starting to study. I learned that from other people. So yeah, that's it.

Interviewer.....[01:15:25]

Thank you Daniel. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we finish up?

Daniel [01:15:20]

No, not really. It's weird because now I understand why why we are doing this. I thought it was just for like an interview or something like that but now and and no I don't think I would change anything because because thinking is not linear. I thought I was going to take some notes, that's why I took my paper and pen but I didn't because, at some point you don't really know what to say so you just mumble. That's what I saw myself doing , mumbling about and thinking. It's like going to the shrink but without a specific theme. But, uh no yes, connections, that's what I think good, the thing I learned from today. Thank you.

Interviewer [01:16:33]

Thank you. I'll end the recording there.